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Seacorp Inc and The Arc of New London County Announce Merger

NORWICH – Seacorp Inc and The Arc of New London County announced today that they will commence a merge of operations. The non-profit agencies have served people with intellectual and related disabilities in Southeastern Connecticut for a combined 86 years.

The Uncasville-based Seacorp Inc, with an annual operating budget of approximately \$3 million, serves 40 individuals in eight community living arrangements employing 65 people. The Norwich-based Arc of New London County is one of 22 Arcs statewide and a member of an international network advocating for and serving people with intellectual and related disabilities. A full-service agency, The Arc employs approximately 200 and serves close to 500 people in the areas of community participation, in-home supports, employment services, advocacy and community living arrangements as well as summer and winter programs at Camp Harkness in Waterford. The Arc's annual operating budget is approximately \$6 million, bringing the combined annual revenues to just over \$9 million.

Both organizations were established as grass-roots movements by families seeking full involvement and greater opportunity for loved ones with intellectual and related disabilities. Both are licensed private providers primarily supporting individuals served by Connecticut's Department of Developmental Services.

After a period of joint operation, the organizations will do business as The Arc of New London County. "Seacorp Inc and The Arc of New London County share a passionate determination to advocate for full inclusion for people with disabilities," said Kathleen Stauffer who will lead operations as chief executive. Seacorp's current executive director, Laurie Herring-Sylvestre, an industry veteran with 27 years of commitment to empowering people with disabilities, will serve as a senior executive with the title of Chief Quality Assurance Officer reporting to Stauffer.

Both agencies have a long history of excellence, and the move creates opportunities to serve new families and meet emerging, pressing needs in the community. "This merger," said Roberta Hublard, President of The Board of Directors of Seacorp, "makes Seacorp and The Arc of New London County stronger. It makes us better able to support the people we serve."

The merger is expected to facilitate long-term efficiencies by providing a larger on-call staffing pool to reduce overtime costs and introducing new scheduling efficiencies. Operations and overhead savings also are expected to be realized through natural attrition and employee sharing. Some of these already have been accomplished as both agencies have a cooperative history and, in recent months, have allowed key positions to go unfilled while initiating shared employee arrangements in the areas of finance, quality assurance and maintenance. The move makes the organization the second-largest private provider of community living arrangements in Southeastern Connecticut.

“Non-profits have to work as aggressively as possible to deliver quality services as efficiently as possible,” Stauffer said. “We are delighted to welcome this talented team into our Arc family. Our shared vision and similar genesis make this a natural partnership both in terms of continuing service quality and expanding targeted services for our participants.”

“We are doing more than establishing a smarter, leaner platform,” said John Fournier, President of The Arc of New London County’s Board of Directors. “We are positioning ourselves for change and growth despite a challenging economic climate.”

NOTE: The Arc of New London County is New London County’s agency of choice for many people with intellectual and related developmental disabilities. Located at 125 Sachem Street in Norwich, Connecticut, The Arc was established in 1952 by parents of children with intellectual disabilities to serve the citizens of New London County. Board of Directors: John Fournier, President; Enrico DeMatto, Vice President; Linda Rhodes, Secretary; Emily Fournier, Treasurer; Jessica Starling, Client Representative; Members: Shannon Aiello, Dawn DeCristofaro, Karen DiSaia, Mary Ann Duchene, Deborah Gregoire, Alan Messier, Alice Munyan, Immediate Past President: Diane Aubin.