

Summer 2021

# SPOTLIGHT



## Celebrating Our 70th Anniversary!

**T**he Arc of San Diego is thrilled to be celebrating our 70th Anniversary this year! This important milestone dates back to 1951, when a small group of parents, at the Ocean Beach Junior Women’s Club were concerned about the lack of resources for children with disabilities. They decided to reach out to others interested in helping children with developmental disabilities reach their full potential. After meeting, the “Society for Exceptional Children” was created and voted into existence, and The Arc of San Diego as we know it commenced.

Starting in the early 1950s began the struggle to organize and set policies in place. It wasn’t until the 1960s when The Arc of San Diego was able to change public attitudes, influence legislation, and recruit professionals into the field. In the 1970s, legislative successes were encouraged to then create statewide delivery of services systems. An era of mergers, program growth, expansion and improvements followed the next decade. The 1990s began a new shift in thinking to empower individuals with developmental disabilities



and change the way services were delivered which then gave The Arc of San Diego a new direction.

In the new century, we changed our mission statement to expand services for other disabilities and initiated a new, major federal food service contract at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot. Today, The Arc of San Diego is the largest, most comprehensive provider of services to children and adults with disabilities in San Diego County.

For 70 years, The Arc of San Diego has remained committed to its mission of supporting and empowering individuals with disabilities to achieve

their life’s goals. Through perseverance and determination, we have overcome tremendous obstacles to expand the knowledge and importance of these individuals within our society and government.

We serve more than 2,000 individuals countywide and continue to help each individual reach their fullest level of independence. This year we will reflect on all the achievements we have attained and celebrate the years to come!



## President's Message

Dear Friends,

This year marks a very important milestone for The Arc of San Diego: our 70th anniversary! It is remarkable that what began as a small group of concerned parents from the Ocean Beach Junior Women's Club in 1951 has turned into one of the largest disability service providers in San Diego County. In honor of our anniversary, I find myself reflecting on all that we have achieved over the years, and hopeful for what we will attain in the years to come. I am proud to serve an organization that has remained committed to supporting and empowering individuals with disabilities for the past 70 years. I am proud of the tremendous obstacles we have overcome to improve the lives of people with disabilities and bring us closer to achieving full inclusion of this community. I am extremely grateful for our dedicated community of clients, staff, family members, caregivers, donors and volunteers that make our work possible.

In April we celebrated National Volunteer Appreciation Month, and I would like to recognize our volunteers who have been an essential component of The Arc of San Diego's growth. In the fifties, we were founded by volunteers who ran the organization and, today, we continue to rely on their beneficence for our well-being. Our boards, committees, parent groups, auxiliaries, and interns make significant contributions that lead to positive changes in the lives of our clients. Our programs are strengthened when volunteers actively engage with us, whether it be in-person or virtually. To all our volunteers, I appreciate your time and talent, your energy, your values, and your dedication. We honor your commitment and thank you!

Anthony J. DeSalis, Esq.  
President & CEO

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# Introductions: Getting to Know...



## Chris DeVoy

### *Food Services Program Manager*

The Arc of San Diego is pleased to welcome Chris DeVoy, the Food Services Program Manager. Chris joined The Arc in September 2020 and comes to us with over 20 years in food and beverage experience. Before working with The Arc, Chris was the Regional Manager for a restaurant and bar hospitality group based in San Diego.

As the Program Manager of Food Services at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD), Chris wants to continue to build on the current relationships with Sodexo and our Arc employees at MCRD. "I've always liked working with people, and being in a leadership position. I'm in a position to be able to offer guidance, knowledge and support to better help our clients achieve their goals, whether it be within our company or further down the road!" said DeVoy. In this role, Chris plans to create a great team atmosphere where everyone feels like they are important, because they are, and actually enjoys coming in to work.

Chris holds a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology from National University. Chris is a new dad and loves to spend time with his family. When he has free time, he enjoys riding his bike or relaxing with a good book.



## Sania Dhillon

### *Program Manager of Community Living Services*

The Arc of San Diego is pleased to welcome Sania Dhillon, Program Manager for Community Living Services. Sania joined The Arc in February 2021 after moving to San Diego from the Bay Area. Previously, Sania worked for Rebekah's Children Services, supporting children and teens in foster care and or on probation. She has also worked with Emerging Milestones as a Program Manager serving children with autism and adults with disabilities. "I love that The Arc is person centered. I intended to not only help but also empower individuals with disabilities," said Sania, about choosing to join The Arc of San Diego.

As the Program Manager of Community Living Services, Sania is especially excited for the start of the Supported Living Services program. She is looking forward to helping the program continue to grow and thrive through teamwork and communication! She asserts that maintaining strong relationships and open communication is the best way to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Sania holds a Bachelor's degree in Education from Arizona State University. In her free time, she enjoys staying active with boxing and yoga, which she has practiced for many years. Sania also enjoys reading psychological thrillers and listening to podcasts, including Crime Junkie, her favorite!

# Measuring Excellence

The Arc of San Diego continues to strive for excellence in our programs, even during these unprecedented times. In assessing our programs by contacting our clients, families, community members and funders annually, The Arc of San Diego is able to formulate an outcome measurement tool. The outcome measurements provide information on how our programs made a positive difference and significant changes in the lives of our clients.

*Below is a summary of results from fiscal year 2020:*



**98%**  
of clients report satisfaction with the overall quality of services.



**89%**  
of the children served progressed in a minimum of three developmental areas.



**39%**  
of clients in day programs actively gave back to their community through volunteer activities.



**20%**  
of clients enrolled in The Arc of San Diego's Employment Services have maintained their jobs for more than 5 years, with 29% maintaining the same job for more than 10 years.

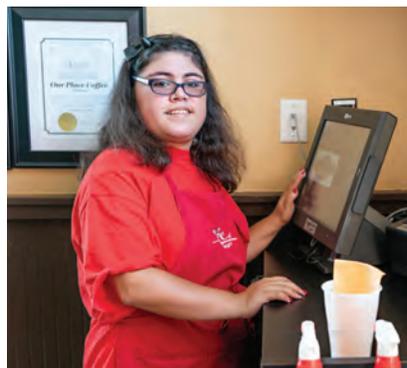


**40%**  
of clients in Organizational Employment Services had a wage increase during the past year.

## Highlights:

### Independent Living Services

Independent Living Services (ILS) continues to see an increase in the number of clients that were able to achieve their goal of living independently in their communities.



### Employment Services

Employment Services saw a rise in Group and Individual Placement with 88% of new enrollees remaining on the job a minimum of 90 days.

### Community Inclusion Services

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the transition from our hybrid site-based Community Based Program (CBP) to our 100% Community Inclusion Services (CIS) created some movement from clients enrolled in CBP/CIS to the Adult Development Center programs.

### Respite Services

Respite Services experienced an increase in enrollment compared to last year. The percentage of Direct Service Professionals in Respite Services with one year or more of service rose to 91%.



# Celebrating Our Incredible Volunteers



## Ready to Make a Difference?

Volunteers are the heart of our organization. Opportunities include working with our clients in a variety of programs, joining our Boards and Committees, providing administrative support, or assisting at special events. If you are interested in volunteering, please call Alba Sanchez, Development Coordinator, at (619) 685-1175, ext. 296 or email [asanchez@arc-sd.com](mailto:asanchez@arc-sd.com).

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Virtual Volunteer Opportunities:

Looking to help from the comfort of your home? We have the following Virtual Volunteer Opportunities for individuals or groups:

- Conduct a gift card drive for our clients.
- Find your inner artist and design something memorable such as painting rocks with cute designs, faces, or sayings.
- Host a virtual Bingo Night/Trivia via ZOOM!
- Record a video of yourself reading your favorite story book that can be shared with the children and adults in our programs.
- Collect gift cards to give to our clients.
- Create an activity package, such as craft kits, for clients to enjoy.

### Program Support:

Our Program Support opportunities include: Classroom Assistant, Marketing and Development Intern, Community Living Services Volunteer, Front Desk Assistant, Hands-On Project Team Leader, and Special Event Volunteer.

\*Due to COVID-19, several of our on-site volunteer opportunities are limited. For more details contact Alba Sanchez, Development Coordinator, at (619) 685-1175, ext. 296 or email [asanchez@arc-sd.com](mailto:asanchez@arc-sd.com).

### Leadership Opportunities:

We have Leadership Opportunities for community and business leaders who share and support the vital interests of our organization to serve on our Board of Directors, Chapter Advisory Boards, and Committees. For more information, contact Jennifer Navarra, Vice President of Marketing & Development at (619) 685-1175, ext. 291 or [jnavarra@arc-sd.com](mailto:jnavarra@arc-sd.com).

In April, The Arc of San Diego took the time to thank all of our phenomenal volunteers during Volunteer Appreciation Month!

Last year, we successfully recruited 19 new volunteers for a total of 83 ongoing volunteers who donated 4,376 hours of service to our organization. In addition, we had 190 one-time volunteers contribute 812 hours of service to our organization. We are significantly grateful for the time, talent, voice, and support from each volunteer.

To the members of our Board of Directors, Chapter Advisory Boards and Arc Foundation Board, a special thank you. Without your vision and determination, The Arc would not be as successful as it is today. Our volunteers are vital to our ongoing success and help us achieve our mission of empowering individuals with disabilities achieve their life's goals. Our work would not be possible without you.

*Thank you for assisting our organization and the individuals we support!*



# Employee Service Milestones

Congratulations to all employees at The Arc of San Diego who accomplished a service milestone in 2020! This year 76 employees completed 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 35 years of service. We are grateful for our dedicated employees who have made it their life's work to serve individuals with disabilities. Each employee who celebrated a milestone received an award, gift box and gift card as a token of appreciation.



Rosario Chavez  
35 Years



Irene Holguin  
35 Years



Richard Coppa  
25 Years



Dennis Dizon  
25 Years



Susana Levack (right)  
15 Years



Jennifer Navarra  
15 Years



Myriam Saldana Aguirre  
15 Years

### 35 years

Rosario Chavez  
Irene Holguin

### 30 years

Mariyam Pious

### 25 years

Richard Coppa  
Dennis Dizon  
Rosa Gutierrez  
Shannon Housley

### 20 years

Elizabeth Baddour  
Elma Huerta  
Martha Romero  
Barbara Steinkirchner  
Silvia Steinmetz

### 15 years

James Alvarez  
Frank Anderson  
Esperanza Buhain  
Oscar Garcia  
Blanca Kelly  
Susana Levack  
Elizabeth Mayoral  
Jennifer Miller  
Jennifer Navarra  
Araceli Ortiz  
Dipakkumar Patel  
Trina Perez  
Michael Poplos  
Shirley Reedy-Edmondson  
Myriam Saldana Aguirre  
Jose Verdugo  
Yolanda Veytia  
John Williamson

### 10 years

Shawnta Barber  
Delores Collins  
Edson De Jesus  
Alice Derosa  
Anna Garcia Sandoval  
Melvin Harris  
Pacita Howell  
Ladonna Kisner  
Chad Lyle  
Michael Melycher  
Guadalupe Naranjo  
Hope Parra  
Evangeline Reyes  
Saul Salgado  
Andrew Thacher  
Merle Thomas  
Justin Umpierre  
Kristin Woodhouse

### 5 years

Cindy Adame  
Gabriela Alcala de Osuna  
Nayeli Capetillo Alvarado  
Carlos Escamilla  
Tirhas Gebreselassie  
Lorenzo Green  
Yamel Grijalva  
David Gurule  
Leticia Tavarez Hernandez  
Cattrica Jones  
Laura Luna  
Marisa Macias  
Luis Martinez  
Crystal Melban  
Raquel Minguer  
Vanessa Moncada-Rascon  
Ariana Nunez Soto  
Luz Olaya Alvarez  
Rosa Rodriguez  
Rumana Saeed  
Maria Soriano  
Adam Sowards  
Nancy Sweeney  
Janet Truchsess  
Kennethia Turner  
Maria Valdez  
Rory Van Nuis  
Maria Villanueva



Chad Lyle  
10 Years



Carlos Escamilla  
5 Years



Marisa Macias  
5 Years



Raquel Minguer  
5 Years



Ariana Nunez Soto  
5 Years



Adam Sowards  
5 Years

# The Arc of San Diego

Providing services for people with disabilities and their families since 1951

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## Celebrating Success

In honor of March as National Disability Awareness Month, The Arc of San Diego celebrated a major accomplishment by Alex Tenorio, who has received services from The Arc since 2012. After being furloughed from her job at AMC 20 Theaters last year, Alex used the extra time at home to write and publish a book which is now available on Amazon.

Alex's book "All You Need for Halloween" is a collection of short stories and poems about Halloween, Alex's favorite holiday. Alex has loved Halloween ever since she was little, and wanted to write something that she could share with her nephew and her friends' children. "I wanted to make something that kids could read that wasn't too scary," said Alex.

Alex has been taking classes since 2008 for English, Math and Writing. Writing in English has not always been easy for Alejandra, as English is her second language.

The book began as an assignment Alex was given for her writing class through San Diego College of Continuing Education. She discovered that she liked the stories she was writing so much, she wanted to turn them into a book. With the help of her teacher, she began editing her stories and researching how to publish a book on Amazon. At one point, Alex realized her book was not long enough for Amazon's criteria, so she worked with her teacher to add photos to adjust the length.

Alex came to The Arc of San Diego in 2012 for support



Arc client Alex Tenorio with her newly published book.

with seeking employment. With the support of her job coach, Alex obtained a position at VONS, then KMart, then AMC Theaters, where she has worked since 2017. Alex loves her job as a greeter and is happy now that theaters are reopened.

While Alex's life and routine changed drastically during the pandemic, she chose to focus on the positives of the situation. "If I did not have this extra time at home, I would not have done this. I was able to find something I like doing," said Alex. She is now working on publishing a second book on Amazon, a collection of poems. Her book "All You Need for Halloween" is available on Amazon as a paperback for \$13.

### About March National Disability Awareness Month

**March was officially recognized as National Disability Awareness Month in a proclamation from President Ronald Reagan in 1987. This month commemorates the progress toward improving the lives of people with disabilities and also highlights the challenges that remain in achieving full inclusion.**