

Executive Notes

Dear Friends of Arc Northland,

I hope you are doing well despite the high Covid numbers we are experiencing in our community. It has been a long road and unfortunately, we are not out of the woods yet.

There is much to share; hard to know where to start. First, I need to express our sincerest condolences to the family of Michael Manning, who passed away just before Thanksgiving. Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with Michael's family and caregivers. He was a wonderful person, a good friend, and advocate. He will be missed by many. We have more information on a memorial page dedicated to Michael in this newsletter.

We have been busy at Arc Northland. There has been no slow down due to the pandemic and our team continues to do incredible work supporting individuals and families requesting our assistance. Program Directors will each give a brief program update further on in the newsletter.

Our Board has been busy as well, continuing to meet virtually for health safety. It was with a heavy heart, that I shared with the Board and team my intentions of retiring on 4.22.22. I am in my fourth year as your executive director, but have worked with and respected this organization since I moved to Duluth in 1988. I have worked in the field for 45 years and it is time to pass the torch. It has truly been an honor to work with this phenomenal team and Board. The Board and I have begun the work of my succession and will officially post the position in January. We will work towards hiring someone with the leadership skills needed to continue the good work of Arc Northland and ensure a smooth transition.

Lastly, I want to thank all of you who have supported Arc Northland over the years through your time, monetary donations and commitment to our work carrying out the mission of The Arc. We will be celebrating, (hopefully), our 70 years as an organization on March 24th. Invitations will be sent; but, please mark your calendars as we would like to celebrate with as many of you as possible. We are all a part of this incredible organization and being together will be very special.

All of us at Arc Northland wish you a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season: Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanza and Happy New Year!

Here's to 2022 ~ May we come together in **Peace** and good **Health**!

Sincerely, Laurie B. Berner, Executive Director



1951—2021

Arc Northland;

**70 Years and
Counting!**

Here for you!

Board of Directors

Sandy Moore, Chair

Gina Gensing, Secretary

Blaze Zenner, Treasurer

Tracy Averill

Don Curry

Becky Jakubek,

Heather Stillwell

Heidi Zegan

Remembering Michael



Michael Manning was a dear friend of Arc Northland for many years. Although a young man of 29, he demonstrated true commitment to our mission in a variety of ways. Michael was a People First member and held leadership positions, attending meetings with regularity including during this time of Covid. He participated fully and was accompanied by his devoted supporters, Kevin or Mindy. Michael participated in the State SAM Conference, social dances and was a member of the Arrowhead Regional Quality Council, which started in 2016.

Michael did not let limitations get in the way of doing what he enjoyed, like being around many friends. He participated and engaged in groups, listening intentionally and sharing his opinions and suggestions. He will be sorely missed!

We send our heartfelt sympathies to Michael's mom and dad and his supporters and friends at DRCC as well.

Program Highlights

Adult, Children and Family Services (ACF)

Greetings! I'm Alison Stucke, and I'm honored to join Arc Northland's team as an Adult, Children, and Family Services Program Coordinator. My professional background is in education and information services. I enjoy helping connect people with information and resources they can use to improve their lives. At Arc Northland, my job will include providing advocacy services to students on IEPs and 504 educational plans and their families. Additionally, I am facilitating Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students between the ages of 14 and 21 referred to us by Vocational Rehab. Services. Feel free to reach out to me at astucke@arcnorthland.org or 218-726-4746.

Arc Northland now offers Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

Arc Northland is now offering Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students between the ages of 14 and 21 who are eligible and "potentially eligible" for Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Pre-ETS support the transition of students with disabilities from high school to competitive integrated employment.

Pre-ETS services include, Job Exploration Counselling, Post-Secondary Education Counselling, Workplace Readiness Training, Teaching Self-Advocacy skills.

Pre-ETS Services are available to students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 plan, record or note from a mental health or medical provider, a Social Security Administration (SSA) beneficiary award letter For more information contact Meredith Kujala at 218-726-4841 or mkujala@arcnorthland.org .

Program Highlights

Housing Services

The housing department at Arc Northland has continued to be busier than ever. We are grateful that we are able to serve so many people with disabilities in achieving safe and affordable housing; however, the high demand for services speaks to how affordable housing is significantly lacking. Recent statistics reflect 1,371 long-term homeless households currently in Southern St. Louis County and it is estimated that in order to solve the housing crisis we need an additional 3600 units of affordable housing built.

Despite the extreme housing shortage, we have been able to help move 54 people with disabilities into safe, independent and affordable housing in 2021. We are also pleased to announce that our housing department is expanding to meet the growing need. We are actively searching for an additional full-time staff member to join our growing team.

PCA Choice

Background Studies: During the pandemic, the requirement for fingerprinting was temporarily lifted. In November, the requirement resumed. New PCA applicants need to provide an email address for instructions on how to register and where to go. PCA's hired during the pandemic will receive instructions on how complete it.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV): Due to a federal law, workers who provide in-home services will soon be required to electronically clock in and out for each shift. The start date has been delayed to 2022. More information to come.

CFSS: The PCA program will be evolving into a new program called Community First Services and Supports which is projected to be mid-2022. Individuals who receive PCA services will transfer onto CFSS during their annual assessments. DHS is still working with the federal government to get CFSS approved.

Arrowhead Regional Quality Council (ARQC)

Arc Northland was awarded a new DHS grant to continue the work of the ARQC, which originated in 2016. The RQC's were not in the State Budget, initially but after extensive legislative advocacy, the RQC's were added into the 2022-2023 budget.

The ARQC will focus on five goal areas: 1. Expanding the ARQC regional membership and statewide collaboration; 2. Reconnecting with the Culture of Safety Project; 3. Expand outreach and education; 4. Expanding involvement within the Communities of Practice and the Institute on Community Integration; and 5. two new initiatives focused on Housing and Transportation.

The focus is on qualitative work, and will include connecting with the BIPOC community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) ; and creating Person-Centered principles trainings. We are hiring one more full-time employee to assist with the ARQC. Please feel free to help us spread the word.



Arc Northland Team:

PCA Choice

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Jenny Feehan

Naomi Gordon

Adult, Children, Families

Meredith Kujala

Summer Thomas

Alison Stucke

Brenda Caya

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Housing Services

Karel Hedstrom

Seth Borovsky

Arrowhead Regional Quality Council

Becky Lambert

Finance

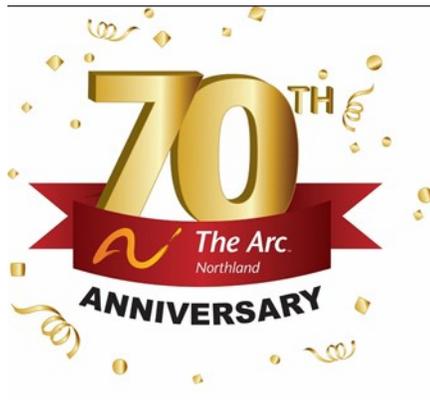
Rick Sailstad

Executive Director

Laurie Berner

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3.24.2022; The Garden Event Center



We hope you enjoy reading about the news and updates about Arc Northland's programs and services.

To support us through a financial donation, please find the link on our website. All proceeds support Arc Northland's local services.

We Thank You for your support!

Mission:

To promote and protect the rights of people with disabilities and their families while supporting inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetime.

Contact Us:

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Like us on **Facebook**.

Newsletters are available on our website. If you no longer want to receive this newsletter via the mail, contact us at info@arcnorthland.org or call: 218-726-4725.