

The Arc of Mecklenburg County is dedicated to working with individuals with cognitive and intellectual impairments. We promote dignity, inclusion and choice for individuals and their families through advocacy, education, and support services.

We are on the Web! Check us out at
www.arcmeck.org



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Please keep us updated with your address changes.

The Arc Voice

Creating Opportunities within our Community for People with Cognitive Impairments and their Families to Experience more Meaningful and Satisfying Lives

The Arc & The United Way

*From the
Executive
Director,

Lauren

Mullis*

I am sure that many of you have been reading the papers and hearing the news reports regarding the compensation and benefits package for Gloria Pace King, the President of The United Way of Central Carolinas. I am writing you today to talk with you about the negative implications this has for The Arc of Mecklenburg.

You may or may not know that The Arc relies heavily on United Way dollars to make our programs come to life. We have historically been dependent upon this funding to run the organization.

Currently, The Arc is at risk of having our funding cut by The United Way if the United Way has a poor fundraising campaign. This will not affect us immediately but will affect us one year from now.

I understand that many of you may feel anger towards the United Way for the mistakes they have made. I myself am nervous about what this will mean for us. I honestly wish this hadn't of happened this way. But it did. And I cannot change it. So we need to come together and let people know how this negative publicity is going to hurt our community.

Some of the bigger United Way agencies may be okay. Unfortunately, we are not one of the bigger agencies. Many people in fact do not even know who we are. It will be a similar situation for agencies such as the Arthritis Patient Services, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Centers, Love Inc., Mental Health Association of Central Carolinas, and two other chapters of The Arc (Union & Cabarrus) among others.

It all comes down to the fact that we will all be forced into serving fewer people regardless of the fact that they all have real and immediate needs.

People have been asking me, "Why give to the United Way?" I can provide one perspective – from a place where United Way dollars go. If you are a current United Way donor then you are aware of the thousands of neighbors who suffer through no fault of their own --- when a child dies, when mental illness strikes, when unexpected layoffs occur or when a child is born with a developmental disability, our United Way agencies are there for them.

Last year, The Arc of Mecklenburg County received \$229,774.45 from the United Way (not including United Way designations) to fulfill our mission of creating opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. Last year we served over 3,000 individuals and families through our education workshops, case by case advocacy and support services.

Story Continues on Page 5

Announcements

Advertise With Us!!!

- We have now begun to advertise in our exclusive Resource Guide. Our Resource Guide is a great tool for individuals and families alike, providing them with a comprehensive directory of supports and services for mental health, substance abuse, and developmental disability programs in the Charlotte, Mecklenburg region. Advertising in our Resource Guide means reaching out to new residents or people moving to the area, showing the community that you actively support local nonprofit agencies, and increasing your organization's presence in the community. The Arc of Mecklenburg County has been a part of the Charlotte, Mecklenburg community for 55 years, and is well respected within the disability community. We have a wide variety of advertising options available at great prices, plus it's tax deductible! For more information and prices about advertising please call Meika at 704-332-4535 ext. 104 or email her at meika@arcmeck.org.



CHARTING A COURSE

- The Arc of North Carolina's Annual Convention will be held September 26 & 27th in Wilmington at the Wilmington Hilton Riverside Hotel. Members of the Arc are welcome to join other "Arcies" from across the state. Please visit www.arcnc.org for more information or call our office at 704-332-4535. Hope to see you there!

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Arc Angel

Awards Dinner

The Arc Angel Awards Dinner was a great success and everyone who attended enjoyed a tasty spread of food, a heart-felt awards presentation, the induction of new board members, and the opportunity to socialize and meet our clients and members. We were all entertained with the emcee skills of Larry Sprinkle and appreciate his support of our mission and his involvement with our agency. We had a great time celebrating 55 years of Arc history and recognizing the special people in our community who diligently work to serve people with disabilities.

We would like to sincerely thank our sponsors for supporting our agency:

Presbyterian Hemby Hospital

Hinrichs Flanagan Financial

St. Matthew Catholic Church

A Special Needs Plan

Developmental Disabilities Resources Inc.

We would also like to thank Suarez Bakery for donating the delicious chocolate cake that was such a hit. And last but not least we have a big **THANK YOU** to those who donated at the event. We truly appreciate your contribution to our agency, which helps us to better serve children and adults with disabilities and their families. Support from our community is essential to our ability to serve the developmental disability community, so thank you all for making this evening so special!

Aktion Club's of Mecklenburg County



The 4th annual Disability Awareness Night at the Charlotte Knights Stadium was a success! Aktion Clubbers came out to watch the baseball game while having fun socializing with their fellow members. Everyone received free Charlotte Knights baseball caps at the game.

The Arc of Mecklenburg County would like to thank Ryan Platt of Hinrichs Flanagan Financial for supplying tickets to whomever wanted to take part of the Disability Awareness Night. This event is growing yearly with over 800 tickets being distributed to individuals with disabilities and their families and friends.

The 3rd Annual Aktion Club Convention for the Kiwanis Carolinas District will be held September 12-14 at the Summit Center at Haw River State Park near Greensboro, NC. The cost is \$75.00 per person to attend and meals are included. For more information contact Lauren Mullis or Steve McIlwain at 704-332-4535



The Arc's Executive Director is an Award Recipient!

At the Disability Awareness Night Game, Lauren Mullis, Executive Director of The Arc of Mecklenburg was awarded the Exceptional Parent Magazine Maxwell J Schleifer Distinguished Service Award for her work in the disability community. The award is sponsored by Exceptional Parent Magazine & Mass Mutual.

- August 8—Aktion Club South Mecklenburg Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at Central United Methodist Church. Special Guest Speaker, Amy Riss will be on hand for a sign language presentation.
- August 29—Aktion Club Lake Norman Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at the Boy Scouts Cabin on the grounds of Mt. Zion Church in Huntersville
- September 12—Aktion Club South Mecklenburg Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at Central United Methodist Church—VOTING 101
- September 26—Aktion Club Lake Norman Regular Meeting 7:00 pm at the Boy Scouts Cabin on the grounds of Mt. Zion Church in Huntersville—VOTING 101

At The Arc Angels Awards Dinner, the Membership approved to induct five new members to our Board of Directors. Please welcome the following NEW Arc Board Members:

Lisa Brown

Jeremiah Harris

Tommy Lopez

Avi Williams

Shamika Williams

We Are...

- We are a well-established network that connects families and people with developmental disabilities to community resources.
 - We create awareness of developmental disabilities.
- We lobby legislators to ensure all the needs of people with developmental disabilities are met. (i.e. education, housing, services and funding)
 - We help people with developmental disabilities access services and the supports they need.
 - We encourage personal empowerment and self-advocacy.
- We educate the community about receiving, embracing, and engaging people with developmental disabilities in all facets of the community

Membership Application

Renew Your Membership Today!

Sign up for:	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Advocate	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$30
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate/Sponsor	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Arc Friend	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> President's Club	\$1000

Total: _____

Method of Payment	Name _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check	Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard	_____
	Phone _____
Credit Card # _____	Exp. date _____
Signature _____	



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Notification
Your Membership Goes a LONG way to help The Arc of Mecklenburg help those with disabilities and their families! Please become a member today!
It's TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!

Community Education Update

ASMC & Metro School Partnership

ASMC successfully partnered with Metro School to provide an After School Program for the 2007-2008 school year. We are pleased to announce that we will continue operating the program for the 2008-2009 school year.

ASMC is a non-profit agency that has 29 years of experience serving individuals with autism and other disabilities. ASMC provides a wide range of community residential and periodic services. We support the belief that people with disabilities have the right to live and work in the most normal, least restrictive setting as is consistent with their abilities and that they should be afforded the same dignity and rights as all other citizens.

The ASMC After School Program is a safe, licensed program that is both therapeutic and recreational in nature. Working closely with staff, the students pursue program goals by transitioning between a variety of skills centers, which include reading, handwriting, puzzles, art, sorting, music and building. By working in closely supervised groups, the students learn socialization and independence skills. Every effort is taken to blend fun with function.

The After School Program is open to all Charlotte area children age five to twenty one. It operates from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday, and 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM on teacher workdays throughout the CMS school year. Services are not available on CMS Holidays or Vacations Days when the school is closed.

We accept individuals with CAP funding as well as those who wish to private pay. For those individuals who wish to pay privately, we have a sliding scale fee available. Individuals receiving CAP services are eligible for free transportation home at the end of the day.

If you would like more information, please contact Elyssa Henkel, Social Work Coordinator, at 704-392-9220 ext. 116.



New Recreational Programs being offered!

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Therapeutic Recreation Division has many different Programs starting in September 2008. Programs for adults ages 30-55 with disabilities they have Aerobix~4~Adults "Sports Time" a newly designed program for adults that want to get into shape while playing their favorite sport. Aerobix~4 ~Adults "Exercise Time" a newly designed program for adults that want to get into shape and have fun doing it. , and Artful Adults which is a newly designed program for adults that will stimulate the creative and untapped talent that each person possesses. Young Adult Day Program for adults ages 18-25 with disabilities is a wonderful community-based program that will enrich and teach skills that are essential for daily living as well incorporating community integration skills.

Please contact Karen Noel, LRT/CTRS at 704-432-0955 and 980-722-2171 for more information regarding these programs.

What to Expect when entering Kindergarten?

When?

Saturday, September 13, 2008

Time?

9:30am until 11:30am

Where?

Scottish Rite Building Library

4740 Randolph Road

Charlotte, NC 28211

This workshop will be discussing what to expect when entering into Kindergarten. Speakers have not been confirmed at this date.

Please contact Sabrina with questions or to RSVP 704-332-4535 ext. 103 or via email at sabrina@arcmeck.org

Don't let anger toward agency stop your giving

Posted on Sat, Jul. 19, 2008

Mary C. Curtis: mcurtis@charlotteobserver.com

It's human nature. You get mad and you want to make a point. So when the United Way of Central Carolinas comes calling this year, you'll think twice about giving. Maybe you'll even skip it. That will show them.

But you won't be punishing an organization. You will be hurting the 98 local health and human service agencies and more than 200 programs the organization serves.

You might be affecting one of the joys of Shonte Chatman's life. On Wednesday morning, the 30-year-old Charlottean wasn't concerned with whether donations to the United Way might drop off because of controversy over its president's compensation package. There is no way to know the impact of Gloria Pace King's \$365,000 salary, the \$822,000 contribution to her retirement plan and the clumsy way local organization officials have handled the situation.

Chatman – a big smile on her face – was busy decorating a card she was making to greet deaf and hearing-impaired pre-schoolers when the school year begins. “Welcome back,” she wrote on the front. Then, she chose stickers – a book, a star, a ribbon, an apple and a little girl – and arranged them perfectly.

“They'll love it!” Chatman said. And the program that helps Chatman owes a lot to United Way.

Chatman – who is developmentally disabled – is vice president of the Aktion Club, which meets every other Wednesday at the Nevins Center off Statesville Road. It's one of three in the area sponsored by the Kiwanis (why action is spelled with a K) and the Arc of Mecklenburg County, a United Way agency.

Chatman lives with her aunt in Charlotte and enjoys her time at Aktion Club. She is a charter member, there when the club was organized last August.

The club – for adults with disabilities – fits the mission of Arc, which supports people with cognitive impairments. Members of the club have assembled care packages and written letters to those in the military, organized canned food drives and planted flowers outside the Nevins Center. This is what Lauren Mullis – Arc of Mecklenburg executive director – wants people to think about when they hear the words United Way.

Chatman and fellow club members are out in the community, said Mullis, learning and volunteering. The money United Way provides enables them to “pay it forward.”

This week, Aktion Club members learned about American Sign Language from Amy Riss, who teaches the 3-, 4- and 5-year-old deaf and hearing-impaired children who will receive the cards. Riss was surprised by the Aktion Club turnout – about 25 – and that so many already knew how to sign a few words and phrases: an undulating hand means fish, a flick of imaginary whiskers, cat. The class came to a halt so everyone could learn “I love you.”

Riss, 25, says her students will, as Chatman predicts, love the cards.

Mullis, 28, looks forward to Wednesday mornings, “more than anyone can understand,” she said, because she's guaranteed to have a good day when it starts with Aktion Club. “Everyone's so happy and loving. We get to talk and hug.”

Mullis' message to the community: “We're all very nervous. We may not like what's happened, or the way it's happened. But I stand by the United Way because they've stood by us.”

She hopes people realize the complexity of what can happen when donations are lowered, and what it will mean to Aktion Club vice president Shonte Chatman and the community she serves.

2008 Arc Angel Award Winners

Distinguished Services Award: Christopher White of Lifespan

Direct Care Provider of the Year: Residential & Support Services

Business Partner of the Year: Wendy's

Legislator of the Year: Representative Beverly Earle

Teacher of the Year: Kay Miller, CPCC

Advocate of the Year: Curtis Overcash

Parent of the Year: Jeff Katz

Volunteer of the Year: Danny Williams

South Mecklenburg Aktion Club Member of the Year: Zandria White

Lake Norman Aktion Club Member of the Year: Chris Brown

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Aktion Club Member of the Year: James Allen

Kiwanian Volunteer of the Year: Pam Chaplin

Regina Howard Independence Award: Jeff & Corilee Mauldin

Arc Board Member of the Year: Victor Hart

Arc Angel of the Year: Sara-Marie Miller

*Arc
Angel*



Continued from Front Page...

If we had not received these funds from the United Way we would have two choices: 1) serve less people or, 2) hire more fundraising staff. In both of these cases our expenses would increase and our services would be negatively affected. As executive director of The Arc of Mecklenburg County I don't like either option.

Imagine if all 98 United Way agencies had to hire more fundraising staff or serve less people to account for the loss of United Way support. Imagine if we all came to the doors of thousands of companies across our community individually to seek their support. Which of the agencies would get in? How much money would the agencies have to spend to seek grants to replace these funds? Would the “popular” causes win at the expense of lesser known agencies that may provide “under the radar” services such as ours? We would quickly see much more being spent on overhead in our community than the salary and benefits of one individual.

The management of The Arc of Mecklenburg cannot speak on behalf of the United Way board or executive committee. We respect the personal choices that people make in the method that they give, and who receives the funds. We can provide an accurate picture of the funding we receive and the services we provide every day. And I am committed to do that – earning and keeping your trust as we do important work in our community.

We have all worked very hard to get The Arc of Mecklenburg County where we are today. I have no intentions of going backwards. We need to pull together and work on getting through this rough patch in a unified way. Please tell anyone you can about how this situation will negatively affect the United Way agencies that rely on their financial support.

If any of you have further questions or comments I invite you to call me at 704-332-4535 x 102. I would be glad to sit down with you and go over anything that may be concerning you.