



# The Arc of Virginia

*Creating A Life Like Yours In The Community For People With Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities*

The Arc of Augusta

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 18, 2007

The Arc of Central Virginia

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Danville ARC/  
Hatcher Center

## **The Arc of Virginia Advocates Say: Real Life Stories Are the Real Story**

The Arc of Eastern Shore

The Arc of Virginia today urged elected state officials to address the critical needs of persons with intellectual disabilities in the upcoming state budget cycle. The Arc is a statewide organization representing persons with intellectual disabilities (formerly labeled mental retardation) and related developmental disabilities. This year's advocacy campaign will highlight real family stories from across the state. These actual stories show the impact on families when they are unable to access needed help.

The Arc of Halifax

Hanover Arc

The Arc of  
Harrisonburg/  
Rockingham

The Arc will be seeking additional state funding to reduce Virginia's long waiting list. The Arc will also be urging the Governor and General Assembly to provide state capital outlay dollars to expand housing options in local communities for persons with intellectual disabilities.

The Arc of  
Lenowisco

The Arc of Loudoun County

The Arc's Executive Director, Jamie Trosclair, said, "The stories The Arc will be sharing during our advocacy campaign should help translate the current waiting list of over 3,700 from a dry statistic into real life family situations the public and our elected officials can understand. It is very unfortunate that for each story that will be highlighted there are hundreds more just like it all across the Commonwealth."

The Arc of Northern Shenandoah Valley

The Arc of Northern Virginia

Spotsylvania County: MM is 23 year-old young man with an intellectual disability. He was also born with a severe congenital malformation with a life expectancy of five years. MM was placed with a loving foster mother at birth. MM's foster mother provided the physical and emotional support that allowed him to thrive. No matter that his medical condition caused his hands to fold at the wrist making his fingers useless; no matter that his legs folded at the knees, necessitating a wheelchair; no matter that he couldn't speak – he communicated by head and body gestures. One year ago, MM completed high school and then his world ended. There was no Medicaid waiver funding available for a day support activity that would have allowed MM to continue to participate in the community on a daily basis. His former foster mother can't go work, as MM requires full-time care now that he is at home. A waiver slot would provide funding for MM to attend a day program. It would also help his mother with respite services as well as the knowledge that MM would be able to have a residential placement when his mother is no longer able to care for him. MM is on the waiver wait list, like thousands of others.

The Arc of the Virginia Peninsula

The Arc of Petersburg

The Arc of the Piedmont

The Arc of Greater Prince William

The Arc of Rappahannock

The Greater Richmond Area ARC

The Arc of Rockbridge

ARC Smyth County

The Arc of Warren County

The Arc of Greater Williamsburg

Prince William County: ZK is a 43 year-old woman with an intellectual disability. She lived at home until her mother died in January 2005. ZK had lived with her parents her entire life and she depended heavily on them. When their mother died, ZK's older sister stepped forward and had ZK move in with her. This living arrangement became too stressful for ZK's sister. ZK has now been rotating every month between two sisters for two years. Both sisters have their own families to look after and are seeking a community placement for ZK. This rotating living arrangement has also taken its toll on ZK. She would greatly benefit from living in a small group home where she can learn independent living skills while still maintaining family contacts. ZK has been on the wait list for a waiver slot for three and a half years.

Ms. Trosclair pointed out, "These wait list stories are two examples of how individuals with intellectual disabilities - who were cared for by loving families - are falling through the cracks in Virginia's safety net. State support and care for persons with mental disabilities have been a core state responsibility for over two hundred years. This longstanding state government responsibility should be met. The wait list must be reduced."