

CARYN: Thank you all for attending our 2023 Annual Membership Meeting. I'll begin by calling our meeting to order.

Tonight, before we get into our Board business and voting matters, I'm happy to share news about what our Board and Staff have been working on together, why this collaborative process is so important, and the very productive and meaningful outcomes of our work.

Let's start by watching a video that I'm very excited to share—it presents the results of a successful collaboration process...our new Strategic Plan!

To create a powerful strategic plan, our entire Board and Staff worked together. We began the process with an intensive and productive meeting, and then spent time refining our ideas and wording.

Whether Staff or Board, everyone's input and perspective was sought and valued. I am proud to share this strategic plan with you tonight because I am confident that these goals will successfully guide our chapter toward the future. We will uphold our promise to the people we serve – to maintain quality and excellence in all we do.

The goals we arrived at, which you saw illustrated in the video, align with our mission to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes. I was so impressed with the thoughtful organization and framing of our goals, and how achievable they really are.

I feel our first goal is essential. **People with IDD and their families are at the center of everything we do.**

This is important because without the guidance and support from people with IDD and their family members, The Arc's mission is meaningless. Goal one acts as the touchstone for our decisions and the direction of our organization. As we move forward with planning what work will be accomplished during the next three years, we use this goal to focus our efforts so the needs and priorities of individuals with IDD and their families are at the center.

For me, our second goal, **The Arc is the destination for participation for our community** is important because it shows our commitment to creating

an organization that is not limited to just the IDD community. We are working to actively engage local governments, businesses, and individuals in the promotion of our Mission. It includes creating a work environment that recruits and retains highly qualified, high performing, and motivated employees. It seeks to create opportunities for volunteers both within and outside the IDD community to work with us to fulfill our Mission.

And goal three is: **Understanding and anticipating the needs of people with IDD and their families and preparing them to successfully navigate life transitions across the age spectrum.**

Achieving this goal will make a huge difference because it shows the importance we are placing on foresight. We are looking forward - **not** reacting **but** anticipating - the needs of the people we serve. Our staff team's experience has shown that when we can anticipate a need for information and resources, we can help avert crises.

We are all confident that this strategic plan will help us stay current and most importantly – relevant - to our community and the public.

Our Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2023 to 2025 is our shared roadmap and will lead our organization to successfully promote **engagement, participation and understanding** - not only in our community but also beyond. The three goals complement each other to keep The Arc focused on who we serve, anticipate the needs of our IDD community, and invite others to join us in our work. We are enthusiastic to take the steps to achieve these goals for our community and beyond.

Each of these goals will be woven into the work we do every day. This includes supporting more than 2,000 individuals and their family members and assisting them with problem solving related to self-advocacy, the school system, housing, transportation, employment, and other issues. In addition, the Board has been overseeing other very important plans for our chapter related to our Duty of Foresight.

I now want to share a bit more about foresight and our obligation to engage in looking to the future. All nonprofit Boards are bound by the duties of Care, Loyalty and Obedience. In a nutshell it means that we, as Board members, are committed to acting in the organization's best interest and being good stewards of the organization's resources. In recent years, the

Duty of Foresight has begun to be discussed in the nonprofit world. To think about the world around us, how it's changing, the impact it will have on the people we serve, and how we need to change along with it.

It's an emerging and important discussion in nonprofits and I'm excited to share that our Board has embraced the Duty of Foresight wholeheartedly. We are only at the beginning of this journey, so you can expect to hear more about it as we learn more ourselves. And now, I'm going to hand things over to Lori Ropa.

LORI: Hi everyone, and thanks again for being with us this evening. I'd like to share just a few of the things we've begun as a result of this fantastic collaboration. As Caryn mentioned, we have a new strategic plan. With every new strategic plan comes new opportunities, and this plan is especially inspiring.

As she mentioned, our Board and staff worked together to develop this strategic plan. Through their participation, lived disability experience, advocacy experience, and community experience, came together and informed this really important work.

So here are a few things that we have begun as a result of the collaboration.

Our first goal, putting people with IDD at the center of everything we do shows up every day in all we do, but I want to share that we've got a new research project going on right now that focuses on families and what they need now and in the future, and how The Arc can help. We've already conducted three focus groups and a large-scale survey is going out as well. We want you to guide where we go next.

Another way of moving this goal forward is to really put some energy and resources behind further developing Consulting Advocacy. At our last Summit of Hope, you might remember me mentioning our pilot; we were in the earliest stage of developing a way for people with lived experience to be engaged through The Arc to support someone going through a similar experience. Some types of organizations call this Peer Advocacy. We've chosen Consulting Advocacy. By the end of this new fiscal year, we will

have hired a program development consultant to help us bring this idea to life in scale!

Goal 2 is to make The Arc a destination for participation for all. With the support of the Board, we've done some incredible work to make The Arc a place people want to come to work and stay, with a supportive and welcoming culture and compensation and benefits that our team members deserve.

In addition, we've increased outreach to our broad community, opening our signature event The Summit of Hope to anyone who wishes to attend. And in the future, you'll see more opportunities to get involved and participate in The Arc's favorite and new events.

Our third goal reminds us that transitions are where we all encounter bumps in the road along our journey. We've engaged thoughtfully with families as they've had very difficult discussions about future planning and end of life. We've ramped up our work around transition-aged students and broadened our partnership with the school district to help ensure smooth transitions into adulthood. And when the research I mentioned a moment ago is complete, we'll be reinventing our flagship program Mobilizing Families to support younger families on their disability journey based on what they tell us they need. The program may or may not continue to have that name, but that important work will continue.

These opportunities are just a few of the actions that will propel The Arc forward, making sure that we are truly moving the Mission and creating the world in which we all want to live. We look forward to sharing more along the way and look forward to your participation.