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## You can help others 'Achieve real choices'

I hope you enjoyed reading about Bert Hill and how he has been achieving real choices with The Arc's support.

The Arc is not the only reason that Bert has these opportunities. Thanks to the compassion and support of people like you in our community, individuals with developmental disabilities are having more and more opportunities to succeed each day. And by supporting The Arc of Atlantic County through events like our annual Tribute Dinner and Step Up for The Arc Walk, you can provide the resources we depend on to make a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Please consider joining us at our upcoming events, or simply make a gift by using the enclosed envelope. Your donation will ensure that more people just like Bert can continue to dream and achieve!

Cordially,

*Deborah Davies*

Deborah Davies, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer



**P.S.** There are many other ways to get involved and support The Arc. Please call our Director of Fund Development, Deborah Given, at 609-485-0800 ext. 135 for more information.

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of Atlantic County

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### Vision

People with developmental disabilities have the opportunities and supports they need to live the lives they choose.

### Mission

The Arc of Atlantic County improves the lives of people with developmental disabilities in our community. Through direct services, advocacy, education and prevention activities, we work in partnership with individuals and their families to make choices possible about how and where they live, learn, play and work.

Deborah Davies, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

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Helping people with developmental disabilities in our community

The  
Arc  
of Atlantic County

Achieve

A quarterly newsletter for Members and friends of The Arc of Atlantic County

A Noteworthy Couple, A Worthwhile Cause

### A Tribute to

## Senator William Gormley and Virginia A. Gormley

Presented by Atlantic City Electric and AtlantiCare



Each year The Arc of Atlantic County hosts a fundraising dinner to celebrate those who have gone above and beyond to make life better for people in our community. And few individuals

have worked harder on behalf of the community than Bill and Ginny Gormley. The Arc of Atlantic County will recognize the efforts of this dynamic couple on Wednesday, March 26, 2008 from 5:30 to 8:30 pm at the Carriage House in Galloway, NJ.

Bill served as State Senator for 25 years and during that time helped to dramatically improve the economic health of our region by sponsoring every major piece of

casino legislation during his tenure. Ginny was deeply committed to helping at-risk youth during her career and played a major role in establishing Family Court in New Jersey.

Please help us recognize the Gormleys while also raising much needed funds for our programs and services. There are many ways you can support The Arc through this event. You or your company can become a sponsor, purchase an ad in the program book, donate an auction item and/or attend the event. With your help, we can celebrate the Gormleys' efforts and above all, support a bright future for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We hope you will join us as we honor these two individuals who have made such a wonderful mark on our community. For more information contact Deborah Given, fund development director, at 609-485-0800 ext. 135

## Step into Spring and Step Up for The Arc

Join thousands of Arc friends across the state of New Jersey who are participating in the 2008 Step Up For The Arc Walk and take steps toward a brighter future for people with developmental disabilities. The Arc of Atlantic County will host our chapter's walk on Saturday, May 3, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. on the Ventnor Boardwalk. We hope you'll join us!

Registration and all pre- and post-walk activities will be held at St. James Roman Catholic Church, 6415 Atlantic Avenue in Ventnor. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. and the walk kicks off at 10:30 a.m. Refreshments will be generously provided by the Masonic Lodges of the 23rd District

both before and after the walk. Be sure to stick around for dancing and entertainment afterward!

Registration is \$20 and includes a free walk t-shirt. If you raise \$50 or more, your registration fee is waived.

Raise \$100 or more and you'll receive a stylish khaki Arc baseball cap. The walk runs the length of the Ventnor Boardwalk and back (a total of 3.4 miles) but you can walk as much or as little as you'd like. For more information and to download a registration form, please visit [www.arcatlantic.org](http://www.arcatlantic.org).



Don't miss the 2008 Arc Variety Show performed by our very own Spotlight Players, to be held on Sunday April 13, 2008 at 2:00 pm at the JCC in Margate. The show will feature more than 20 acts ranging from singing and dancing to dramatic monologues and musical numbers. Also featured will be scenery painted by Arc artists through an outreach program with the Ocean City Fine Arts League. Call Becky Eisele at 609.485.0800 ext. 267 for more information.

We Remember  
Our Friends

Forest Conover  
Terry Weems  
Dan Miller  
Dorothy McGrath  
Kathy Jeffries



## The Arc In Pictures



Photo courtesy of Belhaven School

This year's Holiday Partners program was a huge success thanks to an overwhelming response from the community. Seventy-two donors were matched up with 60 individuals and families who are caring for a person with developmental disabilities and in financial need. New to Holiday Partners this year were Linwood's Belhaven School students from 5th through 8th grade. They rallied together along with their families and faculty to adopt 15 Arc families. Gifts included bikes, food baskets, electronics, clothing, and even a computer! Pictured from left to right are Belhaven students Mackenzie McCune, Abigail McLaughlin and Jennifer Eisenberg. Thank you to everyone who generously donated to this year's Holiday Partners program.



Deborah Davies, center, received the Humanitarian Award from the American Conference on Diversity in December for her efforts to create an inclusive community. Dr. Juanita High, member of the Atlantic County Chapter Board and a retired Stockton administrator, presented Davies with her award. The American Conference on Diversity educates and empowers leaders and promotes inclusion in schools, workplaces, community services, businesses and communities.



Congratulations to Arc service recipient Alexandra Morton, left, for receiving the 2007 Donald Sykes award in October. The Donald Sykes award recognizes individuals with disabilities who have attained significant personal achievements and have also made a difference in the lives of others. Alex is a member of several civic organizations, Arc committees and clubs and plays an active role in advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. Pictured with Alex are Candice Scaffidi, center, and Jo Hudson.



As part of The Arc of Atlantic County's annual All Staff Day, more than 100 employees and service recipients volunteered at sixteen area sites to help give back to the community in October. Volunteer projects included outdoor cleanups, reading to school children, serving food to the homeless, visiting hospital patients, and many other activities. "The Arc's employees are always focused on how to make life better for people with developmental disabilities and their families. We are trying one more time and one more thing that might make a difference in our community," said Deborah Davies.

## The Arc's Prevention Program Receives National Award

A decade of effort and commitment by Brian Illencik was nationally recognized recently when The Arc of Atlantic County received the Peter Leibert Community Prevention Action Award from The Arc of the United States. The award is presented annually to a state or local chapter of The Arc for a program designed to reduce the incidence of intellectual disabilities or to promote wellness.

Brian is the Prevention Coordinator for The Arc of Atlantic County and has developed an array of materials and activities aimed at preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). These disorders are a completely preventable set of intellectual and developmental disabilities that are caused by drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Brian has presented programs to 8,000 area elementary, junior high and high school students, and created a high school level FASD prevention curriculum that was distributed statewide. He has distributed posters and countertop displays with prevention brochures to hundreds of area businesses, organizations and physicians offices. Over 12,000 adults in-

cluding teachers, medical and social services professionals, parents and other community members have received FASD prevention information through Brian's seminars and presentations.

As a member of the New Jersey Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders task force, Brian was instrumental in helping create the "Be in the kNOw" prevention campaign that includes billboards, countertop displays, brochures, posters and a public service announcement to run on cable television. The message was developed to let every woman know about the need to "Be in the kNOw...NO alcohol, NO smoking and NO drugs during pregnancy." Dr. Deborah Cohen, director of the office for Prevention of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities comments, "The Arc of Atlantic County has demonstrated its commitment to the prevention of developmental disabilities in many ways for many years. Brian Illencik has been a trailblazer in this area."



## Achieving real choices: Bert Hill Home-owner; full-time employee; world traveler

If you have visited the restaurants at Caesar's Atlantic City you may have run into Bert Hill. He is a porter at Caesar's and has been achieving real choices with the help of The Arc since 1985.

"I'm a happy guy, like always," says Bert Hill with a grin.

Bert has reason to smile. He celebrated a major milestone recently. He paid off his 30 year mortgage in 10 years--an achievement enviable by most standards, and especially significant for Bert who has intellectual and developmental disabilities. Bert has worked hard, lived simply and with the help and guidance of The Arc staff, has become a good steward of his money.

Bert came to The Arc at the age of 19. His mother Sandra was serving as secretary on The Arc's Board of Directors at the time and learned of an opening at the Fernwood Group Home. She asked if Bert would be eligible for it. He had spent 10 years at the Camp Hill School in Pennsylvania and was ready to transition back to community living. Bert got the slot and began his journey with The Arc.

Bert settled in very well and in a few years was able to move to the Concord Apartments where he had more independence. He began job training around this time and landed his first job with Roy Rogers which later became Burger King. After two years Bert accepted a porter's position with Caesar's Atlantic City and recently completed his 14th year of service there.

"I love it," Bert says with his usual enthusiasm. "They're always nice. I get good tips and I have a lot of friends there. I love my bosses."

Bert takes the bus to work everyday and often goes in early for a stroll on the boardwalk. "So I can relax," he says.

"Bert is just a wonderful person," says Victoria Negron, public areas supervisor at Caesars. "He is so friendly and outgoing. He motivates others. He remembers the date of everybody's birthday and their kids' birthdays."

Bert is in The Arc's Supportive Living program now. Through this program he is able to live quite independently. Bert was able to purchase his own condominium in 1997. He was one of the first Arc service recipients to do so and the first to pay off his mortgage.

Mark Henry, Bert's supportive living coordinator explains, "I help him with his finances, reconciling his bank accounts, communicating with the bank, ad-

ressing medical issues and making doctors appointments, grocery shopping, keeping in contact with family and really anything where he can use support."



Bert Hill, center, receives support from Arc staff members Kreg Scott, left, and Mark Henry.

This past year Bert had much of his condo updated and renovated. Mark helped him get estimates, line up contractors and see that all work was completed to his satisfaction.

"Mark Henry is something out of a dream," says Sandra. "He's like a son to me."

Bert's dad passed away unexpectedly this past year, but not before Bert had taken both his parents on vacation with him. In addition, he had had the foresight to purchase family burial crypts which relieved his mother of a major financial burden.

Bert has traveled widely including destinations in Florida, California, Alaska and Hawaii, and is planning a trip to the Mediterranean with his mother and two sisters later this year. Other activities he enjoys include, visiting the Cape May County Zoo, swimming, watching Nicole Kidman films and spending time with his friend and roommate Tom. He also participates in The Arc's Holiday Partners program and purchases gifts each year for a family in need.

Bert was the recipient of the Community Star Award in 2001. This award is presented by the New Jersey Association of Community Providers to recognize the contributions of people with developmental disabilities.

Sandra is very proud of Bert and his achievements and she is grateful for the peace of mind she has gained since he came to The Arc.

"The Arc is just a blessing to me," she explains. "Now I know Bert is able to maintain himself. That's where The Arc has brought him."

Bert is a shining example of what achieving real choices means at The Arc—having a say in where you live, learn, play and work.

"I love The Arc," says Bert. "Everybody's nice."