

OCTOBER 2022

# Disability: Part of the Equity Equation

Dear Friend of The Arc Kent County,

Thank you for supporting the critical work we are doing here in Kent County to empower people with disabilities by using a person-centered approach. October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the theme for this year is “Disability: Part of the Equity Equation.” We know many people with disabilities face challenges in seeking and obtaining employment such as lack of education or training, lack of transportation, physical barriers, and the need for special features at the job. Many employers miss out on the talents and capabilities of qualified candidates who live with disabilities, simply because they assume that accommodation is a burden for reasons that don’t prove out in reality.

According to Rise Services Inc., “Just about everyone will face difficulties or challenges at some point in their lives. However, persons with disabilities are more impacted by personal and environmental barriers. The World Health Organization defines employment barriers as ‘factors that limit functioning through their presence or absence.’ They can include:

- A physical environment that is inaccessible or hard to navigate
- Lack of assistive tools or technologies to help the person be effective
- Negative attitudes within the work environment
- A lack of relevant systems, services, and policies”

At The Arc Kent County, we aim to recognize the important role people with disabilities play in a truly diverse workforce. We work every day to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the opportunity for satisfying employment. Specifically, we help individuals navigate the Social Security rules for working and provide expertise with benefits planning along with other services.

We’re grateful for the opportunity to serve our community and to partner with you as we empower people with disabilities!

Sincerely,

**Tammy Finn**  
Executive Director

**The Arc**  
Kent County

Achievements

Firstname Lastname

Address line 1

Address line 2



Learn more about The Arc Kent County at **Arckent.org**.

## Spotlight: Shannon Cox

The Arc Kent County provides services for one of their clients, Shannon Cox, and helps make it possible for him to continue to have successful employment while adhering to the Social Security Administration rules and guidelines.

Tammy Finn, executive director of The Arc Kent County, connected with Shannon to learn more about his employment success and experiences. Here's what Shannon had to share.

**Tammy:** What do you like about working for Valley City Linen?

**Shannon:** Mostly everything. I like both of my bosses. We get along, and they are easy to talk to.

**Tammy:** Tell me a little bit about your job duties.

**Shannon:** I work on sorting sheets, picking up linen bags and taking them to the back, where they get sorted. I have been on one of their machines where the sheets get sorted.

**Tammy:** How has The Arc helped you keep your job since becoming your representative payee?

**Shannon:** You guys try to do your best and manage how much I make in this job. Maggie has helped with how much I can make at work. I like the debit card The Arc got me. It's very reliable and usable. I can get things that I need to get.

**Tammy:** Shannon, you've been a successful employee. What advice would you give someone else if they're trying to get a job?

**Shannon:** Most of the advice is to have good work skills. You will get along with other people if you ask questions. Just do a great job!

With October being National Disability Employment Awareness Month, The Arc Kent County encourages you to help create awareness and spread the word as we continue to work together as a community to make it possible for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to have satisfying employment. For additional resources or if you would like to learn more about employment and Social Security, please contact The Arc Kent County at 616.459.3339.