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The Arc Maryland Honors 2017 Award Winners

ANNAPOLIS, MD – The Arc Maryland, the largest statewide nonprofit organization working to ensure equal rights and opportunities for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) announced this year's winners of several awards during its annual state convention in June.

"People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities depend on the dedication of thousands of volunteers in our communities each and every day, as well as support from our elected officials to protect critical funds and programs. Without this outpouring of support from our community, many of our citizens with I/DD would not be able to participate in activities, work, or manage daily activities. Each year, The Arc Maryland recognizes just a few of these outstanding volunteers and elected leaders and we hope this small appreciation of their hard work and generosity inspires others to lend a hand to help everyone live the most productive and independent life possible," said Richard Dean, board president.

A full list with fuller descriptions and photos are available at: www.thearcmd.org

This year's awards include state legislators who helped pass groundbreaking legislation that ensures access to education, childcare services, higher education opportunities, safe evacuation from public schools, and more. Legislative honorees also fought for restoration of funding in the state budget for critical programs and tax credits for disability-related home improvement costs. This year's legislative leadership award winners include:

- State Senator Andrew Serafini, Washington County
- State Senator William Smith, Jr., Montgomery County
- Senator Craig Zucker, Montgomery County
- Delegate Eric Ebersole, Baltimore & Howard Counties
- Delegate Eric Luedtke, Montgomery County
- Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Baltimore City
- Delegate Kirill Reznik, Montgomery County
- Delegate Alonzo Washington, Prince George's County

The Arc Maryland's President's Cup award winner was outgoing executive director, Cristine Marchand, who will retire next month after more than 30 years at the helm of The Arc Maryland. This award is selected annually by The Arc Maryland's state president and honors an individual, group or organization that has contributed to the mission and vision of The Arc by providing exceptional commitment to improve the quality of life for people with I/DD.

Legacy Awards were presented to Stephen Morgan, who retired this month as the executive director of The Arc Baltimore after a 45-year career with that chapter and Kathleen Rollason, who retired from The Arc Central Chesapeake Region after 38 years of advocating for people with I/DD. These awards honor individuals for a lifetime of work to create a legacy for the future and mission of The Arc.

The Gott Company received the Employer of the Year Award in recognition of its partnership with The Arc Southern Maryland. The company continues to employ people supported by The Arc and currently has four Arc supported employees in its location in Calvert County.

Anne Arundel County's Crofton Woods Elementary School First Grade teachers Lisa Lapina and Julia Nelson received this year's School Inclusion award. These teachers work creatively to ensure equal opportunities to education curriculum, as well as social interactions, for students with I/DD.

The Stanley S. Sidle & William Ohge, Jr. Memorial Citizenship Award was presented to Christopher McCaffery of Calvert County. This award honors an individual with I/DD for outstanding participation and contribution to the community. Christopher was honored for his leadership in helping law enforcement with training on I/DD related issues.

The Lorraine Sheehan – Bernard Could Volunteer Governmental Affairs awards went to Lori E. Scott of Howard County for her work on state legislation that will require individualized emergency evacuation plans for students with IEP and 504 plans in Maryland public schools. She also testified on behalf of the The Arc Maryland in opposition to the Death with Dignity legislation.

Leslie Seid Margolis received the Advocate of the Year award for her outstanding work as managing attorney at Disability Rights Maryland, Maryland's protection and advocacy agency, where she has worked since 1985. During the 2017 Legislative Session, she was instrumental in securing new rights for children and youth with disabilities and chairs the Maryland Education Advocacy Coalition.

Dr. Lynn Buhler was honored as Professional of the Year for her collaboration with The Arc Baltimore for the past six years. Dr. Buhler provides psychotherapy, mind-body wellness services and clinical research and specializes in cases of trauma and serious mental illness. Her work has helped many people pursue their dreams and reunite with family.

Becky Barry of The Arc Carroll County received the Outstanding Employee of the Year: Administration. Becky is now a program coordinator in the Support Services Department, after serving as a community living assistant. She also leads the Event Planning Committee to plan future events and outings for program participants. Her late brother, Michael, who had Cerebral Palsy, inspired her career path in helping others live happy, healthy, independent lives.

Aaron Stephens of The Arc of Frederick County received the Outstanding Employee of the Year: Program Management. With 20 years of professional experience advocating for the rights and quality of life for people with I/DD, Aaron has spent the past two legislative sessions as public policy fellow in Annapolis, writing and presenting testimony in support of legislation that protects and expands rights for people with disabilities.

Two employees received The Arc's Outstanding Employee of the Year: Gilbert John Zucchi Direct Care Award: Francine Barnhart of The Arc of Washington County and Regina Gaye of The Arc Prince George's County. Francine has worked as a direct care support staff for 21 years. In addition to building

relationships with local companies, activity centers and churches, she also works to help keep family relationships intact. Once a week, Francine picks up mothers who are no longer able to drive for dinner with their children. Regina Gaye has helped 20 individuals supported by The Arc Prince George's County obtain jobs at The University of Maryland. She also frequently provides direct care support coverage due to staff shortages or staff on leave.

Sgt. James Miller of the Easton Police Department received the Certificate of Appreciation/Meritorious Service for his leadership in I/DD education. He was the first officer in Talbot County to be trained for crisis intervention and ran the team at the department, helping create positive interactions between law enforcement and the I/DD community.

The Wolf Pack Theatre Company in Prince George's County also received a Certificate of Appreciation/Meritorious Service for its commitment to diversity and participation of diverse groups in productions. This past winter, they created a part in their annual production of "A Christmas Carol" for a young woman determined to have a speaking role, despite her disability. She had multiple speaking parts and sang in many musical scenes.

The Arc Baltimore received the annual Per Capita Membership Award and The Arc Montgomery received the annual Membership Achievement Award. Each chapter also recognized its outstanding chapter volunteer of the year awards, including:

- The Arc Central Chesapeake Region: Kathy Creighton
- The Arc Southern Maryland: Delores Datcher
- The Arc Howard County: Mike Lewis
- The Arc Baltimore: Neil MacDonald
- The Arc of Frederick County: Melissa Main
- The Arc Prince George's County: Shirley Patterson
- The Arc Maryland: Bea Rodgers
- The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region: Steve Rowlands
- The Arc of Washington County: Joe and Dianne Statari
- The Arc Montgomery County: Robert Tievsky
- The Arc Carroll County: UMBC Students – Olivia Hardy, Grace Salem, Danielle Boateng, Johan Raphael, Summer Mills, Sungheum Jo, David Lee, Shafin Malik, Raissa Toure, Raymond Bascal, Erica D'Eramo, and Feyisanmi Ojo