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Christmas Eve, National Egg Nog Day, Last-Minute Shopper's Day, National Regifting Day

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Philanthropists make the holidays a little brighter for Northeast Arc

By **Anne Marie Tobin**
ITEM STAFF

DANVERS — Thanks to the generosity of a couple of prominent North Shore philanthropists, the Northeast Arc is making things brighter for people working with individuals diagnosed with COVID-19.

Julie Rainer Cummings of Swampscott and **Steven P. Rosenthal** of Marblehead recently donated a combined \$55,000 to the Danvers-based Arc, allowing the agency to provide year-end recognition to hundreds of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who have worked with individuals living in the Arc's 30-plus residences across the North Shore who have been diagnosed with coronavirus. These workers provide essential 24/7/365 hands-on care for individuals with disabilities.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Northeast Arc DSPs have worked tirelessly to support hundreds of individuals, and these holiday bonuses are in recognition of that effort.

"My family has been fortunate to be involved with Northeast Arc since its founding in the 1950s," said Cummings, a member of the Northeast Arc Board of Directors. "Direct Support Professionals are our backbone, directly supporting individuals in reaching their full potential. I've never been more proud of these employees and I am pleased we can show them our appreciation."

The gifts are the latest round

of financial support made by donors to the Arc during the pandemic, many of whom have provided the agency with hand sanitizer and personal protective equipment (PPE) and have helped make it possible for the Arc to move many services to a virtual model. But many people living in the Arc's residential homes still require in-person care, which DSPs have been providing since the beginning of the pandemic in March.

"The Northeast Arc continues to impress me with their incredible compassion and commitment to people with disabilities," said Rosenthal, also a member of the Northeast Arc Advisory Board. "During the pandemic, their Direct Support Professionals routinely put the needs of the individuals served by Northeast Arc ahead of their own and continue to do so on a daily basis. They deserve an incredible amount of respect for their hard work and I am happy to be able to join with **Julie Rainer Cummings** to show them support at this time."

Northeast Arc (NeArc) changes lives for people with disabilities — and children at risk of developing them — and their families. The agency, which opened the Center for Linking Lives at Liberty Tree Mall in Danvers in 2020, serves more than 15,000 people in 190 Massachusetts cities and towns each year. NeArc is the largest Arc in the state of Massachusetts and the second largest (of 700) in the country. Services include: adult



Ed Sholes, Direct Support Professional at the Northeast Arc, left, with John Braucher outside one of the residential homes owned and operated by the Northeast Arc.

family care, the ArcWorks Community Art Center, autism services, the Black Box Theater, the Breaking Grounds Café, continuous care nursing services, day habilitation, deaf services, early intervention, employment services, family support, First Steps Childcare & Preschool, fiscal intermediary, personal care assistance, recreation, residential, shared living and transition programs, and skilled intermittent home health care. Learn more at www.ne-arc.org.