



# Family News

The Arc of Litchfield County, Inc.

July 2017



## Welcome our New Executive Director

We are pleased to announce that following a national search, Michael Menard has been selected by the Board of Directors to be LARC's new Executive Director, effective July 17<sup>th</sup>. Please join us in welcoming him into the LARC family.

"I am excited, honored, and humbled by the opportunity to help lead this organization" said Michael. "The passion and camaraderie that I felt during my visits speaks volumes about why LARC is so well-respected in the community. I can't wait to get started and to become part of the team."

Michael has 22 years of professional experience at the University of Connecticut, where served as Director of the Torrington Campus and Associate Director of the University's Office of Public Engagement. In addition to well established community connections and extensive management experience, Michael brings skills in facilities infrastructure, budget and finance, public safety, community outreach, government and community relations, personnel, staff recruitment and development, information technology, fundraising and donor relations.

To ensure a smooth transition, Larry Cassella is remaining involved with LARC on a part-time basis mentoring Michael and assisting with fundraising initiatives until December.

"Thanks to the wonderful work done by Larry and all staff members, LARC is in a great position; our agency is financially strong, has strong community ties, and is well respected for supporting individuals with disabilities" said Kimberley Brown, Board President. "I am confident that Michael will continue this work and will reinforce our mission of *Community for All*."

Michael can be reached at 860-482-9364 x28 or at [mmenard@litchfieldarc.org](mailto:mmenard@litchfieldarc.org).

**Please see reverse for an important budget update**



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chapter of The Arc.

# Impacts of State's Budget Cuts on LARC

In response to the absence of a state budget, Governor Malloy has implemented a "Resource Allocation Plan" which will have dire impacts on the lives of many local families. As of July 1st, the State is funding the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) on a limited basis, which translate to ***an estimated loss of \$500,000 in revenue to LARC***. A cut of that magnitude cannot be absorbed without dramatic cuts to services.

Under the Governor's spending plan there is a 10% cut in funding for day programs, and there is no funding for high school graduates. As a result, the progress made during the school years will be lost as these individuals are now forced to stay home. In addition, families will need to make difficult decisions involving quitting a job to stay at home with their adult child.

The State is also mandating six furlough days where they will not pay for day program services. While we know that this is disruptive to both the individual and family involved, we are forced to **close our day and vocational programs on Wednesday, July 26th**. The next furlough date is August 23rd, and unless a budget is in place that restores funding, we intend to close programs that day as well.

Cuts to community residential services call for no new funding for residential placements, with the exception of individuals already on the emergency list, and a 10% reduction in funding to group homes. LARC will be forced to make difficult decisions in order to continue to provide appropriate and safe care in our group homes. We are also looking at reducing staff hours and eliminating some transportation services.

**You can help!** Please contact your legislator and let them know that balancing the budget by denying services to people with disabilities is wrong. Remember, as a taxpayer and voter your voice matters! Tell them your name and address, what services your family receives, and what life would be like without them. Include pictures of your loved one to put a human face to the cuts. We expect that legislators will begin to meet on July 18th to discuss a budget. Ask them to vote on a budget that:

- Funds day and employment services for new graduates
- Does not eliminate the Community First Choice (CFC) program
- Provides waiting list funding for residential placements
- Stops program closures and layoffs by fully funding community nonprofit providers, such as LARC

To look up your State Representative or Senator, visit: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp> or call Christina at 860-482-9364 x39 for assistance.

Please also consider joining us for "**SOS! Save our Services Lobby Day**" at the State Capitol on Tuesday, **July 18th from 10:30 am - 2:00 pm** with The Arc Connecticut and other private nonprofit providers. You are welcome to come for all or part of the day. To arrange a carpool, call 860-482-9364 x39 or email [cemery@litchfieldarc.org](mailto:cemery@litchfieldarc.org).

The current situation is unacceptable. Every day that goes by without a budget puts more programs, services, and jobs at risk!