**Use this template to personalize an awareness letter and send it to your local government officials (Mayor, Freeholder, Councilperson, School Board President, etc.)**

**Consider including a picture of you and your loved one with your letter. Remember Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is just that, a month to highlight your loved one and show the wonderful contributions they make to society.**

Dear (Mayor, Freeholder, Councilperson, etc. Local Legislator’s Name),

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is \_ and I am a constituent living in your *[county, district, township, Municipality, etc.]*. March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and I want to take this opportunity to speak with you about community inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

My *[son/daughter]* is *[age]* and has *[intellectual disability, developmental disability, Down Syndrome, etc.]*. *[He/she]* lives *[at home group home, etc.]* with *[me, sister/brother, etc.]*. My *[son/daughter] spends [his/her]* days *[working, at a day program, volunteering, etc.]*.

As you create programs, carry out initiatives and evaluate potential legislation please keep in mind that my son/daughter has a lot to offer the community. I welcome you to use National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month as an opportunity to learn more about people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their incredible accomplishments in our community.

For more information visit The Arc of New Jersey’s developmental disability awareness website at www.disabilityawarenessnj.org. Or feel free to use me as a resource for personal stories and information. Please contact me at \_\_.

Thank you for all you do in serving our community and for supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Sincerely,