

Summaries of State Chapter Interview/Outreach

Conducted by Arc of Iowa Board Members

There are 35 state chapters in The Arc network. The board was able to connect with 20 during this time of COVID19. Everyone that was contacted, gave in depth responses and seemed eager to share and were equally eager to see the results. Apparently this has not been done before and several chapters want to see our compilation and projected strategies to rebuild and strengthen our mission.

Observation – In reviewing all responses - there are no cookie cutter state chapters- they are extremely diverse and seem to have developed many different cultures. Unique responses are entered in spreadsheet that can be shared with you.

Several would like Arc of the United States to create more defined practices in order to have better continuity and to be more seamless.

All states who reported in had a very strong public policy presence supporting their constituency at the state capital. For some, it was the role of the ED. In other cases there was dedicated staff and in others they contracted with a lobbyist or public policy expert.

In response to **advocacy vs. service** – 12 identified that they did advocacy only, 6 said they did advocacy and service and 1 said they did service only (Oregon - states they are soft service such as guardianship). The Arc of Delaware has lots of state contracts and is very heavy into service.

Constitution of state vs. local chapters – 2 states that stood out as creating a strong state chapter with outreach (whether field offices or outreach coordinators) were Ohio and Minnesota. These 2 states have a very comprehensive system seated at the state capital and have field workers throughout the state. In Hawaii, which is geographically different from almost any other place, there are over 1,000 chapters. In sharing their structure, there are small groups of people who are almost neighborhood groups. This structure mirrors Hawaiian culture generally of family “pods”. Other states have variable numbers of chapters – however sparsely populated areas have little in the way of organized chapters.

Budgets ranged from minimal (Missouri puts on a fall conference to cover costs and the board of directors do all the work with no staff) to several between \$150,000 to \$1million, 4 having a budget between \$1 and \$2 million, 1 at \$3.5 million, 1 at \$5million and 1 at \$30 million (North Carolina that

manages enormous amount of property such as group homes and some as income producing revenue). South Carolina has a state contract to do I/DD case management in the state).

Memberships – Indiana had the most members – 30,000 and also the most chapters (43). They have an enormous Master trust and a training institute. South Carolina has quit doing memberships Other states such as Mass (11,000), Colorado (3500) with other states having numbers all over the board. Most state chapter reps indicated membership responsibility is on the local chapters. Some state chapters make every donor a member.

Affiliation structure – This too is diverse and has been an evolution over time. In general, state chapters have used affiliation fees – just as Arc of US does. In assessing responses, affiliation is becoming a smaller part of annual budgets. Assessment of fees are usually based on the revenue of local chapters, some are the same as national and others have blended rationale. Several chapters offer associate memberships to other providers/advocacy groups like DD Council, provider groups, Independent Living Centers (ILC), and so on.

Most percentages of affiliation dues were under 10%. Only Mass (30+%), NE (30%) and CT (50%) had substantial amounts.

In conclusion, the report indicates a very diverse approach to creating budgets for mission. The most successful state chapters (it seems) are those with outside revenue (whether generated through state contracts, social enterprise such as retail stores, master trusts, learning institutes, owning a hotel, or managing a large real estate portfolio for example).

We would like to thank the efforts of those who have volunteered to research this information. What we do with it goes to the very heart of The Arc of Iowa; how it is funded, what is most important and the legacy we leave to future generations.

An Initial Draft Concept

In aligning what Arc of Iowa (and local chapters) value - a) presence for public policy and advocacy at the capital and across the state b) a strong network of local chapters, c) engaged members, d) a financially stable state chapter budget with diverse funding to counter ebbs and flows of the economy and e) critically, training and support for all Iowans with I/DD. Following is the step to produce response, suggestions and interest.



Based on the information the Iowa Affiliation Committee collected, to begin a process in Iowa, the following conceptual draft was formatted as a way to encourage discussion at the board meeting.

In reviewing the document of states we kept referring to Indiana -*Indiana has a full time public policy presence using blended affiliation fees (chapters and other organizations), strong membership numbers, social enterprise, government contracts (and enviably, a large master trust) to fulfill its mission which appears to be embraced by citizens across the state in 43 local chapters.*

We fully comprehend that we have to work together to fully represent Iowans with I/DD in small towns and large metro areas. It will take effort and cooperation.

Our goal with this first draft is to start conversations that will result in the best result in a strong and stable mission and that produce results for those we care most about.

The Arc of Iowa

Creating the most effective structure to advocate and support 94,000 Iowans with I/DD

Background/Fact - In 1994 the board of directors at The Arc of Iowa formulated a plan to fund the work of the state chapter.

It created a structure that used the population of counties (Iowa still had about 50 chapters at that time) to create a fee schedule. This structure also encouraged the continued effort to gain members across Iowa. The board approved a structure that included not only the affiliation fee but \$10 for every member secured by a local chapter.

Many chapters have disappeared across Iowa since then, particularly in sparsely populated counties...or larger chapters have merged those counties. However, Iowa's largest metro area (Polk/Dallas) does NOT have a local chapter. The other larger metro area without a chapter is Council Bluffs.

One of the strategic objectives outlined by the board in 2018/19 was to achieve a public policy "voice" at the capital. To achieve this The Arc of Iowa had to create resources to hire/contract a professional to represent 94,000 Iowans. Through target fundraising that was accomplished for the current legislative session

A second objective was **to move from dependence upon affiliation** as the primary source of revenue; and become more self-sustaining. Finally, the Arc of Iowa would ultimately be a stronger

partner with local chapters to assist them in member management, social media platforms, donor management and other forms of back room support.

The Arc of Iowa had initiated a **social enterprise endeavor** (vending) and it was slowly producing returns that showed promise of financial integrity. At the same time smaller chapters were finding less ability to generate members or have money to remain affiliated.

The board voted in mid 2019 to create an affiliation committee to study how to revamp the 25+ year old structure and create a mechanism that would benefit both local chapters and the state chapter in protecting the needs of 94,000 Iowans with I/DD and to strengthen their voice. The first meeting did not generate participants. In October 2019 the board president agreed to recruit the original committee to actively participate in assessment and planning.

By December, names of participants were established. In January, calls were made to set a meeting for February. As the date approached the meeting was cancelled due to the resignation of one ED, a local rep who decided it was not what he wanted to do. By the first of March it was decided that the board could benefit from knowledge across the country. So each board member took some states. Of course the pandemic rose its head and caused fear that delay would set in – again. However, many state chapters helped albeit remotely and far from the office resources. By April 15 we had a usable sample to begin to digest information. The board agreed the information would be summarized and a concept or two could possibly be ready to start conversation at the May board meeting.

The goals for the board have been;

- a) Find an **equitable and achievable** structure to present to local chapters at the annual meeting that will
 - i) **Create revenue** that will allow the state chapter to underwrite the cost of a policy advocate at the state capital
 - ii) **Integrate the relationships** between National, Local and the State of Iowa Arcs.
 - iii) And that will help **support the communication and support strategies** needed for the state to support local chapters in their areas of need.

Initial Draft Concept - Presented for Study, Reflection and Improvement and Change

A. Affiliation Phase Down - Potential Phase Out

1. Year One – Affiliations are reduced by 10%. Balance of affiliation from chapters will be used to hire a member/advocate coordinator. This position would concentrate on recruiting,

retaining and communication with individuals across Iowa to be part of the Arc network. Coordinator will support the work of the public policy/advocacy team to the network.

2. The Arc currently has a list of 9,000 in its database which has been collected over the years but with no electronic contact information. We will rely upon local chapters to provide current emails and contact information. Chapters will have **the option** to turn over their recruitment process to this coordinator. Any member secured will be managed by the state chapter **but a local chapter will be paid \$10 for any “captured” member** in their specific catchment area. Example – a Cedar Falls special education teacher becomes a member. Arc of Iowa makes them a member of state and national and informs Cedar Valley of the individual and also sends \$10 and contact information so that individual can be part of the local chapter/community initiatives. The revenue will be used for public policy/advocacy.
CAVEAT A local chapter who relies heavily on membership for its budget will be critical in creating more options to this draft concept.
3. Year Two - Affiliations are reduced by 20% using the previous year base. The same strategy in #1 will be used. Introductions of Network Partners such as ASK Resource Center, DD Council, Independent Living Centers (ILC), IACP, NAMI, BIA, LSI, Respite Connection, Easter Seals, Goodwill will be solicited and invited to participate as an associate. The Arc of Iowa will begin to formulate action steps to find a partner(s) with a mission to study the potential of merger/collaboration. Begin writing targeted grants to secure funding for this potential.
4. Year Three – Affiliations are reduced by 20% using the previous year base. All strategies in #1 and 2 continue. The Arc of Iowa enters into potential merger/collaborative discussion. Continues to secure targeted funding
5. Year Four-Assessment of Affiliate Schedule and modifications made based on outcomes of action steps #1, 2 and 3.

Thank you for participating in studying this first draft. In working toward a goal that engages all chapters equitably, every one wins