

SPRING | 2010



Schenectady ARC Update

PROVIDING SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SINCE 1952.

Schenectady ARC advocates against cuts in 2010 State Budget



It was a long, but positive, night for the ARC on January 7, 2010

The training rooms at Schenectady ARC's 214 State Street site were filled with individuals with a developmental disability, their families and friends, advocates, and service providers.

The topic of the night was the State Budget and the proposed cuts that were looming. It was one of the largest showings at the ARC in support of a particular issue. All who attended were advocating for a continued level of services for the upcoming year.

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SLATED FOR MAY 11, 2010

Calling all members! It is time for the 2010 Annual Membership Meeting. Join us as we review the year at Schenectady ARC. We will install new officers and board members, and review the Annual Report. Plus, we will highlight one of our agency programs. All these great things and more will take place on May 11, 2010 at Schenectady ARC's Princetown Ridge location. Tickets are \$10 per person. To order advance tickets call 688.8278 or email the public relations office at WebPubRel@arcschenectady.org



Partnerships create the power for people with developmental disabilities to live, learn, work and play as fulfilled members of society.

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budget continued

One by one individuals stood up and voiced their concerns. Assemblyman James Tedisco and Assemblyman George Amedore listened to the audiences concerns, and stated their support.

Since that meeting, Schenectady ARC has received some positive news regarding the budget, as the Governor's budget proposes restoring the Trend Factor for 2009 and 2010.

The trend factor is a critical component in assisting the agency with staff retention. This trend will enable Schenectady ARC to continue to attract quality employees that can deliver the high quality services that many of the Schenectady ARC consumers have come to know and value.

There are still proposed cuts in the current budget that Schenectady ARC advocates will be watching and evaluating.

Overall, however, Schenectady ARC advocates were pleased with the current proposed budget and the restoration of the trend. Schenectady ARC was also very thankful for the willingness of our Assemblymen to attend this event and hear our concerns.



Stay in touch with Schenectady ARC on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

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Greenhouse project nears completion

We are pleased to report that the Maple Ridge Greenhouse renovation is nearly complete, including the purchase and installation of new wheelchair accessible flooring. A new stone floor was installed in August and September thanks to the concerted efforts of Schenectady ARC staff and participants as well as the gracious assistance of various community volunteers including those from Key Bank (photo page 7), led by Key's Assistant VP Sid Ramotar. We were able to acquire the materials from local vendor, Dagastino Building Block, Inc. As soon as the pavers were applied, several of our wheelchair-bound participants joyously traversed the entire structure which, prior to renovation, was partly inaccessible.

Schenectady ARC maintenance staff and participants spent several weeks constructing 12 new growing tables which are now in use.

In early November, following the removal of the existing dilapidated canopy, several participants and maintenance personnel installed our brand new 40' by 100' double-layered polyethylene greenhouse cover. We are pleased to report

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Schenectady ARC - A chapter of NYSARC, Inc.

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.



A member of
The Arc of the United States

ARC attends NYSACRA Legislative Day

Schenectady ARC was represented by a contingent of staff and consumers at a NYSACRA rally day at the State Capitol on January 26.

Schenectady ARC represented Schenectady County at the all day event. Starting early in the morning staff and consumers listened to comments from Assemblyman Peter Rivera, who chairs the Assembly Committee on Mental Health. Also speaking at the event were Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg, a parent and advocate for an adult with a disability, and Commissioner Diana Ritter from OMRDD.

Later in the afternoon consumers and staff spent time with Assemblyman George Amedore, Assemblyman Jim Tedisco and Senator Hugh T. Farley discussing our concerns and the impacts that budget cuts could potentially have on services to individuals with developmental disabilities.



Schenectady ARC staff and consumers participate in NYSACRA Legislative Day events at the State Capitol in Albany. In this photo is OMRDD Commissioner Diana Ritter with ARC consumers.

If you would like to be involved with advocacy please contact the Public Relations office at Schenectady ARC. We will be sure to add you to our mailing list for events and keep you informed of opportunities to advocate. Call 372-1160.

Schenectady ARC

UPDATE

Your donation helps to fund Schenectady ARC's services. There are several ways you can support Schenectady ARC. If you would like to learn more about the various ways you can support our organization please contact the Public Relations Office at 518.372.1160. We appreciate your interest and support!

DONATIONS

General Donations:

Mr. & Mrs. Maurice W. Goyette
Ms. Cori Hoffman
Ms. Geraldine Meehan
Mr. Paul Partidge, Ph.D and Linda Mertz
Ms. Terri Stripling

2009 Holiday Appeal

Ms. Dorothy Apicella
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph N. Bellicose
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bland
Ms. Alma Blohm
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In Memory of James Hare:

Mr. & Mrs. Richard L. Shopmyer

In Memory of Billy Carlson:

Ms. Carol Carlson

In Memory of John McCartney:

Ms. Aviva T. Hallenstein

GIVE WITH LIBERTY

Employee donations:

Mr. Thomas P. Hughes
in memory of Charles & Mary Hughes

Transportation partnership seeks to streamline services

Schenectady ARC

UPDATE

Ridge Service, the ARC transportation department recently received new software called PtMS for Windows. It is a scheduling and routing system that can handle diverse scheduling and trip planning for smaller and . The software was acquired through the New Freedom Grant program through Federal Transit Administration.

Catholic Charities Senior Services in Schenectady and Ridge Service, applied jointly for and were awarded the grant. “It was a necessary step in our ability to provide first rate transportation services, while saving on operating costs. It was great to collaborate with our partner Catholic Charities on this application,” said Phyllis Relyea, Director of Transportation Services.

The collaboration allowed Schenectady ARC and Catholic Charities to purchase an updated and sophisticated routing software system that will aid them in their ongoing efforts to coordinate transportation services. “Sharing the system allows us to better coordinate transportation between our services in Schenectady County,” said Margo Mahoski, Coordinator of Catholic Charities Transportation.

The amount of the grant was \$86,556 which was used to purchase the software, modems, printers and a server needed to use the program. Funds are also being used to purchase a new radio/phone system linking the office to the buses. “This was an 80/20 grant meaning we only have to pay 20% of the cost and the grant covers the other 80%,” stated Relyea.

Catholic Charities does transportation for seniors in Schenectady County.

Prior to this official collaboration the two agencies have partnered since 1990 to provide first rate transportation services. Ridge Service

has worked with Catholic Charities for 21 years and even shared office space at one point until both agencies grew and required more space.

The new software program will allow Transportation to streamline everything. The program will do reporting and also routing using data that is entered into the system, monthly reports can be generated with the touch of a button. Regular bus routes will be figured out with the best possible scenarios in seconds, as opposed to someone manually taking hours to try and figure out the runs.

Ridge Services staff are currently testing the system on ARC buses.



Schenectady ARC transportation staff review routing schedules on the new PtMS program that was purchased through a NYS DOT Grant.

It's a treat

At Schenectady ARC Pine Ridge Industries it is a Dog Eat Treat world.

The creative team at Pine Ridge Industries have come up with a unique new product. They are taking the cue from an idea that was first conceived at Maple Ridge to produce dog biscuits. The PRI team has taken the production to new levels and are now starting to reach out to community vets and retailers to sell the tasty canine treats on a larger scale. The dog biscuits are made using all FDA approved “quality” ingredients. If you would like to know more about Pine Ridge Bark Bits you can contact sales@arcschenectady.org

Schenectady ARC gets new buses

Schenectady ARC has acquired four new buses. The new buses arrived about a month ago through an Urban Mass Transit Act grant administered by the New York State DOT. They are 2009 Ford E450 Super duty chassis with bodies made by Starcraft. Each bus seats up to 18 adults or 8 adults and 4 wheelchairs. The new buses will replace four older buses that are due to be replaced: Schenectady ARC will pay 20% of the cost the buses plus the cost of any accessories: the grant will cover the other 80% of the cost. The new buses have V10 gasoline engines which saves approximately \$6,000 per bus compared to buses built with diesel engines. They also use ½ the amount of oil during maintenance so there is less waste making them more environmentally friendly. Transportation puts approximately 170,000 to 200,000 miles on each bus and each bus has a life expectancy of 5 years before it



One of four new Schenectady ARC buses that were recently purchased through a DOT Grant sparkles in the garage at Ridge Service Transportation.

has to be replaced due to salt and other wear damage to the buses. Ridge Service provides approximately 11,000 one-way transportation trips each month.

Schenectady ARC

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Being prepared for your new career

A Celebration of Success. That was the theme in December as Schenectady ARC graduated the inaugural class of students from the Career Path Prep program. The program was a joint collaboration



Gina Barrett proudly displays her certificate of completion from the Career Path Prep Program. Presenting the certificate are Linda Lahaie (Schenectady ARC Executive Director, Denise Brucker (SCCC), and Assemblyman George Amedore.

between Schenectady ARC and Schenectady County Community College. The purpose of the program was to assist new employees in developing the necessary skills to complete forms, reports and other items that would be necessary in the performance of their job duties.

“Many of the forms and the reports that are required to filled out as part of an employee’s job duties can become challenging to understand if you are not familiar with the language or the process,” stated Jane Canale, Human Resources Director.

The program guides students through a program of core skills needed to complete state forms, service documentation and other related medical records pertaining to the work at Schenectady ARC.

The program was custom developed by Schenectady ARC and SCCC.

Do you know where P-TOWN is?

Schenectady ARC

UPDATE

No P-TOWN is not in Massachusetts. It is right here in Schenectady County. It is Princetown Ridge, the site of one of Schenectady ARC's Day Habilitation Programs.

Where is it?

Princetown Ridge is located in Princetown at 395 Becker Drive in the town of Princetown, Schenectady County.

What goes on at Princetown?

Our program hours are from 9:15-3:15. We provide a variety of activities and groups for our consumers such as dance, exercise, Mens & Ladies group, reading, writing, & math, gardening, arts and crafts, relaxation, and bingo, just to name a few. Our consumers also enjoy social trips to the library, local malls, pet stores, coffee shops, museums, bowling, swimming and to parks. The schedule of activities and groups varies from week to week and from season to season.

What types of career opportunities are available?

We employ Direct Support Professionals, Team Leaders, Program Coordinators, Psychology Coordinators, and an Activities Coordinator as well as OT, PT, & Speech Clinicians.

How many consumers currently attend Princetown?

We currently have 99 consumers attending Princetown.

You do a lot of community work. Who do you work with?

We have created numerous partnerships within the community where our staff and consumers volunteer their time and talents. These include but are not limited to Regional Food Bank, Schenectady and Albany City Mission, Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM), Salvation Army and Day Haven.



View of Schenectady ARC's Princetown Ridge located in the Town of Princetown.

How long has Princetown been in operation?

The building opened in 1993.

How can somebody get in touch with Princetown to tour the site?

Anyone interested in touring Princetown can contact Chrissy Friello, at 357-0129.

Is there anything else we should know about Princetown?

Princetown will be receiving a new wood framed pavilion sponsored by the Tech Valley Leadership Class of 2010. Construction is expected to begin this spring.

Schenectady ARC consumers join relief efforts for Haitian children

The earthquake that destroyed much of Haiti on January 12 has inspired people from around the world to help with the country's relief effort. Thanks to Schenectady ARC staff member Ka'Turay Koroma, our consumers and staff have been able to make contributions to the organization **To Love A Child Inc.**, a non-for-profit organization that operates an orphanage located in Port au Prince.

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Schenectady ARC's Transportation Director Receives Statewide Award

Schenectady ARC Transportation Director Phyllis Relyea recently accepted an award from the NYS Department of Transportation for Outstanding Specialized Transportation for 2009. The Award was given at the NYS DOT Rural and Specialized Transportation Conference in November.



“As with our past recipients, this organization is a leader in coordinating services, both in the transportation of people and the provision of mechanical services to other agencies. This organization is highly regarded in an area that closely scrutinizes human services transportation,” said Jan Simpson, NYS DOT.

On winning the award Relyea stated, “It really is a whole agency award, we all work together to make sure our transportation is the best.”



Schenectady ARC staff Ka'Turay Koroma (far right), (from left) Casey Lucca, consumer Curt Brown, and staff Melissa Williams hand over donations to Cindy Schmehl, (center) Executive Director of *To Love a Child*.

After researching different organizations, it was determined that the needs of To Love a Child, which operates a local chapter in Ballston Spa, were something that our agency could help meet. The collection of items such as diapers, wipes, Tylenol, wash clothes, towels, nail clippers and surgical masks began at Maple Ridge and Princetown and was later expanded to all of the agency's sites. Koroma has been thrilled with the results. “Our consumers put together and decorated boxes for each site and many have brought in donations as well. The agency's staff has been very generous and I think everyone feels great about being able to help.”

Greenhouse project continued

that the former dilapidated cover, rather than being discarded, was recycled to interested Schenectady ARC employees for their use as part of Schenectady ARC's Green Campaign.

The installation of two new blown air heaters, occurred within several weeks of the stone floor's completion. Upon installation of the new heating units, new polyethylene ventilation tubing was attached to evenly distribute heated air to plants throughout the greenhouse.

Upon its ultimate completion, scheduled for May 2010, this newly renovated greenhouse will provide our wheelchair-bound participants with dramatically improved access to the many training opportunities



and services of our horticulture program and create a temperature- controlled environment conducive to successful plant cultivation.

March is Membership Month

Schenectady ARC

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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. Visit arcschenectady.org for more details.

Become a member today!

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

2010 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

YES! I am pleased to join the Schenectady ARC Membership for 2010. To ensure that Schenectady ARC can continue to advocate for individuals with developmental disabilities I am returning my contribution of:

\$10 (Individual)

\$18 (2-year)

I have a family member or sibling that receives services at Schenectady ARC

I live in Schenectady County

I work in Schenectady County

First name

Surname

Address

Telephone

Email

Memberships are renewed on an annual basis, they expire 1 year (2 if selected) from the date received.

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