

MARCH 2023

Critical work. Big impact.

Lauri & Gene Stein

About Lauri

Lauri Stein has been an advocate for her son, Gene, since the day he was born. She advocated for him for inclusion programs from pre-K through his elementary and middle/high school years. Lauri continues to advocate for Gene, now 34, to get the services he needs to become more independent, to stay active and healthy, and to contribute to society through volunteer programs. Lauri is retired from Priority Health, where she worked as a nurse case manager.

Connection with The Arc

Lauri initially connected with the Arc in 1988 when she served on the board in San Diego County after Gene was born. After moving back to Michigan several years later, Lauri was able to join the board of the The Arc Kent County. She also served on the board of the Arc of Michigan within the past 10 years.

"Through the years, the Arc has supported my advocacy activities by providing knowledge about laws surrounding special education in schools and advocates for meetings. The Arc Kent County also assisted me un understanding the adult assistance Gene is entitled to receive. These can be complicated areas to understand but they (The Arc) have the answers," says Lauri.

Lauri still utilizes the Arc when she questions: "Is this legal? How can I change this service? How do I make sure Gene is receiving the right services to meet his needs?"

Advice from Lauri

"I would tell families and people with disabilities that they do not need to fight alone to get what they deserve. The Arc fills a void that initially may not be recognized by you. That void is your right to assistance and services to give you all a full life. The Arc is just an email or a phone call away."

If you are interested in learning more about opportunities for being an effective advocate for your child, please contact The Arc Kent County at 616.459.3339.



**March is Developmental
Disabilities Awareness Month**



Achieve together

The Arc
Kent County

Thank you for your commitment.

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 intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) by using a person-centered approach.

We've been busy this past year working to increase awareness and communication while providing more educational opportunities to the community. Our goal is to build an organization that will remain strong and relevant so we can continue to help individuals and families who need our services.

As I look to an exciting year ahead in 2023, I anticipate another successful year of service as we work together to support the full inclusion and participation of people with I/DD. While we have been working on new initiatives, our programs and services remain at the forefront of our work. Through our programs such as individual advocacy, representative payee services, educational trainings and expert advice on Social Security benefits, we have seen many lives changed for the better.

We are currently preparing for the National Core Indicators survey grant. Staff at The Arc Kent County will conduct over 80 surveys with persons with disabilities, family members and direct support professionals. The National Core Indicators are standard measures used to assess the outcome of services provided to individuals and families. The key indicators address employment, rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety. Go to ddi.wayne.edu/ncireports to see past survey results for Michigan.

Thank you for helping make this work possible.
Sincerely,

Tammy Finn
Executive Director



If you would like to consider a gift to support the continued work of The Arc Kent County, please give online at arckent.org/give.



Because of your Support.

With your support this past year, you helped make it possible for The Arc to respond to over 9,000 phone calls and referrals, assist more than 140 representative payee clients, and oversee 60 special education advocacy cases.

It is because of you that in 2022, we were able to achieve our mission: To actively support the full inclusion and participation of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our community. Thank you!

Our vision for 2023 is to continue to enhance communication and build awareness in the Kent County community about the critical work of The Arc and offer educational advocacy and supports to foster care students with a suspected disability or IEP/504 Plan, to improve educational outcomes.

We work toward achieving these initiatives to expand our growth and network so that we may better serve individuals with I/DD and their families.

Thank you for your support and commitment to The Arc. You are making a difference.

9,000+
calls + referrals

140+
payee clients
assisted

60
special education
advocacy cases

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



Save the Date Spring 2023

How Employment Affects Social Security Benefits for People with Disabilities

Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 12pm
Zoom webinar

For more information on upcoming
trainings, contact The Arc Kent
County at 616.459.3339.