



**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

— FOR THE FUTURE OF —

# The Arc



**The Arc**<sup>®</sup>

*For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities*



## Dear Friends and Colleagues:

We are excited to present, on behalf of The Arc's Board of Directors, The Long Range Strategic Planning Committee, and the national staff, the new Strategic Framework for the Future of The Arc. This Strategic Framework **declares our vision of the future** for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and reflects our deep commitment to work with and for them, their family members, and supporters to make that vision a reality. The millions of people with IDD are at the heart and soul of everything The Arc does and stands for. The Strategic Framework is intended to be a guiding light for all that The Arc does every day including **advocacy, mobilization, public education, and the operation of its programs and services at the national, state, and local levels**. It is the result of a two-year, extraordinarily collaborative and participatory process. Extensive input was gathered from thousands of stakeholders throughout The Arc's network as well as from a variety of other public and private sector parties. **An expansive nationwide survey was conducted which generated useful and important information from these stakeholders and respondents**. Interviews, meetings, and listening sessions were held to incorporate real-time perspective, thought, and opinion.

During this collaborative process, The Arc's Board of Directors, the Steering Committee of the National Conference of Executives, the National Council of Self-Advocates, the National Sibling Council, The Arc Alumni Council, many committees and work groups, and chapter leaders from across the nation were highly involved. This high level of engagement resulted in a dynamic, visionary plan representing the collective thinking and wisdom of our constituents, voluntary leadership, and staff nationwide.

The Strategic Framework is a living document without a rigid timeline. Its Goals, Strategies, and Tactics will move The Arc toward achieving its Vision with intrinsic flexibility to pivot to meet real time changes and challenges. The Strategic Framework was finalized in 2020 in the midst of a global pandemic which has exposed disparities and gaps in the nation's health care system impacting people with IDD and others. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities, families and caregivers,

**The Arc is critical in the lives of people with IDD.**

**81%** of stakeholder survey respondents said that the organization is helpful or very helpful in the lives of people with disabilities.

and frontline direct support professionals are navigating unexpected and novel challenges during the pandemic. Simultaneously, The Arc's commitment to and legacy of fighting injustice stands at the intersection with those seeking to combat injustice and discrimination on behalf of communities who have historically been marginalized and excluded from full equality in our nation. The Strategic Framework provides The Arc with the necessary flexibility to be an active participant in making a positive impact on these and other issues confronting our nation as we move confidently into the future.

Now more than ever, **The Arc must strategically build the disability rights movement into a more diverse and powerful force for**

**change**. We must **speak truth** to all who will listen. We will **advocate**. We will **innovate**. We will **extend our reach** and invite participation from anyone who believes in justice and dignity and rights of all our citizens, including persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

We invite you to embrace the Strategic Framework for the Future of the Arc and commit toward advancing and achieving our goals, together.

Sincerely,

**Frederick J. Misilo, Jr.**  
PRESIDENT AND BOARD CHAIR

**Kruti Acharya and Jose Velasco**  
CO-CHAIRS, LONG RANGE STRATEGIC  
PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Peter V. Berns**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**We must SPEAK TRUTH TO ALL WHO WILL LISTEN.  
We will ADVOCATE. We will INNOVATE.  
We will EXTEND OUR REACH...**



# MISSION

The Arc's mission is to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.



# VISION

The Arc's vision is for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to be valued members of their communities, with the opportunity to realize their full potential and a future that is secure.

# GOALS

To make this vision a reality, The Arc will work to achieve the following Goals.



## HUMAN DIGNITY

Every member of society recognizes and respects the human dignity of people with IDD.



## SELF-DETERMINATION

People with IDD are masters of their own lives and destinies, with help from family, friends, and other supporters if needed.



## QUALITY SUPPORTS

People with IDD and their families have timely access to the quality supports and services they need and want to achieve a life of personal significance.



## POWERFUL VOICE

The Arc is an even stronger, more diverse force for change, capable of wielding power with and on behalf of people with IDD and their families at the local, state, and national levels.



# STRATEGIES

The Arc will use the following strategies to advance and achieve our Goals.



## BUILD THE MOVEMENT

Mobilize a more powerful national movement of people to be activists for change



## SPEAK TRUTH TO ANYONE WHO WILL LISTEN

Work with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to amplify their stories



## ADVOCATE

Aggressively advance the interests of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families before the government



## EXTEND OUR REACH

Expand and sustain our presence as a critical part of the fabric of every community where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live



## INNOVATE

Capitalize on the collective knowledge and creativity of our federation of chapters to envision, pilot, and implement new and improved programs





# STRATEGY 1 BUILD THE MOVEMENT.

The Arc will **organize** and **mobilize** a more powerful national movement of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their family members, and supporters to be **activists for change**.

## TACTICS

- › Attract more people to our cause—including those from diverse communities—and engage them as leaders, as activists, as donors, and as allies
- › Organize and mobilize people to act
- › Support people with IDD to be leaders in the movement and in their communities
- › Support people with IDD, their family members, and chapter leaders to be powerful advocates at the national, state, and local levels
- › Engage more people with diverse personal characteristics in leadership in the IDD field
- › Continually test a range of marketing, communications, and media relations strategies, tactics, and messaging to drive attention to and garner resources for our advocacy
- › Capitalize on short-term campaign opportunities to build organizing infrastructure for the long term
- › Build, deploy, and sustain cutting-edge database and communications systems
- › Attract and engage businesses and other private and nonprofit sector organizations in our movement

### Survey respondents\* view The Arc's name as important for:



\*Among those who had an opinion



**of stakeholder survey respondents ranked it as highly important to be a part of a nationwide movement dedicated to people with IDD**

- › Attract more money to our cause to support advocacy and to expand and sustain the chapter network by pursuing increased individual, corporate, and foundation support and actively collaborating with chapters in fundraising
- › Embrace intersectionality in our pursuit of disability rights
- › Increase marketing and communications support for chapters to deliver a powerful, unified message
- › Publicize our power and influence and related successes to demonstrate our leadership in the IDD field
- › Ensure our primary communications and key messages are accessible to our constituents and stakeholders

## STRATEGY 2

# SPEAK TRUTH TO ANYONE WHO WILL LISTEN, AND THOSE WHO WILL NOT.



The Arc will work with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to **amplify their stories**, call for recognition of their **human dignity** and the day-to-day challenges they face, affirm their **abilities** and contributions, and **demand change**.

## TACTICS

- › Expand our network of relationships across all media channels
- › Increase our ability to communicate with impact beyond the disability community
- › Mount public awareness campaigns to inform and change public attitudes
- › Increase national media exposure to increase awareness of The Arc and coverage of issues impacting people with IDD
- › Publicize the contributions and potential of people with IDD as members of our community
- › Promote awareness about the negative impacts of segregation and isolation of people with IDD
- › Amplify the voices and perspectives of people of color with IDD, as well as those from other marginalized communities

87%

of respondents agree with the following statement

The human dignity of people with IDD is often not respected in our society



79%

of respondents agree with the following statement

People with IDD are rarely portrayed, or portrayed accurately, in the media





## STRATEGY 3

# ADVOCATE.

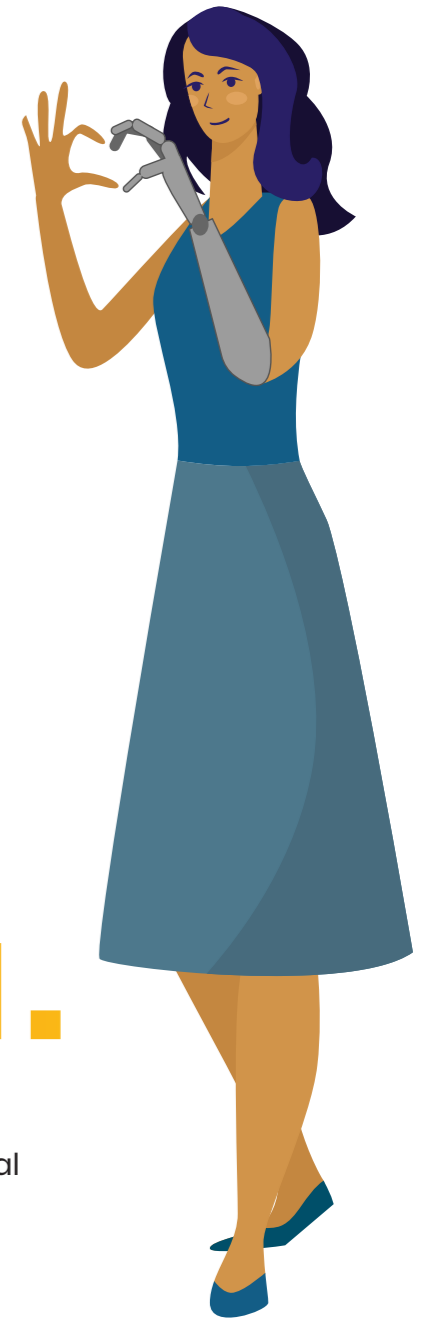
The Arc will **aggressively advance the interests** of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families before the executive and legislative branches of government and in the courts, and **influence the practices** of other private and public sector organizations.



## TACTICS

- › Support our chapter network for maximum engagement in both public policy and individual advocacy
- › Support and elevate the leadership role of self-advocates
- › Leverage the engagement of our chapter network, self-advocacy and family groups, and individual self-advocates, parents, and siblings for maximum impact
- › Engage elected officials regardless of party affiliation
- › Expand our capacity to advance the rights of people with IDD through the legal system
- › Expand relationships with law firms and attorneys and law enforcement, judicial, courts, and corrections personnel in pursuit of shared objectives
- › Expand our relationships with business, industry, and professional associations and their members in pursuit of shared objectives
- › Expand our relationships with civil rights, human rights, social justice, and anti-racism organizations; social services and religious groups; and organized labor in pursuit of shared objectives
- › Engage broadly to advance the civil rights of people with IDD across the lifespan





#### STRATEGY 4

# EXTEND OUR REACH.

The Arc will **expand and sustain** our presence as a critical part of the **fabric of every community** where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live.

#### TACTICS

---

- › Support existing chapters to grow and become stronger, more sustainable organizations
- › Attract new organizations to become part of The Arc and find new ways to establish our presence where it is missing
- › Provide new options for individuals, companies, other nonprofits, and religious organizations to participate with us
- › Become more diverse, accessible, equitable, and inclusive as a national office and support our chapters' efforts to do the same
- › Reach out to minority, marginalized, and disadvantaged communities and engage with them in ways that are relevant to their needs and our shared objectives





## TACTICS

- › Engage broadly to improve opportunities for people with IDD across the lifespan (e.g. education, employment, health, housing, individual and family support, etc.)
- › Engage private, nonprofit, and public sector organizations to hire, support, and retain employees with IDD
- › Engage private, nonprofit, and public sector organizations to recognize and address the needs of their employees who are caregivers
- › Seek out and drive replication of successful, evidence-based programs
- › Find, create, and seed new ideas and promising practices for supporting people with IDD to live and participate in the community
- › Explore opportunities to leverage existing and new technologies for maximum impact
- › Share knowledge widely, including convening practitioners and partners, creating new networks, and demonstrations
- › Provide high quality and affordable training, networking opportunities, and online resources to support our chapters to grow and evolve

## STRATEGY 5

# INNOVATE.

The Arc will **capitalize on the collective knowledge** and **creativity** of our federation of chapters to envision, pilot, and implement **new and improved programs, supports, and services** and to **create new opportunities** for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families that they need and want.





**Thanks to members of  
The Arc's Long Range  
Strategic Planning  
Committee, 2019-2020,  
for their service.**

**CO-CHAIRS**

**\*Krutu Acharya**, Associate Professor, Director – Illinois LEND Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Applied Health Sciences

**\*Jose Velasco**, Vice-President Operations & Strategy; Co-Lead, Autism at Work; SAP

**MEMBERS**

**\*\*Frank Adu**, Chief Executive Officer, The Arc Middlesex County

**Aaron Bishop**, Associate Executive Director Public Interest Government Relations, American Psychological Association

**Meghan Burke**, Associate Professor, Special Education, Illinois College of Education

**Maggie Butler**, Director Office of Disability Issues in Psychology, Public Interest Directorate, American Psychological Association

**\*\*Kim Dodson**, Executive Director, The Arc Indiana

**James Emmett**, Principal, James Emmett and Company

**Doug Golub**, President, Medisked

**Erika Hagensen**, Policy Consultant, The Arc North Carolina

**Tim Hawley**, Executive Director, Gigi's Playhouse – Twin Cities

**\*Hussain Ismail**, Social and Content Marketing Lead, Facebook

**\*Laura Kennedy**, Immediate Past President, The Arc New York

**Yvonne Metcalfe**, Tax Partner, International Tax Services, Ernst & Young

**\*Ken Oakes**, Director, Special Education (retired), School District of Philadelphia

**Damon Romine**, National Director, Communications & Marketing, SAG-AFTRA

**\*Mitch Routon**, Board Director, The Arc Pikes Peak Region

**\*\*Leo Sarkissian**, Executive Director, The Arc Massachusetts

**Emma Shouse Garton**, Director of Communications, Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities

**JoAnn Simons**, Chief Executive Officer, Northeast Arc

**Christiano Sosa**, Executive Director, The Arc Colorado

**\*\*Chris Stewart**, Chief Executive Officer, The Arc of Central Alabama

**Ric Swierat**, Executive Director (retired), The Arc Westchester

**\*Faye Tate**, Vice President of Diversity & Inclusion, Cobank

\*The Arc National board members

\*\*NCE Steering Committee members







1.800.433.5255



[info@thearc.org](mailto:info@thearc.org)



[thearc.org](http://thearc.org)



**The Arc**<sup>®</sup>

*For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities*

The Arc promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.