



## A Message From the President of the Board of Directors



Linda Rhodes

**G**et out your sweater, comb, bobby socks and Ray-Bans! **We're throwing a sock hop!** And, oh, yes, watch your back . . . somebody is bound to be pronounced guilty at the annual **Murder Mystery Dinner**. We hope to see you there for fun, food, dancing and intrigue!

**I would like to thank everyone who donated to our 2020 Annual Appeal. If you haven't, it's not too late to remember The Arc ECT.** Thanks also to Board and team members who joined us February 13 in kicking off our new Strategic Plan.

We are very excited to reignite our walk "In Partnership for Full Equality" with the people we serve,

**Put on your dancing shoes!  
Let's Celebrate Spring  
in Style . . .**

**Thanks also to  
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our team and our Eastern Connecticut community. **Surveys – among people we serve and our valued team – will be key** to our ongoing and strategic journey of excellence.

*Please share your opinion with us in the coming months!*

PS – Don't forget to join us for **The Arc ECT Murder Mystery Dinner event April 4 at Connecticut National Golf Course and The Arc Film Festival at Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center April 23!** For information, call Denise at 860.889.4435 x 116 or Crystal at 860.774.2827. <

## A Message From the Chief Executive Officer of The Arc

**Connecticut must solve its trash crisis!**

### **We Need Your Help Updating the Bottle Bill**

*"Connecticut has a trash crisis on its hands."*

**W**riting in The Day of New London, **Senator Heather Somers and I outlined why the state must update its 40-year-old recycling law.** Bottles, cans and plastic too often litter our beautiful landscape.

The Arc Eastern Connecticut's Woodstock Redemption Center takes 1.6 million pieces of trash off Connecticut's roads annually while training people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for community employment. **Sadly, redemption rates no longer cover costs, and most Connecticut redemption centers already have shut their doors.**

Recent stories in The Bulletin of Norwich, on WINY Radio and on social media drew strong public support for The Arc and for updating the Bill.

Soon, we'll need you to ask your legislators to update the Bottle Bill.

**Recent stories in The Bulletin of Norwich, on WINY Radio and on social media drew strong public support for The Arc and for updating the Bill.**

**The Arc ECT is a formidable force for Civil Rights and jobs for people with IDD.**

*Thank you for being on our team! <*



Kathleen Stauffer

# The Arc NEWS

## Spring is for Disability Awareness Events . . . ... and The Arc team participates in all of them!

The start of 2020 was busier than ever for The Arc ECT's "Advocacy United" group. First was a presentation from the Census Bureau on the importance of the Census and how to help spread the word to family, friends and co-workers. (The Arc ECT is a **Census 2020 Complete Count Committee**.) The group and other Arc representatives then participated in a **Legislative Breakfast**, followed by **Family Hearing Day** at the Capitol on February 26th. The overflow crowd, including 6 self-advocates from The Arc ECT, **testified to legislators on the IDD Caucus** for the need to cease discussion of any budget cuts and instead increase funding to DDS for programs and services. We also hosted an **informational booth for legislators** as part of the **Connecticut Community Non-Profit Alliance's** 2-week advocacy event. **Self-Advocate Coordinator Jamie Lazaroff** and **Arc ECT Board member Sen. Paul Formica** were presented awards from the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities for their years of service to the IDD community.



Advocacy United members from L to R Rebel, Shannon and Aaron pose with CTCDD awardee Sen Paul Formica at the Capital

And that was just February!

Advocacy United will be helping create and distribute 1,000 copies of our **second annual Voter Guide** for people with IDD and their families, in conjunction with The Arc CT and funded by the **Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut**. The group has also arranged for a voting machine demonstration at its September and October meetings, as well as our SPARCS school-to-work transition program meeting. Notes Jamie Lazaroff, "We take voting pretty seriously." <

## Real Work for Real Pay: The Arc ECT micro-enterprise update

The Arc ECT's Redemption Center in Woodstock hosted a legislative event on January 13 to introduce local and state representatives and the public to **proposed Bill 7294 (the "bottle bill")** and its implications for both the environment and for employment for people with IDD. In attendance were **Sen. Christine Cohen, who introduced the bill** and gave an overview of what it included. Sen. Catherine Osten, State Reps. Rick Hayes, Anne Dauphinais, and Brian Lanoue were also in attendance, as well as Win Evarts, Executive Director of The Arc Connecticut.



Kathleen and the Redemption Center crew L to R: Brian, Kyle, Anthony and Roy



L to R: Reps Hayes, Dauphinais and Lanoue, Julie Cammarata, Kathleen Stauffer, Win Evarts, Sen. Cohen, Sen. Osten

The event was covered by WINY Radio and the Norwich Bulletin. CEO Kathleen Stauffer outlined for attendees **the importance of the Redemption Center—the only one remaining in the state—and the employment skills it teaches to people with IDD**. She also emphasized that without a deposit increase, both The Arc's redemption center and the environment would suffer greatly. Legislators got to meet the center's 4 employees and see the entire redemption process, from public drop-off to sorting to processing. A lively discussion and many questions followed; all legislators left eager to find out more about the entire statewide redemption process. All in all, a very successful event! <



## Job Training for People with IDD is Different . . .

**C**EO Kathleen Stauffer interviewed Kathryn Lord, President of the **Edward and Mary Lord Foundation** and a longtime supporter of The Arc ECT's lawn and landscape micro-enterprise, for the *Norwich Bulletin* this past February. Below are excerpts from that article.



Director of Employment Bonnie Jones, Kathryn Lord, and Job Coach Tim Bates

"I had never employed this type of lawn service before," said Lord. **"I knew the job was going to get done.** It wasn't my business to see how. It was my job to make sure they

knew what I needed to have done."

Last year, the [landscape] program graduated two people into community jobs. Job Coach and Crew Leader Tim Bates provides **vocational training and safety oversight.** "When I have a job, I make sure it gets done the way I'd want it done at my house," Bates says. **"I work side by side with my guys.** Each person might not be able to do the whole task, but I try to keep everyone going."

Director of Employment Bonnie Jones says Tim's walrus mustache, no-nonsense approach, and brawn shouldn't fool people. "Tim has a huge heart."

**"I would give this guy an award," says Lord.** "I can't abide anything going slower than the way I think it should. And of course, in this situation, that's not the way it works."

Lord **sees the lawn crew as a community investment.** "I've employed people who didn't come close to what I needed. I am getting every bit of what I am paying for." <

**We're going paperless—  
Sign up NOW for our e-newsletter!**

Make sure you still receive it regularly—email us at [info@thearcect.org](mailto:info@thearcect.org) or call (860) 889-4435 x116

## Meet The Arc ECT's Seniors!

**A** mid-week visit to The Arc's Retired Senior Program (RSP) in Danielson finds cooking class in full swing. Director Paula Kowalski has worked with The Arc's Seniors for over 20 years. "I just love these folks," she says. **"Many have been in the workforce their entire lives,** so you think they'd just want to take it easy, but most days we have to work hard to keep up with all the things they want to do!" Although the program, which operates 5 days a week, **is designed for people with IDD who would**



Jane Navarro, Direct Support Professional (holding tinfoil), joins Seniors from L to R Shirley, Randy, and Doris as they prepare their "Unstuffed Cabbage Casserole" for the oven.

**like a bit of a quieter, sometimes slower-paced day** without as much noise or stimulus as some younger participants enjoy, the RSP program is anything but dull. **"Our goals are to get people participating in as many activities as they'd like—especially in the community,"** says Paula. "Here at our offices we have cooking classes, sign language activities, sewing, crochet, games . . . but we also take lots of trips to museums, shopping, restaurants, the Senior Center, and we also do some volunteer activities—we try to keep it interesting. We have one big trip a year. Last year all 22 of our participants visited the Mashantucket Pequot Museum—what a great experience. **In a large group, the Seniors' enthusiasm is contagious, and it really makes for an enjoyable day for everyone.** Our goal is for these trips to be talked about all year long."

The RSP program serves not only Arc participants and residents but those people with IDD receiving services from other agencies. **"We're one of the few day programs in the region that offers this service,"** notes Paula. "And although it's mostly for older people, there's no real age cutoff—it just depends on whether the person would benefit from a bit of a calmer day. It's really a beautiful program." <

## “I’m all about organization!”

*Karlee has a plan, and she’s sticking to it*

Karlee is in The Arc’s Education program in Danielson, which provides additional programming for young people after they graduate high school until age 21. She’ll be 21 next year, but unlike many people her age, this change doesn’t bother her; she has a plan—and it’s pretty extensive.

“Right now **I’m working three days a week at Stop&Shop in Putnam.** I work in a bunch of different departments. I help with bagging, and scanning barcodes, and cleaning up spills—the pickle juice spill was the worst! I also empty the bottle return containers—that’s not a problem because **we have the same thing at The Arc’s Redemption Center so I’m really good at that.** Sometimes customers forget their shopping bags and since we don’t have plastic anymore I’ll help them take their groceries out to their car and then bring the cart back for them.

“I love my job, so I’m hoping that as soon as I graduate from this program, I can work more hours. **I have to make more money because there’s a list of things I want to do.**” She isn’t kidding—she really does have a list.

“Well, first, my dad’s girlfriend and I are trying to convince my dad to go to Disney World. He doesn’t like to fly, but we’re slowly wearing him down. I’ve read a lot of books about Disney World, and while Mickey Mouse and Goofy are okay, **I really have to see the inside of that castle. Seriously.**”



*Karlee, working on one of her schedules. “It’s important to keep track of what you have to do, so you can do all of it!”*

But the plan doesn’t stop with saving money. **“You have to be in shape to see everything there, and I’m trying hard to do that.** I have a Fitbit and my goal is to get to 20,000 steps a day. I know that’s a lot, but yesterday at work I got to 15,000—that’s seven miles!”

Karlee also takes advantage of some of the **health and fitness activities offered at The Arc.** “We go to the Y and to the treadmill, which I like. The Zumba class, though—I can’t keep up with the teacher! I also go to a health class with my mom, and we’re both **trying to eat more healthy foods.** Like, we both love pasta but we’re trying to substitute more vegetables. We make lists together now, so that we can plan all our meals ahead of time.”



“My supervisors at Stop&Shop are really great. Whenever I need help they’re always there—like when I have trouble with the scanning gun—sometimes it’s a pain in the butt.” She giggles.

“I like The Arc because things are very well organized.” She nods emphatically. **“I like to know what’s going to happen and when it’s going to happen. No surprises!”** Karlee has lots of friends at The Arc, and she’s pretty much in demand. “I think I’m a good friend. I like to help people. I’m a good listener—and I’m all about organization—as you can tell! So people will ask me to help them sign up for things, or remind them when events are going to happen, or else I help them register for activities and things.”

**“I think I’m a good friend. I like to help people. I’m a good listener.”**

Karlee hopes to live away from home someday, “but I know that costs a lot of money, so that’s why I need to work more hours.” Right now she lives with her mom, “but all my family is nearby. My brother and sister-in-law are having a baby girl in March. I’m so excited! I hope they name her Hazel because I really like that name.” <



## Our Community Partners Make Dreams Come True

*Our heartfelt thanks to these organizations, who help us provide life-changing programs for people with IDD in eastern Connecticut.*

Grants were awarded to our Community Life & Advocacy Programs from the **Savings Institute Financial Group** (\$5,000) and the **Oakdale and Gales Ferry Knights of Columbus Councils** (\$1,514 total).

The Town of **Waterford** also supported CL&A with an award of \$1,800. The **Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut's Northeast and Southeast Women and Girls' Funds** awarded CL&A's Voices northeast and southeast CT programs for women \$2,500 and \$3,500 respectively; **Berkshire Bank Foundation** awarded an additional \$2,500 to the northeast Voices program. CFECT also provided us with a \$950 mini-grant to develop a Voter Guide for people with disabilities.

The **Jewett City Savings Bank Foundation's** grant allowed our Danielson programs to purchase \$500 worth of sensory items, and the **Dominion Foundation** provided a \$3,000 grant for a participant lift at our Norwich Day program.

Both **Connecticut Water** and **Killingly Building Products** participated in the **Neighborhood Assistance Act program**, providing \$2,500 each towards energy saving windows at our Mechanic Street, Danielson program offices. We received a \$100,302 grant from the **CT Office of Policy and Management** to install sprinkler systems at two of our supported group residences through their Non-Profit Grant program.

The **AHEPA Foundation once again** presented us with a \$600 unrestricted award for agency programming. And **Tom Borner of Putnam Bank** helped raise over \$4,000 for The Arc ECT in a "skydive challenge" in August.

We're also deeply grateful to **the friends, family members, employees and their companies' matching gifts programs, and community partners** who have contributed over **\$21,100** to our Annual Appeal since September 2019. Your generosity has helped further our mission of walking "In Partnership For Full Equality" for people with IDD. <

## The Arc Eastern Connecticut in the Spotlight

Board Members, staff, and agency leadership celebrated the **1-year anniversary of The Arc ECT's merger** on February 13<sup>th</sup> at an agency-wide party at The Norwich Marriott. Included in the festivities was a first look at the agency's new **3-year Strategic Plan**, developed by both staff and the Board during a series of retreats in 2019. "We're so fortunate to have such a great team," noted CEO Kathleen Stauffer.

CL&A staff member **Ellen Hillman** was surprised by friends and coworkers with a Christmas stocking to thank her for her incredible work with The **Connecticut Free Store**, which she co-founded in 2015.



Ellen collects donated food and produce from area stores and farms and puts them on roadside tables and "pop up" booths year-round, free for anyone in need. "All we ask is that you pay it forward," she says. <

## Self Advocacy Corner

-by Jamie Lazaroff,  
The Arc's Self-Advocacy Coordinator

The northeast and southeast Self-Advocacy groups have been meeting together and it's been great! We recently elected



**officers** and will be having a training on Roberts Rules of Order. We're getting some great suggestions from members on things we'd like to accomplish as advocates— and activists!—This summer, I'll be **compiling a list of disability-related activities happening each month**, collected from People First, The Arc of CT, and the DDS website, to keep our members informed of what's going on and how they can participate. I'll also be developing **a list of volunteer activities** our group can join. We're also planning a **fundraiser** to be able to attend the National People First conference next year. <



## The Arc Through My Eyes by Cheryl Pedro

In this issue of **The Arc News**, columnist **Cheryl Pedro** interviews **James Hyman**, Lead Supervisor in the **In-Home Supports program**.

**Cheryl:** How long have you worked at The Arc?

**James:** 6 years. I just got promoted. I'm very excited about that.

**Cheryl:** What do you do here?

**James:** I oversee all the administration for our department, including the billing, and I assist with programs like our cooking program.

**Cheryl:** What's that?

**James:** Twice a week we have groups of 3 participants who have to plan a meal, then do all the shopping and preparation to cook for up to 30 people.

**Cheryl:** Wow, that's a lot of work! What's your favorite part of working here?

**James:** Oh, all you guys, and all the people and friends I get to see every day here.

**Cheryl:** Do you have any pets?

**James:** I have a cat, a fish tank, and a rabbit named Mumble.

**Cheryl:** What a great name! What are your future career goals?

**James:** I love working here and I'd like to keep moving up the ladder. I'd like to stay with IHS, but if there's an opening elsewhere at The Arc I'd happily join another program, too.

**Cheryl:** Are you going to go to the Film Festival and the Murder Mystery fundraiser?

**James:** Oh, you bet! I went to both last year—our team won absolutely last place at the Murder Mystery dinner—it was great! <



## The Arc Presents: Two Fabulous Spring Fundraisers

You won't want to miss out on The Arc's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual **Murder Mystery Dinner Theater** event coming up on **April 4, 2020** at **CT National Golf Club in Putnam**. This 1950's sock hop is a doo-wop disaster! When a death on the dance floor makes this night a party foul, **it's up to you to figure out who did it** and get this dance back on track. Grab your poodle skirts and leather jackets and join in the fun!



*Brooklyn Love Tales, a personal look into the lives of 3 couples with IDD, is a contender for this year's Festival.*

Following hot on its saddle shoes is our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual **Film Festival**, held this year on **Thursday April 23<sup>rd</sup>** at The Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center in Mashantucket. Please join us for an evening of **inspiring and life-changing short films featuring people with IDD** as they face challenges, set goals, and live their dreams.

The evening includes **substantial hors d'oeuvres by Go Fish Catering** and a **silent auction** featuring many high-quality items and great gift certificates.

Please consider **SPONSORING one (or both!) of these events**. There are several levels of sponsorship and all receive many promotional benefits. We would also love donations of tangible items or gift certificates for our silent auction. <

**For more information, including sponsorship and event tickets, visit [TheArcECT.org](http://TheArcECT.org).**





## Karlee's Broccoli Cheese Stuffed Spaghetti Squash

*Karlee and her mom both love pasta, but they're trying to eat more sensibly. Spaghetti Squash is a great alternative—it has only 314 calories per serving, it tastes delicious, it's healthy, and it's easy to cook.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 spaghetti squash cut in half, seeds removed
- non-stick spray
- 2 cups chopped broccoli florets
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- pinch of salt and pepper
- 1 tsp Italian season or use a mix of oregano, basil, thyme
- 1/2 cup part skim shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese shredded

### DIRECTIONS:

Place squash halves flesh side down on a baking sheet in a 350-degree oven; cook until squash is tender (50-60 mins).

In a skillet coated with nonstick spray, add pepper flakes; cook 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Stir in broccoli and garlic. Add 2 Tbs water to the skillet, and turn up the heat. Sauté for 3-5 more minutes, or until the broccoli is tender. Add mixture to a large bowl, discarding any left-over water.

Using a fork, scrape out the flesh/'spaghetti' of the squash; add it to the bowl of broccoli mixture. Add Parmesan cheese, salt /pepper, and seasoning to the mixture; stir to combine.

Distribute the mixture back into the squash shells; sprinkle 1/4 cup of mozzarella cheese on top of each half. Place shells into an oven safe baking dish/pan. Place under broiler @ 2-3 minutes; remove when cheese is bubbling. <



## Our 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Strides Road Race was a Great Way to Start October

A beautiful day, incredible food by our Title Sponsor **Outback Steak House**, and loads of help by a team of dedicated volunteers helped over 275 athletes of all abilities enjoy a fun-filled morning and a beautiful course on **October 2, 2019**, at Camp Harkness.



*A sea of pink Strides T-Shirts waits for the starting gun at the Family Fun Run, Walk*

**Waterford First Selectman Robert Brule** shot the starting gun; **Becky Iselin of Chester** was the overall winner of the 10k (go, Becky!) and **Jeff Walker of Westerly** zipped across the finish line first in the 5k.

The event raised over \$25,400; **100% all proceeds go to services and supports for people in IDD in eastern CT.** "We couldn't have done this without the help of our race sponsors and our volunteers," noted The Arc's CEO Kathleen Stauffer.

**"The Dime Bank's 'Blue Crew', the Mystic Boy Scouts, The Waterford Police and the Goshen Fire Police—**these volunteer groups, along with community volunteers and members of **The Arc's own Volunteer Corps**, made sure we had the best event ever. **We couldn't have done it without them."**

Not one to rest on our laurels, we're already gearing up for this fall—be sure to join us on **Sunday October 4, 2020!** <



*Kids, dogs, seasoned runners—the Strides 5 and 10k is for everyone!*



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[TheArcECT.org](http://TheArcECT.org)



IN  
**PARTNERSHIP  
FOR FULL  
EQUALITY**

## The Arc NEWS

### SAVE THE DATE!



Saturday,  
April 4, 2020

CT National Golf Club  
Putnam, CT



Thursday,  
April 23, 2020

Mashantucket Pequot Museum  
and Research Center  
110 Pequot Trail, Mashantucket, CT



Friday,  
June 26, 2020

CT National Golf Club  
Putnam, CT