



The Arc[®]

California

2020-2025

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Final Progress Report



INTRODUCTION

In April 2020, The Arc of California adopted a five-year strategic plan grounded in a clear vision: advancing justice, equity, and full community inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) across California. The plan identified five strategic priorities—Awareness, Public Policy, Diversity & Inclusion, Sustainability, and Infrastructure—intended to guide the organization’s work through 2025.



Almost immediately after adoption, the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped the landscape in which this plan was implemented. The Arc of California was required to adapt rapidly while continuing to advocate for people with I/DD and their families during a period of unprecedented disruption. Despite these challenges, the organization remained focused on its mission, expanded its leadership role statewide, and strengthened its capacity to respond to both immediate needs and long-term systemic issues.



This final report reflects on progress made over the full five-year period. It highlights key accomplishments, documents growth and adaptation, and demonstrates how The Arc of California emerged from this period more connected, more resilient, and better positioned to serve as a statewide leader for people with I/DD, their families, and local chapters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2020 and 2025, The Arc of California made substantial progress toward the goals outlined in its strategic plan, even as the organization navigated a rapidly changing external environment.

KEY OUTCOMES OVER THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD INCLUDE:

- **Expanded statewide leadership and visibility**, including significant growth in communications reach, training, and convening power.
- **Sustained and deepened public policy influence**, contributing to historic investments in developmental services, workforce initiatives, and protections for the disability community.
- **Meaningful advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion**, particularly through the creation and scaling of El Arc de California and culturally responsive community partnerships.
- **Strong financial stewardship and sustainability**, maintaining long-term operating reserves while investing strategically to increase impact.
- **Modernized infrastructure and operations**, leveraging technology and remote work to improve access, participation, and statewide engagement.

Together, these accomplishments demonstrate that the strategic plan not only guided day-to-day decision-making, but also provided a stable framework that allowed the organization to respond effectively to crisis, scale successful initiatives, and lay the groundwork for future growth.



GOAL I: AWARENESS

The Arc of California is the leader for and with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families throughout the state of California.

NARRATIVE

Over the course of the 2020-2025 strategic plan, The Arc of California significantly strengthened its role as a trusted statewide leader, convener, and source of information for people with I/DD, their families, and allied organizations.

Early in the plan period, the organization prioritized listening to the community. Surveys and ongoing engagement with families, self-advocates, and partners informed advocacy priorities, communications strategies, and program development. This commitment to listening ensured that the organization's work remained directly responsive to real-world needs across California.

The Arc of California also expanded its reach and visibility through consistent, accessible communications. The weekly *Monday Morning Memo*, targeted email advocacy, and coordinated social media efforts became core tools for engaging stakeholders statewide. Over time, these channels dramatically increased the organization's ability to share timely information, elevate community voices, and mobilize collective action.

A major milestone during the plan period was the organization's growing role as a statewide convener. The Arc of California sponsored and co-hosted conferences, while staff and board members served as presenters at regional and statewide trainings. These efforts strengthened collaboration across the disability community and reinforced The Arc of California's position as a hub for shared learning and advocacy.

Awareness efforts also intentionally expanded to reach communities historically underserved by disability systems. Through the launch and growth of **El Arc de California**, The Arc of California supported the development of an organized Spanish-speaking disability network and elevated culturally responsive leadership and advocacy. In addition, the organization broadened its focus to include aging family caregivers, securing state support to provide training, resources, and community-building opportunities with the launch of *Caring Futures* and *Futuros y Esperanza*.

FIVE-YEAR OUTCOMES & DATA HIGHLIGHTS (2020-2025)

- Conducted statewide surveys reaching **740 respondents** in the most recent year, with earlier surveys informing long-term advocacy and communications strategies.
- Expanded social media presence from **7,999 followers in 2020 to 14,916 followers by December 2025**, including the launch of dedicated El Arc platforms.
- Grew the organization’s email communications list from **6,597 contacts in 2020 to 43,983 contacts in 2025**.
- Built a statewide advocacy network through Phone2Action, growing from **zero contacts in 2020 to 61,187 contacts by 2025**.
- Convened and supported large-scale trainings and conferences, including:
 - **DisCo 2025**, a sold-out, two-day conference with nearly **700 attendees**
 - A **Caregiver Conference** with more than **1,200 registrants**, the largest event hosted by the organization to date
- Through Caring Futures and Futuros y Esperanza, served more than **3,400 individuals in 2025 alone**, across English- and Spanish-language programs.
- Reached an estimated **5,338 unduplicated individuals** through El Arc de California summits, webinars, advocacy actions, and campaigns.
- Achieved statewide geographic reach through engagement with **every Regional Center in California** and media campaigns reaching **all counties statewide**.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

By the conclusion of the strategic plan period, The Arc of California had transformed awareness work into a comprehensive, data-informed strategy rooted in listening, inclusion, and sustained engagement. These efforts significantly expanded statewide reach, strengthened trust across communities, and positioned the organization for continued leadership in the next strategic planning cycle.



GOAL II: PUBLIC POLICY

The Arc of California is the recognized expert in public policy and legislation that impacts people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

NARRATIVE

During the 2020-2025 strategic plan period, The Arc of California deepened its role as a leading voice in statewide disability policy, combining technical expertise, coalition leadership, and lived experience to influence systems-level change.

The organization consistently engaged with policymakers, state agencies, and advocacy partners to shape legislation and budget priorities affecting people with I/DD. This work required sustained presence, credibility, and the ability to translate community needs into actionable policy solutions. Throughout the five years, The Arc of California served not only as an advocate, but as a trusted resource for lawmakers and administrators navigating complex policy decisions.

WE THANK OUR CHAMPIONS IN THE LEGISLATURE
for taking a historic first step in funding services for Californians with developmental disabilities. Together, we can create a future of inclusion and opportunity for all!

Senator Nancy Skinner

Senator Phil Ting

Assemblymember Kevin Mullin

Assemblymember Jim Wood

#TheFutureIncludesUs

Coalition leadership remained central to this work. Through continued leadership of the Lanterman Coalition and The Arc & UCP California Collaboration, the organization helped align diverse stakeholders around shared priorities. These partnerships strengthened advocacy efforts and amplified impact, particularly during periods of significant system reform.

The Arc of California also played a critical role during the COVID-19 pandemic, advocating for nondiscriminatory healthcare practices, alternative service delivery models, and protections for people with I/DD at a time of heightened risk and uncertainty. These efforts reinforced the organization's reputation as a principled and effective policy leader.

Paid for by:
LANTERMAN COALITION

FIVE-YEAR OUTCOMES & DATA HIGHLIGHTS (2020-2025)

- Led statewide advocacy efforts supporting rate study implementation, resulting in more than \$2 billion per year in new investment in regional center services.
- Successfully advocated for an 8% provider rate increase, generating over \$300 million in additional annual investment.
- Played a central role in securing the creation and passage of DSP University, a statewide Direct Support Professional training program that includes increased pay tied to ongoing training.
- Produced and expanded the **California Disability Community Advocacy Conference (DisCo)**:
 - Initially delivered virtually during the pandemic
 - Transitioned to an in-person, sold-out conference by 2025
- Established a new statewide advocacy partnership with Easterseals, strengthening DisCo and coordinated policy efforts.
- Successfully led and co-chaired the **Lanterman Coalition**, maintaining a unified legislative agenda across disability organizations.
- Helped form and lead California's first Continued to lead a statewide civil rights coalition focused on disability justice for all with special emphasis on anti-disability hate crimes and elder and disability abuse. Successfully enacted three major bills with far-reaching impacts on our community and the state.
- Advocated for pandemic-related protections, including:
 - **Access to alternative and remote services**
 - **Nondiscriminatory healthcare and vaccine access**
 - **PPE prioritization for people with I/DD and Direct Support Professionals**

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

By the end of the strategic plan period, The Arc of California had solidified its role as a respected, effective, and influential policy leader. Through sustained advocacy, coalition leadership, and strategic partnerships, the organization helped secure historic investments and advance systemic reforms that will benefit Californians with I/DD for years to come.



GOAL III: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The Arc of California reflects the diversity of the state and the populations it serves; welcomes diverse opinions; and models effective methods of finding common ground in decision-making.

NARRATIVE

Over the five-year strategic plan period, The Arc of California undertook a significant organizational and cultural shift to more fully reflect the diversity of California and the communities most impacted by disability policy and systems.

What began as a commitment to improve representation and access evolved into a fundamental transformation in how the organization operates, communicates, and leads. The Arc of California moved from an English-first organization with translated materials to one offering **parallel English and Spanish programs**, supported by bilingual staff and culturally responsive leadership.



Central to this transformation was the creation and growth of **El Arc de California**, which provided a statewide platform for Spanish-speaking disability leaders to organize, build power, and shape advocacy priorities. This work expanded representation, strengthened trust, and ensured that policy and program decisions were informed by the lived experiences of diverse communities.

The organization also strengthened diversity and inclusion at the governance level, expanding Board capacity and increasing self-advocate representation. These changes improved decision-making and reinforced the organization's commitment to inclusive leadership.



FIVE-YEAR OUTCOMES & DATA HIGHLIGHTS (2020-2025)

- Expanded the Board of Directors from 4 to 10 at-large positions, with 8 at-large seats filled by 2025, including 4 self-advocates.
- Developed and implemented a strategic board recruitment and onboarding plan to support diverse representation and leadership.
- Launched and scaled El Arc de California, convening 7 statewide summits, each bringing together 40+ leaders from across California.
- Served an estimated 5,338 unduplicated individuals through El Arc summits, webinars, advocacy campaigns, and actions.
- Transitioned to offering parallel English and Spanish programs, including:
 - Advocacy conferences
 - Caregiver conferences
 - Futuros y Esperanza and Caring Futures programming
- Achieved a workforce milestone with more than half of staff bilingual by the end of the plan period.
- Supported community partners such as Congreso Familiar, which:
 - Secured multi-year grant funding
 - Hosted an in-person conference with 500+ participants
 - Delivered digital literacy and outreach programs across multiple regions

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

By 2025, diversity and inclusion were no longer discrete initiatives, but embedded organizational practices. The Arc of California emerged from the strategic plan period as a more inclusive, culturally responsive, and representative organization—better equipped to serve California’s diverse disability community and to lead with authenticity and equity.



GOAL IV: SUSTAINABILITY

The Arc of California is financially stable, solvent, sustainable, well-managed, and responsibly governed.

NARRATIVE

Over the course of the 2020-2025 strategic plan, The Arc of California strengthened its financial stability while navigating one of the most volatile funding environments in recent history. Rather than retreating in the face of uncertainty, the organization focused on disciplined financial stewardship paired with strategic investment to support mission impact.

From the outset of the plan period, leadership prioritized maintaining strong reserves and strengthening governance practices. As the organization’s role and reach expanded, financial decision-making evolved to balance long-term sustainability with timely investments in advocacy, infrastructure, and equity-driven initiatives.

The Arc of California also diversified revenue sources beyond chapter dues, leveraging grants, partnerships, sponsorships, and fundraising campaigns to support new programs and statewide convenings. These efforts increased financial resilience and reduced reliance on a single funding stream.



Throughout the five years, the Board of Directors and Executive Committee played an active role in fiscal oversight, policy development, and strategic deployment of resources—ensuring that financial health remained aligned with organizational values and priorities.

FIVE-YEAR OUTCOMES & DATA HIGHLIGHTS (2020-2025)

- Maintained **strong operating reserves throughout the plan period**, with an average reserve over five years of approximately **10.5 months of operating expenses**.
- Implemented **comprehensive fiscal policies** to strengthen accountability, transparency, and long-term financial planning.
- Diversified revenue sources to include:
 - State and regional center grants
 - Sponsorships and event revenue
 - Fundraising campaigns
- Raised **\$97,000 in sponsorships** and **\$14,274.80 in ticket sales for DisCo 2025**, demonstrating growing external investment in the organization’s advocacy work.
- Developed and expanded **Giving Tuesday** as a turnkey fundraising platform for both The Arc of California and local chapters.
- Secured program-specific funding partnerships, including:
 - **Golden Gate Regional Center - \$63,600**
 - **Lanterman Regional Center - \$30,000**
- Made intentional decisions to **deploy reserves strategically** in support of program growth, equity initiatives, and statewide impact.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

By the conclusion of the 2020-2025 strategic plan, The Arc of California demonstrated strong financial stewardship and governance. The organization emerged from a period of significant uncertainty with diversified revenue, clear fiscal policies, and reserves that support both stability and strategic growth—positioning it well for the next phase of planning and impact.



GOAL V: INFRASTRUCTURE

The Arc of California maintains the necessary infrastructure (physical and technological) to achieve the goals outlined in the strategic plan.

NARRATIVE

During the 2020-2025 strategic plan period, The Arc of California modernized its operational infrastructure to support statewide engagement, accessibility, and organizational effectiveness. The rapid shift required by the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated changes that ultimately strengthened the organization's long-term capacity.

Rather than returning to pre-pandemic operational models, The Arc of California adopted flexible, technology-enabled approaches that expanded participation and reduced geographic barriers. Investments in digital platforms, accessibility tools, and remote work systems allowed staff, Board members, self-advocates, and partners across California to engage more consistently and meaningfully.



Infrastructure decisions were also guided by fiscal responsibility. The organization evaluated physical office needs and made strategic choices to reduce costs while maintaining operational effectiveness.

Together, these changes created an infrastructure that supports statewide reach, inclusive participation, and a modern advocacy organization.

FIVE-YEAR OUTCOMES & DATA HIGHLIGHTS (2020-2025)

- Transitioned to a **remote and hybrid workforce model**, supported by clear policies, procedures, and accountability systems.
- Rapidly adopted and expanded use of **Zoom and other digital platforms** to support meetings, trainings, and conferences.
- Integrated **accessibility features** across virtual convenings, including:
 - Closed captioning
 - ASL interpretation
 - Spanish-language interpretation
- Successfully delivered major statewide convenings virtually during the pandemic, including multiple years of the **Public Policy Conference**, expanding access to participants across California.
- Evaluated physical office needs and **relocated office space** to reduce costs and align with remote operations.
- Built technological capacity that supported engagement with **every Regional Center in California** through programs such as Disability Thrive and Caring Futures.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

By the end of the strategic plan period, The Arc of California had established an infrastructure that is flexible, accessible, and aligned with statewide advocacy. These investments support ongoing collaboration, broaden participation, and ensure the organization is equipped to meet future challenges and opportunities.



CONCLUSION: LOOKING AHEAD

The 2020-2025 Strategic Plan guided The Arc of California through a period of extraordinary challenge and transformation. Despite unforeseen disruptions, the organization advanced its mission, strengthened its leadership role, and expanded its reach across California.

OVER FIVE YEARS, THE ARC OF CALIFORNIA:

- Deepened its influence in public policy and systems change
- Expanded and diversified community engagement
- Embedded equity and inclusion into its programs and governance
- Strengthened financial stewardship and operational resilience

These accomplishments reflect the dedication of staff, volunteers, Board members, self-advocates, families, chapters, and partners across the state. Together, they laid a strong foundation for the organization's next strategic planning cycle.

As The Arc of California looks ahead, it does so with greater capacity, stronger partnerships, and a clear commitment to continuing the work of advancing justice, equity, and full inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout California.

