



## FELLOW PROFILE

**Fellow's Name:** Maria Cortner

**Fellow's Partner Organization:** The Arc of the Pikes Peaks Region

**What are your main responsibilities as a PIFP fellow?**

We are currently working on fundraising for the Indy Give! Campaign. This requires communicating with potential donors about donating grants to our cause as well as planning events to fundraise and match the grants donated. All the funds we receive during this campaign will support The Arc PPR's Building for Change project that will create a fully-accessible facility and community center for all abilities.

**What's the most interesting thing you've learned in your fellowship so far?**

Each day, it has been really incredible to hear about the days and lives of the people who work here. The Arc PPR has various programs aimed at improving the experience of individuals with I/DD here in the springs. Some of these are educational advocacy, judicial advocacy, and guardianship. Each person at The Arc PPR has a particular position and they are extremely passionate about the work they do. The way they talk about the people they serve shows how much they care about disabilities issues and rights. Hearing their stories has been the highlights of my day.

**Why did you want to become a PIFP Fellow?**

I was really interested in working at The Arc PPR and learning about the work they do within the Colorado Springs community. I have worked in non-profit before and loved the work, and was inspired by the work The Arc PPR was doing for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

**What activities outside of your work do you enjoy?**

I enjoy just being outside and active in any capacity. I enjoy hiking and yoga. I am from Massachusetts originally and as I am heading into my senior year (my last guaranteed year in Colorado) I am trying to soak up as much of the sun here as possible. I also enjoy cooking and baking and I now have a garden I am just trying to keep alive. I also will admit that I spend far too much time and resources seeking out good (or the supposed "best") food.

**What is something most people would be surprised to know about you?**

I do not often give myself a chance to stop moving and manage to get myself involved in one too many tasks at a time. Therefore, I come off very extraverted and comfortable in groups and crowds. Truly though, I would admit that I am more introverted than I seem. It is often my time alone playing or writing music, driving in my car, or reading on my porch that I feel I am being my most honest self.