

FRIENDS OF THE ARC SUMMER 2020

Explore. Extend. Expand.



Dear Friend,

How are you? It's been an extraordinary time of anxiety, pain and change for all of us as together we forge ahead with a renewed commitment to racial justice and our mission.

At The Arc SF, our long history of activism puts us squarely in support of Black Lives Matter as we continue to hold a safe and inclusive space for our staff and participants while strengthening our support for BIPOC communities. ([See statement from The Arc San Francisco.](#))

In the midst of the ongoing pandemic, we watch with deep concern as state budget cuts target the programs that are the lifeline of support for Arc participants with developmental disabilities. We encourage you to visit [The Arc CA Advocacy](#) page to let our leaders know that we will not stand for the dismantling of services that are essential to so many lives.

We thank you, our dedicated allies and donors, for helping to lift the voices of progress, protest and partnership in the stories that follow.

For the latest updates about program activities, reopening plans and more, follow us on social media or visit our main site at www.thearcssf.org.

Stay in touch and stay safe until we meet again.

Kristen Pedersen, Interim Executive Director



Above: Friends Like Me after-hours program meets online weekly in a forum for up to 30 participants.

Friends Like Me: Talking, Protesting and Change

Vernae remembers a protest against the "R" word used in a movie. Cal talks about a white man who called him names he won't repeat. Sondra worries about people not wearing masks at a recent protest march.

"Arc participants are Bay Area folks who understand racism and discrimination," says Lance Scott, Manager of the popular Friends Like Me after-hours recreation program now on Zoom six days a week. "They want to talk about Black Lives Matter and ableism, so having a safe space on Zoom to share experiences with trusted friends is more important than ever."

"These are really challenging times for our participants who need to talk, ask questions and stay in the conversation. I'm committed to bringing current news and important social justice issues to our group so our participants can speak up and speak out," Scott added.

Learn more at <https://www.facebook.com/lance.scott.969>



Above: Anne demonstrates her culinary skills as she preps for spaghetti and meatballs.

Home but Not Alone during the Pandemic

"I really miss my friends but I'm doing ok," says Anne. She and her Arc support staff, Gary (masked and across the room) are meeting in her small studio in the Haight, going over her schedule for the week, planning her shopping and meals and talking about the things they miss while sheltering in place.

Like other Arc participants in isolation, Anne wasn't sure how she'd keep connected to the programs that support her independence. But thanks to the nimble efforts of The Arc's education and technology teams, within weeks a new website with all the classes, activities and information she and her peers count on was launched at [The Arc SF Hub](#).

Gary and other redeployed staff are filling the gap in personal contact by reaching out daily to every Arc participant, conducting wellness checks while supporting clients who live in a variety of situations, from board and care homes to residents of Arc Mercy Community housing like Anne.

Recently, Anne checked out an Arc drama class on Zoom. She needed Gary's help to join the group, but once in, she loved it. "Oh yeah, lots of music and dancing around--it got me moving!"

ArtReach Launches "ArcSF Windows Talk" Project



As worldwide protests and actions against police brutality and racism continue, the students and staff at The Arc's ArtReach Studio are leading a poster project that will cover the windows of The Arc's main campus location at Howard and 11th, San Francisco. The Arc Windows Talk Project is part of a larger effort to show solidarity and support for Black Lives Matter, LGBTQIA Pride, disability rights, voting rights and other social justice movements.

"We're inviting participants and The Arc community to express themselves. Whether it's through a poem, artwork, or writing...these windows are there to carry their message," says Mim Weisburd, Lead Art Instructor.

For more information about ArcSF Windows Talk, visit us @[thearcshub.org](https://www.thearcshub.org) on social media or on our website at www.thearcshub.org.

FAST FACTS: Responsive Services & Supports

(The Arc SF, period from March 18 to June 11, 2020)

- **8,519** Number of staff-conducted well-being and support checks on Arc participants since shut-down



- **99** Telehealth or in-person visits/appointments with clients
- **7,321** Visits to The Arc SF Hub remote learning site
- **85** Participants getting support to assess job readiness or to explore new careers

Shifting gears: Worklife in the New Normal



The Arc's Workforce Development team is in high gear supporting an active list of Arc participants who want support to assess current skills and interests, develop or revise a career plan and learn the skills needed to pursue the right personal path. Participants range from young "transition age" adults to recent internship grads to furloughed workers and even essential employees thinking about a different future.

"Although we're all apart from each other during this pandemic, we're reaching out to our participants and letting them know we are here to support their goals. From career exploration workshops to learning style assessments, we're here to provide our participants with the tools and skills they need to succeed," says Christa Preston, Associate Director of Employment Services.

For more information, contact cpreston@thearcSF.org.

Make a note! Save the date! Lots going on that you won't want to miss at The Arc San Francisco.

[Click on our Calendar for more information.](#)



6/18 Virtual Town Hall for Participants

6/25 Virtual Town Hall for Families & Circles of Support

7/15 Special Screening: "Crip Camp" and Director's Panel Discussion

8/11 Virtual Board Meeting

8/20 Work Life Virtual Award Celebration

The Arc San Francisco | San Francisco | Marin County | San Mateo County

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OUR MISSION To transform the lives of adults with developmental disabilities by advancing lifelong learning, personal achievement and independence.