



Schenectady ARC Update

New Location, New Faces, and New Opportunities

Annual Awards Dinner celebrates new partnerships and ARC Consumers

The 2011 Annual Partner Awards Dinner changed location, emcee and everyone's perception of the individuals who work with Schenectady ARC.

Situated in the beautifully renovated Key Hall at Proctor's, Schenectady ARC honored local businesses, organizations and individuals for their outstanding commitment to enhancing the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities.

The ceremony began with comments from ARC Executive Director Kirk Lewis who

commented on the significant changes reflected on the significant changes that have taken place over the past months. Lewis then introduced the keynote speaker: NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner Jim Moran. Moran stepped in for Commissioner Courtney Burke who was called away at the last moment by Governor Cuomo.

beyond when partnering with our New Directions Employment Services Program to ensure success for our consumers. The second award reflected on E/One as the Customer of the Year. Eric LaCoppola from E/One accepted on behalf on the company, stating "E/One has enjoyed the partnership with Schenectady ARC and the individuals who come to E/One." This partnership involves individuals at Pine Ridge Industries assembling and packing control units for E/One while earning a paycheck for themselves.



E/One accepting the award for Customer of the Year.

The Community Partnership Award was given to Pedro Rosa of the Rotterdam Elk's for securing the funding for a collaborative project at ARC. The Sense-able Movies was a collaboration between the Elk's, Autism Society, Schenectady ARC, and Bow-Tie Cinemas. It provides 200 free tickets to families of children with Spectrum Disorders.

Director of Medicaid Service Coordination, Marcy Wilson, introduced the Self Advocate of the Year recipient saying "A true friend and compassionate advocate best described Michelle Rosenberger." Michelle is a tireless self-advocate who has made it a top priority to let representatives at the local, state and national level know how state cuts to programs and services negatively impact individuals with developmental disabilities. She also recently worked on raising awareness of cancer after losing a close friend. She worked through the Self Advocacy Group

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UP COMING events

24-25 NOVEMBER 2011
THANKSGIVING - OFFICES CLOSED

16 DECEMBER 2011
STAFF HOLIDAY PARTY

06 DECEMBER 2011
PINE RIDGE @ The ELK'S HOLIDAY PARTY

26 DECEMBER 2011
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Schenectady, NY 12305
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The theme of the evening was change. Mr. Moran spoke of the tremendous changes that are happening at the State, and the ability for non-profits like Schenectady ARC to be ready and able to adapt to those changes. The goal is always providing the highest quality care to the individuals we serve.

As the evening progressed, the awards ceremony began. The first two awards were given to companies who have recognized the full potential of people with disabilities in the workplace. Camelot Print and Copy was named Employer of the Year for employing an individual. Camelot was noted for going above and

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Social Work Department shares Sex Ed Program at Conference

Rocky Bonsal co-presents at Sexuality Conference in Latham, NY



Schenectady ARC Senior Social Worker, Rocky Bonsal, presented at the conference "Supporting Healthy Sexuality for People with Developmental Disabilities" on November 4, 2011. The event was produced by Saratoga Bridges and the Wildwood Program.

Bonsal reviewed a nine week program that is offered to individuals with I/DD ages 17 and older. The training that Schenectady ARC provides covers topics such as communication, private and public scenarios, and self protection in certain situations.

"Eileen Marrone of Wildwood asked me to present at their conference to talk about our Sexual Health Education (SHE) classes, since there are not many other options for adults with intellectual disabilities to get the information in a way they can really use it. I am very excited to be telling more people about the program," Bonsal said.

Bonsal has worked at ARC for nine years and has been conducting the sexuality education programs at Schenectady ARC for 5 years. Rocky has currently trained eleven teachers to provide the classes across the ARC organization. The classes are offered twice a year – spring and fall. The next classes will be this coming spring.

Annual Dinner continued.



to sell awareness bracelets. As Michelle received her award the audience erupted to a well deserved standing ovation.

Zach Ethridge accepted the Community Volunteer Award. He volunteered more than 500 hours at the ARC After School program through Scotia-Glenville schools. In addition, Zach has recruited his younger brother to volunteer at the program. "He is a bright light for many of the kids and he is so creative," said Serena Denofio, program director.

The night ended on a high note as a staff member was honored with the highest form of recognition given by the agency to a staff member: the Barbara and James H.

Schliff Award. The award is given annually to a staff member who demonstrates the highest degree of integrity, dedication and compassion while providing high quality resources and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. Kevin Cimbalo, house manager at Agnes Avenue, accepted the award to a well deserved standing ovation. He was accompanied to the podium with residents from the house. Kevin said, "It really is a team effort. I would not be here today without the people I work with."

Schenectady ARC's families, Board of Directors, and Staff congratulate all of the honorees and we look forward to seeing everyone again at next year's event!

National Task Group on Alzheimer's uses advice from Schenectady ARC team member

Schenectady ARC Licensed Clinical Social Worker Tammy Morley was part of a National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices.

Morley submitted a quote to a report "My Thinker's Not Working," A National Strategy for Enabling Adults Affected by Dementia to Remain in Their Community and Receive Quality Supports.

The overall goal of this initiative is to review and update the technological and clinical practices used by agencies in delivering supports and services to adults with ID affected the various dementias.

In early 2011, President Obama signed the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA) which is expected to lead to the development of a coherent and coordinated national strategy on dealing with Alzheimer's disease in the United States. The National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices is working to feed into the NAPA effort and ensure that the concerns and needs of people with intellectual disabilities and their families, when affected by dementia, are considered as part of this national strategy.



Administrative Staff

Kirk M. Lewis
Executive Director

Suzanne Pinto
Associate Executive Director

Jane Canale
Assistant Executive Director
Human Resources & Support Services

Jennifer Cole
Assistant Executive Director
Employment & Day Services

Brian Dwyer
Chief Financial Officer

We bet you never knew he was a celebrity in disguise

This celebrity may surprise you. He tends to be a more reserved employee. But, there is a wilder side to **Mark Sheehan**. Read on and you will learn more about his rocker-attitude.

Mark How long have you been with ARC?

I have been employed at the agency for 17 years. I am currently the Director of New Initiatives. I work on developing our community outreach and grant funded programs.

Your band has been around a while. Tell us about how you got started with them?

My experience with drumming began about 43 years ago when I was eight years old – when visiting my grandmother’s house on weekends, I would constantly bang on her pots and pans (to the dismay of my grandfather). It was then that my parents decided to sign me up for lessons in Syracuse. For my 50th birthday last year, my family cumulatively bought me a Roland TD-4 electronic drum set which I now use for practice and live performance. I am currently involved in two local bands, the Ed Salvo Band and Full Effect. Ed is a terrific, longtime local entertainer and guitarist, performing at many local venues in and around the Capital District. I learned of Ed’s need for a drummer from a fellow member of the Schenectady Rotary Club.



Mark Sheehan playing drums at Pinhead Susan’s with the *Ed Salvo Band*.

I have been playing with Ed since January at local sites such as the Flightline Pub in Glenville and Pinhead Susan’s in downtown Schenectady. While performing one evening several months ago, another local band, Full Effect, saw me playing with Ed and recruited me. They play a regular schedule of performances in Schenectady, most recently at the Shamrock Tavern on Clinton Street in Schenectady. It is loads of fun and I get to play with some awesome musicians and meet terrific people.

How has your music impacted work at ARC?

It has placed me in contact with musicians in Schenectady County. It has provided me with the opportunity to increase their awareness of our agency and the many needs facing those individuals we serve.

It also provides a venue for agency staff to socialize and enjoy some good music. Plus, it is so nice to see them having such a great time. I think it is a great wellness activity.

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Schenectady ARC -

A chapter of NYSARC, Inc. and a Member of The Arc of the United States.



Schenectady ARC is committed to helping people in the Capital Region enjoy healthy, rewarding lives as members of their community. Schenectady ARC brings staff, families, and community together to encourage dreams and respond to each person’s life choices by offering high quality services, resources and support.

Schenectady ARC Update

ARC Presents Fire Safety Program

ARC Group presents Fire Safety Curriculum and NYSADSP Event

With support from a Mary Frawley Memorial Grant from the NYS Association of Day Service Providers, Schenectady ARC's Luke Wilkinson, Marina Boldeau, and Trisha Vieira presented Thursday, November 3rd at the 2011 NYSADP Symposium.

D-I-Y A How To Guide to Create Your Own Consumer Fire Safety Curriculum was presented to provide the audience with an overview on how Schenectady ARC day hab programs created and developed its own consumer Fire and Personal Safety Curriculum. It was specifically designed to be versatile, use a multi-sensory approach and target different learning modalities.

This hands on, fun and easy to use curriculum allows staff to pick and choose the most useful materials for the consumers. The purpose of this curriculum is to build consumers'

understanding of fire safety and fire awareness within their own abilities. Various assessments used to track progress and skill acquisition were reviewed with participants as well as resources such as supporting activities, suggested community outings, books, videos, websites and games.



Wiffle Ball for Team Building



Members of Team Agnes stand ready to accept the trophy for the Wiffle Ball Tournament

The Residential Staff at ARC recently had the chance to play around. During DSP Week the residential staff from several houses at ARC joined at the Central Park baseball fields to get a little competitive.

This is the second year that the residential team has held this team building exercise for the staff.

This year the Wiffle Ball Tournament was intense. At the end of the day it was Team Agnes (21) that took the day. But not without some strong competition from the other teams. Nice work, everyone!

Schenectady ARC is rated by employees as "Best Place to Work" for 2nd Year

Schenectady ARC staff have once again voted Schenectady ARC as one of the Capital Region's Best Places to Work.

Notice was received by Executive Director Kirk Lewis on October 26. Schenectady ARC will hold an agency wide raffle for employees to win the chance to attend the recognition event on December 2, 2011 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Albany.

This award marks the third time the agency has been recognized as a Best Place to Work.



PROVIDING SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SINCE 1952.

Were you seen at the ARC Annual Partner Awards?



Top Row Left to Right: Employees at E/One pose with the Customer of the Year Award. Michelle Rosenberger and family display the Self Advocate of the Year Award. Camelot Print and Copy's Carm and Tom Popillizio pose with Gretchen Lesson (ARC) and Camelot employee Dave Nichols.

Bottom Row Left to Right: Zach Ethridge, Volunteer of the Year with Serena Denofio, ARC afterschool program director. Pedro Rosa, Community Partner of the Year poses with Mark Sheehan, Director of New Initiatives.

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Mr. James H. Schliff

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Schenectady ARC Update

Were you seen at the ARC 5k Challenge?



ARC 5k Challenged all who ran

The ARC 5k Challenge was developed to raise awareness of Developmental Disabilities in Schenectady County. The secondary mission was to serve as an education vehicle for the public on the use of insensitive terms such as the "R" word and demonstrate that Adults and Children with Developmental Disabilities are very similar to everyone else. That is why in our logo we used the CAPABILITIES tag line. Because we are all capable.

The ARC 5k Challenge was two events on October 15. The Family Mini Wellness Challenge allowed children and families to participate in a fun but challenging course that will keep everybody fit and healthy. The family mile was led by South Paw from the Tri-City Valley Cats and was won by Alia Acosta. The 5k Course (USATF Certified) provided our serious runners with a challenge. The course

meandered through Schenectady's beautiful Central Park with challenging hills at the start and relaxing flats to finish off the race.

Chuck Terry was the best overall runner even with a little course snafu. He was followed in by Kahlil Scott, Jr. The best corporate team participation award went to Schenectady ARC.



Kahlil Scott Jr (L) and Chuck Terry (R) were the best overall runners at the 5K Challenge



Eagle Scout Builds Picnic Tables for ARC

Kevin Ravas spent countless hours soliciting donations and hammering nails. His work paid off when he delivered two new picnic tables to the consumers and staff at Schenectady ARC's Paul Christian House.

The tables were put to use right away by the consumers who thanked Kevin and the rest of the Troop 37 Scouts.

Kevin worked on the tables for his Eagle Scout community service project.

CQC is making changes

The state Commission on Quality of Care is overhauling its' operation. They have a new director, Roger Bearden, who was appointed by Gov. Cuomo in April. The changes are part of a larger revamping of the state's vast system of disability and mental health services.

Here are the details:

The Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQC) today announced substantial reforms to fulfill its mission to protect and advocate for all New Yorkers with disabilities.

The Commission oversees the operations of several state agencies, including the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS).

The changes follow an extensive review of the agency's operations over the past several months by Chair Roger Bearden, a nationally recognized human rights attorney who was appointed to the position by Governor Cuomo in April. The changes include:

- Focusing CQC's work on systemic issues to increase the impact and effectiveness of its oversight role;
- Establishing direct access to the incident management systems of the agencies CQC oversees;

- Improving investigative targeting through use of data analysis;
- Raising the visibility of CQC's oversight role and improving care through broad dissemination of its reports, investigative findings and recommendations;
- Expanding involvement in policy development to drive needed changes;
- Increasing outreach to disability stakeholder groups, and;
- Improving customer service, including centralizing and strengthening CQC's intake process.

Bearden is implementing the reforms in collaboration with Clarence Sundram, who served as the Commission's first Chair when it was created in 1977. Sundram is currently serving as a special advisor to the Governor who is making a comprehensive review of state programs and services for people with disabilities. Sundram will present his recommendations for improving the system in the near future.

"The changes I have made are designed to return the Commission to an effective role as the State's independent watchdog for overseeing the care and treatment of New Yorkers with disabilities," said Bearden. "The Commission is greatly strengthening its ability to detect and analyze systemic problems and to widely publicize the results of its work."

Staff Appreciation Week



Executive Director Kirk Lewis serves ice-cream at the Staff Appreciation Week

Schenectady ARC employees enjoyed a week of lunches served by Executive Management.

Executive Director Kirk Lewis and his team thanked the staff of Schenectady ARC with a week long lunch service that moved from site to site. The program is part of Staff Appreciation Week at Schenectady ARC.

"For us it is fun and it allows the managment to personally thank every employee for the hard work that they do day in and day out," said Lewis.

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Lewis Selected to Speak at Statewide Event



On October 26, 2011 Executive Director Kirk Lewis was asked to be a part of the NYS OPWDD Works For Me employer recognition program. Lewis spoke on the importance of providing new opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Occurring during National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), the annual Works for Me employer recognition event honors select businesses for their commitment to workforce diversity.

The event was held at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY.

Flood waters could not get as high as morale at ARC

As hurricane Irene swept through the Capital Region, Schenectady ARC staff put their emergency plans into effect.

The staff and consumers at Schenectady ARC came together to weather out the storm. The hardest hit was our home in Duanesburg, Stowell House.

The loss of power and rising waters forced residents to evacuate. The staff made the best of the night by taking shelter at the Princetown Day Site, which itself lost power over the night.

With generators sputtering and flashlights flickering, staff from all the ARC sites made consumers feel safe and

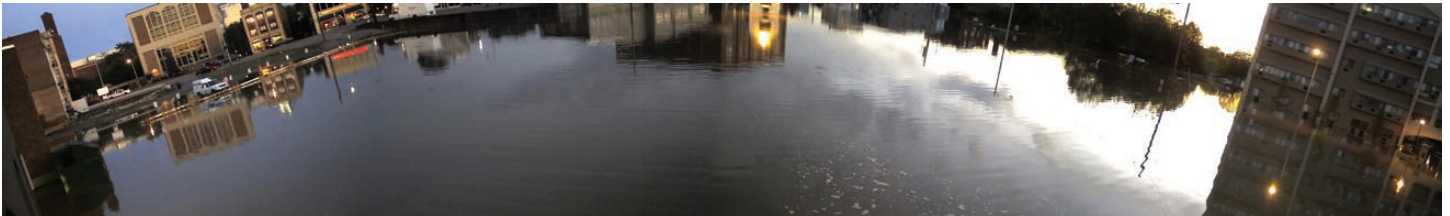
comforted throughout the weekend event.

The executive management team, under the direction of Kirk Lewis, went into full crisis mode. Plans for transportation, food delivery and medical care were all coordinated from the Maple Ridge Day site.

Schenectady ARC's main building at 214 State Street was also battling back the rising waters, as pictured below (photo was taken from the roof of 214 State). Adam Smith and the buildings and grounds team put forth a valiant effort to mitigate damages across the agency.

As the storm waters receded and programs and routines returned to normal, individuals were able to reflect on the great team work and support that they found during the storm at ARC.

At Stowell House the staff went so far as to celebrate their storm trials with a new t-shirt.



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