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Advocacy & Policy Conference 2022

Planning for Life Stages: Pathways to Success **PROGRAM SCHEDULE**



June 6 & June 7, 2022

A VIRTUAL EVENT!

LINK TO ALL JUNE 7th EVENTS HERE:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81391529753?pwd=Z3BJcjhlakxETThKdINONExHcmRUUT09>

ASL and Live Captioning Service Available

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Monday, June 6, 2022

**Board of Director's Meeting
&
Annual Membership Meeting**

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84995296921>

5:30 PM The Arc of Pennsylvania Board of Director's Meeting

6:30 PM Annual Membership Meeting

7:30 PM END

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Tuesday, June 7, 2021

(Schedule Subject to Change)

Join Webinar Link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81391529753?pwd=Z3BJcjhkxETThKdINONExHcmRUUT09>

9:00—9:30 AM Opening & Welcome

- Ms. Jessica Capitani, *President*, The Arc of PA
- Ms. Sara Wolff, *Assistant President*, The Arc of PA

9:15—9:30 AM Keynote

- Ms. Kristen Ahrens, *Deputy Secretary*, PA Office of Developmental Programs

9:30—10:45 AM Workshop 1—“Charting the LifeCourse: a Tool for Every Stage”

- Ms. Melissa Mecke, *Consultant*, Early Intervention Technical Assistance
- Ms. Diana Morris Smaglik, *Program Manager & Family Advisor*, The PA Family Network

10:45—11:00 AM BREAK

11:00—12:00 PM Workshop 2—“Early Intervention: Setting the Stages for Success”

- Ms. Lisa Parker, *Bureau Director of Early Intervention Services and Family Supports*, PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning
- Ms. Lisa Snyder, *Consultant*, The Arc of Pennsylvania’s Include Me Preschool

12:00—1:00 PM LUNCH BREAK

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1:00 – 2:00 PM **Workshop 3**—”School Age: Foundation for the Future”

- Ms. Carole Clancy, *Director of Bureau Special Education*, PA Department of Education
- Dr. Hillary Mangis, *Educational Consultant*, PA Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)
- Ms. Jacki Lyster, *Educational Consultant*, PA Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)

2:00—2:15 PM **BREAK**

2:15 – 3:00 PM **Workshop 4**—”Understanding Supported Decision Making”

- Ms. Jennifer Garman, Esq., *Director of Governmental Affairs*, Disability Rights PA

3:00 – 4:00 PM **Workshop 5**—”Financial Planning for the Future”

- Ms. Nancy McMillan, *Benefits Counseling Specialist*, Achieva

4:00 – 4:30 PM **Legislator of the Year Award**

- Senator Bob Mensch

4:30 PM **End of Conference**

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The Arc of Pennsylvania Honors
Senator Bob Mensch
with the “**Legislator of the Year**” Award
in recognition of his advocacy throughout his tenure on
supporting people with Intellectual and Developmental
Disabilities in the communities rather than institutions and
expanding the Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities to
ensure workers with IDD can earn more but still retain their
medical assistance benefits.

The Arc of Pennsylvania thanks Senator Mensch for his years of
service and wish him the best on his upcoming retirement.

Pennsylvania State Senator Bob Mensch represents the constituents of the 24th District (including parts of Berks, Bucks and Montgomery counties) bringing to the state Senate more than 35 years of business and management experience, coupled with political leadership and public service.

Senator Mensch was elected by his Republican colleagues to serve as Majority Caucus Chairman, a leadership position, for the 2020-2021 legislative session. As chairman he presides over Republican caucus meetings to discuss bills and amendments and to develop caucus strategy. He serves as Vice Chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee and sits on the influential Senate Appropriations Committee. In addition, the Senator is a member of four additional committees: Communications and Technology; Community, Economic, and Recreational Development; Labor and Industry; and Legislative Budget and Finance. He co-chairs the bipartisan Senate Life Science Caucus, Economy, Business and Jobs Caucus, and the Community College Caucus.

Bob’s top legislative priority is ensuring the Commonwealth has economic development and tax policies that promote economic expansion and job creation and make Pennsylvania the place where business and industry want to be and individuals want to live. Bob is also committed to farmland and open space preservation, as well as improving transportation infrastructure both within the 24th District and throughout the state.

Prior to his election to the state Senate, Bob served in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for the 147th Legislative District. He worked on issues relating to telecommunications, prescription drug theft, unemployment compensation, alternative energy system tax credits, and permanent tax credits for volunteer emergency responders. In addition to committee assignments, Bob was selected and appointed by the Speaker of the House to the Children’s Trust Fund Board, the Speaker’s Task Force on Crime and Violence, the Commonwealth Debt Task Force, the Energy Task Force, and the Select Committee on Information Security.

Bob previously served as a Marlborough Township Supervisor, and during his time as Chairman led successful efforts to preserve over 100 acres within the township. He was Chairman of the Upper Perkiomen Regional Planning Commission, where he began an initiative that implemented multiregional cooperation. He served in various leadership positions within the Upper Perkiomen Ambulance Association and transformed it into a fiscally responsible enterprise. He served in the U.S. Army Engineers Reserve from 1966 to 1972.

As a husband, father, grandfather, executive and community leader, Bob understands the issues that are most important to the communities and families of the 24th District. A native of Pennsburg and resident of Marlborough Township since 1975, Bob was married to his wife of over four decades, JoAnn, until she passed away in 2020. Together they raised two children and enjoyed being grandparents to grandson Zackary.

Senator Mensch will be retiring from the PA Senate at the end of 2022.

Thank you to our speakers



Jessica Capitani is the Board President of The Arc of Pennsylvania. She is also a board member of Children’s Miracle Network at Penn State Health and is a founder and co-chair of the Derry Township Special Education Parent Advisory Council. She is a contributing author to the book “Gifts: Mothers Reflect on How Children With Down Syndrome Enrich Their Lives” and assistant editor to “Gifts 2: How People With Down Syndrome Enrich the World”. She is a former co-chair of the Family Advisory Council at Penn State Children’s Hospital as well as Family Faculty member. She lives in Hershey, PA with her husband, Frank, and their son, Caden.

Sara Wolff has been involved with several governing bodies over the years including The Arc organization both locally and the state level since 2004. She serves on the Board of Directors for The Arc of Northeastern PA and The Arc of PA and is the coordinator of Advocacy Outreach for her local chapter. As a Self-Advocate, she specializes in public speaking, traveling the states educating others on the acceptance of all individuals, including those who have Down Syndrome. She joined the workforce out of high school and is employed as a Law Clerk at O’Malley and Langan Law Offices in Scranton PA. Her passion is a result of her strong family support system that made inclusion a priority and led her on a journey of Self-Advocacy. Ms. Wolff has been recognized for her efforts in advocacy and the passage of ABLE.



Kristen Ahrens currently serves as the Deputy Secretary for Pennsylvania’s Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) within the Department of Human Services. Prior to her appointment as Deputy Secretary, Ms. Ahrens served as the Director of the Bureau of Policy and Quality Management at ODP. Before joining ODP in 2016, Kristin was the Policy Director for the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University. Ms. Ahrens’ more than 25 years of experience working with people with disabilities, spans from advocacy and community education to providing supported living, family support and self-directed services and includes development and management of several self-directed models. Prior to moving to Pennsylvania, Ms. Ahrens was the Director of Self-Determination Resources, Inc. (SDRI), a regional brokerage serving adults with IDD, in Oregon. Ms. Ahrens has a Master’s in Education and Disability Studies Certificate from Temple University.

Melissa Mecke is credentialed by the Supporting Families National Community of Practice as a Charting the LifeCourse Ambassador and by the Learning Community for Person Centered Practices as a Person Centered Thinking Trainer. In her work with Early Intervention Technical Assistance (EITA), Melissa has supported statewide projects on behalf of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), including PA’s involvement in the national Community of Practice: Supporting Families throughout the Lifespan, OCDEL Policy Fellowship, Learning Online, leadership, evidence and evaluation, and statewide training and technical assistance. Melissa earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Dickinson College and a Master of Education in Training and Development from the Pennsylvania State University.



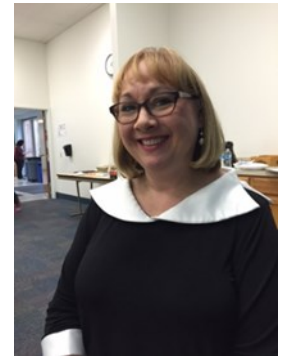
Thank you to our speakers



Diana Morris Smaglik has been both personally and professionally involved in the disability community for over 29 years. When her oldest son turned 4, he developed a rare epilepsy known as Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome and he became very medically involved. As a result, Diana became an avid advocate - determined to help other families travel the long, involved road that leads to supports, services and community life.

As part of the PA Family Network, Diana Has been actively involved in supporting families in the Intellectual Disability/Autism System for over 6 years. She creates person-centered, family-centered workshops, presents workshops, facilitates the activities of the Network of Family Advisors, and is an Ambassador for Charting the LifeCourse.

Lisa Parker has worked in a variety of leadership roles in the field of Early Intervention (EI) and Family Supports in Pennsylvania over the past 32 years. Supporting families, young children, and local communities first as an Infant Toddler EI Service Coordinator; then as an Infant Toddler EI County Coordinator before going to the Commonwealth. Lisa joined the Office of Child Development and Early Learning over 15 years ago as an EI Advisor; then as a Division Chief and now as Director of the Bureau of Early Intervention Services and Family Supports, overseeing Infant Toddler and Preschool EI programs as well as Family Support programs including Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) and state funded evidence based home visiting programs, Children's Trust Fund (CTF) positive parenting/prevention programs, community based Family Centers, and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood (PRF) programs.



Lisa Snyder lives in Middletown PA with her two children. She received her master's degree in Early Intervention in 2013. Lisa is a consultant with Include Me Preschool. She works with programs to increase family engagement in Early Intervention and help families develop their leadership skills. In her spare time Lisa enjoys spending time outside with her kids, cooking, and family movie.

Thank you to our speakers



Carole Clancy serves as the Director of Special Education for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Her extensive background includes over twenty-seven years spearheading initiatives in the field of Special Education within her school districts.

Ms. Clancy's role is to oversee the work of the Bureau of Special Education. The Bureau of Special Education works collaboratively with educators, schools, agencies, and other stakeholders across the Commonwealth to ensure students have access to quality and meaningful educational supports, services, and opportunities while complying with state and federal guidelines.

Prior to joining PDE, Ms. Clancy served as Director of Pupil Services for the Solanco School District, as Director of Special Education at Oxford Area School District, and served in many roles from educator to administrator within the School District of Lancaster from 1995-2015 ending her time as the Supervising Coordinator of Special Education Services.

Dr. Hillary Mangis is an Educational Consultant at PaTTAN Pittsburgh, where she co-leads the Secondary Transition initiative for the state. She also serves on the School Psychology, Universal Design for Learning, and Intensive interagency initiatives. Dr. Mangis' previous work experiences include serving as psychologist for Early Intervention/DART at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. In addition, she served as contracted school psychologist for West Allegheny and district school psychologist for Carlynton. Dr. Mangis joined the team at PaTTAN in 2017, following service as the Coordinator of Special Education and Student Services for the Carlynton School District.



Jacki Lyster is an Educational Consultant at PaTTAN with 25+ years' experience in the field of education. She co-leads the Middle School Success: Path to Graduation (P2G) State Personnel Development Grant project and the PaTTAN Secondary Transition Initiative. Jacki brings secondary classroom and community-based experience from both public and private education settings.

Thank you to our speakers



Jennifer Garman is the Director of Government Affairs for Disability Rights Pennsylvania (DRP). She leads the work of DRP on emerging policy issues on a statewide and federal basis. The policy work is cross-disability and cross-systems with a focus on ensuring that people with disabilities are fully included in all aspects of life and have access to home and community based services. Previously, Jennifer was the Project Director for the Protection and Advocacy of Beneficiaries of Social Security Project, addressing both individual and systemic barriers to employment for people with disabilities and the duties of employers under the ADA. Jennifer received her J.D. from Widener University School of Law and her B.A. from Pennsylvania State University.

Nancy McMillan has worked for Achieva, Inc. (formerly Arc-Allegheny) for 18 years, first as a Special Needs Trust Administrator, and the last 5 years as a Benefits Counseling Specialist. With United Way funding, their staff developed the project, “Employment Benefits Counseling”, for workers with disabilities. Previously, she was a Supports Coordinator for five years with Family Links, enrolling and serving individuals (Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities) into the Waivers. Having earned her Masters Degree in Social Work (MSW) and Certification in School Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh, she also has experience as a School Social Worker in public schools.



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**Thank you to The Arc of PA's Board
of Directors for their Wonderful
Service to The Arc of PA. Well done!**

We haven't forgotten the Advocacy
part of our Advocacy & Policy
Conference!

Eight chapters of The Arc are
participating in Virtual Advocacy
meetings with their legislators
throughout May and June.

THANK YOU The Arc Alliance, The Arc of
Centre County, The Arc of Chester
County, The Arc of Cumberland/Perry
Counties, The Arc of Erie, The Arc of
Indiana, The Arc of Philadelphia, The
Arc of Susquehanna Valley.

THANKS!

**See you next year at the
2023 Advocacy & Policy
Conference**

June 5-6, 2023

**LOCATION:
The Crowne Plaza
Harrisburg, PA**

**Mark Your
Calendars**