Dear Members and Friends of The Arc of Oakland County,

It’s hard to believe that another year has come and gone. As I reflect on 2022, I am so proud of everything we have been able to implement and accomplish. The year may be coming to an end, but our work never stops.

This year, we worked hard to provide impactful health and wellness opportunities for individuals by creating an inclusive adaptive recreation pilot program and implemented a much-needed training course that provides individuals with important information about sexuality and healthy relationships. We also focused our efforts to increase The Arc’s presence by growing our advocacy team and are proudly going out into the community more regularly to bring awareness to the important programs and services we provide. More people know who we are, and more people are getting the assistance they need!

Advocacy remains our top priority! I want to take the time to share a few recent ADVOCACY IN ACTION stories that highlight how we have been working throughout the year to improve the lives of our members and their families.

After the mother of a young woman with an intellectual impairment died, she faced the real possibility of losing her childhood home. A place where she truly felt safe, she became a few months behind on the mortgage and could not catch up. We helped by partnering with other community agencies and, together, we provided both the financial resources and the legal assistance to reverse a foreclosure determination. She continues to live and thrive in her home!

The Arc of Oakland County is committed to being a voice for individuals and families as it relates to individual advocacy needs as well as systemic advocacy needs. We know that quality education is essential to a successful life. We recently learned that a school district sent 100 students with special needs home to learn virtually, so they could use their school for other students. We took action immediately and are currently in the process of advocating for the families, and students, so they can return to the classroom where they belong.

We know that people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else to live in the community of their choice, and the services they receive within their home should not cause them to be evicted. Recently, we helped three people from losing their home by advocating for their equal rights and valid tenancy. We will continue to be a voice for community inclusion!

We are happy to be celebrating 55 Years of achievement! We will continue to stand strong and fight for all individuals with disabilities. We are beyond thankful for those who have joined us in that effort. You are the pillar of strength for The Arc of Oakland County family – every membership, every volunteer, and every dollar you contribute is an investment in someone’s future! We cannot do this without your support, and we continue to need your help, now more than ever to help our community!

I respectfully request your consideration of The Arc of Oakland County as you plan your end-of-the-year tax-deductible donations. When you invest in our success, what you are really doing is helping another community member thrive!

Please remember to ask your employer’s human resources or payroll department if they offer a charitable matching gift program. These matches are often dollar for dollar, which doubles your charitable-donation power!

‘The Arc of Oakland County Board of Directors, staff and I wish you a wonderful holiday season and a joyful 2023. We hope that you will continue to join us and our movement in the upcoming year— to make sure every individual with a disability is living their best life!

Warmest wishes,

Dawn Calnen, J.D.
Executive Director
The Arc of Oakland County