

# MON-ARC *News*

Summer, 2017

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

As spring is ending, we at The Mon-Arc of Monroe are preparing for the start of the summer season. Here's what's happening around our office:

**Open House:** On May 11, 2017, the Board held a Meet and Greet Open House at our office. Even though the attendance was low, the benefits were huge. We made connections throughout the community that will benefit The Mon-Arc throughout the year. Thank you, Connie and Roxie, for all your hard work.

**Award:** May 25, 2017 was the annual Michigan Week breakfast. Mon-Arc was awarded a plaque along with many other local businesses, celebrating over 50 years in the community. From the Michigan Week program booklet:

*"The Mon-Arc of Monroe promotes the general welfare of all persons with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, counseling, education, and community program services. It is an affiliated chapter of the ARC Michigan and The Arc of the United States.*

*Our organization was founded in May 1962 by parents who were concerned about the lack of schooling and services available for people with disabilities and their families. The group was instrumental in the passage of the \$985,000 bonding proposal for construction of a special education school in 1971: The Monroe County Educational Center.*

*The Mon-Arc of Monroe was awarded the Community Achievement of the Year award for Monroe County in 1972 by the Michigan Week Committee. The award was presented to a group for accomplishments that have brought or are expected to bring betterment or advancement to the community.*

*Today, with a membership of nearly 100, we are guided by the same sense of purpose and dedication that inspired those parents 55 years ago. We have a rich tradition of services that address education, personal independence, financial assistance, health care, socialization, etc., for the developmentally disabled of Monroe County."*

Story continues on page 5



**New Location & Time!**  
**Friday, June 16 - 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**  
**Sponsored by The MON-ARC of Monroe**

**Outdoor Location:**  
**PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Located at 1920 Lewis Avenue, Ida**  
**If there is inclement weather, we will move inside.**  
**Hot Dogs, Chips and Drinks Will Be Provided!**  
**PLEASE BRING A FOLDING CHAIR**

**Serving children and adults with developmental challenges since 1962**

Affiliated with ARC U.S. ■ ARC Michigan ■ United Way of Monroe County

## Here to serve you ...

**Staff Members:** Sondra Nocella-Thorn, *Executive Director*  
Wanda McCann, *Rep Payee*

**Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
**Closed on Friday**

**Located at:** 6021 Parkside Drive, Monroe, MI

**Phone:** 734.241.5881

**Fax:** 734.241.3694

**E-mail:** [arcmonroe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:arcmonroe@sbcglobal.net)

**Website:** [www.monarcmonroe.org](http://www.monarcmonroe.org)

## Autism at Center of New Prime-Time TV Drama

- by Shaun Heasley

ABC will introduce a prime-time drama this fall featuring a lead character on the autism spectrum.

The hour-long drama, *"The Good Doctor"*, focuses on Shaun Murphy, a young surgeon with autism and savant syndrome who has left his quiet life in the country to work at a prestigious hospital.

"Alone in the world and unable to personally connect with those around him, Shaun uses his extraordinary medical gifts to save lives and challenge the skepticism of his colleagues," according to ABC.

*"The Good Doctor"* will air on Mondays at 10 p.m. this fall, ABC said, though an exact premiere date has not yet been announced. Freddie Highmore will star as Shaun Murphy.

## MON-ARC Board Members

**Maureen Dempsey**  
*President*

**Michael Brown**  
*Vice President*

**William Dashner**  
*Secretary*

**Jeffrey Stoll**  
*Treasurer*

**Kyrsten Niemiec**  
*Member-at-Large*

**Roxie Boll**  
*Member-at-Large*

**Susan Pickens**  
*Member-at-Large*

**Marge Burnett**  
*Past President*

**Board meetings are held  
on the 2nd Tuesday  
of every month  
at 6 p.m. at  
the MON-ARC office.**



It's easy and it won't cost you a dime!

1. Visit or login to:  
[www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com)
1. Enter # 90839 or search for and select  
The MON ARC of Monroe Inc.



The Mon-Arc of Monroe, Inc.



**Our Mission:** The **MON-ARC of Monroe, Inc.**, promotes the general welfare of all persons with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, counseling, education and community/program services.

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# State Education Plan Shortchanges Special Needs Students

- Brian Calley, Lieutenant Governor of Michigan

From the Detroit Free Press, May 19, 2017

Every child in Michigan deserves the chance to succeed in school and gain the knowledge needed to reach their full potential as adults. This, unfortunately, has not been the case historically for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It has been a priority of mine as lieutenant governor to reform our special education system and make sure we sent the message that all kids matter.

Though we have made progress on this front, Michigan's *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* plan needs to be improved to account for the needs of our most vulnerable students. I submitted my concerns, along with hundreds of parents and advocates, to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in March during its public comment period. Those suggestions, which would have strengthened school accountability, were not incorporated into the plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

I then personally reached out to Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and asked her to return Michigan's plan to MDE for improvement. Gov. Rick Snyder also expressed his concerns, stating "I believe that we can do better. Given Michigan's historically low performance nationally, we must ensure that our accountability system is transparent, honest and works for every student in the state." That frank critique certainly rings true for students with disabilities in our state.

MESSA created an accountability system to help ensure all students are learning, but changes are needed to Michigan's plan to fulfill that promise. Particularly, Michigan's n-size for student subgroup accountability must be lowered. "N-size" is the number of students a subgroup must include for its performance to be measured separately within the school. Michigan's proposed n-size of 30 would result in almost two-thirds of Michigan schools (61.5 not being required to meaningfully account for their students with disabilities. That would create a serious lack of transparency for students and their families, negatively impacting many of our most vulnerable students.

*Education Week* reports that 15 states and the District of Columbia submitted ESSA plans to the U.S. Department of Education this spring and Michigan's plan is one of only two that adopt an n-size of 30. The other 14 plans specify n-sizes ranging from 10 to 25. Accountability for our students should be a top priority and this is not a place where Michigan wants to be an outlier. We have a lower n-size for the English Learner subgroup, so there is no reason we shouldn't be able to do the same for the other student subgroups, including students in special education.

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* plan needs to focus on the success of every student, and that includes students with Individualized Education Plans. We owe it to our students and their families to improve Michigan's ESSA plan. I hope to work with the Michigan Department of Education on changes to better account for the performance of all student groups in our schools.

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## Zappos Looks To Help Shoppers With Special Needs

- by Shaun Heasley

On-line retail giant Zappos is looking to make it simpler for kids and adults with disabilities to find clothes that meet their sensory and physical needs. The retailer said recently that it is launching a special section on its site to highlight "functional and fashionable products designed to make life easier for those who have challenges getting dressed."

The new collection dubbed Zappos Adaptive features items that are reversible, pieces that are soft to the touch as well as clothing without tags, buttons and zippers, the company said. The selection also includes slip-on shoes, those with easy-to-use fasteners and orthotic-friendly footwear.

Zappos said the idea for the new section came from just one customer interaction. "Zappos Adaptive started with a single phone call from a customer looking to exchange a pair of shoes for her grandson who was unable to tie his own laces," said Saul Dave, director at Zappos. "My disappointment in not being able to replace the shoes inspired me to start this initiative."

In addition to featuring disability-friendly products, Zappos said it now has a dedicated team of adaptive specialists trained to help people shopping for those with special needs. The company indicated that it's still working to add to the Zappos Adaptive collection.

"Through our research, we discovered there is a huge underserved community needing clothing and footwear that is both functional and fashionable," Dave said. "This is just the beginning."





# Dining to Donate

Enjoy a meal that's filling – and fulfilling.



Dine at Applebee's®  
and 20% of your bill  
will be donated to  
**Mon-Arc Inc  
Of Monroe**

Present this flyer  
to your server on  
June 20, 2017  
at  
**MONROE APPLEBEE'S**

You must bring this flyer for your donation to be counted.



[applebees.com](http://applebees.com)

©2005 Applebee's International, Inc. Donation percentage excludes tax, tip and alcohol sales. Valid at participating restaurants during specified hours. Must present flyer in order for organization to receive credit for purchase. Flyers are not to be distributed in the restaurant or within the perimeter of the parking lot.

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**State Representative Joseph Bellino:** On Friday, June 26, 2017, Connie Janus and I had a meeting with Representative Joseph Bellino regarding the implications of Section 234 in the FY18 DHHS budget. We spoke with him at length stating our significant concerns with the Senate's recommendation contained in a new boilerplate section 234. Our message: Keep our public mental health system Public! Don't privatize or profitize our critical support services! This essential assistance is not medical and we don't want to receive it through a health plan! He was very sympathetic to our cause and even reached out to Lt. Governor Calley. *Thank you, Representative Bellino!*

**Summer Dance:** Our Summer Dance will be held on Friday, June 16. **Please remember that the time and location for this dance has changed.** It will be held in Ida at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 1920 Lewis Avenue, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. We will have hot dogs, chips and beverages for the first 130 people. We will also have a DJ to enhance the fun.

**Dining to Donate:** On June 20, from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., we will be hosting our next *Dining to Donate* at **Applebee's** in Monroe. Please join us and bring in the enclosed flyer. A portion of your bill will be donated back to Mon-Arc. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Conference:** On June 24, I will be attending the state's Disability Conference at Michigan State University. This is my first conference and I am excited to attend. I look forward to meeting with other executive directors from around the state and hearing from speakers such as Sherrie Boyd, Executive Director, The Arc of Michigan, and Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley.

**Safety:** Please be safe this summer and wear your sunscreen and insect repellent while you are out and about.

Happy 4th of July to all,

*Sondra Thorn*

## After Outage, Ed Department Unveils New IDEA Site

- by Michelle Diamant/Disability Scoop: June 1, 2017

Three months after a key government special education website crashed, federal officials are introducing a revamped on-line presence.

The U.S. Department of Education launched a new website dedicated to housing information on the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

The updated resource, which is based on feedback from parents, educators, disability advocates and other stakeholders, offers a design that's more consistent with the rest of the Education Department's branding. The site features better search capabilities, enhanced accessibility and more content, the agency said. "It is incumbent upon the government to provide accessible and accurate information to our citizens. That's why one of my first actions as secretary was to direct the department to fix and revitalize its woefully outdated IDEA site so that parents, educators and service providers could readily access the resources they need," said Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.

The move comes after the first weeks of DeVos' tenure were marred by concerns from special education advocates when **idea.ed.gov** went dark.

Education Department officials said that technical problems were to blame for outages that plagued the site for weeks before it was restored in late February. They indicated that the site had been neglected for years and included outdated information leading DeVos to order that a new platform be developed.

The old site at **idea.ed.gov** is expected to remain live for some time while the agency continues to collect feedback on the updated version.

"The department will continue to improve upon the new site by seeking and incorporating feedback from IDEA stakeholders in the coming months," DeVos said. "We are committed to ensuring all students with disabilities and their families have the supports and services guaranteed under the IDEA."



## With New Season, Down Syndrome Reality Show Broadens Focus

- by Shaun Heasley

A reality television show about a group of young adults with Down syndrome is set to return with a new season that will also explore the experiences of children with the chromosomal disorder.

A&E Network said a third season of *"Born This Way"* would start in May.

The hour-long show, which won an Emmy last year for outstanding unstructured reality program, offers a lens into the world of seven individuals with Down syndrome and their families as they navigate their paths to independence.

Over the course of the new 10-episode season, there will be "job changes, new living arrangements and evolving romantic relationships," A&E said.

"*'Born This Way'* has contributed to a cultural shift in the way individuals with differences are viewed and it remains incredibly rewarding to have such an impactful series on our air," said Elaine Frontain Bryant, executive vice president and head of programming for A&E. "This season we continue to highlight the shining personalities and incredible abilities of this cast of young adults who, alongside their families, fearlessly represent and celebrate diversity on television."

In addition, the show will add a new viewpoint this season by documenting a family raising a 3-year-old named Rocco who has Down syndrome.

*"Born This Way"* will air on Tuesdays at 10 p.m. ET on A&E.



## Star of New Comic Book Has Down Syndrome

- by Michelle Diamant

In a first, a new comic book debuting this summer will feature a superhero with an extra 21st chromosome.

Comic book publisher Lion Forge said they will introduce a character named Jonah, a teenage boy with Down syndrome, in a new series called *"Superb"*.

The move to include a superhero with a developmental disability comes as part of Lion Forge's pledge to provide "comics for everyone".

The story "features young adults finding out what it means to be a hero," said Sara Hart Weir, president of the National Down Syndrome Society.

The non-profit partnered with Lion Forge on the new series "in order to ensure the individuals with Down syndrome are properly represented," Weir said. "We look forward to sharing Jonah's adventures ... to encourage the value, acceptance and inclusion of the superheroes we know exist within all people with Down syndrome."

*"Superb"*, which is part of Lion Forge's *"Catalyst Prime"* line-up, will be released July 19.

# Thank You!

**A Very Special Thank You to ...**

■ **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**  
for your annual donation to our organization!

■ **Breaking Beans Coffee**

**for donating your coffee for our Open House!**

If you would like more detailed information regarding the Breaking Beans Coffee story, commercial orders or investing, please contact Tammy Lamb, the Founding Cupper, at **734.847.2203** or e-mail **sales@BBkoffee.com**



**Join our e-mail list and be first to hear about:**

- Presentations/events
- Press releases
- Changes or cancellations of events
- Newsletter, if you sign up
- Fundraisers
- Local, state and national current events

Call the office at **734.241.5881** or e-mail us at **arcmonroe@sbcglobal.net** to add your name to our e-mail list.

## **GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS:**

### **Senate Bill 38, House Bill 4137**

Allowing for fingerprint/photo of child or youth with special health care needs to be included in Automated Fingerprint Identification System and State Police or other designated statewide entity upon request of parent or guardian, to be distributed if the child or youth is missing or a runaway. Both bills have passed the Legislature and been presented to the Governor for signature.

### **HCBS Waiver**

The Center for Medicaid Services has new rules for the Home and Community Based Waiver and all states must comply. In June, Michigan's providers will begin receiving notification letters with a template and links to readiness tools and corrective action plans to achieve compliance with the new rules before the end of 2019. Compliance ensures that:

- Individuals who have disabilities have the same access to the community as individuals who do not have disabilities.
- Allows individuals the opportunity to make decisions about the services they receive and who provides their services.



**We appreciate our new and renewal members!**

#### **NEW MEMBERS:**

**Julie Bringman**  
**Jim & Chris Cieslinski**

#### **RENEWALS:**

**Edward & Carolyn Alston**  
**John & Barbara Bacarella**  
**Charles & Roxie Boll**  
**CHS Group Homes**  
**William Dashner**  
**Janet Esper**  
**James Gerber**  
**Judy Grounds**  
**Clyde & Barb Jenkins**  
**Chuck & Sue Leibenguth**  
**Carol Miletti**  
**James Franciscy**  
**Philip Masterfrance**  
**Mary May**  
**Cindy Mayes & Robert**  
**Elaine Mink**  
**James Nausbaum**  
**Larry & Sue Pickens**  
**Eugene Poupard**  
**Martha Plaskiewicz & James**  
**Ted & Mary Ann Reed**  
**Jimmie Semones**  
**Jeffery Stoll**



*For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities*

## **MON-ARC of Monroe, Inc.**

**6021 Parkside Drive  
Monroe, MI 48161**

**Affiliated with:**

**The ARC U.S.**

**The ARC Michigan**

**Proud to be a United Way agency.**



**Community Partner**

## **MEMBERSHIP FORM**

### **PLEASE PRINT:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check all the apply:** ☐ Parent/Guardian ☐ Developmentally Challenged Person  
☐ Sibling/Family ☐ Community Member ☐ Education/Professional Staff  
☐ Friend ☐ Business/Organization ☐ ARC Staff/Board Member

### **Membership in the MON-ARC for one year:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Family Membership	\$ 25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Person with Developmental Challenges	\$ 10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Membership	\$ 50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution to <b>MON-ARC</b>	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Membership	\$ 100.00		
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$ 200.00	<b>My total gift to MON-ARC (Tax Deductible)</b>	\$ _____

Send to **MON-ARC; 6021 Parkside Drive: Monroe, MI 48161.**

### **For Office Use Only:**

Date Rec: \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. Rec: \_\_\_\_\_ Ck. # \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_