

The ArcTM

Colorado

Strategic Roadmap

September 2019

Executive Summary

The Arc of Colorado has undertaken a strategic planning process for the 2020 – 2022 period involving staff, board, self-advocates, chapter leadership, and external stakeholders. Through this process, a refreshed strategic vision for the organization has emerged and is detailed in this Strategic Roadmap.

The organizational strategy of The Arc of Colorado is to continue to advocate for, and build the political power of, the intellectual and developmentally disabled (I/DD) community by:



1. **Amplifying the Voice** of individuals with I/DD, their families, and The Arc of Colorado by strengthening self-advocacy, emphasizing integration, and partnering to build awareness for those not connected in readily served areas, especially those who will bring greater diversity, equity, and inclusion to our efforts



2. **Focusing Our Legislative and Policy Efforts** on the highest impact efforts we have the capacity to support in the short and long-term



3. **Leveraging the Power of Our Chapters** to showcase best and emerging practices and keep our movement relevant



4. **Working in Collaboration** with other partners, pilots, and coalitions when we have clear goals and measurable outcomes for people with I/DD

Background

Over the last 65 years, The Arc of Colorado has grown from a small movement focused on access to services for children and adults who had been denied preschool, education, and employment opportunities to a strong, statewide grassroots network of 14 chapters directed by 3,500 members to provide opportunities for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families to advocate for the changes they need to reach their potential.

Building on past successes including those both legislative and community focused, The Arc of Colorado looks to amplify its focus on systemic change and strengthening the profile of the I/DD community.

The Arc of Colorado is a membership organization governed by a voluntary board of directors. Members are parents, family members, persons with disabilities, professionals, and interested citizens. It is part of a national organization, The Arc United States, that supports advocacy activities organized at the local, state, and national levels. Our constituents include member chapters, legislators, legislative staff, the Governor, the Governor's office, self-advocates, self-advocacy organizations, adults and children with I/DD and their families, The Arc of the United States, and partner organizations.

The Arc of Colorado has undertaken a strategic planning process facilitated by La Piana Consulting. The process included multiple meetings with La Piana and the Strategic Planning, Chapter Executive, and Board Executive Committees and one-on-one conversations with selected stakeholders and staff members. A list of themes and people interviewed can be found in Appendix A. In addition, worksheets and background materials were completed to advance thinking and provide references for the in-person board retreat.

The following document summarizes this work and the decisions made to support The Arc of Colorado's success for 2020 – 2022.

Mission

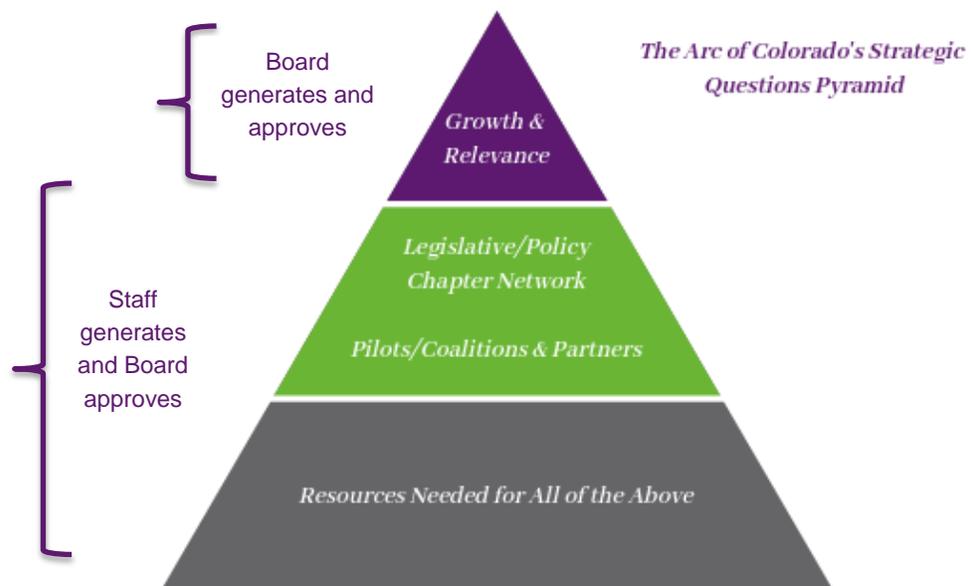
The Arc of Colorado provides leadership opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to achieve their goals by influencing public policy, promoting integration through public awareness and community engagement, showcasing best practices of the chapter network, and collaborating with national, state, and local organizations sharing the same values.

Values

The Arc of Colorado believes that all people have moral and civil rights providing them with inclusive and equitable opportunities to love, work, play, learn, and worship in communities where they choose to live. All people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have inherent value with individual strengths and abilities, are equal before the law, and must be treated with dignity and respect.

Big Questions

The issues facing The Arc of Colorado that needed to be resolved through this plan were determined during the initial interviews and meetings with stakeholders and the Strategic Planning Committee. They included the following, organized according to the La Piana Consulting Strategy Pyramid which groups them by organizational strategy, programmatic strategy, and operational strategy.



Through the initial discussions and interviews, the following big questions surfaced:

Organizational Strategy Questions:

1. What work should we **grow** to serve our constituents best?
2. How do we **stay relevant** as a movement in today's world?

Programmatic Strategy Questions:

3. How do we focus our **legislation and policy** work in a way that is sustainable, supportable and drives the most impact?
4. How do we get the most impact out of our **chapter network**?
5. Will The Arc of Colorado **add new chapters**?
6. How do we balance **pilots and coalitions** with our other work in a sustainable way?
7. How do we balance our work with **partners** with our other work in a sustainable way?

Operational Strategy Questions:

8. What **resources** are needed for any strategic changes we want to make?

In order to answer these questions, The Arc of Colorado undertook a full-day board retreat on August 10, 2019 to first understand the context in which it operates, including a review of its business model, competition, and trends in the environment.

Arc of Colorado - Identity Statement

In order to lay the groundwork for strategic planning, La Piana Consulting began by collecting information like the organization's current business model, trends impacting it.

Trends Analysis

In order for The Arc of Colorado to be truly sustainable and remain relevant, the organization needs to be responsive to its environment. The following trends were identified by staff and discussed at the August board retreat.

Social Trends

Young people with disabilities are less interested in the current self-advocacy model than young people have been in the past, including families today that have different expectations for their children than previous generations. Technology has made it easier to manage disabilities. There is a growing demand for advocacy and programs. Communities are becoming more diverse.

Economic Trends

More recently, the environment in which The Arc of Colorado works has experienced budget cuts for both state and federal departments and programs that affect individuals with I/DD and their families. Medicaid and Social Security Income budgets have also decreased, and limits have been added. The I/DD community is acutely interested in economic trends that affect employment, especially minimum wage, given the impact on caregivers and is concerned about the possibility of a recession. Additionally, the philanthropic community appears less interested in supporting I/DD programs. However, a recent Economic Impact Report demonstrated that the Arc Community generated \$2.3 billion for the Colorado economy.

Demographic Trends

People with I/DD are living longer and so are their caregivers. There is significant population growth in Colorado which is impacting demand for I/DD support. There is recognition that The Arc of Colorado and its chapters are mostly serving white and English-speaking families which raises the question of how to reach those community members who are not connected with The Arc of Colorado or its chapters despite being in areas served and demonstrating need.

Political Trends

I/DD is a bipartisan issue, and The Arc of Colorado is committed to working in a bipartisan manner. The state of Colorado has experienced shifts from right-leaning legislatures to left-leaning and these shifts will continue. Currently, there are concerns about divisiveness and gridlock. There are competing priorities and interests among disability groups. The Arc of Colorado must continue to work with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing and other executive branches despite concerns about capacity at the agency.

The complete trends worksheet is included as Appendix C.

Identity Statement

Based on the above and additional materials reviewed at the Board retreat, the following identity statement was crafted. An identity statement offers a snapshot of what an organization aspires to accomplish, why it exists, its place in the “market,” and its business model.

Mission	As a human rights organization, The Arc of Colorado provides leadership opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to achieve their goals by influencing public policy, promoting integration through public awareness and community engagement, showcasing best practices of the chapter network, and collaborating with national, state and local organizations sharing the same values.
Result / impact (vision)	The Arc of Colorado works toward the creation of a world where children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities have and enjoy equal rights and opportunities.
Whom we serve	To benefit adults and children with I/DD and their families, we work with legislators, legislative staff, Governor’s office, self-advocates, self-advocacy organizations
Where we work	Statewide on policy and legislation; rural areas not served by local chapters
What we do/ how we do this (programs)	Public policy including legislation and work with state agencies Lead/participate in national and statewide self-advocacy groups Trainings Film Festival, Wings for All, Policy Day Support including remote support, for families/children with I/DD in unserved areas
Our competitive advantages	Legislative Leadership/Reputation Collaborative Approach Self-Advocate Support, Constituent-Led, and Person-Centered Chapter Network Funding Structure Allows Independence Expertise at All Life Stages
How we are funded	By arc Thrift stores (87%) and some grant funds (11%)

Resources

In order to execute on the organizational and programmatic strategies discussed above, the following needed resources and budget implications have been identified:

Resource Needed
Intensive Advocacy Specialist (contract)
Policy Analyst
Budget for Action Items
Administrative Support
Grant Writer (contract)
Intern
Volunteers
Technology
List-serv (Advocacy)

In 2020 to 2022, The Arc of Colorado will advocate for, and build the political power of, the I/DD community by amplifying the voice of individuals with I/DD and their families, focusing on legislative and policy efforts, leveraging the power of its chapters, and by working in collaboration with partners, pilots, and coalitions.

Conclusion

The Arc of Colorado staff, board, and stakeholders have undertaken a thoughtful process to guide the organization in the 2020 – 2022 period. They have assessed The Arc of Colorado's unique strengths, market position, and trends. They identified and resolved eight key strategic questions, either through an action plan or a strategy screen for making decisions as opportunities or challenges arise. The strategic questions resolved included organizational, programmatic, and operational questions.

The organizational strategy of The Arc of Colorado is to continue to advocate for, and build the political power of, the intellectual and developmentally disabled (I/DD) community.

The Arc of Colorado will focus on four programmatic strategies to support the organizational strategy:



Amplifying the Voice of individuals with I/DD, their families, and The Arc of Colorado by strengthening self-advocacy, emphasizing integration, and partnering to build awareness for those not connected in readily served areas, especially those who will bring greater diversity, equity, and inclusion to our efforts

Focusing Legislative and Policy Efforts on the highest impact efforts we have the capacity to support in the short and long-term

Leveraging the Power of Our Chapters to showcase best and emerging practices and keep our movement relevant

Working in Collaboration with other partners, pilots, and coalitions when we have clear goals and measurable outcomes for people with I/DD

The Arc of Colorado exists to provide leadership opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Over the next three years, the organization will use this plan to guide its work, its decisions, and its ongoing efforts to discern how to best influence public policy, promote integration and community engagement, showcase chapter best practices, and collaborate with partners.



