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Fed funds to lift Arc of Mass. worker recruitment



The Arc of Opportunity in North Central Mass. is one of the chapters of the broader statewide Arc of Mass. and will benefit from the \$1.6 million in federal funding for worker recruitment. From left to right, Arc of Opportunity direct support staff member Glee, residential manager Kwadwo, direct care staff member Dulce, and Sabrina. (COURTESY ARC OF OPPORTUNITY IN NORTH CENTRAL MASS.)



By **COLIN A. YOUNG** | State House News Service
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FITCHBURG — As more than 3,000 adults remain unable to attend day or employment services due to a serious shortage of staff who provide direct care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Arc of Massachusetts celebrated an award of more than \$1.6 million in federal funds for its workforce recruitment program.

The organization said U.S. Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey reeled in \$1.635 million in federal money to help create a statewide marketing campaign to promote staff recruitment at the 17 non-profit chapters of The Arc of Massachusetts, which includes the Arc of Opportunity in North Central Mass.

The hope is that other service-providing agencies will be able to replicate the program, The Arc said.

“I’m delighted that The Arc of Massachusetts is receiving \$1.635 million in federal funding that Senator Markey and I helped secure for their workforce recruitment program,” Warren said in a statement. “With this federal funding, The Arc of Massachusetts will be able to recruit more direct care workers who provide critical care for people with disabilities.”

The Arc’s executive director, Leo Sarkissian, said the funding is expected to “significantly increase staffing.”

“It will provide hope to the many adults and families who are desperately waiting for services. The lack of services has a ripple effect: families and other caregivers face cutting back or quitting employment to care for loved ones, while people who cannot attend programs experience isolation and behavioral regression,” he said.

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