



Achieve with us.®

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www.thearcoakland.org

FIRST QUARTER 2025



For 54 years, The Arc of Oakland County has proudly hosted the Dove Awards Program—a cherished tradition that honors the outstanding contributions and dedication of individuals, businesses, and organizations in our community who have made a lasting impact on the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This annual fundraiser is more than just an awards ceremony; it's a joyous celebration of compassion, achievement, and community spirit—everything that makes The Arc of Oakland County so special!

JOIN US IN HONORING THE 2025 DOVE AWARDS RECIPIENTS!

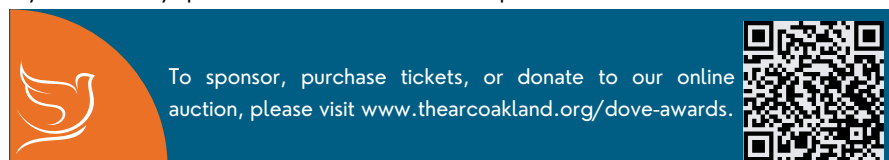
We invite you to join us for this unforgettable evening filled with celebration and connection. Dove Awards attendees will enjoy a plated dinner, live entertainment, in-person raffles, an online auction, an inspiring awards presentation, and more!

New Location Mark your calendars for **Thursday, March 13, 2025**, and join us at Petruzzello's Banquet & Conference Center in Troy for the 54th Annual Dove Awards Program and Online Auction. Together, let's honor the incredible people and organizations who make a difference in our community!

You can show your support for the Dove Awards by becoming a sponsor, purchasing tickets, and/or donating items for the online auction. The funds raised at this year's event will support the launch of new initiatives and projects aimed at further enhancing the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities. (See pages 4 and 5 for more details)

We look forward to sharing this memorable evening with you!

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call 248-816-1900.



"From the Director's Chair"

By: Dawn Calnen



Happy New Year from all of us at The Arc of Oakland County! With each new year, I like to reflect on all of the successes and challenges of the previous year, with hope to create an even brighter future for the people we serve. This past year was particularly trying for our public behavioral health system. OCHN reported being in a substantial deficit and has implemented standardized rates, which is negatively affecting both providers and individuals receiving services. I understand that part of the challenge in Oakland County stems from inadequate state and federal Medicaid funding to meet the community's growing needs, but at the end of the day, our public behavioral health system has a responsibility to provide an adequate network of services that can be readily accessed. Unfortunately, insufficient funding has led to service reductions and waitlists, leaving many families without the resources they depend on.

For children and adults with developmental disabilities, these cuts are not just numbers on a financial report; they represent a devastating loss of essential supports. When we fail to adequately fund programs and services for individuals with developmental disabilities, we undermine not only their well-being but also the stability of their families, with far-reaching consequences for our entire community.

Services, including community living supports, transportation, respite, and job training, allow individuals to thrive and live with dignity. They also provide lifelines to families who rely on these resources to balance caregiving with work and other responsibilities. When funding is cut, those lifelines fray.

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Mission Statement

The Arc of Oakland County advocates for the rights and full participation of all children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We strive to improve systems of supports and services; connect families; inspire our community and influence public policy.

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Parents are often forced to make impossible choices: cut back hours at work or quit their jobs altogether to provide the care that the system no longer supports.

Meanwhile, individuals with developmental disabilities face fewer opportunities to develop independence and contribute to their communities. Local providers and advocates are doing their best with limited resources, and long-term solutions require an increased investment at the state and county level.

We cannot solve budget challenges by cutting services to our most vulnerable citizens. Such reductions only exacerbate long-term costs while putting families and individuals in precarious situations. Instead, the solution lies in sustainable funding that supports both immediate needs and long-term outcomes.

In addition to the financial struggles at the state and local level, the changing federal landscape presents additional concerns. Medicaid is the backbone of services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Any federal reduction in Medicaid funding would only deepen the crisis we are facing at the local level, forcing even more families into impossible situations. Proposals that impose funding caps or reduce federal Medicaid contributions threaten the stability of these essential programs. Now, more than ever, we must stand together to protect Medicaid and ensure that those who rely on it are not left behind.

The Arc of Oakland County is focused on monitoring federal policy changes and advocating across local, state, and national levels to ensure that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities get the services and support they require. We will continue to work closely with other advocacy organizations, policymakers, providers, and families to push back against harmful proposals and fight for sustainable funding solutions.

The time to act is NOW. Please attend OCHN board meetings and tell your story. Talk to your federal, local, and state legislators about your needs. Speak up! Let's ensure that no family has to choose between caring for their loved ones and maintaining their livelihood. Let's create a future where EVERYONE has the support they need to live a full, meaningful life. By supporting those who are most in need, we all benefit.

Thank you for your continued support as we help families through these difficult times. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming Dove Awards Program, where we can celebrate the hardworking individuals who are making a real impact in our community." ...DHC

2024 Holiday Appeal – Thank You!



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the 2024 Holiday Appeal and for making a meaningful impact in the lives of individuals with disabilities! Your support of our 2024 Holiday Appeal is truly appreciated, and we are grateful for your role in our community and your belief in our mission.

Together, we have raised **more than \$26,925.00** that will help create a brighter and more inclusive future for all. THANK YOU!

Tootsie Roll Drive Volunteers Needed!

Knights of Columbus

The Arc of Oakland County will be participating in the annual Tootsie Roll Drive for children and adults with disabilities sponsored by local councils of the Knights of Columbus. This community service project has financially supported our local chapter of The Arc of Oakland County for several years.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED 4/11, 4/12 & 4/13

Knights of Columbus | Bishop Gallagher Council # 2569

Volunteer sites include Holiday Market & Hollywood Market in Royal Oak, the Royal Oak Farmers Market, the Post Office in Royal Oak and St. Mary's Catholic Church in Royal Oak.

Please contact Lisa Fuhr at lfuhr@thearcoakland.org or 248-846-7535 if you would like to sign up! 100% of proceeds raised during this fundraiser will go to The Arc of Oakland County

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

with The Arc of Oakland County's Executive Director — Dawn Calnen



SCAN CODE

VIRTUAL EVENT
Thursday, February 27
6:00 — 7:00 PM

JOIN US for an engaging Community Conversations virtual event!

Please scan the QR Code or visit The Arc of Oakland County's website at www.thearcoakland.org to register for this FREE event. Once you are registered, you will receive an email with the Zoom login information.

We look forward to collaborating with our members and friends!

SUCCESS STORY

Celebrating Dedication: The Arc's Financial Management Services Team A Story of Advocacy and Resilience

An advocate is defined as someone who speaks for, supports, or represents a person or group who may need extra help or protection. In 2024, The Arc's Financial Management Services (FMS) team embodied this definition to the fullest. Through their tireless dedication, they have continued to provide vital support to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, even as challenges mounted.

The Arc's FMS team serves individuals who rely on self-determined, person-centered plans and budgets to live full, independent lives. Over the past year, they've faced significant obstacles, including the rollout of a complex electronic visit verification (EVV) system, onboarding 162 new individuals and 350+ direct support professionals, and maintaining services— all while operating on reimbursement rates that have not changed since 2021.

Despite these challenges, the FMS team has stayed focused on their mission. With a payroll of approximately 1,250 direct support professionals serving 1,200 individuals and families, The Arc is projected to facilitate the flow of \$50 million in care funds from OCHN (Oakland Community Health Network) to direct support professionals in 2025. Every step of the way, the FMS team ensures that these funds are administered responsibly, helping families and direct support professionals navigate challenges, retain staff, and maintain proper wages— all with a supportive and detail-oriented approach.

However, the financial landscape has become increasingly strained. In December 2024, OCHN proposed a 2024–2025 contract with rates that represent a 12% reduction from the already unsustainable 2021 levels. Despite this, The Arc remains steadfast in its commitment to advocacy, asking OCHN to propose fair rates that reflect the quality and breadth of services provided.

Our FMS team doesn't just provide services— they empower individuals and families with hands-on support, patience, and expertise. Here are just a few testimonials that highlight their dedication:

"I decided to use The Arc's Advocacy Resource Center's walk-in hours to get hands-on help with installing the EVV app. Thank goodness I did! I was seen within 10 minutes, and the person helping me was friendly, patient, and really knew his stuff. My problem turned out to be complicated, but they stuck with me until it was fixed. I'm so glad I didn't stay home getting more and more frustrated"

"I just love how my FMS analyst notifies me of how my son's support people have clocked in and used their miles. They make it easy to track his budget."

"I appreciate getting heads-up emails from The Arc when my son's support staff need to recertify their training or update their insurance. Now I help remind staff too, and I don't worry that certifications will slip through the cracks."

At The Arc, we are dedicated to providing service that is efficient, effective, and compassionate. From answering calls promptly to offering walk-in assistance and guidance, our experienced team goes above and beyond to support the individuals, families, and direct support professionals we serve.

As we enter 2025, our dedication to being committed advocates remains strong. We continue to urge OCHN, state and county leaders to work with us in ensuring that the individuals and families who depend on these services are met with the support they deserve. Together, we can uphold the advocacy and excellence that define The Arc's mission.



54TH ANNUAL DOVE AWARDS



54th Annual Dove Awards Program

Each year, The Arc of Oakland County holds the Dove Awards, to recognize the efforts of individuals within our community that, through their dedication and commitment, have enhanced the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This annual fundraiser is a celebration of the selflessness and achievements of those who make a difference in the lives of others.

New Location! The 54th Annual Dove Awards will be held on **Thursday, March 13, 2025 | 6 PM** at Petruzzello's Banquet & Conference Center in Troy.

Funds raised at this year's event will help support new initiatives and projects aimed at further enhancing the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities.

Purchase tickets to join us for an unforgettable evening as we honor the 2025 Dove Awards Recipients!



Become a Sponsor

The Dove Awards would not be possible without the generosity of our donors and sponsors! Your support is vital in helping The Arc of Oakland County sustain and grow programs that positively influence our community. By sponsoring the Dove Awards Program, you play a key role in helping create a more inclusive future for everyone.



Donate to the Online Auction

In addition to the Dove Awards Program, we are also hosting an online auction that everyone can participate in! This online auction plays a significant role in the fundraising success of the Dove Awards. You can help by donating NEW items big or small!

Donation Ideas: gift cards; sports tickets; theatre & opera tickets; days/weeks at your vacation condo/home; spa/fitness club packages; rounds of golf; electronics.



Scan QR Code to Sponsor or Donate Online!

To sponsor, purchase tickets, or donate to our online auction, please visit www.thearcoakland.org/dove-awards.





SPONSORSHIP & TICKET OPPORTUNITIES

Dove Awards attendees will enjoy a plated dinner (cash bar), online auction, awards presentation and more! **All sponsorships, ticket purchases & donations are due by Friday, February 28, 2025.**

PRESENTING \$5,000+

- Ten (10) tickets/full table to attend the 2025 Dove Awards
- Ad/Logo recognition on individualized event signage and social media post
- Logo/Name recognition in newsletter, evening program, e-blasts and website
- Name prominently displayed in the Advocacy Resource Center

DIAMOND \$2,500+

- Six (6) tickets to attend the 2025 Dove Awards
- Logo/Name recognition on event signage and individualized social media post
- Logo/Name recognition in newsletter, evening program, e-blasts and website

PLATINUM \$1,000+

- Two (2) tickets to attend the 2025 Dove Awards
- Name recognition in newsletter, e-blasts, website, social media, evening program and event signage

GOLD \$500+

- Name recognition in newsletter, e-blasts, website, social media, evening program and event signage

SILVER \$250+

- Name recognition in newsletter, e-blasts, website, social media, evening program and event signage

BRONZE \$100+

- Name recognition in newsletter, e-blasts, website, social media, evening program and event signage

TICKETS

- \$65 Individual Ticket
- \$35 Individual Ticket/person with disability
- \$650 Full Table (10 Tickets)

*Sponsorship donations do not include tickets to attend the Dove Awards Program, unless otherwise noted.



Questions? Contact Lisa Fuhr at lfuhr@thearcoakland.org | 248-846-7535

2025 SSI RATES ACTION ALERT

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025, SSI RATES ARE ESTABLISHED AS FOLLOWS:

<u>LIVING SITUATIONS</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Household of Another	\$644.67	\$ 9.33*	\$654.00
Sharing/Independent	\$967.00	\$14.00*	\$981.00
Personal Care/AFC	\$967.00	\$157.50	\$1,124.50
COUPLE-House of Another	\$966.67	\$13.96*	\$980.63
COUPLE-Independent	\$1,450.00	\$21.00*	\$1,471.00

*The payment of the state supplement to SSI is sent on a quarterly basis, by either a paper check or via direct deposit, from the Michigan government to recipients at the "Household of Another" and the "Sharing/Independent" rates. Benefit payment checks (or direct deposits) are forwarded during the months of: March, June, September and December. For persons receiving only an SSI supplement amount due to the presence of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits and/or earned income, the state supplement will not be paid. Affected individuals must apply separately for Medicaid at a local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") office.

1. The "personal needs income" or "incidental needs allowance" for 2025 remains at **\$44.00** per month for Adult Foster Care recipients (Personal Care). The monthly AFC payment for 2025 is **\$1,124.50**. The SSI personal allowance for residents of a nursing home is \$30 federal and \$7 state for total of **\$37.00**.

2. **NOTE:** The cost-of-living ("C.O.L.A.") increase for SSI and SSDI benefits is **2.5%** for 2025.

3. An additional State Medicaid Personal Care Supplement check is paid directly to providers of Adult Foster Care. The amount for 2025 remains at **\$250.92** (effective: 10/1/18) per month per resident (see: ASM 077).

4. For concurrent recipients of SSI and SSDI (old age, survivors, widows, disability, and disabled adult child) benefits, the total of the two checks is \$20.00 more than SSI alone for the specific living situation.

5. The standard Medicare "Part B" monthly premium (i.e., single persons with annual incomes below **\$106,000**, and married filing jointly below **\$212,000**) for 2025 is **\$185.00**. Some longer-term enrollees may pay less each month due to special "hold harmless" premium calculations. If the state of Michigan pays the Part B premium due to your eligibility for Medicaid, the state will pay the **\$185.00**. Persons with higher annual incomes must pay a significantly higher monthly Part B premium (see: CMS Newsroom Fact Sheet, dated 11/8/2024).

6. The SSDI Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) work earnings ceiling for 2025 is increased to **\$1,620.00** (**\$2,700.00** if recipient is blind). The Trial Work Period threshold for 2025 is now at **\$1,160.00**.

7. The 2025 SSI asset limits remain at **\$2,000.00** for an individual and **\$3,000.00** for a couple. The monthly SSI Student Exclusion for 2025 is **\$2,350** (annual limit is **\$9,460**).

Supporting The Arc of Oakland County

Birthdays, anniversaries, and significant milestones are special moments that allow us to reflect, celebrate, and share our happiness with those we care about. A meaningful way to enhance your celebration is by supporting a cause close to your heart.

Whether it's for a birthday, wedding, holiday, or in memory/honor of a loved one, your donation can have a lasting impact. Rather than receiving gifts, you can encourage your friends and family to contribute to an organization.

At The Arc of Oakland County, we are dedicated to making a difference in the community we serve. Your donations help us continue our essential work and directly improves the lives of individuals with disabilities!

KATHERINE'S CORNER

Let's talk about the Dove Awards "Inspiration Award"!

By: Katherine Kauffman and The Arc of Oakland County Advocates



The Inspiration Award is meant to celebrate someone with a disability who is inspiring to their community. It might be someone who speaks up for others when they need support, helps them believe in themselves, provides others with hope, or encourages them to do their best so they can reach their full potential.

One time, I was recognized for getting a certificate of completion when I was in college, and it made me feel so accomplished. It motivated me to continue striving to be independent and gave me the confidence to know that I can always succeed with whatever I choose to do.

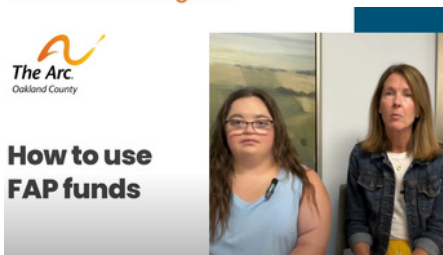
To me, the Inspiration Award is important because it recognizes accomplishments and hard work. At times, it can be difficult and overwhelming to find the strength to keep going, especially as people with disabilities often face many obstacles.

Join us on March 13th to cheer on all of the Dove Awards winners. I hope to see you there!

MEMBERSHIP PORTAL

As an added benefit to our members, our advocates will be uploading informational videos on key topics to the Membership Portal for only our members to view. We will then host a live Q&A session to dive deeper into the topic covered in the informational video.

Advocacy "How To" Video on the Food Assistance Program



Advocacy "How To" Video on Turning 18



Advocacy "How To" Video on Accessing Community Based Services



We'd love to hear your feedback! These "How To" advocacy videos are created for the benefit of our members. If there is a topic we haven't covered that you'd like to learn more about, please reach out and let us know.

If you're a member of The Arc of Oakland County and don't have access to our Membership Portal, you can contact our office at (248) 816-1900 or email us at info@thearcoakland.org to receive a registration link. This link will allow you to set up a login to view our advocacy videos and Q&A's at any time.

PROFILES



PROFILES is published by The Arc of Oakland County | 1641 West Big Beaver Road, Troy, MI 48084 | 248-816-1900

AS OF 12/31/24 WE HAVE 1,135 MEMBERS!

NEW MEMBERS

OCTOBER MEMBERS

Kimberly Black | Silya Brady-Stokes | Bobbie Dinklemann | Gary Koskinen |
Mindi Kurth | Mitchell Lipton | Jennifer Maxwell | Laura O'Connell | Laura
Sanchez | Donna Schilling | Sandra Sussman | Vernal Tiller

NOVEMBER MEMBERS

Kimberly Arroyo | Karma Brown | Susan Claffey | Kristen Dailey | Angelo &
Paula Lanni | Lauren MacLeod | Tina Makris | Darcee Matlen | Valerie
Moskalik | Sara Plumstead | Santosh Prabhu | Melissa Selenich | Grace
Serra | Paul & Vicki Thomas

DECEMBER MEMBERS

Ashley Barber | Peter Bauman | Amy Bennington | Diane Blackburn |
Chereese Carr | Koren Clark | Joan Edwards | Nicole Joyce | Amitai Kohn |
Joseph Lafave | Laura Miller | Juan Mora | Tia Mullins | Ronald Nelson | Julie
O'Donovan | Kevin Pokora | Susha Shuten | Devon Slanec | Sarah Stark |
Jeanne Vautaw | Stephanie Zender

The Arc of Oakland County Staff

Dawn Calnen, J.D. Executive Director	Monica Knoblock Director of Financial Management Services
Beth Lafata Comptroller	Megan Arnold Financial Management Services
Christie Kay Director of Programs & Operations	Ashley Ball Financial Management Services
Allison Murowany Director of Marketing & Communications	Megan Brandal Financial Management Services
Kiesha Lawton Forever Plan Coordinator & Membership Services	Leanne Cook Financial Management Services
Lisa Fuhr Fundraising Manager	Megan Hannigan Financial Management Services
Delia Eremie Accountant	Jonathan Howlett Financial Management Services
Jill Skornicka Advocate	Michelle Larzelere Financial Management Services
Jessica Showers Advocate	Diane McDaniel Financial Management Services
Katherine Kauffman Advocate	Jessica Pfeiffer Financial Management Services
Serena Kulaga Communications & Leadership Administrator	Garret Van Drunen Financial Management Services
Jodi Rubin Office Administrator	Linda Yucha Financial Management Services

Board of Directors

Lisa Kowalski, President
Randall Meono, 2nd VP
Suzanne Marquardt,
Secretary
Jerry Rubin, Treasurer
Tom Quakenbush,
Past President

Delegates-at-Large

Shashi Bihani
Mark Buckley
Max Elliott
Tim Hatfield
Dawn Hayes
Ellen Hulverson
Patrick Kauffman
Paul O'Meara
Annamarie Kupovits

Calendar

January

1 - Happy New Year!
20 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February

Jewish Disability Awareness &
Inclusion Month
11 - The Arc of Oakland County Board
of Directors Meeting, 7 PM
17 - Presidents' Day
27 - Community Conversations via
Zoom, 6 PM

March

Developmental Disabilities,
Cerebral Palsy, and
Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month
13 - Dove Awards, 6 PM, Petruzzello's
Banquet & Conference Center
21 - World Down Syndrome Day

In Memoriam

Troy Allen Butler
Ron Kimball
Kathleen Ann Kortge

Advocacy Resource Center Hours

Appointments will need to be scheduled for:

Monday: 12-5 PM
Tuesday: 9 AM-5 PM
Wednesday: 9 AM-1 PM & 4-5 PM
Thursday: 9 AM-2 PM
Friday: 9 AM-4 PM

Drop in hours:

Monday: 9 AM-12 PM
Wednesday: 1-4 PM
Thursday: 2-5 PM

We will also be offering evening hours one
Tuesday of the month and extended hours
one Saturday of the month by
appointment