

Living Life to Its **Fullest**

The Arc of San Diego supports children and adults with disabilities to help them reach their fullest potential!



Investing in kids
page 3

Helping adults
page 4

Accepting volunteers
page 5

Employing people
page 6

Supporting Independence

How The Arc of San Diego helps clients live life to the fullest

BY ANNE STOKES



PHOTO BY CHARLIE NEUMAN

Every new parent worries: “Am I doing this right?” But resources can be especially hard to come by for parents of children with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This need helped found The Arc of San Diego.

In 1951, new mothers Dolly Clark and Diane Stice bonded over their newborn babies in a shared maternity ward room. Clark’s daughter Jenny was born with Down syndrome.

At that time, special education services were virtually nonexistent, and millions of children were excluded from public school systems. Many were even institutionalized. It wouldn’t be until 1975 that legislation was passed to guarantee children with physical and mental disabilities the right to an education.

Rather than wait, Stice decided to help. Using her position with the Ocean Beach Junior Woman’s Club, she helped create the Society for Exceptional Children, an organization that would evolve into The Arc of San Diego.

From its humble beginnings supporting children in the region, The Arc of San Diego has grown into a vast organization that provides resources and support for both children *and* adults who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. The nonprofit is able to offer tools these individuals need to not just survive, but to *thrive*.

“Our mission is to support and empower people with disabilities to achieve their life’s goals, whatever those life goals are,” says Anthony DeSalis, President and CEO. “We’re here as an agency to provide individuals with whatever level of support they need, with a focus on their growth and independence.”

Today, The Arc offers a wide spectrum of programs — what DeSalis calls a “one-stop-shop” for individuals, their families and caregivers — that provide a well-rounded support network for every aspect of a client’s life. Programs include:

- Early intervention services
- Adult day programs
- Employment services
- Residential services
- Community-based services

For nearly 70 years, The Arc of San Diego has evolved to provide clients with a comprehensive set of resources so clients can live as independently as possible and achieve life goals *they* set for *themselves*. DeSalis says

The Arc’s success is due in large part to the community’s support of its mission.

“We’ve changed so many attitudinal barriers,” DeSalis said. “As opposed to people seeing individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as simply needing charity support, they now see them as vital members of the community capable of providing a wide-range of opportunities within the community and performing a wide-range of tasks.”

Keep reading to see how The Arc of San Diego helps individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities live their lives to the fullest.

“Our mission is to support and empower people with disabilities to achieve their life’s goals.”

ANTHONY DESALIS
President and CEO, The Arc of San Diego



THE ARC’S IMPACT:

5 full-service locations

are located throughout San Diego County with programs also offered at other locations through various community organizations.

2,000+ children and adults

with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive services and support from The Arc of San Diego.

1,200 full- and part-time employees

work for The Arc, which is also one of the area’s *largest* employers of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Nearly \$6 million in income:

was earned by clients of The Arc in 2018 through its employment programs and services.

Ezekiel and Leilani would've started school far behind their peers if Aaron and Vanessa Yee hadn't sought help from The Arc of San Diego. Now, both children are thriving.
PHOTO BY CHARLIE NEUMAN

Back On Track

Children reach their full potential thanks to support from The Arc of San Diego

BY LILLIE APOSTOLOS



Vanessa Yee's first child, Ezekiel, was a little over 1 year old when she noticed he was having more difficulty speaking compared to other children his age. Her mother, a teacher, encouraged Yee and her husband, Aaron, to have Ezekiel assessed at one of the state-funded Parent Resource Centers located throughout California to identify if he had a disability.

Ezekiel was diagnosed with a speech delay and the Yees were directed to The Arc of San Diego for assistance. There, Ezekiel was enrolled in The Arc's Early Intervention Services, where the Yee family gained the support and services they needed to help Ezekiel catch up with his peers.

"One of the fears as a parent is that your kids are going to struggle in something whether it's education, speech, or behavior," says Yee. "But my son has done really well. We loved our teachers — they really helped with his development."

The Arc supports young children at a critical stage in their development through physical, cognitive, speech/language, music and art intervention. Trained professionals work directly with children at The Arc's sites and also supply supports for children to continue learning at home. For instance, The Arc's staff give children activities to complete at home, loan out toys, create calendar play sheets with fun things to do, and many more options to encourage growth.

"If we didn't offer this program and then the child showed up at kindergarten at age 5 — think of what strains it would

create for the public schools. We are giving families tools," says Early Intervention Services Program Director Becky Thaller. "It's helping the families through a rough spot and helping their child develop."

The Yee's daughter, Leilani, entered into The Arc's program when she was 16 months old. She spoke even fewer words at this age than her older brother Ezekiel. After receiving early intervention services from The Arc, she quickly caught up with her peers.

Yee says The Arc has given her family a sense of community and support that extends further than the program itself.

"Any time we have an issue or are stuck as parents, we text someone at The Arc who has helped us and they tell us to try different strategies," shares Yee "It's so important to have a support system."

Ezekiel participated in The Arc's program until he was 3 years old. Now almost 6, Ezekiel is in kindergarten and has fully caught up to his peers. Although he participated in an individualized education program at his school for a couple of years, Ezekiel now requires no additional guidance and is doing so well he has exceeded his teacher's expectations. Leilani, now 4, also doesn't need assistance at her nursery school. She progressed so steadily that she met developmental expectations from the district when assessed again at age 3.

Both children are currently excelling in school.

"It's so important to have a support system."

VANESSA YEE
Mother

3 WAYS TO SUPPORT KIDS

Get help

Option 1: Receive in-home visits from The Arc for one-on-one advice and care.

Option 2: Go to one of The Arc's centers for a classroom setting and assistance with social, motor and communication skills.

Option 3: Attend toddler group events in community spaces for other supplemental activities and socialization.

Give help

Option 1: Volunteer to work with children in a classroom at one of The Arc's centers.

Option 2: Donate items to The Arc's Early Intervention Services, such as toys or books.

Option 3: Fund grants for art and music therapy.

Ben Samuel is able to keep active and fit thanks to wheelchair accessible gym equipment and support from fitness staff at The Arc of San Diego, such as Erika Junge, certified recreation therapist.
PHOTO BY CHARLIE NEUMAN

Healthy Habits

How wellness programs keep individuals with disabilities active and healthy

BY ANNE STOKES



Despite the well-documented health benefits of exercise, nearly half of adults with disabilities report engaging in little to no physical activities, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This is often due to inaccessible facilities and lack of fitness professionals who have experience working with individuals with disabilities. But at The Arc's Our Place Wellness Center, people of all abilities can find affordable and accessible fitness and wellness programs.

Ben Samuel, who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, has been a member of Our Place for almost three years. He had access to occupational therapy through California Children's Services when he was younger, but once he aged out of the program he had to find new ways to keep fit. At Our Place, he lifts weights, takes yoga classes and uses wheelchair accessible fitness equipment.

"I like exercising and being on the move," he says. "It's kept up ... my drive to keep myself healthy since I have a disability. It's given me strength. It's helped out a lot."

According to Justin Umpierre, Director of Community Living Services, all of Our Place's programs and classes are adaptive to any type of disability. Just as importantly, the program is affordable: \$25 for Arc members and \$45 for non-members for a seven-week program.

"Most clients can't go to a gym because there are very few pieces of equipment that they can access," Umpierre says.

"It's given me strength, it's helped out a lot."

BEN SAMUEL
Client, The Arc of San Diego

"We provide personnel who are trained to work not only in the fitness field, but in providing support to people with disabilities. We also provide an environment that's welcoming for everyone to be a part of."

Our Place also provides people with the chance to socialize. Clients can express themselves through fitness and other therapeutic programs and make friends.

"It's a good opportunity to meet people ... and maintain friendships that you've made through the years," says Samuel, a classic rock fan who likes to participate in the music program when he's not working out. "It's a great opportunity to expand your social network."

Our Place also provides enrichment through the Personal and Leisure Services (PALS) program. Through local excursions and other activities supported by qualified staff and volunteers, clients learn social, personal safety and independent living skills.

"Our clients need opportunities to get out and explore the world, explore the city, their community and environment and make new friends," Umpierre says. "If they don't have them, they're at home, watching TV. There's so much more of the world that they can explore by being a part of these programs."

3 WAYS TO HELP WELLNESS

Get active

Option 1: Join an exercise program at The Arc's Our Place Wellness Center, no matter your fitness level.

Option 2: Learn how to cook healthy meals with a registered dietician or go on a Personal and Leisure Services (PALS) excursion.

Option 3: Visit www.arc-sd.com/ourplace to learn about programs and services that can benefit your unique needs!

Give support

Option 1: See what kind of equipment and materials The Arc needs at www.arc-sd.com/wish-list.

Option 2: Volunteer your time and expertise as an exercise guide or chaperone a Personal and Leisure Services (PALS) activity.

Option 3: Donate a one-time gift, become a member or name The Arc as a beneficiary in your will by visiting www.arc-sd.com/donate.

Bill Butkiewicz loves his job at Vons helping customers. His supervisor, Patee Cody, is grateful The Arc of San Diego placed him in her store.
PHOTO BY CHARLIE NEUMAN



Fulfillment Found

The Arc of San Diego's partnerships with local companies provide job opportunities for individuals with disabilities

BY ANNE STOKES

Bill Butkiewicz is a model employee. For the past 14 years, he has excelled at keeping customers happy, the store clean and shopping carts at the ready for shoppers at a Vons supermarket in San Diego County.

For its part, Vons makes him very happy too. Butkiewicz, who has a developmental disability, particularly enjoys when he gets the opportunity to work outside gathering carts and help customers with their groceries. He says he also enjoys receiving a regular paycheck. Butkiewicz lives at home with his parents. Before his job at Vons, Butkiewicz used to rely on his parents for everything, but now he can make decisions for himself.

"I go to the movies sometimes and I go to San Diego State games," he says of his financial freedom. "Football is over, now it's basketball."

Butkiewicz's supervisor, Vons Service Operations Manager Patee Cody, says he's also an asset to the store's team.

"He has a strong work ethic, he's on time, treats everyone the same and has a positive attitude. He's self motivated and he needs little or no direction," Cody says. "He goes above and beyond what he has to do. He always gives excellent customer service — he's always happy, customers love him and know him by name."

Butkiewicz was able to find his job through The Arc of San Diego. The Arc and the Vons chain have given many people with intellectual or developmental disabilities jobs they love thanks to a 20-year working partnership. This particular relationship, and others like it that The Arc maintains, benefit both employers and employees: Companies fill positions with

capable and reliable workers, and individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities find gainful and paid employment. Throughout the entirety of an individual's employment, The Arc provides support for both parties through job coaches who work one-on-one with employees to meet any training needs, address any potential issues and ensure they are a good fit.

"The Arc is there, not only for Bill but for management," Cody says. Though there has yet to be any issue, Cody notes that even if one were to arise, The Arc would provide support to manage and resolve any problems between employer and employee — alleviating any strain on Vons behalf.

Butkiewicz gets a great deal of satisfaction from his job. He says that it feels good to be able to help people all day and is very thankful for the help he's received from The Arc. He encourages other individuals with developmental disabilities who want to work to go through their employment services.

"If you have a disability like me, I know Arc can help you get a job," he says.

From an employer's standpoint, Cody says Vons' partnership with The Arc has been a win-win situation for everyone.

"Working with The Arc is very satisfying," she says.

"We work together to help individuals be self-sufficient and part of a team."

**"Working with
The Arc
is very satisfying."**

PATEE CODY
Service Operations Manager, Vons

3 WAYS TO HELP WITH JOBS

Get a job

Option 1: Enroll in The Arc's employment placement program for help with career goals, applications, interviews and more.

Option 2: Work a fixed amount of hours each week through the group-supported employment program in food service, landscaping, retail and more.

Option 3: Help businesses with their basic assembly and packaging needs at one of The Arc's production centers.

Hire for a job

Option 1: Be connected with reliable candidates who can perform repetitive tasks or fill positions with high-turnover rates. Job coaches can also be provided at no cost to employers.

Option 2: Contract with The Arc's Employment Services to meet your service or production needs, on- or off-site.

Option 3: Get more information on how to fill a position and visit www.arc-sd.com/community-employment-services or call 619-685-1175.

Vickie Lawrence finds her own sense of healing by lending her skills to The Arc of San Diego as a volunteer.
PHOTO BY CHARLIE NEUMAN

Reaping the Rewards

How volunteers at The Arc of San Diego gain from their involvement

BY LILLIE APOSTOLOS

When Vickie Lawrence moved from New York to California in 2012, she wanted to start volunteering. Lawrence was able to overcome major personal hurdles, move and start a new life thanks to community support, and she wanted to give back to her new community in the same way. She found that opportunity with The Arc of San Diego.

“[Volunteering feels] like giving thanks that I have been given the opportunity [to] give back to the community of San Diego with art. It makes me really happy and brings healing to me just to work with my peers and my community,” says Lawrence.

Lawrence is now a volunteer art teacher and board member with The Arc, and she also has her own nonprofit called Dancing Around the Oak Tree Art Studio, Inc. Her work with The Arc allows people with disabilities to express themselves and also promotes a better understanding of The Arc throughout the surrounding community by showcasing the talents and abilities that her students have to offer.

“It’s really rewarding, to treat everyone fair. We work on communication [and] how they are able to communicate with each other,” says Lawrence. “One of my goals is to have the students talk to me and talk to each other.”

The Arc of San Diego offers volunteers a number of ways to become involved with its services, and volunteers can join any of The Arc’s programs depending on their interest. For instance, those who want to teach life skills can become

involved with the day program’s activities. Volunteers who join residential services can strengthen clients’ social skills by helping them get to know their community and neighbors. Those well-versed in therapeutic fitness or art can lend their skills to yoga, fitness, dance, art and music therapy, or nutrition classes.

All volunteers are trained and mentored by The Arc so they are prepared for any tasks required during participation. According to Jennifer Bates Navarra, The Arc’s Vice President of Marketing and Development, this ensures everyone — volunteers as well as the clients they serve — feel supported throughout activities.

“Volunteers are also welcome and encouraged to participate in staff development trainings and events to make sure they are getting something substantial out of their volunteering experience,” says Navarra.

Volunteering can also have a huge impact on participants in The Arc’s program. For instance, clients’ motor and communication skills generally improve when working with volunteers, and thanks to certain classes and individualized attention The Arc has seen increases in clients’ physical range of motion.

Effects like these are what keep volunteers like Lawrence motivated.

“I learned that no matter which level [of] disability ... that I am able to communicate, through just smiling or saying, ‘hi,’” says Lawrence.

**“[Volunteering]
makes me really
happy and brings
healing to me.”**

VICKIE LAWRENCE
Volunteer art teacher,
The Arc of San Diego



BECOME A VOLUNTEER!

Volunteering at The Arc of San Diego is easy. It only takes FIVE easy steps!

**Step
1**

Apply online by visiting arc-sd.com/volunteer-forms or in person at The Arc’s main office.

**Step
2**

Go on an onsite tour to meet staff and make sure volunteering for The Arc is a good fit.

**Step
3**

Pass standard screening tests required to keep The Arc’s clients safe.

**Step
4**

Complete orientation and any onsite training with staff.

**Step
5**

Schedule a start date!

What We Do

BY ANNE STOKES

How The Arc provides a continuum of support that allows clients to live as independently as possible



Early Intervention Services

These services help integrate children into mainstream classrooms rather than separating them into special education classes when they reach school age and help:

- Families with children up to age 3 who have or are at risk for developmental delays — at no cost!
- Educate parents on how to interact with and teach their children
- Guide children through instruction from physical, speech, occupational and music therapy professionals



Employment Services

The Arc's Employment Services work with individuals to identify career goals and connect candidates with employers by offering:

- Job placement that includes employment preparation and onsite job coaching
- Employment opportunities that include training and job support in food service, landscaping, retail, janitorial industries and more
- Vocational training programs at one of The Arc's production centers in light assembly and product packaging work and food service



Adult Day Training Programs

These programs provide life skills training and support for post-high school adults including:

- Money management
- Computer literacy
- Communication and social skills
- Specialty courses in American Sign Language, bilingual instruction and more
- Assistance with enrollment in college, adult education and trade school programs
- Essential life skills
- Self-advocacy skills
- Self-help skills



Residential Services

The Arc staffs 10 residential homes, allowing individuals to safely live as independently as they can. Choice is encouraged and privacy is honored. Professionally trained staff includes:

- 24-hour onsite staff
- 24-hour on-call medical professionals
- Physical, occupational and speech therapists
- Mental health professionals



Community Living Services

Individuals with intellectual disabilities can live in their own communities with the right support and life skill instruction, such as:

- Assistance with living in their own home including meal preparation, money management, and accessing community resources
- Health and wellness resources like the Our Place Wellness Center, which provides services such as nutrition classes, adaptive fitness programs and equipment
- Opportunities to participate in recreational and leisure activities, such as community events, dances, dinner or attending movies
- Respite care available so caregivers and family can have support in caring for individuals with disabilities



INVEST IN THE ARC: IT MAKES GOOD SENSE!

Investing in and supporting organizations like The Arc benefits more than just individuals with disabilities and their families. It benefits the whole community!



Early intervention services

can integrate young children into mainstream classrooms rather than into segregated special education programs or expensive state-run institutions.



Employment programs

help many people transition from needing government assistance to becoming taxpayers, decreasing spending for entitlement programs.



Nearly \$6 million

was earned by clients employed through one of The Arc's programs in 2018, much of which went back into the local economy.



Empower YOUR Community

The Arc of San Diego supports people with disabilities through the right assistance and resources, but it needs your help to continue doing so. To keep providing crucial programs and a unique continuum of care, The Arc needs everyone to get involved and create a more inclusive community. From donating to volunteering, there's so much that can be done by reaching out and supporting The Arc!

GET INVOLVED TODAY

Client

Seeking services and support? Visit arc-sd.com/seeking-services.

Volunteer

Have unique talents or skills to share? Go to arc-sd.com/volunteer and click "Apply Here!"

Donor

Able to lend monetary support? Learn more and donate to The Arc at arc-sd.com/support.

Employer

Have needs to fill at your business? Get information at arc-sd.com/business-services.



The Arc of San Diego

3030 Market Street
San Diego, CA 92102
619-685-1175
www.arc-sd.com



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VISIT THE ARC TODAY!

Services Offered Countywide



Adult Day Training Programs



Employment Services



Early Intervention Services

Arc North County



1336 Rancheros Drive, Ste. 100
San Marcos, CA 92069
(760) 740-6800

East County Training Center



1374 E Lexington Avenue
El Cajon, CA 92019
(619) 444-9417

John Towers



1855 John Towers Avenue
El Cajon, CA 92020
(619) 448-2415

North Shores Vocational Center



9575 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 715-3780

Sulpizio Family Center



Administration Headquarters
3030 Market Street
San Diego, CA 92102
(619) 685-1175

The Sol and Ruth Gerber Family Center



1280 Nolan Avenue
Chula Vista, CA 91911
(619) 427-7524

More programs and services offered at additional locations countywide, visit www.arc-sd.com for more information.

Social Media:

www.facebook.com/TheArcSanDiego
 @TheArcSanDiego
 @TheArcSanDiego
 www.youtube.com/user/arcsandiego