



SPRING NEWSLETTER

The pandemic did not stop The Arc of King County, we have been busier than ever. Check out some of the great things we have been doing inside!

APRIL 2021

SAVE THE DATE

Stayed Tuned for Details

2ND ANNUAL TALENT SHOW



The Arc's Got Talent

Online Fundraiser and Talent Show
Saturday, October 2, 2021
5:00 - 6:30 PM



ROBIN TATSUDA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WITH FRANKIE HOGAL II, OUR WINNER OF THE 2020 THE ARC'S GOT TALENT SHOW



The person with a disability prefers not to have his name listed or to have his photograph taken so please enjoy a collage of his favorite things.



SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

WRITTEN BY JEAN - MOTHER

The Arc of King County has supported our son with a disability, and our family, for more than five years. This support was particularly vital during the long four years it took to get appropriate housing for him. This process including needing to re-apply to qualify for Developmental Disabilities Administration, and a two and a half year wait for Supported Living. For four years, our family dealt with issues including: challenges at home, legal system involvement,

neighborhood upset, and the real possibility of youth homelessness. All of these factors combined to create a high level of family stress.

My family and I consistently received compassionate, professional support to help us navigate the issues and systems. We received accurate technical information, solid referrals, and extensive, personalized attention and advocacy from Executive Director, Robin Tatsuda, and other staff at The Arc of King County.

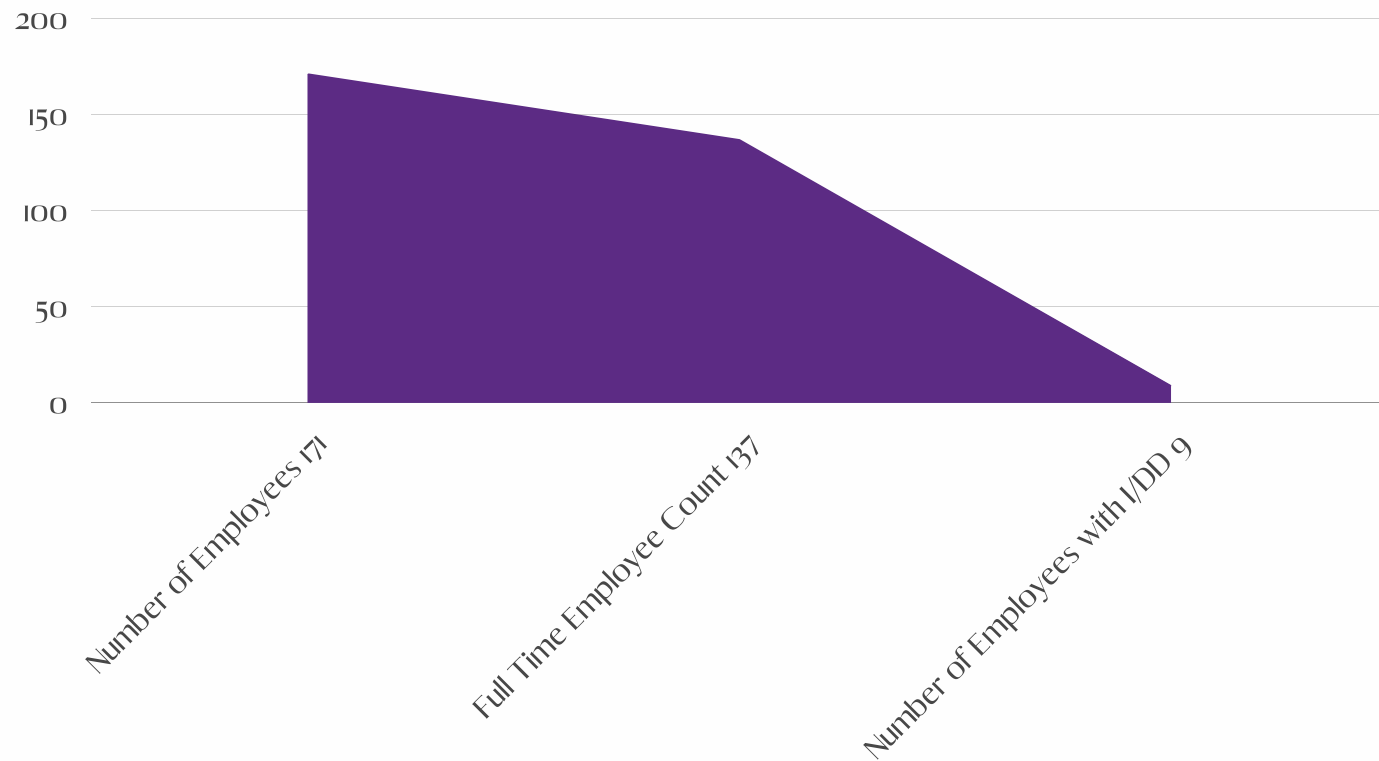
We benefited from the parent support of the online community groups, facilitated by Rachel Nemhauser, and the support of Homelessness Prevention Coordinator, Thomas Bethea.

My abilities to advocate and support our family and other families were increased by my participation in The Arc of King County's excellent workshops and training programs, including Advocacy training, and the IEP Parent Partner Program.

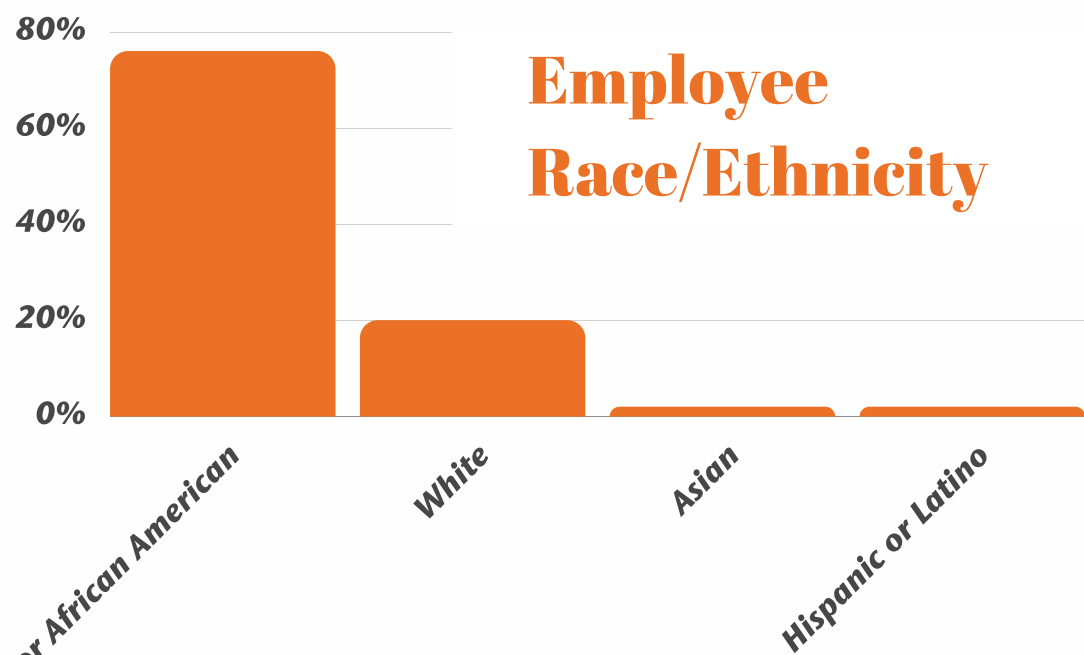
I continue to actively serve as both a Helping Parent, and as an IEP Parent Partner, after completion of required training. I have met and communicated with state legislators consistently, and provided parent input during legislator meetings which included Robin Tatsuda and Ramona Hattendorf.

I can not overstate the critical role that The Arc of King County played in our ability to persevere and secure needed services for our son and stability for our family.

Practicing Inclusion: Our Staff Team



- Employee Turn-Over Rate: 29.76 %
- Average Employee Longevity: 2.75 Years
- Current Longest Serving Employee: 30 Years



Zoom has kept us together!

Employee Anniversary Milestones

30 Years

Peter Brulla - Direct Support Professional

25 Years

Barbara Schrader - Direct Support Professional

5 Years

Tami Wolff - Human Resources Director

Vernon 'Robb' Jones - Supported Living Manager

Francis Tierney - Healthy Relationships Manager

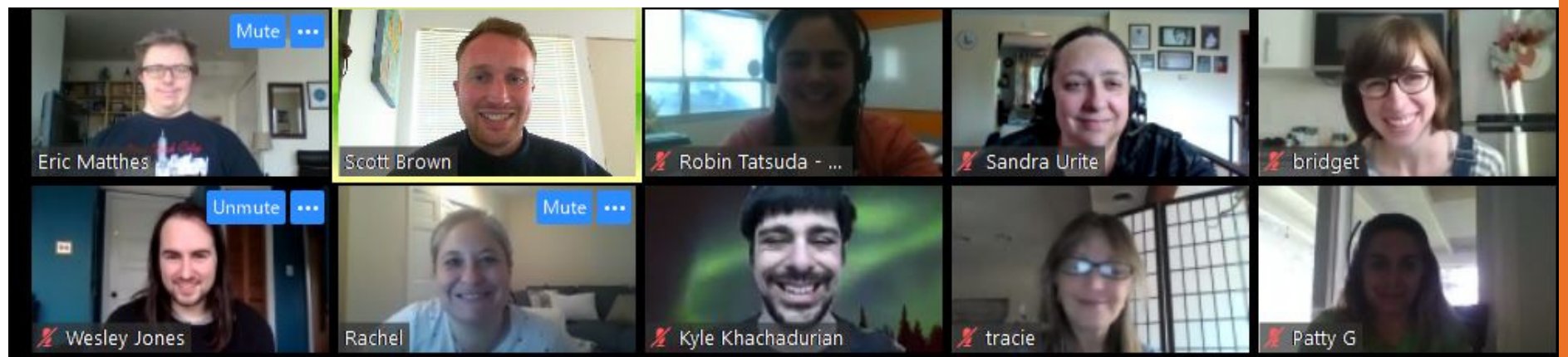
Ramona Hattendorf - Advocacy Director

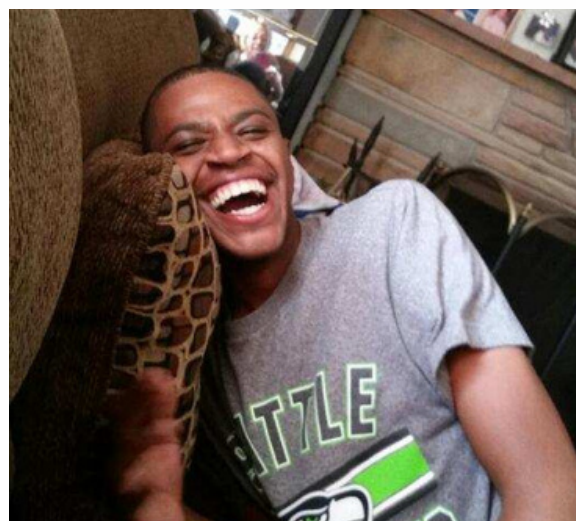
Fabou Bayo - Direct Support Professional

Isatou Mbye - Direct Support Professional

Jeffrey Runcorn - Direct Support Professional

Fabou Touray - Direct Support Professional





A SMILE THAT WILL IGNITE A ROOM

WRITTEN BY VIVIAN ARMSTRONG -
FRANKIE'S MOTHER

My son, Frankie, was diagnosed with developmental delays at the age of eight months, and I was told he would never talk or be able to walk. But in the back of my mind, I wasn't accepting what they were telling me. I didn't know what to do, or where to turn for help because I felt I was alone in this. I was overwhelmed. I was tired of going to so many doctors and not getting direct answers.

I remember talking to a friend about how Frankie was doing, and telling her that we needed a speech therapist and a physical therapist to help with Frankie's motor skills.

I knew I needed to find help for him but I was so hesitant to reach out. Finally after fretting over it a week I finally reached out for help. I spoke to someone really kind who helped me find the services Frankie

"My son, Frankie, was diagnosed with developmental delays at the age of eight months, and I was told he would never talk or be able to walk. Never something a parent wants to hear." - Vivian

needed. I had such mixed feelings when I got that first appointment. I was scared because I thought that they would not be able to help him, but I was also happy because at least I had some direction and a place to go. But the good news was, they were able to help us.

I met a lot of people along the way that helped Frankie and I through his journey.

Part of that journey was learning about different resources. I am in tears right now as I write this because I feel in my heart that if I had not

met people along the way to help us/him, Frankie would not be where he is today.

Prior to finding resources for him, I felt hopeless. Then Frankie learned how to crawl, then he learned to walk with braces, and he finally began to walk without them. Doctors had said he would never walk, Frankie proved them wrong. His milestones did not stop there, he learned to interact with other children, learned to play games, arts and crafts and learned songs.

Now Frankie is 30 years old, and has grown up



to be a loving, happy, helpful, respectful, kind, generous young man who is always smiling and sees no wrong in anyone.

He is a part of the Special Olympic team and made it to the 2018 Special Olympics in



Seattle. He ran the 50m dash, winning a Gold medal, and the Ball Throw, winning Silver. I was thrilled by his accomplishments, but he did not care about the medals; he just loved the running. For a child that was never supposed to walk, to then win a Gold

medal in the 50 yard dash, I am so proud of how hard my son has worked, and how far he has come.

I met a lot of people along the way that helped Frankie and I through his journey. Last year we learned about

The Arc's Got Talent Show Fundraiser and Frankie became the first champion. I loved learning about the different programs they offer and it was fun for Frankie and I to raise funds. The Arc is another organization that gives hope to people with I/DD, their families and their friends.

Frankie will be competing again in The Arc's Got Talent Show and Fundraiser coming up on October 2nd.



Vivian's experience is not unique. Having a child with a disability can feel very isolating. Connect with our Parent-to-Parent program to find resources and community from other families like yours. Check out our Parent-to-Parent page on our website: arcofkingcounty.org



"Prior to finding resources for him, I felt hopeless." - Vivian



CENTER - SHADRACK MWANGI -
2020 DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL

SUPPORTED LIVING

2020

Direct Support Professional

There were so many DSPs who went above and beyond during 2020, selflessly and endlessly supporting participants, however Shadrack Mwangi clearly and heroically was awarded DSP of the Year. Shadrack not only lived with and provided around-the-clock care a participant for over 14 days while they battled COVID-19, but he also has been a transformative advocate for the participants he supports creatively getting them to engage with the world and do the things they love despite the pandemic. He is a truly amazing staff, and we are grateful that he is part of our community.



FRANK - SUPPORTED LIVING
PARTICIPANT WITH STAFF

MEET OUR PARTICIPANTS

He LOVES spaghetti!

Frank joined The Arc of King County's Supported Living Program in early 2016. Prior to joining us, he was near death and was in a hospice program. We stepped in, secured him an accessible apartment, supplied him with assistive equipment, and provided him with double staff around the clock. The Arc of King County's focus on each participant's likes and desires has proven success; Frank graduated from hospice and is working on his health daily. He is physical and occupational therapy, he is slowly reducing his pain meds, and best of all, Frank has a positive outlook on life.



SUCCESSFUL VACCINATION CLINIC

Reemerging Into the Community

Prior to the vaccination clinics held at The Arc of King County, seven supported living participants received positive COVID diagnoses, since vaccinations have started no participants have tested positive or have been symptomatic.

With 90% of Supported Living Participants vaccinated as of March 12, 2021, and moving into Phase III in the state of Washington, Supported Living participants are ready to get back to being active members of their communities.

In addition to our Supported Living Participants receiving the vaccination, the majority of The Arc's staff were also vaccinated.

We are now planning community vaccination clinics. Stay tuned for details.



SPIRIT CLUB

Online & Free for Everyone

The Arc of King County and Spirit Club have partnered up to help people in isolation stay active. Join us every Friday at 2:00 PM for a FREE virtual exercise class for people of all abilities.

The classes have multiple trainers with different workouts each week. Worried about equipment? No equipment needed. A fantastic workout for the entire family. Pictured above is a photo of Paul, a weekly online participant.

Contact Tracie Warren for details:
twarren@arcofkingcounty.org

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE PROGRAM

50 Participants

The Arc of King County offers Representative Payee services to King County residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities receiving Social Security Benefits (SSA/SSI).

The Arc of King County manages Social Security benefits and/or wages, and acts on the participant's behalf as the recipient of monthly entitlement. It is the duty of the agency to use these benefits for participant's best interest.

Pictured below is Harold, a long time participant.



The Arc of King County was formed in 1936 when a group of parents raising children with intellectual and developmental disabilities came together to advocate for their children's rights to live, learn, work and play in the community.

Nothing About US Without US!

WE NEED TRANSPORTATION!

40 Homes to Stock

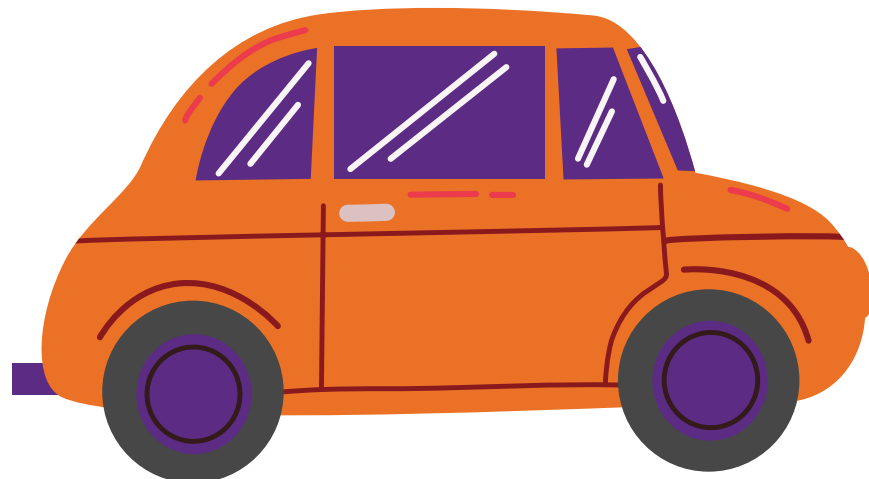
The Arc of King County serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our Supported Living program participants live across 40 different homes throughout King County. The Arc serves as the main source of transportation for our participants; we take folks to their doctor appointment, grocery shopping, and recreational activities, and more.

You can help!

Do you have a vehicle that you are no longer using and want to donate? Are you about to purchase a new vehicle and looking to donate your current vehicle? You can donate and receive a tax deduction.

We also have means for you to donate vehicles that are no longer usable.

Contact Marci today to make arrangements:
masher@arcokingcounty.org



Always in our hearts

**ANTHONY
ZENITH
HALL**

1963-2021

**ADVOCATE,
COMMUNITY MEMBER,
FRIEND**

**Scan here for a
quick way to
donate to The Arc
of King County!**



SCAN ME



SENSORY ROOM

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport - Welcoming ALL neurodiverse passengers

The Port of Seattle has just opened a new Sensory Room for travelers with autism and sensory processing disorders, located on the train level of the A Gates near the elevators. The room has a northwest theme, bringing to mind the starry skies and natural beauty of the water and mountains of the region. The room includes a blue color which evokes a sense of calm, tranquility, serenity and peace. The lighting can be dimmed by user which allows the starry sky to come into view upon dimming. Rocks in the room can be moved for calming result. The room includes comfortable and noise-lessening nooks which creates room for more than one person. The space also includes a deep blue rocking chair which creates a calming effect. Stacia Irons, a board member for The Arc of King County and leader of The Arc's Wings for Autism Program, has been an active agent in bringing inclusion to the airport and within air travel!

"Seven years ago, I began working with the Port of Seattle, Alaska Airlines and TSA on the Wings for Autism® program at the airport. Airports and flying are two of the biggest obstacles to travel for people with autism and sensory processing disorders. The chaotic and unpredictable nature of the airport; loud noises, visual stimulation and massive crowds can be overwhelming. The new Sensory Room will make the difference to travelers who become over-stimulated by the airport experience, and to their families. The space has been specially designed to provide a calming and relaxing environment; to allow time to re-center and de-stress before boarding a flight. This opportunity will make the airport truly accessible to all, and the impact it will have on our families is profound," Stacia Irons - Board Member

