



Schenectady ARC Update

Schenectady ARC Named "2010 Best Places to Work" by Business Review

Schenectady ARC staff celebrated the agency's honor of being named a 2010 Best Place to Work. The Business Review announced the list of companies awarded the honor on November 2nd. Schenectady ARC was among 30 companies in the Capital Region voted by employees as one of the Best Places to Work.

"We have always prided ourselves on recruiting a talented and dedicated workforce at Schenectady ARC," said Jane Canale, Director of Human Resources. "It is these very employees who have rated Schenectady ARC so highly and we truly appreciate each and every employee."

ARC's celebration continued at the Business Review's official recognition luncheon at the Crowne Plaza in Albany on Friday, December 3, 2010.

Schenectady ARC last held the designation of "Best Place to Work" in 2004.



UP COMING events

- 10 MAY 2011
MEMBERSHIP MEETING & ANNUAL REPORT
- 30 JUNE 2011
ARC BBQ & LUAU in the PARK
- 15 SEPTEMBER 2011
ARC 1st ANNUAL 5K CHALLENGE
- 12-16 SEPTEMBER 2011
DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS WEEK CELEBRATION

Schenectady ARC
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Schenectady, NY 12305
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Albany, PLEASE! No more Cuts.

ARC Staff and Consumers hit Albany with 2011 legislative platform

On February 15, 2011, NYSACRA led the Annual Legislative Day in Albany, NY. With over 340 individuals participating, advocates and consumers met with legislators to let their voices be heard.

The event was held at the Empire State Plaza. Attendees from Schenectady ARC heard from many state officials including, Assemblyman Felix Ortiz, Chair of the Assembly MH/DD Committee and OPWDD Acting Commissioner Max Chmura. Later in the day Schenectady ARC's advocacy team met with local legislative representatives Senator Hugh Farley, Assemblyman James Tedisco, and Assemblyman George Amedore.

Among the issues discussed were a continuation of the TREND Factor, Health Care Adjustment, the Downsizing of State-Operated Services, Economic Challenges, Workforce, Regulatory Reform, Development, and Community and Economic Development.

Throughout 2011 not-for-profit agencies have struggled with the same challenges that impact all organizations, businesses, and governmental entities throughout the state; however, the situation has been exacerbated by previous reductions. Agencies like Schenectady ARC are often the most cost effective providers of services to persons with developmental disabilities. Since 2008 the system has absorbed over \$152 million in cuts. Additional cuts would compromise the system and jeopardize the health and safety of people with developmental disabilities.

Legislators learned of consumers' concerns, and also shared insights into future needs.

Keep track of ARC Legislative issues on our Blog



<http://schenectadyarc.wordpress.com/>



ARC Staff and Consumers visited with Assemblyman James Tedisco, Assemblyman George Amedore and Senator Hugh Farley to stress the importance of the State Budget and proposed cuts with regard to program and services in their lives.

O'Rourke MS students visit Maple Ridge



Several students from O'Rourke Middle School made their annual trek to Schenectady ARC.

The students volunteer each year at Princetown Ridge. Students in Grade 8 work with our ARC consumers on a variety of craft related projects.

"The experience is a very enriching and rewarding opportunity for students and it is a great bonding opportunity for our consumers," stated Trish Viera.

The program started over 3 years ago and has introduced students to opportunities in the Human Services sector prior to their entry into High School.

Last year the students visited Maple Ridge for a day.



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ARC is the place to spot Celebs

We all know that there are many famous faces at ARC. We decided to dig a little deeper into the celebrity lives of a few in a series of stories. This issue we interviewed **Jared Bashant**.

Jared How long have you been with ARC?

"I worked at Clinton County ARC for five years while attending college in Plattsburgh, NY. After graduation with a degree in Communications, I relocated to the Capital District to explore the opportunities for the band I am in and began looking for a job that would allow me to earn a living and still have the freedom to pursue my music career. I had experience working with the DD



Jared Bashant (Right front) with his band *Around the World and Back*.

population and the schedule at Life Prep was perfect for me."

Your band is quite traveled. Tell us about where you've been?

We have been all around the world and back. Well, we haven't quite traveled that far. We pretty much go wherever our music takes us. I've gone from my hometown of Tupper Lake, NY to Plattsburgh, to Boston, home again and now to the Capital District. We are currently recording our first full-length CD and play 2-3 shows each month. I'm happy here with what we are doing, but everyone in the band is willing to go wherever we need to go to make the band as successful as it can be.

How has your music impacted work at ARC?

I began playing drums 8 years ago on a set I built myself. I have recently incorporated my musical talents with work at Life Prep in our Music Expression class. There consumers listen to music and work on their math and social skills. I think we all agree that music is something that can be enjoyed, appreciated and used as both a learning and calming tool by people of all abilities.

Jared Bashant (25) works at the Schenectady ARC Life Prep Program.

Life Prep is an innovative program that provides a comprehensive, customized set of services designed to gradually teach the skills needed to live and work in the community as independently as possible.

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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 Receives \$5,000 Grant

NYSARC Trust Recreation Grant Grows Equine Program

The trustees of the NYSARC Trusts recently provided Schenectady ARC with a new recreational opportunities grant for \$5000.

Schenectady ARC has utilized this grant to continue collaborations with Peaceful Acres Horse Farm to provide a unique opportunity for individuals, with developmental disabilities, interested in working with animals to do so in an empowering and therapeutic environment.

The individuals that attend the program gain valuable experience in the areas of farm management and equine care. They also develop soft and hard skills that enable them to pursue employment and volunteer opportunities in animal care.



ARC Staff and Consumers volunteer with horses like Image at the Peaceful Acres Horse Farm in Pattersonville. The program is funded in part through a NYSARC, Inc. Recreational Grant.

ARC Cares for Community

Concern for the Hungry receives aid from Schenectady ARC

Volunteering in the community has always been a core part of the mission at Schenectady ARC.

Our individuals work with a number of community agencies. One such non-profit is Concern for the Hungry.

For the past 3 years Schenectady ARC consumers have volunteered their time at Concern for the Hungry (CFH). They prepare food baskets by sorting various food items. The largest project that the ARC consumers volunteer for is the Thanksgiving Food Basket drive.

This past year ARC consumers helped prepare 2,653 baskets to be distributed to needy families in the Capital Region. Their efforts helped feed over 10,000 people 45% of which are children under the age of 16.

"This is a great opportunity for ARC consumers and staff to be part of such a wonderful community effort," said Sue Gnoiski, a Direct Support Professional at ARC's Princetown Ridge.

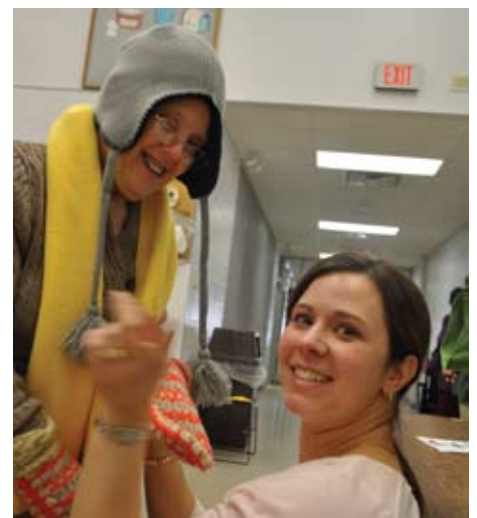
Consumers celebrate at "Winter Jamboree"

The Winter Jamboree was a building wide activity held at Maple Ridge. The Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech staff hosted several stations that focused on sensory skills.

Consumers built snowmen out of snow collected from the Maple Ridge site. There certainly was enough of it!

Consumers enjoyed spiced apple cider brewing to heighten their sense of smell and taste. There was also a winter clothing "relay" race, "sled" rides, and photos with snowmen.

All the rooms at Maple Ridge made cookies prior to the event for a cookie swap. Consumers and staff then watched a video the replayed the morning activities so that consumers could see themselves participating.



ARC Consumer, Nancy gets ready for the Winter Jamboree with Linda Stump, ARC OT/PT Supervisor

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ARC Membership

For just \$10 you can support the mission of Schenectady ARC. Your membership* plays an important role for Schenectady ARC and people with developmental disabilities. With your \$10 membership you can help strengthen Schenectady ARC's voice when we advocate on behalf of the over 1000 individuals that we serve. ARC participates in a variety of corporate matching funds programs. Visit arcschenectady.org for more details.

Your membership helps ARC advocate Locally, State-wide, and across the Nation



Join today and lend your voice to our mission.

* Membership is open to individuals who have a family member served by Schenectady ARC or live or work in Schenectady County. Schenectady ARC, a chapter of NYSARC, Inc. is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed under law.

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SEPTEMBER 15, 2011
Central Park, Schenectady, NY
1 Mile Walk 5:15pm
5K Race 6:00 pm

OPEN TO COMPETITORS OF ALL LEVELS

**INCREASING
COMMUNITY
AWARENESS
OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES**

REGISTRATION FEES
Early Registered 5K - \$20
(Deadline: August 19, 2011)
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Shirts and sizes only guaranteed to the first 300 early registered 5K participants

PREMIER SPONSOR



ARC cosponsors Autism Conference focus on low cost solutions to service provision

Schenectady ARC collaborated with several local agencies on a conference showcasing very low cost, collaborative and innovative programs for individuals with disabilities, including autism spectrum disorders. The other agencies include the Schenectady County Office of Community Services, the Autism Society of the Greater Capital Region, the Capital District Developmental Disabilities Services Office New York, and the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

The conference featured two panels representing organizations operating collaborative, replicable and low cost programs for children and/or adults with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities. One panel focused specifically on school-aged collaborative initiatives, while the other concentrated on post-school, community-based projects. The free event was held March 14 at Schenectady County Community College.

Green tips for your Spring garden

By Donna Vincent

Since the beginning of the Green Team at ARC, we have been looking for new ways to use energy more efficiently, reduce our volume of trash, and increase recycling as much as possible.

Last summer, some of our consumers visited the Schenectady City Greenhouse at Central Park to tour their composting program. We decided to try vermicomposting here at the greenhouse, as it seemed the easiest and quickest way to get some rich organic material to improve our vegetable garden soils. Vermicomposting uses red worms to convert organic waste to dark, earthy humus, called worm castings. Our goal is to expand our program this season to include a three bin composting system that will be able to handle our yard and greenhouse waste as well.

Our staff and consumers are now involved by saving their produce scraps & coffee grounds, shredding extra newspapers to mix into the bins, adding water & stirring the compost up. In April we will be adding the humus to our new vegetable gardens in the back yard to improve our sandy soil.

By composting food scraps, leaves, grass clippings, and other home and garden biodegradables, we can all help limit solid waste going to our landfills. By using compost, we return organic matter to the soil in a usable form. Organic material in the soil improves plant growth by helping to break up heavy clay soils, adding water and nutrient holding capacity to sandy soils, and adding essential nutrients to any soil. Just a small corner in your backyard is large enough to start you own composting project. Much information is available through Cooperative Extension on the specifics of composting.

What will happen with Medicaid? Governor Cuomo wants changes to system

Beginning in January, the Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) held a series of meetings in every region of the state. The meetings were open and transparent, and anyone could offer their ideas for savings either in person or in writing. Meetings were broadcast on the Internet and materials were posted on the MRT's Web page. The MRT received over 4,000 ideas from New Yorkers that were all evaluated and reviewed.

The recommendations submitted to Governor Cuomo meets the Governor's budget target by introducing a global cap on State Medicaid expenditures of \$15.109 billion through a variety of mechanisms, including:

Proposals that would reform the Medicaid payment and program structure and generate \$1.138 billion in total state savings

Eliminating the permanent law statutory cost drivers which generate \$186 million in state savings

Implementing a two-percent across-the-board rate reduction to generate \$345 million in savings

Prepaying certain Medicaid payments to leverage additional enhanced Federal matching funds made possible under ARRA, which generates a \$66 million benefit

Industry-led cost containment initiatives totaling up to \$640 million in savings, representing an unprecedented partnership between the state and its healthcare industry. The Medicaid program will be subject to a contingency reduction if this goal is not met

These proposals will benefit both taxpayers and patients. One million New Yorkers will have access to patient-centered medical homes, and within

3 years, almost the entire Medicaid population will be enrolled in some kind of care management.

Specific recommendations in the report include:

Enacts a Global Medicaid Budget Cap. One Million New Yorkers will now have access to patient-centered medical homes (PCMHs). This proposal catapults New York into a national leadership position.

Major expansion in use of care management. Within 3 years almost the entire Medicaid population will be enrolled in some kind of care management.

Introduces new controls in personal care and home health that will both reign in out-of-control spending and preserve access to these vital services.

Reform Medical Malpractice and lower health care costs.

Streamlines/eliminates program regulations – direct response to stakeholder feedback – in ways that will lower costs for providers and make the program easier to navigate for consumers.

The Team issued its first report ahead of its March 1st deadline and will continue to generate ideas for further reforms and submit quarterly reports until the end of Fiscal Year 2011-12, when it disbands.

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Sweet Heart Visit



Faye Minard (L) exchanges Valentines with a St. Gabriel's Pre-school student

Preschoolers from Childhood Friends at St. Gabriel's Parish visited Maple Ridge's Seniors on Valentine's Day. The kids and the seniors exchanged valentines, sang songs, and had a great time doing crafts.

This is the second visit by the St. Gabriel's program. "The kids and our folks really love these visits. "We are going to explore more fun times likes this with the parish," said Marina Boldeau, Activities Coordinator.

Nisky Students Spread Holiday Cheer



Alicia Borini (ARC Service Coordinator) picks up gifts from Mrs. Massaroni's 5th Grade class

Students at the Craig Elementary School in Niskayuna, NY assisted in Schenectady ARC's Holiday Giving Tree. The program helps ARC families in need over the Holiday season. Mrs. Massaroni's Fifth Grade purchased and wrapped over 30 gifts for an ARC Family.



214 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305
(518) 377.2186 www.arcschenectady.org

Join the Schenectady ARC for just \$10.

Give today!

At Schenectady ARC our mission is to partner with the community to bring awareness and understanding regarding developmental disabilities. By providing high quality services and supports we enable individuals with developmental disabilities to live, learn, work, and play as fulfilled members of society. your support through membership assists us in realizing our mission.

Schenectady ARC & You



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