

**EVERY GIFT IS  
SIGNIFICANT.  
THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
ONGOING SUPPORT.**

## Introducing Matthew Reyher, New President and CEO of ARI



After a comprehensive search, ARI looked to a former employee to lead the organization through the implementation of the Board's new Strategic Plan. Matthew P. Reyher became President and CEO of ARI of Connecticut, Inc., in December, 2005.

Matthew has over twenty years of experience in human services. He holds a bachel-

ors degree from Teikyo Post University and a Masters Degree from Albertus Magnus College.

Prior to joining ARI, Matthew's experiences include Director of Finance for Connecticut Counseling Centers Inc., as well as CFO for ARI of Connecticut, Inc. and Controller of The Kennedy Center Inc., in Trumbull. Matthew has been past Chairman of the Board of Directors for a Community Action Agency providing services to children and the elderly. He is currently President of the Board of Directors of P.A.T.H. of Connecticut providing services to families with children with disabilities.

Matthew arrives at ARI at a time when his leadership, organizational management and previously experiences align succinctly with the goals and objectives outlined by the Board of Directors of ARI. He says; "I pursued this partnership with the Board of Directors and staff of ARI because I believe in the mission of helping people with disabilities access the same freedoms and rights that you and I have; that an individual with a disability can find hope through a conduit such as ARI."

### ARI Hosts Breakfast to introduce Matthew Reyher to community.



Matthew Reyher, Mayor Dan Malloy, Peter Buck

ARI hosted a Breakfast on Tuesday, April 11th to introduce Matthew Reyher and ARI to the greater Stamford community. Over one hundred guests enjoyed an inspiring agenda at UConn/Stamford, conducted by ARI Board Member Don Russell. Peter Buck, Board Chair, spoke of the fine leadership and vision Matthew brings to the organization. Mayor Dan Malloy spoke about the ARI's strong presence in Stamford and its pre-eminence in the local nonprofit arena. Guests were moved by the premier screening of ARI's new promotional DVD; the keystone of its new Development Strategy. Reyher delivered his intentions for the invigoration and fortification of the relationships we have with the city, the state and, most importantly, our clients.

**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.**

## A Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends,

Where is it said that you can't go home again? For me, home is here at ARI. While working at other social service agencies in CT for the last three years, ARI remained in my thoughts . . . and my heart. It's good to be back.

Although I entered this business professionally about 18 years ago, I was first inspired as a young boy when my Mother would practice her testing techniques on me while working towards a Master's Degree in Psychology. When I was old enough I worked at a summer youth recreation program for children with disabilities.

I bring to ARI my financial expertise in as well as my executive skills in leading an organization to *live* its mission. I have served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for a non-profit agency providing services to people suffering from economic hardships. Currently I am completing my term as President of the Board of Directors of an agency

that provides services to families with very ill children or have endured the tragedy of the loss of a child.

I am honored and privileged to have been selected to lead this great organization. I am looking forward to working with the Staff and Board to enhance the quantity and quality of the wonderful services that we provide. I know that I cannot do this alone. ARI needs all of you to share your strengths and resources with us and our clients as they seek the independence and progress that they so deserve.

There is much work to be done.

The most important of which is to provide an inspiring work environment for staff, with the tools they need to provide even better programming and services. We must guarantee the *best* day, residential, recreational and medical services possible to all of our clients.

Some say that you can take a person out of an agency but you can't take the agency out of the person. I believe this is true for I care deeply about the ARI staff, our community and, most importantly, our clients. As I end each and every day I ask myself, did I make a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities today? Most days the answer is yes. Knowing that, I believe that we can meet the challenges and hurdles of tomorrow.

On behalf of everyone at ARI, thank you for helping our clients to *Always Reach for Independence*.

—Matt Reyher

## A Letter from the Chairman of the Board of Directors

It is my pleasure to welcome Matthew Reyher in his new role as CEO. Many of you remember Matthew from when he was our CFO several years ago. As Matthew has said, he left ARI but ARI never left him. He brings a great deal of financial knowledge with him, as well as a keen sense of who we serve and what their needs are. Look for a fresh approach to care giving and teaching. As I near the end of my term I am confident that he, along with incoming chair Mario Musilli, will be faithful stewards of our Strategic Plan and devoted to our Mission.

I have seen many changes at ARI over the last 15 years and I look forward to our challenging future. We are now positioned to be proactive rather than reactive. We have a wonderful Board of Directors, all of whom I have enjoyed working with. We have a talented and steadfast staff, full of inspiration and vigor.

Most importantly, ARI serves some of the finest individuals you'd ever want to meet. They are what makes our work with ARI so important.

Thank you for your confidence and support.

Peter A. Buck  
Chairperson, ARI

## New DVD tells the story of ARI

Bob Becker Communications of Bethel, CT was selected to produce a compelling video story of our agency. Bob's team produced nearly twelve hours of video footage that was edited down to the current eight minute piece.

"Whether it is job placement, promoting our residential options, recruiting a volunteer or appealing for additional funds, this DVD will provide a great tool for marketing the agency. It tells our story in a clear, concise yet extremely powerful way," commented Matthew Reyher.

Special thanks to all members of the ARI family who assisted with the production of the DVD by being interviewed as well as the Marketing and Development Committees, who reviewed numerous versions. Their insight and recommendations were critical to the success of the project. Special thanks to Bob Becker and his crew for going above and beyond to make it happen!

If you are interested in receiving a free DVD, please contact Rob Cottle, Director of Development at (203) 324-9258 x3059 or email to [rob\\_cottle@arict.org](mailto:rob_cottle@arict.org).

## Spotlight on Independence

### Spirit of Life Awards recognizes ARI's best!!



ARI's own Elizabeth "Libby" Ryan and Adriano Gatto were honored recently by the Special Olympics of Connecticut with the Spirit of Life Award. The awards were presented at the annual Hall

of Fame Dinner at the Aqua Turf Country Club in Southington.

The Spirit of Life Awards are given annually to individuals who exemplify the spirit, courage and joy of Special Olympics. This year, nine individuals in Connecticut were presented the award by the Robert "Beau" Doherty, president of Special Olympics of Connecticut.

Well over 500 people attended the festivities including ARI's CEO & President, Matthew Reyher, Recreation Coordinator, Gerard Gasparino and family and friends of both Libby and Adriano. Congratulations to both of you. We are very proud of you!!

### ARI Athletes Excel at Special Olympics Winter Games

Special Olympics held their annual Connecticut Winter Games in the West Hartford Area March 4th and 5th. Once again ARI was well-represented, participating with the Darien Lions and the Stamford Public Schools. Those competing for the Lions included Adriano Gatto, snowshoeing; Bruce Bartrum, cross country skiing; and Jimmy Saunders, cross country skiing. All three received medals in their events. Han Tan participated in Speed Skating for the Stamford Public Schools. Han Tan received 3 medals including a Bronze for the 300 and 200 meter and Gold in the 500 meter events.

Gerard Gasparino, Recreation Coordinator commented, "I'm proud of the effort put forth by these athletes, they truly exemplify the spirit of the Special Olympics and ARI through their commitment to the games and their passion displayed during the competition. All of us here at ARI are truly proud of them."

### Self Advocacy Group promotes personal responsibility.

The ARI Self Advocacy Group is a group of ARI clients who meet once per month to discuss important topics such as knowing and understanding your rights, how and when to speak up for yourself, how laws effect people with disabilities and how to contact our local government leaders. In addition, they discuss the ARI's programs and services and serve as a conduit for making recommendations to management on behalf of the clients.

Lotoya Hunter is the founder and facilitator of this self-sustaining organization. Darlene Booker, Manager of Day Service Options, serves as advisor to the group. She organizes the group, completes the necessary research before meetings and takes notes during the meeting.

Latoya says "This group is important because I felt that people with disabilities including myself didn't know our rights. I wanted to be more involved in knowing my rights, how to get answers and making a difference. This is why I wanted to start this group"

S.A.G. has really made a difference! When the snow was not plowed properly on the corner of Richmond Hill Ave and Fairfield Avenue, Latoya couldn't use her wheelchair to cross the street. She reported this to the City of Stamford and they came out and plowed the snow away. Another time the crossing light was not working and she made a call to the City—and the light was fixed right away.

Latoya wants all clients to know how they can make a difference in their own lives and in the community.

Congratulations on a job well done!



Self Advocacy Group members at a recent meeting from left to right: Tremaine Wilson, Ricky Dennis, Lotoya Hunter, Advisor Darlene Booker, Neftali Soto and Angela Zoppi.

## 11th Annual Golf Tournament



Thelma Martin and Louis Lotstein



### SAVE THE DATE!!

The 11th Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, June 22 at Sterling Farms.

Registration begins at 7am with a Shotgun Start at 7:45. An Awards luncheon will follow at the Italian Center at 1pm.

This event is named in honor of our two founding families, the Lotsteins and the Martins.

What a great way to spend time with the ARI community while supporting their programs and services. For reservations or sponsorship opportunities, please call Rob Cottle, Director of Development at (203) 324-9258 x3059 or email to [rob\\_cottle@aric.org](mailto:rob_cottle@aric.org).

## Knights of Columbus continues support of ARI



ARI Board members Ken D'Andrea, Carmine Vaccaro present Matthew Reyher with a check.

Once again, ARI was the recipient of the Knights of Columbus, Council #41 Annual Tootsie Roll Golf Tournament and Drive. A donation in the amount of \$9,700.80 was presented to President and CEO Matthew Reyher and Board Chairman Peter Buck at the K.O.C. Annual Communion Breakfast held in March.

The Knights of Columbus have supported people with developmental disabilities on the national, state and local level for years. The local council #41 designates their fund to ARI because we are the principal agency in Stamford.

ARI Board Members, Ken D'Andrea and Carmine Vaccaro are also active members of the Knights of Columbus and we thank them for their continued commitment to those we serve!

## ARI Benefit Event at Agabhumi

Michael and Regina Kirshbaum graciously hosted an ARI Benefit Open House at Agabhumi, the Best of Bali, last February. More than just a store, Agabhumi is a story. Inspired while on vacation, Stamford residents opened this flagship store in November of 2002. Their business allows them the opportunity to choose and design products from the exotic island of Bali, Indonesia.

Since then, they have built a brand now recognized across the US through editorial coverage in such fashion bibles as InStyle, Marie Claire, Lucky, Glamour and Cosmopolitan magazines.



In the spirit of giving back to the community, the Kirshbaums generously donated a large percentage of the evening's revenue to ARI. "Michael and I are very grateful for the opportunity to do what we do every day. When Donna Wiberg, ARI Board member, proposed the idea it instantly dovetailed with our philosophy of doing business. As well, we have a few family members who are physically and mentally challenged so a benefit for ARI was a natural. In this crazy, hectic world we live in, people are more than happy to contribute when the opportunity to do so is simple and fun. We hope to be setting an example for other retailers to follow in our footsteps and help make a difference for those in need. We thank you for the chance to contribute and to help others."

Special thanks to Regina and Michael, ARI Board Member, Donna Wiberg and all our friends who supported this event and for making the evening such a success!

## Help Wanted!

ARI's **Job Placement Department** has a lot of new faces but the goal remains the same: to find competitive employment for clients while providing them with the necessary supports to remain successful and satisfied.

The Department is thriving with many new placements throughout lower Fairfield County. The team is led by **Megan DeMaria**, Manager of Employment Services. She's been a part of the ARI staff for seven years and holds a degree in Special Education from Southern Connecticut State University. **Jolene Kalinowski** has been promoted to Marketing Specialist from Employment Specialist. She earned her BA in Psychology from Franklin Pierce College in NH, and is working on her MS in Industrial Organizational Psychology at Iona College. The following Employment Specialists have also joined the team: **Paul Brown**, a graduate of Fairfield University with a BA in Sociology & Anthropology; **Anika Campbell**, a graduate of UConn with a BA in Family Studies; and **Brad Feleccia**, a graduate of Fairfield University with a BA in Sociology, Anthropology, and Communications.

Staff has diligently worked with client Michael Fox, who was a student in ARI's transition program, and was recently hired at New York Sports Club as a part-time housekeeper. Mike really enjoys his job; "My job's going really good. I like it because I make money and get to work out too." He cleans the treadmills, windows, mirrors and other machines in the gym, takes out the trash, empties the towels from the locker room, and vacuums. His supervisor Jason Wajert thinks that Mike is a wonderful employee; "Mike is the most meticulous cleaner I have ever met. He's always smiling and has a positive attitude. He is always early and always stays late."

Jason Bien, another ARI client, was recently hired as a full-time employee at Home Depot in the Green House department. Department head Randy said, "Jason is one of the key components around here. He's been doing such a good job that at our last team meeting he was awarded Employee of the Month!" Jason said he is grateful for all the work that the ARI staff has done for him.

New contacts have been made with Burlington Coat Factory, New York Sports Club, Rip Van Winkle Bowling Alley, Home Depot and Walgreens. As we start to expand further into Fairfield and Westchester Counties this department needs all the help it can get! Please contact ARI with any employment opportunities or leads you may have. Give one of our clients a chance to impress you with their skills and abilities. They will truly make a difference at your place of business. Mike Fox's supervisor Jason Wajert said; "The machines aren't just clean, they shine." They shine just like Mike, because he has this wonderful employment opportunity.

*For more information please contact Megan DeMaria at 324-9258, ext. 3035.*

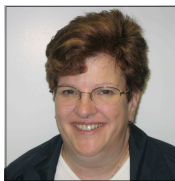
## Staff News

### New Management Staff



**Beverly Bonfoey** is our new Director of Residential Services. Prior to joining ARI, Bonfoey was with ARC in Greenwich for over ten years where she held positions as Residential Services Director and Director of Human Resources.

Beverly holds a bachelor's degree from East Carolina University and is pursuing a master's degree from Manhattanville College. Beverly lives in Weston.



**Lucie Labreche-Queening** is our new Director of Health Services. She will be responsible for the oversight and coordination of medical care for ARI's clients. Prior to joining ARI, Lucie was the Health Services Director with ARC in

Greenwich.

"I am very excited to be joining ARI. I intend to work towards providing the best medical care in our community to our clients. I have joined a team that is focused on providing the finest care available."

A Canadian native, her educational background includes Diplome d'Etudes Collegiale Techniques Infirmieres from CEGEP de Granby, Quebec, Canada and is currently enrolled in the RN to BSN program at Jacksonville University. She resides in Stamford.

**Cecelia Camp**, who has been at ARI in several different capacities, has been named Director of Day Services. Her responsibilities include the overall coordination of ARI's day services, quality improvement and clinical/intake services.

### Promotions and New Staff

*Promoted:*

**Jolene Kalinowski**, from Job Coach to Marketing Specialist, Employment Services

*Hired:*

**Sheldon Morrison**, Day Options; **Marie Luisa**, Palermo House; **Jean Richeme**, Palermo House; **DeKenya Bell**, Day Options; **Paul Brown**, Job Placement; **Carmen Madera**, Case Management; **Mardochay Luis-Fin**, Truglia House; **Magdalah Alphonse**, Lotstein House; **Bradley Feleccia**, Job Placement; **Anika Campbell**, Job Placement; **Micheline Gabriel**, SLS; **Michael Holt**, Lotstein House; **Carlton Martin**, SLS; **Lavina Hurd**, Palermo House; **Gillian Graham**, Lotstein House; **Rita Wagener**, Ridgefield Sunrise Cottage; **Sakina Gordon**, Lotstein House.

## ARI of Connecticut Donations July 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006

Thank you to the following individuals, businesses and organizations for their kind generosity. Please call us at (203) 324-9258, ext. 3059 to find out how you can help by making a donation to ARI or volunteering your time for those we serve. You can also visit our website to find more information and to make a secure donation online @ [www.aricr.org](http://www.aricr.org)

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**SAVE THE DATE**  
**11th Annual**  
**Lotstein/Martin**  
**Golf Tournament**  
Hosted by Friends of ARI  
**Thursday, June 22, 2006**

**Sterling Farms Golf Course**  
Followed by luncheon at The Italian Center

**For information call Rob Cottle**  
**at (203) 324-9258, ext. 3059**

Proceeds to support programs and services provided by ARI of CT.

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