



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

The Arc of Colorado



Email: thearcofco@thearcofco.org

Website: www.thearcofco.org

Tel: 303-864-9334

Address: 1580 N Logan St.

Ste 930 Denver, CO 80203



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The Arc of Colorado saw a very exciting and transitional year in 2022. We started the year off with an incredibly successful legislative session and ended the year in full force by hosting The Arc US's National Convention here in our own backyard. In between these two monumental events, we traveled the state, hosting resource fairs and trainings for the rural communities that we serve. We are very proud of the impact that we have had with our small but mighty team.

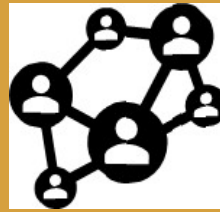
On a somber note, we said goodbye to our passionate and inspiring Executive Director, Christiano Sosa, who served The Arc of Colorado for five years. Christiano accepted a position at the Rose Community Foundation, so he continues to stay in touch and strongly supports the work we do. During his time at The Arc, Christiano implemented a strategic plan ensuring the focus of our mission stays on track and creates systemic impact, improving the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout the state. Jane and I were very fortunate to have been a part of Christiano's team, and we are grateful for his past leadership.

As part of the transition, I was granted the opportunity to act as Interim Executive Director for six months. As Interim Executive Director, I had the honor to learn from so many leaders, including our board members and representatives from the 14 local Arc chapters. I look forward to continuing our work alongside these amazing leaders.

And finally, we welcome Elizabeth Moran to The Arc of Colorado. She will take us on a new and exciting path with her experience and her non-profit leadership skills. Welcome, Elizabeth!

With Gratitude,
Jennifer Levin
Director of Public Policy

MISSION WORK STRATEGY



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.

Work: We influence public policy to ensure the necessary supports and services are in place for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities to have a common life. • We increase public awareness of the rights and needs of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. • We support and develop local chapters. • We collaborate with national, state, and local organizations sharing the same values.

Strategy: Amplifying the voice of individuals with IDD, 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 our 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 our Partners, pilots, and coalitions when we have clear goals and measurable outcomes for people with I/DD.



BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Committee:

Mitch Routon - President *

Tonya Kelly - Past President *^

Jennifer Harris - Vice President +

Lori Thom - Secretary *

Jill Accame - Treasurer **

At Large Members:

Faye Tate ^

Keith Larsen * **

Kelly Stahlman ~

Randi (Rand) Westfall

Carson Covey

Lindsey Mandolini

Key:

**Indicates a member of Governance Committee.*

*** Indicates a member of the Finance Committee.*

+ Indicates a member of the Nominating Committee.

^ Indicates a member of the bylaw Review Committee.

Chapter Representatives:

~ Indicates a member of the Calabrese Committee.

Ben Rhodes - ACL - Boulder ^~

Lynnelle Zackroff - The Arc of Adams County + ~*

Kent Olson – Advocacy Denver ^

Lynn Meyer - The Arc of Arapahoe, Douglas & Elbert Counties * ^

Oren Von Limbaugh - The Arc of Aurora

Danielle Coulter - The Arc of Central Mountains

Caryn Quinkert - The Arc of Jefferson, Clear Creek, and Gilpin Counties

Phil Beers - The Arc of Larimer County

Jeramy Casteel - The Arc Mesa + **

Jonathan Montez - The Arc of Pikes Peak Region

Maralina Schoenfelder - The Arc of Pueblo

Laura Chapman - The Arc of Southwest Colorado

Vincent Scott - The Arc of Weld County

Maureen (Reenie) Miles - The Arc of West Central Colorado ^ **

STAFF



Elizabeth A. Moran, JD, serves as Executive Director for Arc of Colorado. Elizabeth brings an extensive lived experience and professional background working in disability rights across the lifespan. Prior to joining the ArcCO team, Elizabeth served as Chief Counsel at the American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging, where she provided substantive support and expertise to the Commission with a focus on guardianship law, policy, practice, and reform at both the state and federal level, specifically in the areas of guardianship, supported decision-making, capacity issues, and abuse, neglect, and exploitation of individuals who have a broad range of disabilities impacting their ability to communicate, such as intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), traumatic brain injury, or who acquire dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or other disabilities associated with aging.

Earlier in her career, Elizabeth served as Deputy Director of the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council, Public Policy Coordinator for the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, and founded an organization called Midwest Advocacy for Disability Rights, where she served as its Director for several years. Elizabeth also served as Chair of the Missouri Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and more than ten years serving as adjunct professor at UMKC School of Law where she co-instructed the course *Leadership in Disability Studies: A Multi-disciplinary Approach*.

Elizabeth is a sibling of an individual who has an IDD diagnosis and is strong supporter of supported decision-making and community inclusion. She is an enthusiast of creative problem solving, particularly in promoting and protecting the human rights of individuals with IDD as they navigate legal systems and options for quality of life supports. She is most passionate about providing resources, support, leadership training and advocacy for and with individuals with IDD and their families as they seek information and understanding of the options and alternatives available to them in pursuing the most appropriate means of the long-term and decision-making supports necessary for individuals to live a truly integrated life. Elizabeth actively supports full inclusion and participation of all individuals impacted by IDD in their community and throughout their lifetimes.



Jennifer Levin, JD, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a major in political science and went on to the University of Alabama to earn her law degree. It was a natural transition for Jennifer to go from parent advocate for members in her community to an attorney with Disability Law Colorado, the state's protection, and advocacy system.

Jennifer served Disability Law Colorado as an Equal Justice Works Fellow and later moved into position of Education Team Leader. Jennifer has represented individuals in civil rights complaints against various agencies and businesses throughout Colorado. She has taken on legislative action, disability rights trainings, and investigations into allegations of abuse and neglect in state run facilities serving people with disabilities. Currently, in her position with The Arc of Colorado as the Director of Public Policy, Jennifer remains dedicated to working towards implementing public policy that will promote and protect the civil and human rights of people with disabilities throughout the state.



Jane Johnston joined The Arc of Colorado team coming onboard in February 2021. Jane has a passion for working with the community and has interned with the ACLU of Colorado and refugee and asylum seeker organizations locally here in Denver. Jane comes to us with a bachelor's degree of Social Work and with it a dedication to working for the IDD community. Working in the legal field for over 19 years, Jane offers her

organizational experience and managerial skills to further the work here at The Arc of Colorado.

2022 LEGISLATIVE RECAP



The 2022 Legislative Session ended on May 11, 2022. After two years of non-traditional Legislative Sessions due to the pandemic, this year felt much more normal as the General Assembly convened on January 12, 2022, and continued, uninterrupted, for the full 120 days.

One of the dominant issues was how to allocate over \$1 billion in federal funds that Colorado received in federal stimulus. These are onetime dollars that need to be spent over the next two or three years leading to bills that create new grant programs for various things including a major investment in expanding behavioral health services, housing, education, workforce, and diverting/redirecting people out of the criminal justice system.

Behavioral Health

2022 was an historic year for behavioral health (BH) legislation. In total, The Arc of Colorado tracked about 15 bills dealing with behavioral and mental health, including the bill that establishes the new Behavioral Health Administration and all the bills that came out of last year's interim behavioral health transformational task force, of which the Arc network of chapters and executives were a part. The BH bills allocated over \$450 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and were a direct result of the recommendations of the task force. Just a few of these BH bills are listed below.

The new **Behavioral Health Administration**, authorized by **HB21-1097** and made reality by **HB22-1278** overhauls how Colorado's mental and behavioral health (BH) systems deliver services, with engagement from behavioral health providers, advocates, and community leaders. It faced little resistance even with 33 added amendments including language amendments from The Arc of Colorado. The language amendments included the following: *and individuals with disabilities as defined in the Americans with disabilities act, irrespective of primary diagnosis, co-occurring conditions, or if they require assistance with activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living, as defined in title 12*. This language was drafted and included as amendments to ensure that people with disabilities are no longer refused services based on these conditions.

HB22-1214 Behavioral Health Crisis Response System – This bill requires crisis system facilities and programs, including crisis walk-in centers and mobile crisis programs, to meet minimum standards to provide mental health and substance use disorder services. The bill clarifies that crisis system facilities and programs shall provide behavioral health services

to individuals experiencing a substance use disorder crisis. Mobile crisis programs and crisis walk-in centers shall provide crisis services to any individual, including youth of any age.

HB22-1303 Increase Residential Behavioral Health Beds – The bill requires an increase in the number of residential behavioral health beds and requires licensing of the new provider type, mental health residential facilities. This bill grants \$29.8 million to the Department of Human Services to accomplish these requirements.

SB22-102 Transparency Out-of-home Placements Developmental Disabilities - This bill requires the state department of human services to promote additional rules relating to children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are in out-of-home placements. The additional rules include access to the interdisciplinary appeals review panel for the appeals process for children and youth who have been determined to be ineligible for the program of services for children who have been placed out of the home. The bill allows for additional members to the review panel.

SB22-181 Behavioral Health-care Workforce – This bill allocated \$72.2 million to the Behavioral Health Administration to collaborate with multiple agencies to create and implement a plan to improve the behavioral health care workforce, including funding for the Health Services Corps for student loan repayment, and funding to the state Community College System for job shadowing, internship, incentives, loan repayment,

Education

Improvements to education access and funding were also a high priority in 2022. The Arc of Colorado tracked and supported several education related bills this session. The concerns addressed ranged from higher education access for people with IDD to creating more supportive environments for students and addressing Special Education funding. Below are just a few of the bills we worked on and tracked.

HB22-1107 Inclusive Higher Education Opportunities - The bill creates in the department of higher education the inclusive higher education grant program to provide grants to state institutions of higher education for the purpose of establishing, or expanding existing, inclusive higher education programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

HB22-1376 Supportive Learning Environments For K-12 Students – This bill promotes safe, supportive schools by requiring public access to district level disaggregated information, better data collection on disciplinary incidents, updating restraint and seclusion policies and promoting best practices and training for school security staff. The bill updates Colorado’s policies, practices, and data frameworks to make data about students’ experiences at school more transparent and to ensure that every student learns in an environment that is positive, safe, and inclusive.

HB22-1295 Department Early Childhood and Universal Preschool Program - This bill establishes the duties of the department of early childhood and the executive director of the department, relocates early childhood programs from the departments of human services and education to the department of early childhood, and creates the Colorado universal preschool program.

Workforce / Financial Empowerment / Medicaid / Criminal Justice

The Arc also worked to support bills regarding our community's direct care, HCBS workforce, financial empower for people living with disabilities, improved access and coverage for behavioral health modalities, better access to transportation and protecting community members needing behavioral health services from falling into the criminal justice system unfairly. Below are some of those bills.

HB22- 1188 ARPA American Rescue Plan Act Money for Home- And Community-based Services - This bill authorizes money in the ARPA account within the healthcare affordability and sustainability fee cash fund to be used for home- and community-based services that are ineligible for a federal match but otherwise authorized pursuant to the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

HB22-1320 Achieving A Better Life Experience Savings Accounts – This bill creates a more inclusive and equitable path to financial security for Coloradoans who experience disabilities. The new law implements significant improvements in three key areas impacting access and ease of use, security of savings, and additional tax benefits for Coloradoans to create sustainable financial independence through long-term savings. Under the new law the State may no longer file certain claims against an ABLE account upon the death of the designated beneficiary. Known as the Medicaid claw-back, the previous practice allowed for the capture of funds to reimburse certain Medicaid expenses, and ultimately discouraged participation by placing private savings at risk. It also enhances the tax benefits for Colorado ABLE savings accounts, providing a dollar-for-dollar State tax deduction for contributions made into a Colorado ABLE account. And, to broaden access and ease of use, a person other than the individual with a disability can now open and administer an ABLE account on behalf of a person with disabilities.

SB22-077 Interstate Licensed Professional Counselor Compact - This bill creates the adoption of an interstate compact to allow a person who is a licensed professional counselor in the person's state of residence to practice professional counseling in a compact state in which the person is not licensed. It ensures that all people, including people with disabilities, will be afforded access to licensed professional counselors. This is a simple solution to ensure critical workforce expansion in the field of professional counseling to address the behavioral health crisis across the country and in Colorado.

HB22-1068 Medicaid Reimbursement for Therapy Using Equines – This bill allows for Medicaid reimbursement for therapy using equine movement when provided by a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, or a speech-language pathologist.

HB22-1114 Transportation Services for Medicaid Waiver Recipients – This bill authorizes a transportation network company to provide nonmedical transportation services to persons who are enrolled in certain Medicaid waiver programs. This bill improves the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by eliminating barriers when it comes to choices in transportation. Covering private transportation under certain Medicaid waiver services will allow people with IDD to participate more fully in their communities, employment, recreation, and relationships.

SB22-099 Sealing Criminal Records - Beginning July 1, 2024, this bill allows automatic record sealing (rather than having to petition the court) for all offenses that are currently eligible to be sealed and requires 3rd party vendors to remove any sealed records from their databases. Law enforcement will still have access to conviction records. It also clarifies and streamlines the record sealing process and requires annual reports to be published.

SB22-021 Treatment Behavioral Health Disorders Justice System - This bill repeals the mental health diversion pilot program and instead expands existing pretrial diversion programs to intentionally identify and focus diversion programs on individuals with a behavioral health disorder (meaning anyone with an addiction and/or mental health disorder).

The Arc of Colorado and the Arc Chapters worked extensively with community leaders, legislators, service providers, and community member advocates to support the passage of these bills. All our support bills were passed this session. And while all were not by unanimous vote, and a few amended, we were fortunate enough to have bipartisan support on most of them.

The Arc of Colorado



2023 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

Funding and policy changes to strengthen the Colorado Medicaid State Plan, state programs, and HCBS Medicaid waivers for people with disabilities to include:

I. Enhance Capacity, Sustainability, and Quality for IDD Services

- a. Bring an end to the HCBS Comprehensive Developmental Disability waiver waitlist;
- b. Provide an increase in pay rates for direct care workers;
- c. Preserve and maintain current funding levels for intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) services and supports;
- d. Create changes in Colorado statute, where needed, to comply with the requirements established in federal law for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS);
- e. Ensure the full implementation of Colorado's Olmstead Plan including implementation of strategies for competitive integrated employment;
- f. Advance accelerated Medicaid waiver simplification with the purpose of creating single, easily accessible HCBS waivers for 1) all eligible children and 2) all eligible adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Each waiver should further access to quality services and supports when and where needed.
- g. Increase Supported Living Services and equitable access to services across all Long-Term Supports and Services (LTSS);
- h. Increase the accessibility and availability of telehealth services for Medicaid recipients.

II. Implement Person Centered Practices

- a. Ensure quality person-centered services are provided consistently at the right time, in the right place, and in the right way across the state.
- b. Resolve equitable access to personal care services for all people currently receiving long term services and supports. Access should be at a level that meets individual needs and not be limited based on specific waiver participation;
- c. Establish consumer and participant directed service delivery options in all HCBS/LTSS waivers;
- d. Increase accessibility and availability of appropriate, person-centered technology and create billable services for technology acquisition, utilization, and training to bridge the digital divide and make Colorado a technology first state.

III. Mental Health and IDD

- a. Ensure therapeutic, out-of-home placement, and intensive treatment options for children with IDD and dual diagnosis/secondary diagnosis of serious health, mental health, and behavioral conditions are readily available and accessed when needed;
- b. Ensure equitable access to behavioral health services for adults and children with co-occurring IDD and mental health diagnoses in the public and private insurance systems.

IV. Advance Competitive Integrated Employment Outcomes

- a. Continue to phase out and end sub-minimum wage employment in Colorado while providing necessary supports to eliminate the need for sub-minimum wage employment through the advancement of opportunities for meaningful employment at or above the Colorado minimum wage.
- b. Continue to monitor the four-year phase out plan to ensure that the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and the Office of Employment First are supporting individuals in competitive and integrative career goals.

Funding and Policy Measures Prompted by COVID 19

- 1. Ensure that the end of the Public Health Emergency does not result in a sudden disqualification under Medicaid coverage for people with IDD
- 2. Retain flexibilities and codify changes in rules and processes that based on community feedback, have proved essential to maintaining public health as a result of COVID-19;
- 3. Maintain funding for respite and other services needed to sustain family stability;
- 4. Implement the Cross-System Behavioral Health Crises Pilots to address the increased behavioral health needs as a result of COVID-19 and any future public health crisis;
- 5. Increase bonuses for all direct care staff and other related personnel who work directly with individuals with IDD, their families, and caregivers in their homes or in other residential and/or day programs;
- 6. Invest in the recruitment of direct care staff;
- 7. Implement the American Rescue Plan funds for the above-mentioned services and supports.

Colorado students with disabilities have a legal right to free, appropriate and inclusive educational opportunities in all settings within the least restrictive environment. Colorado must include:

I. Enhance Capacity, Sustainability, and Quality for IDD Services in Education

- a. Pursue policy development to address the racial, cultural, and linguistic inequities in education.
- b. Secure funding, professional development, and staffing resources for public schools to forge inclusive, student-centered programs for all students;
- c. Establish processes that ensure the Colorado Department of Education's dispute resolution office remains equitable and accessible to parents;
- d. Guarantee equitable access to technology and technology supports for students with IDD;
- e. Secure adequate and quality educational supports to ensure appropriate and accountable progress;
- f. Pursue adequate medical, nursing, and behavioral support services (with appropriate staffing) for students with complex needs to ensure equitable access to the general education classroom, non-academic and extra-curricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate;
- g. Ensure equal access to appropriate supports and services in publicly funded education services for children age birth through 21;
- h. Ensure Inclusive Higher Education programs across Colorado are accessible to students with IDD and include the appropriate supports so that students can matriculate successfully from the program.

II. Improve Disciplinary and Seclusion Practices

- a. Implement education services that are provided in the least restrictive and most inclusive setting by qualified teachers, staff and therapists for all eligible students, including an appropriate continuum of services, para-professional support, and related services such as transportation;
- b. Assure alternatives to harmful disciplinary practices such as suspension and expulsion for young students along with requirements that schools work to de-escalate minor school infractions rather than call for police department assistance;
- c. Make certain school discipline policies provide positive behavioral supports for students with disabilities to avoid trauma, seclusion, restraint, and involvement of law enforcement;

- d. Strive for the elimination of corporal punishment in public schools that receive federal funding;
- e. Eliminate the use of restraint and seclusion for non-emergency situations and address harmful restraint and seclusion practices;
- f. Require adequate training, documentation and reporting for any seclusion and restraint practices needed for the student's safety.

III. Improve Transition Services

- a. Improve meaningful transition services that include a strong pipeline of employers for students with disabilities that are person-centered;
- b. Enhance transition services that prepare students for continuing education in higher education and vocational alternatives which will result in competitive integrated employment and successful community living;
- c. Implement Supported Decision-Making training for the Colorado Department of Education so that educators will refrain from encouraging guardianship for students entering adulthood.

Education Policy Measures Prompted by COVID-19

- 1. Improve parity and flexibility for students with IDD who, because of possible health complications, may suffer more adverse health effects from the contraction of COVID-19 and therefore, require remote learning options;
- 2. Ensure the same hybrid and remote options available to students without disabilities are also available to student with disabilities;
- 3. Guarantee individualized compensatory services to students who, as a result of COVID remote and hybrid learning, experienced learning loss and lack of progress towards goals.
- 4. Guarantee individualized compensatory services to students who, as a result of staffing shortages, experienced learning loss and lack of progress towards goals.

Protection of civil rights for people with disabilities. Colorado must include:

I. The Elimination of Inequities

- a. Promote policies that dismantle systemic racism that negatively impacts persons with disabilities of color, their caregivers, and family;

- b. Ensure equitable opportunities, rights and protections are afforded to all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and caregivers;
- c. Create appropriate accommodations, modifications, and preventative measures designed to support individuals with disabilities in the criminal justice system;
- d. Advance access to medical information and treatment by ensuring that: 1) all communications are tailored to meet the needs of the individual receiving treatment and/or the guardian; and 2) the appropriate treatment is determined in the context of a person's overall unique medical history and not based on the person's diagnosis of a disability;
- e. Enhance access to supports and services in rural communities, equitable to that which is found in urban communities.

IV. Less Restrictive Alternatives

- a. Promote alternatives (e.g., health-care proxies, advance directives, supported decision-making, powers of attorney, notarized statements, representation agreements, releases, etc.) in lieu of permanent, restrictive protective arrangements;
- b. Promote guardianship policies, in concert with Colorado Statute, that respect and promote the rights of people with disabilities to manage their own affairs with or without informal assistance and guidance from family, friends, and others. If guardianship is essential, it should be limited to the fewest restrictions necessary for the shortest amount of time and tailored to the individual's specific capacities and needs, always with a presumption in favor of limited rather than full guardianship;
- c. Pursue legislation efforts towards increasing oversight of guardians;
- d. Advance policies, procedures, and funding to ensure that the preferences, needs, and complaints expressed by people with IDD are respected, honored, and enforced effectively to enhance quality of life.

V. Increase Affordable Housing Options for people with IDD

- a. Increase affordable, safe, accessible, integrated, and community-based housing options that promote independence, freedom, authority, and support individuals with IDD to exercise control over their housing. This housing must reflect personal preferences and styles, and must be free from housing discrimination.

Civil Rights Policy Measures Prompted by COVID-19

1. Ensure civil rights protections for people with disabilities in situations that include life-saving treatments, necessary medical care, even in the event of a medical shortage, and access to assistance for voters with disabilities in elections
2. Support for patients with IDD who require help with their provision of care in hospital, clinical, behavioral, and other health settings.



PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

Amplifying the Voice of individuals with IDD and their families, by strengthening self-advocacy, emphasizing integration, and partnering to build awareness.

Advocacy

San Luis Valley BOCES/Centauri High School North Conejos School District La Jara, CO:

The school district was educating kids with disabilities in a trailer that was separated from the main school. Only kids with disabilities were in this trailer, and their access to the school was limited. The Arc of Colorado worked with Disability Law Colorado to file an Office of Civil Rights complaint based on discrimination. As a result of the complaint, the district agreed to find a way to include the students into the general education high school. The BOCES sold the trailer.

Santa Fe Trail BOCES La Junta, Colorado: There is a separate school for the “most in need” students. The Arc of Colorado assisted a parent with a Colorado Department of Education (CDE) State Complaint against the BOCES. The complaint alleged that that BOCES offered one hour a day of school for Spring 2021 and for the first couple months of 2022 school year. In addition, the complaint included an allegation that the BOCES required a parent to attend school with their child to support the child’s behaviors. And finally, the complaint alleged that the BOCES graduated a student prior to age 21 without explaining to the parent that a Certificate of Completion would exit the student from the public school system. CDE substantiated these allegations and ordered remedial action.

Northwest BOCES Steamboat School District: A group of high school parents realized that understaffing in the school resulted in the school’s failure to implement their children’s IEP’s. The Arc of Colorado assisted a group of parents and filed a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights. The school district and BOCES are currently under a Resolution Agreement that monitors for compensatory services and staffing retention plans to ensure students’ IEPs are implemented.

Northwest BOCES Hayden School District Craig, CO: The Arc of Colorado assisted parents with an Office of Civil Rights complaint regarding the school’s failure to implement their child’s IEP. The Office of Civil Rights and the school district are currently under a monitoring

plan that includes determining compensatory services for the full school year 21-22, training, and staffing.

Calabrese Life Opportunities Fund

The Calabrese Life Opportunities Fund will once again be the recipient of our Colorado Gives Day push. With all the gifts and grants, we were able to recapitalize the fund with \$15,000 in 2022!

Voting Rights

The year 2022 was a big election year, and we worked tirelessly with our community collaborators to increase the voter turnout for people with disabilities. The Arc of Colorado trained self-advocates on voting rights and the impact that voting has on an individual voter and the community as a whole. These trainings included a voting rights training at Speaking for Ourselves and The Arc University.

In addition to trainings, The Arc of Colorado was invited to host the Just Vote Election Protection Call Center as the disability rights experts on voting. The collaborators at the call center included Colorado Lawyer's Committee, Disability Law Colorado, The League of Women Voters, Mi Familia Vota, and Common Cause.

Disability Policy Seminar

The Disability Policy Seminar was held as a hybrid event on March 27 through 31, 2022, in Washington D.C. All staff, Lori Thom, Mitch Routen, Jennifer Harris, and Tonya Kelly attend on behalf of The Arc of Colorado.



Speaking For Ourselves Grant and Financial Health

The bank balance of Speaking for Ourselves (SFO) is healthier than it has ever been. The \$120,000 DD Council Grant was approved on June 24th, and The Arc of Colorado will continue to work with SFO as fiscal manager for their funding through the grant.

Grants

The Arc US awarded us a \$68,000 grant to subgrant to the chapters for story collection. The Arc of Aurora, AdvocacyDenver, The Arc of Central Colorado, The Arc of the Central Mountains, The Arc of Southwest Colorado, and The Arc of Colorado all provided compelling stories about individual experiences with the Medicaid system. We hope these stories will impact federal policymakers when determining the future of public benefits and supports.

IDD Awareness Day at the Capitol

March 23, 2022 was IDD Awareness Day at the Capitol. The virtual conference/luncheon was held in person at the capitol and on zoom featuring keynote speakers from the IDD community. Participants and Legislators listened and learned about concerns, possible solutions, current supports, and proposed legislation. And, if you were at the capitol, there was a red-carpet themed Oscar night where Legislators received their gold statue award and a box lunch. It was truly a fabulous event!



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

Policy

The Arc of Colorado amended the many behavioral health bills to include cooccurring disabilities in addition to other protections and services for individuals with IDD. We had a successful legislative session in 2022. Significant investments are planned for IDD in Higher Education, there are better parameters, reporting, and definition of restraints and seclusion, there are improvements for those who are dually diagnosed in the mental health system, there are improvements for people using Colorado's ABLE Saving Account, and private transportation has been added to the waivers.

The Arc of Colorado trained over 1000 people on a variety of legal matters, including bills that were recently passed by the state legislature. We were invited to present at many organizations including the Office of Parent Respondents Council, JFK Partners, the Colorado Department of Education, and Sewall Early Childhood Center, Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council, Kansas University, The Arc US National Convention, The Office of Public Guardianship, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, and Department of Human Services Adult Protective Services. It was a very successful year in terms of messaging and outreach.



Arc US National Convention Presentation on Public Health
Emergency and American Rescue Act Funding

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

Task Force Work

Secondary, Postsecondary, and Work-Based Learning Integration Task Force- The Colorado Department of Education's Commissioner for Exceptional Student Services invited The Arc of Colorado to sit on a task force that will address the barriers that students face when participating in the concurrent enrollment programs.

Sponsored Events

The Arc of Colorado had the pleasure of sponsoring and attending several events which include the Anti-Defamation League's Civil Rights Leadership Award where Julie Reiskin and Representative Dafna Michaelson-Jene received awards. We also sponsored and hosted a resource table at The Reel Abilities Film Festival hosted by the JCC Denver. Thank you, Jennifer Harris, for volunteering! At The National State Legislature Convention, we hosted a table for three days and spoke with legislatures from all over the country about bills and community impact. Thank you to our volunteers, Kaley Day from AdvocacyDenver and Daniel McGearry from Armanino LLP! We attended the ACLU Dinner as co-sponsors with arc Thrift and had a great evening with board members from The Arc of Colorado and arc Thrift corporate offices.

We were able to sponsor the arc Thrift Gala where we had the pleasure of inviting several guests. It was a great night!



Arc US National Convention 2022

The Arc of Colorado hosted the Arc US National Convention in November, rounding out a very exciting year for all of us. Mitch Routen, Board President, and Lloyd Lewis, CEO of arc Thrift gave the opening speeches to welcome attendees from all over the country. And a special thank you to Mr. Lewis who generously sponsored the convention and our local event at the Viewhouse in downtown Denver. Thank you, Lloyd and Mitch, for your time and talent!



Outreach in Rural Areas

The Arc of Colorado continues to work in rural areas, specifically the Yampa Valley where The Arc of Colorado, Disability Law Colorado, and the Colorado Department of Education participated in a resource fair for the parents, students with disabilities, self-advocates, and supporters of people with disabilities. We had a similar outreach resource event in the San Luis Valley where Disability Law Colorado and The Arc of Colorado trained parents and teachers on educational rights that protect students with disabilities.

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

Local Chapter Outreach

The Arc of Colorado continues to support the local chapters by attending and sponsoring local outreach efforts including The Arc of Larimer County's Film Festival, The Arc of Weld County's Families in Action Retreat, and The Arc of Mesa's Special Olympics opening gala,

where The Arc of the Central Mountains and The Arc of West Central Mountains were also represented.

Access Equity and Inclusion Committee

This committee, led by our board members, will review and assist in developing a strategic plan that implements The Arc US's AEI Strategic Plan in a way that is designed to most impactful for our communities while taking into consideration The Arc of Colorado's capacity and resources.

Rose Foundation Fund

The Inclusion and Equity Fund has been established at The Rose Community Foundation. Tonya Kelly and Christiano Sosa were integral in establishing this fund to ensure that Access Equity and Inclusion is a priority in our work.