

ARI on the Job – A Blooming Success Story



After the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens opened their new Silver Educational Center, Executive Director of Operations, Peter Saverine recognized an opportunity for greater community outreach, so he sought the assistance of ARI to fill a newly-created custodial position. After meeting with Clifford Beaulieu, Manager of ARI Employment Services to

discuss candidates, Travis Baskin, formerly of the ARI Landscape and Cleaning team, turned out to be the perfect fit.

Travis has already received kudos for his diligent work from Arboretum staff members, board members, and supporters. He attended and was publicly recognized at the Arboretum's Gala on Saturday, September 10th, for his outstanding efforts in preparing the building for the event.

The Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens is located at 151 Brookdale Road in Stamford, CT and is a natural preserve like no other in this region. The mission of the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens is to inspire the community to explore, examine, understand and appreciate the natural history of the botanical world and its place in our lives. It is open to the public 365 days a year. For information about membership and fees visit www.bartlettarboretum.org or call 203 322-6971.

Peter Saverine, Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens Executive Director of Operations and Travis's supervisor, is very pleased with the great job he is doing. "Travis has quickly become a respected and appreciated member of our team at the Bartlett. His enthusiasm for his job and willingness to assist wherever needed has already endeared him to our staff, volunteers, and board of directors. We are pleased to be able to give him this opportunity, and, more importantly, we are rewarded by the good feelings he brings to all of us every day. We look forward to a long relationship with Travis and everyone at ARI."

Travis Baskin is just one of the many ARI clients who work in a community-based job. There are many benefits to hiring ARI clients, who are reliable and hard-working. Each client has a job coach who assists with the training process and will work with employers to ensure that any issues are quickly resolved.

The main objectives of the ARI Employment Services Department are to assist individuals with identifying, obtaining, and maintaining employment. Qualified employment specialists help with specific career planning, job seeking skills and on-the-job training.

ARI begins by guiding individuals to develop a long-term, comprehensive career plan. Once an employment path is determined, we offer training in preparing a resume, learning and/or practicing interviewing skills, and teaching problem solving strategies and options for handling specific disability-related issues.

If an individual wants to explore employment options, ARI can provide opportunities to participate in situational assessments. This involves spending time working at one or more job sites to gauge the level of interest and compatibility.

Once a person is referred for job development services, he/she meets regularly with an ARI employment specialist who assists with searching and following up on leads in the newspapers or online job sites, completing job applications, registering with the state job service, and going on interviews. Once employed, we provide on-the-job training and assist with strategies for maintaining employment, as needed. ARI staff always tailors the support provided to meet the individual's specific needs. We oversee every job placement plan until the individual's specific needs are met and he or she is succeeding.

ARI works with local businesses and organizations to seek employment opportunities for our clients – whether permanent or as temporary assessment situations. The Employment Services Department will work with potential employers to develop a plan that works for everyone involved. For more information, contact Cliff Beaulieu, Employment Services Manager at 203 324-9258, ext. 3035, or e-mail Cliff at BeaulieuC@arict.org.

Enriching the lives of people with disabilities and their families by enabling them to achieve their fullest potential at home, at work and in the community.

From the CEO



As the economy continues to challenge our ability to deliver quality services, I am disheartened that our most vulnerable citizens remain at risk. A new “level of need tool” is now being used for current and future state funding. On top of that, “attendance-based funding” adds complexity when determining the overall budget. With these new requirements in place, ARI cannot just *maintain* services – we must elevate the quantity and quality of our services for everyone we support.

State funds, the greatest piece of the budget, allow us to enhance the lives of our clients by:

- keeping individuals safe and secure in their homes
- teaching skills that encourage independence
- keeping individuals happy and engaged while experiencing their community and programs
- offering opportunities to learn skills that promote job creation which transform them from tax-users to taxpayers.
- guiding clients toward their personal goals with life- and work- skill training

These programs, and more, are funded by the state and will be subject to the trickle-down effect of reduced federal budgets combined with reduced tax income at the state level. Will we, the public, pick up the tab in private donations?

Along with every family in America, the nonprofit sector is wondering about its future. Will we starve our organizations to the core or will they emerge from the current economic calamity intact? It appears that an intensifying struggle for ownership of nonprofits and how they are structured, governed, and deployed is under way. Basically, the question is whether nonprofits are “owned” by their institutional funders (governmental and philanthropic) or whether a broader community of stakeholders can and should participate in the future that a nonprofit pursues. Considering the dollars we do receive from the government and philanthropy, it seems unreasonable to assume that individual givers could fill the gaps. However, we continue to believe and hope that they will.

Our clients need and deserve our attention and advocacy. I urge every reader of this newsletter to contact their area legislator to let him or her know about the critical support needed for our clients. We must continue to be the voice that speaks for them and their families.

Many thanks to all of our generous supporters. Your continued giving of time, talent, and resources is what makes us the proud, quality agency that we have been for 60 years of service.

– Matthew P. Reyher

From the Board Chair



“Let me embrace thee, sour adversity, for wise men say it is the wisest course.”
– William Shakespeare.

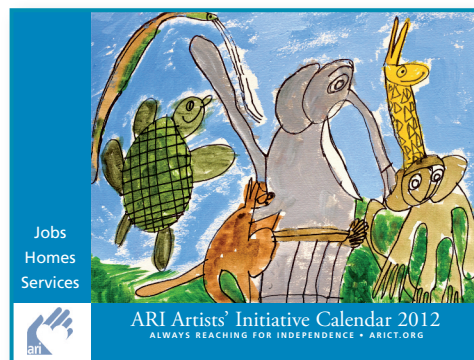
It is news to no one that we continue to suffer through poor economic conditions. Not-for-profit organizations such as ARI are no exception. With our significant reliance on government funding to provide the valued and necessary services to our clients and, in turn, the budgetary challenges currently faced at the federal and state levels, there is a great deal of adversity that lies ahead.

The question for ARI is . . . what to do next? Will we bow to adversity or embrace it, overcome it and further the important mission of ARI? To answer this question, we need look no further than at our history.

Nearly 60 years ago, in an environment where rights for the disabled were largely nonexistent, a small group of Stamford families came together to build support for their children with developmental disabilities. From that small beginning grew a singular mission – to enrich the lives of those with disabilities and provide support for family members. It is the strength and spirit of those few families decades ago that continues to lie at the core of ARI. Today, with over 100 employees, ARI serves clients throughout the Greater Stamford area with a wide variety of programs.

ARI’s history speaks for itself. The agency’s commitment to its mission is unwavering. Regardless of current economic conditions, we will continue to move forward in fulfilling the hopes of those families 60 years ago. We – the management, staff, volunteers, donors, family members and directors – all have an important role in serving that mission. Each of us together is ARI. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for being a part of something so important and ask that each of you continue your support of our mission.

– Scott M. Wich



The 5th ARI Artists' Initiative Calendar will be available for \$10. All proceeds from the will help fund the ARI Artists Initiative. For more information about the program or to purchase a calendar call 203 324-9258 ext. 3023 or gasparinog@arict.org.

59th ARI Annual Meeting

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. (Always Reaching for Independence) held its 59th Annual Meeting on Monday June 29, 2011 at the Knights of Columbus in Stamford, CT.

The meeting began with a special presentation by Mark D. Rosenbloom, Assistant Vice President-First County Bank. Mr. Rosenbloom presented a grant on behalf of the First County Bank Foundation to assist the Individualized Home Supports Program. Following the presentation, State Senator Carlo Leone commended ARI's work over the past year and the importance of ARI in the Stamford community.

Incoming Chairperson Scott M. Wich and President & CEO Matthew Reyher both reflected on ARI's progress over the past year before Past Chairperson Allan Sussman (in absence of retiring Chairperson Christopher Foxall) passed the gavel to Wich.

Allan Sussman also presented the new slate of officers and incoming board members, who were voted in unanimously. Officers joining Chairperson Scott M. Wich are Kamalesh Banerjee, Chairperson-elect; Gail Malloy, Vice Chairperson; John D. Russo, Treasurer; and John Downing, Secretary. New board members are Kathy Mandel, John Martin, Ed Napolitano, Lauren Nussbaum, and Marcus Sweeney.

The annual *Volunteer of the Year Award* was given to Marcus Sweeney, a Stamford resident and incoming Board member, for his impact on many fundraising events, including serving as Co-Chairperson for the 5th Walk for Independence.

ARI presented the *Corporate Partner of the Year Award* to the Cingari Family (Grade A / ShopRite) for their support of the Walk for Independence. ARI also presented the *Community Advocate of the Year Award* to the Knights of Columbus, St. Augustine Council for their dedication to ARI through their annual Tootsie Roll Drive and Frank Robotti Golf Tournament.



ARI awarded their staff awards to the following employees:

15 years of service: Max Brisseaux

10 years of service: Julia Edwards and Sherri Norwood

5 years of service: Marnie Dupree-Nelson, Micheline Gabriel, Renita Holley, Sharon Jennings, Carl Lewis, Carmen Madera, Carlton Martin, Sheldon Morrison, Matthew Reyher, Jacques Richeme, Myia Walters

Rookie of the Year: Kendra Williams

Heart of the Agency: Darlene Caviness

Always Reaching for Independence: Valerie Ennis

ARI Team Award: Tally Ho Residential Staff

ARI would like to thank everyone who was able to attend, as well as those who support us throughout the year. For a copy of the 2011 Annual Report please call 203 324-9258 ext. 3023 or visit us at www.arict.org.

Featuring Three
Headline Comedians
from Treehouse
Comedy Productions



Corey Rodrigues,
Grand Prize Winner
of the "Funniest
Comic in New England
Contest"



Tommy Koenig
as seen on
Comedy Central,
A&E, Showtime and in
the movie "Stitches"



Billy Garan
opening act for Jerry
Seinfeld and Jay Leno

JOIN US FOR THE
THIRD ANNUAL



ARI Comedy Night

drinks, dinner + laughs
to benefit programs serving
individuals with disabilities at ARI of CT

Saturday, October 22, 2011
6:30 to 11:00 pm

Hibernian Hall, 186 Greyrock Place, Stamford
open bar • live & silent auctions

\$150 per person

\$250 per couple • \$1,000 table of 8

please call 203 324-9258, x 3023 or
email gasparinog@arict.org
for tickets and sponsorship opportunities



always reaching
for independence
www.arict.org

Support ARI of Connecticut!!

Just fill out and mail this form to ARI of CT,
174 Richmond Hill Avenue, Stamford CT 06902.

Thank you!

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Leader \$1,000-\$2,499 | <input type="checkbox"/> Donor \$25-\$99 |
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- ☐ Enclosed is a completed form from my employer's matching gift program.

For more information, please call 203 324-9258, ext. 3023

Grants, Donations and Volunteers

ARI thanks all of the following for choosing ARI for their generous grants and community projects:

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. received a \$10,000 grant from the **Fairfield County Community Foundation's (FCCF) Sternbach Fund for People with Disabilities**. This grant supports respite care programs serving caregivers of adults with disabilities. The grant will support ARI's respite program for up to 15 families in need.

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. received \$10,174 in funding from the **United Way of Western Connecticut** for the 2011 – 2012 fiscal year for its Individualized Home Supports (IHS) program. The funding will be used for emergency expenses incurred by clients in the IHS program.

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. received a \$5,000 grant from the **First County Bank Foundation**. The grant will be used for emergency expenses incurred by clients in the IHS program.

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. received a \$2,500 grant from **Purdue Pharma L.P.** The grant will be used for emergency expenses incurred by clients within the Individualized Home Support program at ARI. Stamford-based Purdue Pharma L.P. is a fully integrated pharmaceutical company with state-of-the-art discovery, development, manufacturing, and marketing capabilities.

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. received \$4,000 in July from the **Umbrella Club of Fairfield County** to fund a summer program for four High School Transition Students. Without this grant these four students would not have been eligible to receive services.

On Thursday, July 28th a team of over 20 interns at **GE** painted and cleaned up the yard at the Palermo Residence.

On Saturday, April 30th two teams of volunteers in collaboration with **Rebuilding Together Fairfield County** came to ARI. Thirty volunteers from **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints** came to the Day Program building on Richmond Hill Avenue and painted the hallways of the main level. Twenty volunteers from **Pitney Bowes** and the **First Congregational Church** cut back brush and planted flowers at the Palermo Residence.

Staff News

New Staff Members

Willia Denise Braxton, *Residential Counselor, Truglia Residence*
Jalaine Colman, *Residential Counselor, Lotstein Residence*
Philomene Bien Aime, *Residential Counselor, Lotstein Residence*
Silvia Taylor, *Residential Counselor, Truglia Residence*
Denise Ravet, *Residential Counselor, IHS Program*
Bonnie Margolis, *Registered Nurse, Medical Department*
James Michael Little, *Residential Counselor, Palermo Residence*
Ana Arnzen, *Junior Accountant, Finance Department*

Congratulations on these promotions

Valerie Ennis, *Employment Specialist, Job Placement Department*
Maxine Mereigh, *Accounting Supervisor*

Carlette Brisseaux named Director of Residential Services,



Carlette Brisseaux has been promoted from Residential Manager, Palermo Residence to Director of Residential Services. Ms. Brisseaux has been with the agency for the past 12 years serving most recently as Residential Manager, Palermo Residence.

In Memoriam

Corrine Lotstein, stepmother of the late Sheryl Lotstein, passed away in May. Mrs. Lotstein was the wife of founding member Louis Lotstein. She was a steadfast leader of the Women's Auxiliary and a key component to many ARI fundraisers.

Philip Norgren, father of Erik, passed away in August after a valiant battle with cancer. Both Mr. Norgren and his wife, Jane, have been long time supporters of ARI serving the agency in myriad roles for many decades.

Jessica Fornabia, passed away in September. Jessica enjoyed attending the Day Program becoming friends with many staff and clients. Jessica danced and enjoyed the many parties she attended.

ARI will sincerely miss Corrine, Phil, and Jessica.

Recreation and Volunteer Events

- Thanks to Donald Axleroad, Board Member and founder of the ARI Artists' Initiative, ARI artists were fortunate to have work shown in a month long exhibit titled "ARI Goes Wild" at the Stamford Art Association. This exhibit showcased over thirty pieces of art, created by each artist in the weekly class.
- Swimmers, tennis players, and other athletes participated in the Summer Games for the Special Olympics.
- Over 75 ARI clients were treated to the annual St. Patrick's Party at the Knights of Columbus.
- Over twenty clients resumed their participation with the Challenged People in Motion Golf Program on Wednesdays during the summer. They learned the skills needed to play one of the toughest games to master and many made a lot of progress. Several golfers participated in the annual Challenged People in Motion Golf Tournament.
- Over the summer, ARI clients attended Bridgeport Bluefish games, weekly bowling events, men's and women's nights out and much more. Clients were also treated to two bowling parties sponsored by Thomson Reuters and set up by Ed Napolitano and his staff.



Many of these events cannot happen without dozens of devoted volunteers, including the ARI Youth Corp. We thank everyone for the support they provide our clients.

If you are interested in volunteering or would like to learn more about the ARI Recreation Program please call Gerard Gasparino, Manager of Development & Recreation at 203 324-9258 ext. 3023 or email him at gasparinog@arict.org.

5th Walk for Independence

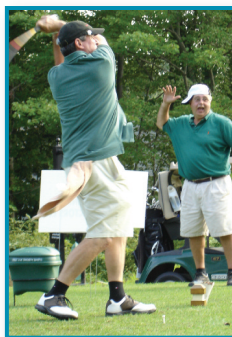


The 5th Annual ARI Walk for Independence took place on Sunday, May 1, 2011 at Cove Island Park in Stamford. Over 350 participants (clients, staff and supporters) enjoyed a perfect, sunny day. Speeches were delivered by ARI President and CEO, Matthew Reyher; our Grand Marshall, retired State Representative, Christel Truglia; State Representative Michael Molgano, and Stamford Mayor, Michael Pavia. Jill Tomasello of Advanced Physical Therapy led the warm-up.

A light breakfast and lunch were provided by Darius Jamshidian, owner of the West Main Street SUBWAY in Stamford, Grade A / ShopRite, Liz Sue Bagels and Lapine, Co.

We would like to thank all of our generous sponsors, donors, walkers and other supporters of this event. The proceeds allow us to continue providing high quality services to our community.

16th Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament



The 16th Annual Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament took place on Thursday, August 18th at Sterling Farms Golf Course.

The Tournament drew close to 100 golfers and was sponsored by over 40 groups, businesses and individuals.

We would specifically like to thank our generous major sponsors Viking Construction, Inc. and the Stamford Hospital Foundation.

We also wish to thank our tee and flag sponsors and those who supported the raffle and auction.

Congratulations to all of the winners, especially the Malloy Group, low foursome. See you all next summer!

Donations February 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011

Thank you to the following individuals, businesses and organizations for their kind generosity. Please call us at (203) 324-9258, ext. 3023 to find out how you can help by making a donation to ARI or volunteering your time for those we serve. You can also find more information @www.arict.org

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Carmine Vaccaro (left), ARI Board Member and member of the **Knights of Columbus**, Kenny D'Andrea, Past ARI Board Member and member of the Knights of Columbus (right), presented a check for over \$12,000 to Matthew Reyher (center), ARI President and CEO, at their Annual Communion Breakfast on Sunday, March 13, 2011. The Knights of Columbus' support comes through their annual Tootsie Roll Drive and Frank J. Robotti Memorial Golf Outing.

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