

The Arc Erie County New York

# Annual Report

2022

*Achieve with us.®*



  
**The Arc**®  
Erie County  
New York

# The Arc Erie County New York

## Annual Report — For the Fiscal Year of 2021

### Leadership

Douglas DiGesare,  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Michelle Cordero,  
*Chief Operating Officer*

Justin Fax,  
*Associate Chief Operating Officer*

Lori Brien,  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Lissa Carroll,  
*Chief Human Resources Officer*

Demetrius Brooks,  
*Director of Residential Services*

Bryan Devans,  
*Director of Vocational &  
Employment Services*

Katie Reiss,  
*Director of Community Supports &  
Habilitation Services*

Jescie Schaefer,  
*Director of Clinical Services*

Linda Malkiewicz,  
*School Age Principal*

Karen Mayweather,  
*Preschool Principal*

Tom Augustyneck,  
*Director of Property Management*

Kristie Edwards,  
*Director of Community Relations &  
Development*

Julianne Krause,  
*Director of Human Resources*

James Otis,  
*Director of Information Technology*

Susan Rosky,  
*Director of Quality Improvement &  
Corporate Compliance*

Peter Schmitt IV,  
*Director of Finance*

### Board of Directors

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*Chair*

Patrick Young,  
*Vice Chair*

Patricia Johnson,  
*Treasurer*

James Hettich,  
*Assistant Treasurer*

Dr. Shane Grant,  
*Recording Secretary*

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Ellen Shanahan Becker, Esq.  
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Kyle Cavalieri  
Dr. Andrew Covey  
Molly Daetsch Hugar  
Peter Martin, Esq.  
Kevin O'Leary  
Olga Rico-Armesto  
David Schute





## A Message from the CEO

This has been an interesting year for us at The Arc Erie County as we celebrate our 71<sup>st</sup> year of existence. Like everyone, we have had ups and downs, successes, and some setbacks. What I have learned through the years is the importance of advocacy for children and adults with intellectual and developmental differences. I have also learned that we as an organization and as an employer also must advocate for our Direct Support Professionals, Front Line Supervisors, Teachers, Clinicians, Administrators, Support Staff and the like. We always need to be on the offensive, to be included and relevant in the conversation with our elected officials, state and government agencies.

From the beginning in 1951 to today, our mission and objective is to advocate for those children and adults who participate in our programs as well as being an active member in our State organization as well as other provider networks for financial support, favorable legislation, regulatory relief when needed and the opportunity for our individuals to participate in their community and to be part of the conversation at all times.

We have made many strides throughout the years and will continue to do so as we do not forget where our founding parents began and the work that we need to continue to carry on with.

So, how did 2021-22 shape up for us at The Arc Erie? Beginning with advocacy, several statewide associations, specifically The Arc New York, worked diligently with our state agencies to acquire federal dollars for bonus funds for Direct Support Professionals who worked in our programs throughout the pandemic as well as providing retention bonuses throughout this tight labor market. Beginning in April of this year through September, we will have distributed approximately \$6 million in bonuses to these employees and I would like to thank them for their service. In addition, through advocacy, our field will see for the first time since 2010 a 5.4% Cost of Living Adjustment to our program rates. These funding trends apply to both our OPWDD, and State Education funded programs. This will go a long way to increase staff wages and provide program enhancements.

We recently completed our new Workforce Training Center at 2643 Main Street, Buffalo. This program will be offering specific training to the individuals we support in the areas of culinary arts, hospitality, customer service and janitorial skills as well as providing program options such as art classes, recreation opportunities and community events.

We have added eight new NYSID preferred source contracts to our janitorial and landscaping portfolio in 2021-22. This is significant in that the preferred source contracts pay prevailing wages to our individuals. We continue to transition from 14c subminimum wage contracts to competitive wage employment, have opened two new group placement sites and opened two new volunteer locations for our Community Pre-vocational program and continue to expand our after school respite programs, with a collaboration underway currently with the Williamsville school district. We have been working with an outside consultant with our Human Resources team on the implementation of Talent Insights, a screening tool to assist our management teams when hiring new employees and using this data and information to better support and develop our new employees. In addition, we are using the Lean Six Sigma process to examine our onboarding process to be more efficient and effective in this tight labor market. We have been in collaboration with Erie Community College and the NYS Dept of Labor and are now offering an apprenticeship program which will provide the opportunity for our employees to obtain up to 24 college credits at no charge to encourage our employees to continue their education. There are many more examples I could provide but my message is simply that the team here at The Arc Erie has been working together to achieve the best possible results, provide the best possible assistance to our valued employees and to always do what is needed and necessary to advocate for those we support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas DiGesare".

**Douglas DiGesare**  
Chief Executive Officer

# Agency Fiscal Synopsis 2021

## Revenue Streams

Medicaid	\$ 24,009,490
Education	12,538,605
Other Income	4,991,565
Employment Sales	3,730,607
Govt. Contracts	3,012,525
Fundraising and Grants	563,021

## Total Revenue

**\$ 48,845,813**

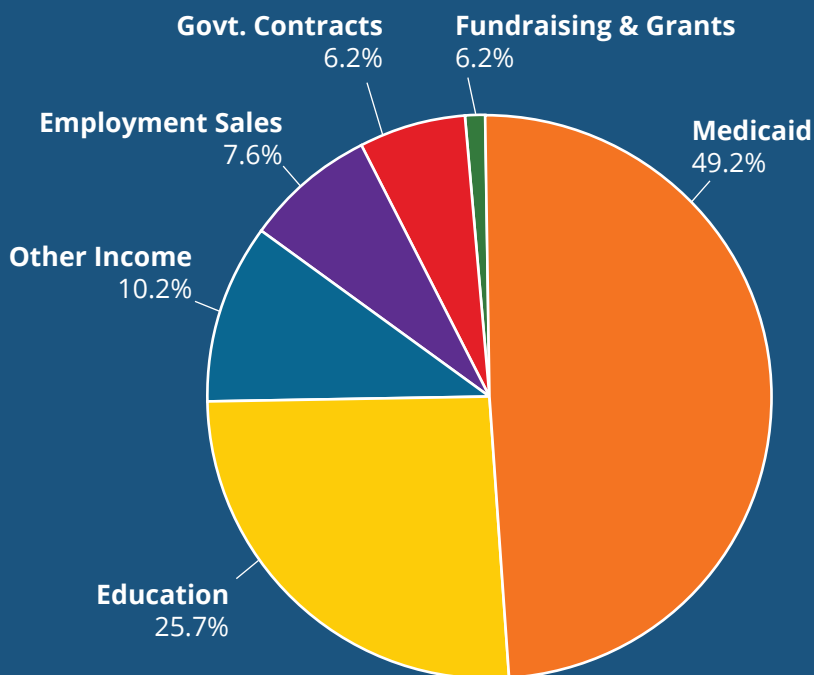
## Expense Category

Payroll & Benefits	\$ 33,439,564
Program Expenses	7,815,520
Other Expenses	6,407,945

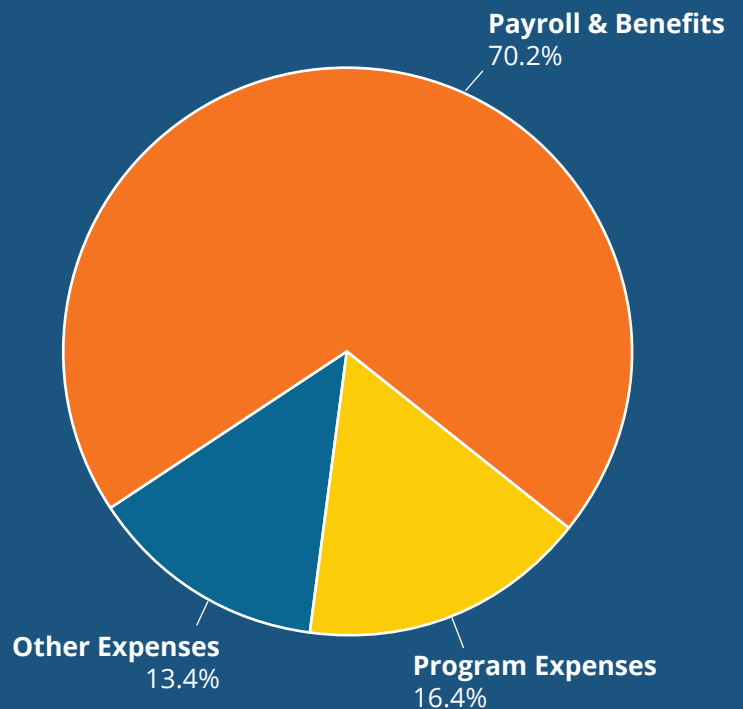
## Total Expenses

**\$ 47,663,029**

## Revenue



## Expenses



# Workforce Training Center

Beginning in 2020, The Arc Erie County embarked on an exciting new project at the 2643 Main Street, Buffalo location. The goal of this \$1.3 million renovation was to create a specialized workforce training center to deliver targeted skill development to people with disabilities. Programming offered at this location would prepare people to enter the evolving workforce and provide ongoing support to ensure employed individuals remain valuable contributors to their employers. As of Summer 2022, the Workforce Training Center has been completed and community partnerships are being developed to link people with employment in the culinary, janitorial, hospitality and retail fields. The site boasts a certified kitchen, a janitorial training suite, a hospitality & customer services training suite, a large social gathering space as well as an art studio and a new elevator to allow for increased accessibility.

**This project would not be possible without the generous support of our donors:**

Golisano Foundation  
The Statler Foundation  
James H. Cummings Foundation  
Wegmans

First Niagara Foundation  
The Margaret L. Wendt  
Foundation



# Rockefeller Report

The Rockefeller Institute of Government is a public policy think tank that conducts cutting-edge, nonpartisan research and policy analysis. In December 2021, they released a report titled *The Role of Disability Service Providers in the New York State Economy* focusing on the economic impacts New York's disability service providers have on New York State. This includes output generated and jobs supported by New York's nonprofit, privately-run disability service providers. Throughout the report are profiles of disability service providers from each region highlighting their creative businesses and programs. The agency representing the Western New York region is The Arc Erie County New York with a profile discussing our Enclave

Labor Solutions and Day Habilitation Without Walls Program. The profile focuses on our transition from sheltered workshops to integrated programs including the renovation of the new Workforce Training Center at 2643 Main St., Buffalo.

*"We wanted to get out into the community and help those we support experience new things. When we started getting people out, a whole other side of each of them came out and we learned so much more about the individuals we support that we never would have known if they were still in a workshop."* — Katie Reiss

Director of Community Supports & Habilitation Services

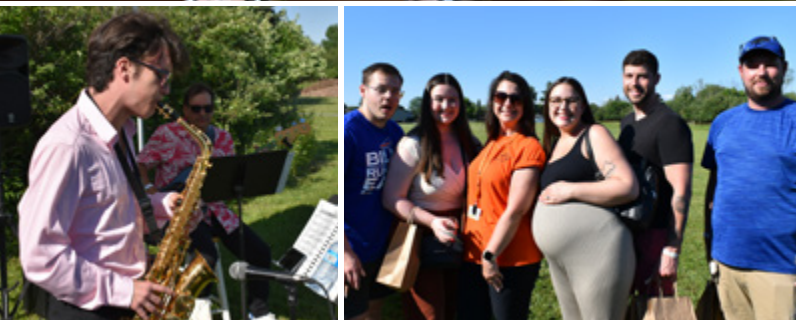




# 2022 Ale Trail

Summer 2022 brought the return of one of our favorite fundraising events! The Ale Trail took place on June 23 upon the grounds of our administrative building located at 30 Wilson Road, Williamsville. The sprawling green space, wooded walking trail and beautiful summer day allowed 450+ people to sample a variety of local beer, wine, whiskey and hard cider from 15+ vendors in a casual and social environment.

The event also included several food trucks, a cigar rolling station, an art show and an assortment of live music performances. Stay tuned for 2023 as we continue to make this FUNdraising event bigger and better!



**Top:** Close-up of Brickyard Brewing Company's branded tap handles. **Middle Left:** Ale Trail musical guests, Michael Scamacca on saxophone and Sam Scamacca Sr. on the bass. **Middle Right:** CFO, Lori Brien and her family pose for a photo on the Trail. **Bottom Left:** A crew of Arc employees hanging out on the trail **Bottom Right:** Two of our all-star brewers cheesing for a photo.

# Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is a time to recognize the Board of Directors and celebrate the amazing accomplishments made by the people we support.

On May 24, the Annual Meeting took place at our Maryvale School location complete with dinner and an awards ceremony. There was not a dry eye in the house as we shared the heartwarming stories of the program honorees.

We were able to hear accounts of their challenges, victories and how the services provided by The Arc Erie impact their daily lives. Congratulations to the awardees listed below and welcome to our newest Board Members, Kyle Cavalieri and Molly Daetsch Hugar!

**Community Partner of the Year:**  
MOD PAC Corporation

**Education Program Graduate of the Year:**  
Christianna Bergeron

**Employment Services Honoree of the Year:**  
Stephen Frears

**Self-Advocacy Honoree of the Year:**  
Robert Pitts

**Day Services Honoree of the Year:**  
Nick Johnidas

**Community Supports Honoree of the Year:**  
Colten Deuser

**Residential Program Honoree of the Year:**  
Matthew Hulme

**Clinic Services Honoree of the Year:**  
Sal Genco

**2022 Courage Award:**  
Luis Luciano-Sanchez



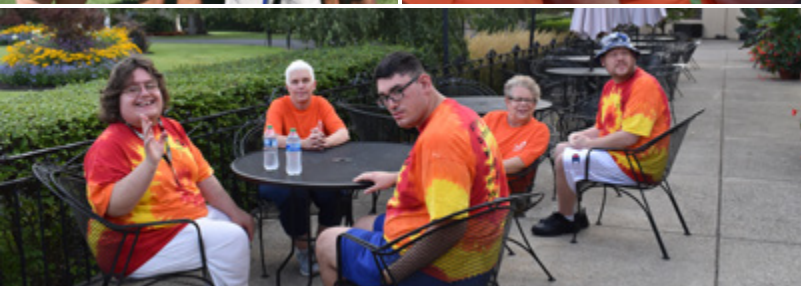
**Above:** The 2022 Courage Award recipient, Luis Luciano-Sanchez, holding his award and standing beside his family, his supervisor, his job coach Bill Barille, Director of Employment Services, Bryan Devans, and CEO, Douglas DiGesare.



# Golf Classic

The Arc Erie County Golf Classic annual fundraiser took place on August 29, 2022 at Brookfield Country Club in Clarence, NY.

It was a beautiful summer day complete with a few stray showers to help us beat the heat. In addition to a round of golf, golfers were able to enjoy lunch, cocktails and dinner as well as taking part in several raffles including the ever popular Wheelbarrow of Cheer which contained over 40 bottles of liquor! We are ever grateful for the support from our sponsors who helped make this event possible!



**Top Left:** An allstar crew of volunteers for The Arc Golf Tournament.

**Top Right:** Tom Trainor hits his best practice swing. **Middle Left:** The Arc team at the Golf Tournament. (Katie Keleher, Chuck Grisanti, Chris Cihak, Dominic Floro). **Middle Right:** Sandi Glendenning, Lissa Carroll, and Justin Fax enjoying the beautiful summer day at Brookfield.

**Bottom:** The Wilson Road WOW (Dayhab Without Walls) Group greeting all of our golfers.

# Winter Picnic

It has become tradition for The Arc Erie County to hold an annual summer picnic but in 2022, we took advantage of the Buffalo weather and had our first ever WINTER picnic too!

The cold February day was an absolute success despite an ice storm hitting the area the night before the event. Over 300 people attended and took part in activities they had never before had the opportunity to experience such as roasting marshmallows and snow painting!

Outdoor and indoor activities were also available including face painting, a magician, bingo, a petting zoo and a sing-a-long. Of course, no winter picnic would be complete without a hot cocoa station, sledding and snowshoeing!

Thank you to NYSARC Trust Services for continuing to support The Arc Erie County New York and our fabulous program events!

**Right:** Jackie Maracle and program participants roasting marshmallows over the fire at the Winter Picnic.



# Program Statistics

## Clinical Services

**The Article 16 Clinic now offers 4 therapeutic disciplines:**

Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy and Mental Health Counseling!

## Vocational & Employment Services

96% of our Supported Employment participants are employed at minimum wage or better paying positions.

## Community Support & Habilitative Services

Currently 20 people we support have attended Arc Day Habilitation programs for 40+ years!

## Residential Services

Residential services are responsible for 34% of agency revenue

## Preschool Education

In 2022, 45% of our preschool graduates transitioned back to their home school districts.

## School Age Education

September enrollment has met or exceed 90% capacity for the past 3 years

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## Major Grants 2021–2022

### Specialized Workforce Training Center

- Golisano Foundation, \$250,000
- The Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, \$177,000
- First Niagara Foundation, \$50,000
- James H. Cummings Foundation, \$50,000
- The Statler Foundation, \$25,000
- The Wegman Family Charitable Foundation, \$10,000

### Green Acres Bathroom Renovation

- John R. Oishei Foundation, \$160,185
- Office of Child & Family Services Childcare Stabilization Grant, \$147,600
- The Children's Guild, \$50,000

### Green Acres & Maryvale Security Improvements

- NYS Division of Homeland Security \$97,605

**Total Amount**

**\$967,390.00**



# Thank you to our donors!

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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## Give 716

Give716 is a collaborative effort between the Buffalo Bills Foundation and the Buffalo Sabres Foundation in response to the urgent needs that the nonprofit community faces. This 36-hour fundraising blitz took place around 716 Day (July 16) via a variety of social media platforms. In 2022, this event raised more than \$1.1 million in support of local nonprofits! As an agency that has served WNY for more than 70 years, we want to say thank you to the City of Good Neighbors for supporting The Arc Erie County New York in this new fundraising opportunity!





# Visual Arts @ The Arc

In 2020, The Arc Erie County continued to expand the supplemental supports available to a variety of Arc programs. The visual arts often provide people with a creative and individually expressive outlet as well as support a therapeutic model fostering healing and mental well-being.

Our wonderfully inventive Creative Arts Facilitator, Jenn Barton, works to ensure that all projects are inclusive and offer adaptive methods for design. Two art shows have been held within the past year highlighting the fantastic works developed by the people supported by The Arc Erie.

Individuals were able to sell their pieces with 50% of the proceeds going back to the program and 50% to the artist. If you've been at the 30 Wilson Road location, you will also see such pieces adorning the walls throughout the building which are also for sale!

The Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council (DDAC) is a statewide group comprised of self-advocates, family members, provider representatives, and other stakeholders which provides priorities and goals, comprehensive planning, resource allocation, and evaluation processes for state and local services for people with developmental disabilities

Recently the DDAC put a call out for "pandemic created artwork"; the winners piece would be featured on the cover of the DDAC Annual Report. There was a huge response to this statewide contest and The Arc Erie County was proud to share the works of several individuals who take part in our supplemental art program through a variety of Arc services. The Arc Erie is delighted to congratulate first place winner Austin Cortez and runner up Robert Pitts!

Both individuals worked with The Arc Erie's Creative Arts Facilitator, Jenn Barton, to create their self-portraits. Robert's work will be featured on the inside cover of the DDAC Annual Report while Austin's work will be featured on the cover of the DDAC Annual Report as well as on the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council website, social media and other materials.



Austin Cortez



Robert Pitts

# Athena Awards

Through the Buffalo Niagara Partnership and ATHENA International, the 31st Annual ATHENA Awards took place on April 5, 2022, at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. Since 1989, this luncheon has celebrated supporting, developing, and honoring women leaders in the workplace.

At this year's event, The Arc Erie County New York was nominated for the non-profit ATHENA Organizational Award which recognizes a non-profit organization that inspires women to achieve their full potential and create balance in leadership throughout the Buffalo Niagara region. Thank you to the ATHENA Awards Executive Committee for your consideration!



# Executive Director Awards

As of 2022, The Arc New York's Executive Directors Association created a new opportunity to recognize our best talent and highest performers across Arc Chapters.

**The Future of Excellence Awards includes five categories:**

Clinical Champion, Program Services Excellence, Excellence in Support Services, Medical/Nursing Excellence and Emerging Leader.

Please join us in congratulating the nominees from The Arc Erie County New York on their hard work and dedication to the people we support!

**Clinical Champion:** Hannah Komin

**Program Services Excellence:** LeeAnn Solis-Sanchez

**Excellence in Support Services:** Rachel Seyfried & Sarah Di Christina

**Medical/Nursing Excellence:** Mandy Pierce

**Emerging Leader:** Lindsay Saunders



## From the ARChive

Next time you're in the Allen & Franklin neighborhood of downtown Buffalo, swing by 470 Franklin Street. This four-story brick building was one of the initial sites of The Arc Erie County New York, formerly known as the New York State Association for Retarded Children.

For 71 years, The Arc Erie has been a staple in the Buffalo community getting its roots as a school program for children with disabilities in a converted home on Humboldt Parkway.

In 1989, the name was changed to Heritage Centers and Allentown Industries became the employment and business division of the agency.

Today, The Arc Erie continues to be an ever-evolving agency with a comprehensive set of services supporting approximately 2,000 people in the WNY area.

**In the words of Maya Angelou:**

*"If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you're going"*

We are proud to celebrate the great strides made by The Arc Family, past and present.

Scan here to donate!

## Support our mission!

[www.arceriecounty.org/donate](http://www.arceriecounty.org/donate)  
Phone: 833-272-3743



### Our Vision

The Arc Erie County New York offers a person-centered focus that connects the people we serve and their families with opportunities for education, employment, socialization and residential options through quality programming.

We pledge to provide leadership at all levels of the agency and to provide a gratifying work experience for all staff.

Our altruistic focus will be communicated internally and externally so that all members of our community can Achieve with us.

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:

At The Arc Erie County, we promote a space where each person is celebrated and respected for being who they are. Our goal is to create a healthier, kinder, and more empathetic environment to work and serve in.

**At The Arc Erie County New York,** we support children and adults with disabilities and their families in achieving their desired quality of life by creating opportunities through comprehensive quality services.

