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<https://www.arcsno.org/>

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Advocacy Spotlight

Tracy Turner is a self advocate and member of People First who has attended multiple advocacy days this year.

On February 3rd, the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance hosted an advocacy day to address lack of affordable housing, and to address the homelessness problem.

"It was really important for me to be there" said Tracy Turner, "I was homeless for a year, and I don't want that for anyone."

"While I was in the shelter I applied for every housing organization I could. Eventually I got a place to live through the Everett Housing Authority."

Tracy has now lived in her new apartment for nearly two years.

"I don't want to see anybody else homeless. It's hard to see people with disabilities, elderly people, veterans, homeless. It's hard to see them not be recognized."

Armed with her own story, Tracy headed to Olympia with nearly 700 other advocates for the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance and spoke personally to her legislators.

"I spoke direct to [Rep.] June Robinson, [Rep.] Mike Sells and [Sen.] John McCoy about the housing problem. I've been working on my story, and how to tell it in a short time. They were all very supportive. I wanted them to know that people don't make this choice."

Two days later, Tracy was heading south again, this time with People First of Snohomish County and representatives from the Arc to discuss transportation issues affecting the I/DD community.

Continued on next page—>



Tracy Turner and fellow advocate Jeanette Ivy

Advocacy in Action

Advocacy Day with People First and the Arc

On February 5th, Tracy Turner, along with other members of People First of Snohomish County attended the Washington State Arc's Employment Advocacy day in Olympia. While there, members of People First were able to meet with their legislators and speak to them on a personal level about their struggles with employment and transportation. People First decided to have a strong and united message and focus on one very particular problem that affects them all—the inability of para transit buses to use HOV lanes. This simple change would impact the lives of countless individuals with I/DD in a meaningful way, greatly increasing the effectiveness of their transportation. For many members paratransit is the only way they can get from place to place, and making the system more reliable by allowing them to bypass traffic via the HOV lanes has an impact that is nearly immeasurable. Less time spent in traffic means less late pick ups, which means less missed appointments, less time waiting in the elements, and less time away from work. This simple and elegant suggestion costs nothing and even saves money by making the system more reliable.

While the topic of transportation was forefront for People First, it wasn't the only topic that came up in legislative conversation. Ryan Carlson, from the 39th legislative district, received a step by step overview of the entire legislative process from Representative Eslick. Leigh Spruce, from the 44th legislative district, spoke with Senator Hobbs about what the direct impacts of transportation cuts would have on the I/DD community.

Every member who attended was able to voice their concerns with their legislators. This seemingly simple act of advocacy can drastically alter policy in our state. Showing up, speaking out, and being heard are the most surefire way to make real tangible change, and change is made by those who show up. Thank you People First for working for positive change!



People First of Snohomish County at the Capitol Building

Advocacy in Action

2020 Census

The United States Census is taking place this year, and the Arc is here to make sure you are counted! The Census is conducted every 10 years, with the first census taking place in 1790. Having an accurate count for the census



is vastly important to the I/DD community, as not only does the census determine how many representatives a state has in congress, it also determines how State and Federal funds are distributed. Information from the census is used by federal, state, and local governments to make decisions about funding for services and programs. These services and programs include, education, housing, health care, transportation, and any other government service. Everyone needs to be counted to make sure the government has the right information to make decisions about these important services. Having enough money for programs and services for people with disabilities depends on having the right information. The numbers collected by the census will determine this funding for the next ten years, making it vitally important to complete your census forms correctly.

Starting March 12, you will be able to fill out your census questionnaire. After April 1st, the census will begin sending in person representatives to collect your census information on a door by door basis. When it comes time to fill out the census you can do so in one of three ways—on paper, over the phone, or for the first time ever, online! You will be able to fill out your census over the phone in 12 languages, or receive written guides in nearly 60! If you don't fill out a census form, a census worker may come to your home. But don't worry, they are easy to identify. Every Census worker's badge has four things on it: It says "Department of Commerce", the worker's name is printed on it, it has a picture of the census worker, and the badge has an expiration date. Census badges cannot be used after their expiration date.

A common concern regarding the census is what may be done with the personal information requested. Fortunately, the law is quite clear as to what can be done with your census information—nothing! It cannot be shared, and violators can face up to five years in jail or up to \$250,000 in fines. Further, the data collected by the census cannot be used by any other agency for any reason. This includes the FBI, Homeland Security, ICE, and any other government institution.

Information provided by the Arc of the United States at thearc.org

Advocacy in Action

Legislative Update

As the 2020 Legislative session winds to a close, a number of important bills have been passed that will impact the community as a whole, and more specifically, the I/DD community directly.

E2SSB 6205: The Had It! Bill, this bill provides protections to long term care workers from abuse by the recipients of long term care. This bill has undergone massive revisions from it's original iteration that have made it a bill favorable for the I/DD community, something it did not begin as. This change was brought about primarily by self advocates and advocacy groups who used their voice to make this bill fair to the I/DD community. It has passed both chambers and is expected to be signed into law.

ESSB 6287: The Uniform Guardianship Act trailer bill, this bill was designed to fix some of the many problems that arose from the passage of the Uniform Guardianship Act bill in 2019. Specifically, this bill was designed to reclaim many of the rights that were omitted in the 2019 bill, and restore them to individuals under guardianship that were going to be lost when the 2019 bill went into effect. Further, this bill also establishes Supported Decision Making (SDM) as an alternative to guardianship, a process where an individual can choose a person to help them better understand the decisions in front of them, enabling them to make their own choices instead of someone making choices for them. SDM will also be recognized legally, enabling a person with a supporter to use them in all legal matters. This bills' entire existence is due to self advocacy, as advocates from around the state recognized the problems with the 2019 bill and pushed to improve it. This bill has passed both chambers and is expected to be signed into law.

ESSB 6419: The Ruckleshaus group bill, this bill takes the recommendations from the 2019 Ruckleshaus report and implements them into law. This includes drastic overhauls of the DDA and DSHS and how those systems interact with individuals under their umbrella. This bill will also dramatically increase funding for these programs in the years to come. It has passed both chambers and is expected to be signed into law.

SSB 6429: Kendra's Law, this bill enables anyone with an I/DD to have it denoted on their state license or identity card. This will be helpful in explaining without communicating with another person why a person with an I/DD can't easily communicate in an emergency situation. This designation is entirely voluntary and you will only receive it if specifically requested. It has passed both chambers and is expected to be signed into law.

If you have questions about these bills or any others, contact jake@arcsno.org or call (425) 258-2459 x105 with any and all questions you may have.

*Fall down seven times,
get up eight.*

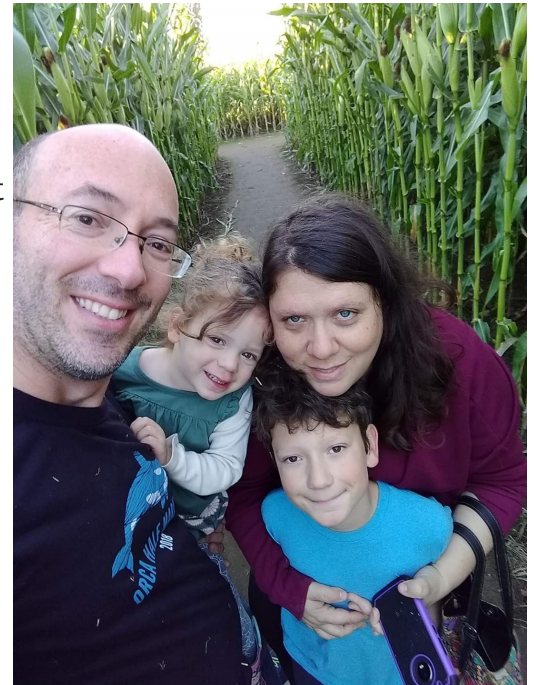
- Japanese Proverb

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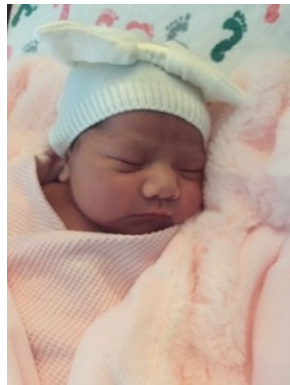
Arc News: New Staff!

*The Arc is excited to welcome a new staff member, Moranne Aaron-Berel as our new **what is her job title***

I am honored and excited to join The Arc, and can't wait to serve this community. My journey started from Israel sixteen years ago when I moved with my husband to Texas, then California. In the past three years (after becoming citizens) we decided to settle together with our two children, dog, and cat in Washington. As a mother for a child with special needs I decided to dedicate my professional and personal life to families like mine. I see the values and mission of The Arc match my own, and am very grateful for the support it provides to so many families and individuals. I have experience with children from pre-school to middle and high school, as well as young adults and adults. I worked with various populations, such as immigrants, severely mentally ill individuals, and individuals with special needs and their families. I have experience both as a teacher, education director, counselor trainee, drama therapist, wraparound facilitator, program manager, and as a behaviorist. I love interacting and support others. I would love to bring to this role the scope of my experience and passion to support my own community.



Moranne Aaron-Berel and her family



Congratulations!

The Arc of Snohomish County welcomes our newest member, Alaia Charlize Diaz! She arrived Thursday January 16th weighing in at 7 lbs, 12 Oz. Proud parents Rosmeyri Romero and Flavio Diaz are both doing well.

Coronavirus Update

We at the Arc are monitoring the continued spread of novel coronavirus in our community, and are responding appropriately. Because of this, many regularly scheduled events and presentations are in flux. We are doing our best to notify as many people as possible as quickly as possible when an event is rescheduled or cancelled. If you are unsure if an event has been rescheduled or canceled, please check our website at www.arcsno.org/calendar and we can let you know if the event is still happening. In the mean time, stay safe and wash your hands as we navigate this trying time.

**We're here to help
you have a voice**

You are the expert in telling your story and how it relates to decisions being made by lawmakers.

Although impacting government may feel overwhelming, we're here to help you have a voice.

It only takes a few steps:

Be informed

- Sign up for Action Alerts

Get Connected

- Join The Arc
- Join a parent coalition
- Join a self-advocacy group

Take Action

- Visit The Arc of Washington State's Online Action Center
- Send emails
- Make phone calls
- Attend town hall meetings
- Participate in Advocacy Days
- Visit your legislators in person.

For tips on Legislative Advocacy visit *Hot Tips*
<https://arcwa.org/content/uploads/sites/35/2019/11/Hot-Tips-2020.pdf>

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Tools & Resources

Sign up

Legislative Alerts & Updates

Arc of Washington State | <http://capwiz.com/arcwa/mlm/signup/>
Sign up for legislative action alerts related to developmental disability. Receive the information you need, to voice your opinions on bills during the legislative session. Alerts provide you with messages for your legislators that you can use as is, or edit using your own words. Enter your name and address and click! Your message will automatically be sent to all of your legislators. Toll free Legislative Hotline 1-800-562-6000. Email or call, action takes less than 5 minutes!

Find Your

Legislative District and Elected Officials

Washington Legislature | <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>
Find your legislative district and elected officials.

Hot Tips

Legislative Advocates on Developmental Disabilities

Arc of Washington State | <https://arcwa.org/content/uploads/sites/35/2019/11/Hot-Tips-2020.pdf>

Some of the topics included:

- Tips for meeting with elected officials.
- How to create a short, clear message.
- The bill process—how a bill becomes a law.
- The state budget process.

Resource Library

Arc of Washington State | <http://arcwa.org/library/all>

A comprehensive list of documents and websites that support developmental disability issues.

Transportation Resource Guide and Accessible Travel Map

Snohomish County Transportation Coalition

https://everettwa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16175/SNOTRAC-map-brochure_web_complete

There are many ways to travel and a wide variety of payment options.

SNOTRAC partners and affiliates offer transportation in Snohomish County and throughout the region. www.gosnotrac.org

Find an open board or commission, get involved and have your voice heard!

The Arc can provide support, resources and tools to help you be an effective and successful disability advocate on local Boards and Commissions.

For information contact:
Autumn Chancellor at
Autumn@arcsno.org
425-258-2459 x107.

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Boards & Commissions

Advocate for Disabilities on Boards and Commissions

Boards and Commissions serve as a bridge between the community and government, ensuring oversight and raising awareness on important community issues. They provide a setting for citizens to volunteer their time and energy in government and on behalf of the community to advocate for issues.

You can be a voice and a leader for developmental disabilities as decisions are made in your community. *The Arc of Snohomish County encourages individuals and family members to participate on boards and committees.*

Vacancies on Boards and Commissions in Snohomish County

Please click on the following Arc of Snohomish County link:

<https://tinyurl.com/boardvacancies> for current openings on Boards and Commission at the city/town level in Snohomish County. *This list is current as of March, 2020.*

When navigating city websites searching for boards and commissions' vacancies, please note that this information may be found either: on one webpage; and/or require additional enquiry from individual Boards and Commission.

If all else fails, one can always call or visit the relevant city office for guidance. A general application may be required for consideration. Vacancies may be open until filled or open until a deadline.

Public Policy & Legal Advocacy

Public Policy and Legal Advocacy at The Arc

<https://www.thearc.org/what-we-do/public-policy>

Take a look at the National Arc and sign up for their Action Alerts.



[Sign up for
Action Alerts](#)

The Arc keeps up on many issues that are important to individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and their families.

Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, Medicare and civil rights laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are critical for people with I/DD and their families, providing benefits, supports, and civil rights protections that help make community living possible.

In 2017, The Arc called on all advocates to join us in reaching out to the President, Congress, Governors, and state legislators to educate them and to urge them to pre-serve - not cut - these essential programs and civil rights laws.

These federal programs provide the key to community living and inclusion for people with I/DD across the nation. We are stronger together when we join together as a collective movement to ensure that these programs and civil rights are protected.

The Arc of
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Get Involved

I.CAN Women's Self-Advocacy Group

2nd Tuesday of each month | 10:30am–12pm

*The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

*Occasional offsite activities and events. We are a group of self-advocates open to all women ages 16 and up. A casual environment that combines learning with fun experiences. We share resources and skills, and hold the belief that everyone has something to contribute to our group.

Please contact Corinna Fale at Corinna@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x103.

Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)

2nd Tuesday of each month | 1pm–4pm

The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

Group of self-advocates focused on legislative change. Open to all. SAIL is a statewide coalition of people with developmental disabilities that strives to shape public policies that affect people with developmental disabilities.

Please contact Corinna Fale at Corinna@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x103.

People First of Snohomish County

4th Tuesday of each month | 11am–1pm

The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

A self-Advocacy organization by and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are focused on educating ourselves and others, advocating for our rights, having fun! We believe we are PEOPLE FIRST and our disabilities are secondary. Please contact Kylie Walsh at Kylie@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x121.

Due to coronavirus cancellations, please check our website calendar at www.arcsno.org/calendar for updates

Did you know

Your Idea Can be State Law!

https://arcwa.org/resources/Your_Idea_Can_Be_a_State_Law_2015.pdf

What do you believe needs to be a law to protect people with developmental disabilities, provide a state-funded service or program for them or to update current laws that may be out-of-date? There are multiple steps in the process. Please contact Autumn Chancellor at Autumn@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x107 at the Arc of Snohomish County for guidance to help you sponsor your idea and to get the word out.

Federal Bills of Interest

H.R. 5456 Family Medical Leave Modernization Act

This bill would permit family members to take leave in the care of any related individual who has a serious health condition. It would also permit extended well-ness leave to participate in educational and extracurricular activities of family members. The Arc of the United States strongly supports this bill.

H.R. 1814 ABLE Age Adjustment Act

This bill increases from 26 to 46 the age threshold for tax-favored ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) accounts. (ABLE accounts are designed to enable individuals with disabilities to save for and pay for disability-related expenses. To establish an account, an individual must have a qualifying impairment that began before the individual attained the age threshold.)