

1st Annual Walk for Independence



The first annual **Walk for Independence** was held at Cove Island Park in Stamford on Sunday, May 20. Close to one hundred people met at the park to show support for ARI and to take a stroll along the beautiful shoreline. Staff, families, clients and volunteers joined together to participate in the first event where the entire ARI community raised awareness and funds side-by-side.



The Walk Committee, led by Allan Sussman, worked tirelessly to create an event that would promote wellness and would advocate involvement

for all. We wish to thank our major sponsors: The Advocate and 95.9 The Fox, our lead sponsors: Bruce Supply; Bruce, Jack and Joe Weksler; Ted and Lou Vitanza; Dellon Sales Company; Fox & Fox Esq.; Malloy Real Estate; Martin Sales, Inc., and our mileage sponsors: The Russo Family; Viking Construction Finn O'Connor; Grunberger Jewelers; Thomson; Creative Pension Design and Administration; J.E.S. Plumbing & Heating Corp.; Goodway Printing & Graphics; Delphi Plumbing; Fairfield Monument Co.; Joe Russo; IGA Stamford; A.G. Bisset Co., Inc.; and SignCrafters, as well as our team sponsors and walkers. We will see you all next spring!



The ARI Youth Corp has been brought back to life by a group of teens from local high schools. Since their first meeting in January they have met monthly with Gerard Gasparino to plan spending time with ARI clients and aiding in various events. They attended holiday parties and made a concerted effort to support the new Walk for Independence. Their first season has been a great success and we look forward to their future involvement.

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



We are a community provider organization that provides high quality vocational options, residential, respite, and clinical services to people with developmental disabilities. With innovative programming, strategic vision and planning, ARI emphasizes community inclusion and self-reliance for every individual. Our clients are capa-

ble, contributing members of society and our community. We focus on each person's strengths, interests, and abilities.

Many of the supports that focus on each person's individual wants and needs require additional resources in order to be successful. These additional resources come through a variety of fundraising activities. Fundraising is an important way for agencies like ours to meet the needs of our clients by developing a partnership with our community. This partnership serves to educate our community about the services and programs that we offer. Many times, there is a "gap" between what is provided by state and federal funding and the needs of our consumers. This "gap" is where fundraising must take over.

Over the last year, we have had many successful fundraising events that have not only benefited our "guys" but also promoted health and wellness. In May 2007, we held our first Annual Walk for Independence. Our year-end annual appeal and 12th annual Golf Tournament were very successful with total number of dollars and individual contribution exceeding our goals. These events were very successful in closing the "gap" in funding.

Much of our success is due to the commitment and dedication of our wonderful caring and compassionate staff. The accomplishments that clients experience each and every day would not be possible without them. Our volunteers are another group that really make a difference the life of a person with a disability. From the Board of Directors down to a recreation event assistant, the commitment and dedication was stellar throughout the year. This past year there has been a resurgence of the "ARI Youth Corps" which helped with all of the fundraising.

While the past year has been successful, there is much more to be done. One of the key challenges is our ability to market ourselves and the services we provide to new prospective clients and their families. The Department of Mental Retardation is in the process of changing its funding model from a grant-based system to a fee-for-service model, in which clients and families have more choice from a menu of services provided by agencies. With this in mind, ARI must be able to meet and exceed the ever-changing needs of the clients whom we serve.—MR

DMR changes name to DDS

On October 1, 2007, the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) will be renamed the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

Several years ago, the department along with consumers, families, advocates and private providers started the long process of advocating for a new name that brings respect and dignity to the individuals we serve. In 2006, the General Assembly passed a bill requiring the department to solicit input and recommend a name change to the Governor in January 2007. After the year long process, Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara recommended that we change our name to the Department of Developmental Services.

54th Annual Meeting 2007

Friends, clients, staff and invited guests enjoyed a lovely reception and meeting at UConn Stamford on June 25th. Chairperson Mario Musilli presided and Matt Reyher delivered an inspiring year-end address. The ARI Youth Corp was commended for its first season of fine work. Tammy DeLeo presented the following awards:



Five Years of Service (above, left) Pat Grant, LaVerne Rollinson, Sherland St. John, Bill Vernon, Shamika Void

Ten Years of Service (above, right) Christine Alexander

"Heart of the Agency Award" (below, left) Darlene Booker

"Always Reaching for Independence Award" (below, right) Shamika Void

On Friday, July 27th we presented Lavinia Hurd with the **"Rookie of the Year Award."**



Staff News

Promotions — Congratulations to:

Octavia Pollard, from Group Leader–Production Services to Residential Coordinator, Tally Ho Residence.; **Sharon Jennings**, from Residential Direct Service Worker to Program Manager.; **Tammy DeLeo**, from Director of Human Resources to Director of Day Services.; **Jolene Kalinowski**, from Marketing Specialist to Director of Human Resources. **Brad Feleccia**, from Group Leader–Job Placement to Coordinator of Community Based Vocational Services.; **Lavinia Hurd**, from Direct Day Service Worker–Day Options to Group Leader–Job Placement. **Bryant Roberts**, from Direct Day Service Worker–Day Options to Group Leader–Job Placement. **Marvin Lewis**, from Residential Direct Service Worker–Sunrise Residence to Day Direct Service Worker–Group Employment.

New Staff — Introducing . . .

Charlene Milkey, Supervising Nurse for ARI; **Kathleen Dunlop**, Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Sunrise Residence; **Michelle Campbell**, Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), ARI of Connecticut, Inc; **Roberto Sanchez**, Maintenance Technician; **Judith Bruen**, Administrative Assistant; **Carl Norde**, Direct Day Service Worker–Day Options; **Louise Mediot**, RDSW–Truglia Residence; **Guirlanda Guery**, RDSW–SLS; **Cherry Byrd**, RDSW–Tally Ho Residence; **Melody Thompson**, RDSW–SLS; **Melissa Ruffin**, RDSW–Tally Ho Residence; **E. Jean Nelson-McClain**, RDSW–SLS; **Audrey Owens**, RDSW–Palermo Residence; **Regina Holley**, RDSW–Palermo Residence; **Regina Garcia**, RDSW–SLS; **Leola Marshall**, RDSW–Palermo Residence; **Veronica Callum**, RDSW–Palermo Residence; **Tshimanga Kapitaine**, RDSW–Truglia Residence; **Wendy Butts**, RDSW–Palermo Residence

WE REMEMBER CHRISTINE BRENNER

Christine Brenner passed away suddenly on July 25, 2007. She was born in Indianapolis, IN on June 7, 1952. In 1972, she and her family moved to Stamford, CT where she was involved in ARI. She worked at a local restaurant for several years moved into a group home and eventually into her own apartment.

In 1994, Christine moved to Goleta, CA where she lived with her sister Betsy for several years before moving into an apartment in Santa Barbara under the sponsorship of CLIP (Community Independent Living Programs).

Christine is survived by Henry and Jo Ann Brenner, her father and stepmother, her sisters Betsy (Mary) and Jeanne, her brother Daniel and his wife JoAnne. Henry is a Chairperson Emeritus of ARI and past chairperson of Friends of ARI.

Recreation and Volunteers

The ARI recreational programs cannot be successful without the help from volunteers. This year ARI has been fortunate to have 50 plus great people from the community donate their time to recreational activities.



This year's annual St. Patrick's Day Party was held in the new Knights of Columbus banquet hall. Thanks to Mike Powers for the traditional corned beef dinner as well as to his daughter and friends for entertaining us with their Irish dancing. They inspired some of our dancers to join in. Thank you to the many volunteers and Youth Corps kids for your help and for adding to the fun!

Norwalk Community College will be hosting "*Exceptional Art*," a group exhibit for the ARI Artists Initiative this fall. The show will be NCC's back-to-school exhibit.

The exhibit will run from September 4th through October 31st. An Opening Reception will be held September 6, 2007, from 5:30–7:30pm at the Norwalk Community College West Campus Community Gallery, 188 Richards Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854.

This opportunity has been made possible with the help of our wonderful volunteer teachers Donald Axleroad and Charles Wiesehahn, along with Susan L. Hardesty from NCC. Thank you so much.

Please join us in saluting our ARI Artists!

The Special Olympics Summer Games took place in New Haven this past June. The ARI athletes were Swimmers Elizabeth Ryan, Adriano Gatto, and Neftali Soto; Wheelchair Racer Rickey Denes; and Tennis Player Samantha Downing. ARI would like to thank the Darien Lions and Norwalk Public Schools teams for allowing our athletes to compete.

WE REMEMBER MICHAEL BURL

Michael Burl was born on September 21, 1959 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama to the late Derosta Burl and Billie Jean Harvey. He moved to Stamford as a young adult and was served by ARI until his untimely death on July 22, 2007. Michael worked at the Stamford Post Office and with the ARI Landscape crew during the summer. Michael was an avid golfer and participated in the Martin/Lotstein Golf Outing and the Special Olympics.

He leaves six sisters, seven brothers and many dear friends at ARI. We wish him and his family peace.



12th Annual Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament



The 12th Annual Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament was held at Sterling Farms Golf Course on Thursday, June 21st. You may be able to tell from these photos that we had a picture-perfect day. For all the golfers and friends who attended the awards luncheon it was a memorable day. Congratulations to the winning foursome of Matthew Tackman, Robert McDonald, Gerard Gasparino, and Michael Flynn (below.)



Donations October 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007

Thank you to the following individuals, businesses and organizations for their kind generosity. Please call us at (203) 324-9258, ext. 3028 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 at www.aric.org.

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THANK YOU

ARI of Connecticut Inc. was the recipient of a trust fund by Arthur T. and Lorelee Clark Trust Fund. Lorelee was a client served by our agency in the 1970's. Her family designated a portion of their estate to ARI to sustain the good work of our agency. The purpose of this bequest is to support our continued success in 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. The Board of Directors has set aside these resources to be the basis of a perpetual endowment for the future of new programs for ARI.

ARI of Connecticut Inc. was also the beneficiary of contributions of \$1,000 in April, 2007 and \$10,000 in May, 2007 to our High School Transition Program. Our connection with RBS is through a High School Transition student Matthew Egan and his godfather Mr. Matthew Monaghan, an official at RBS Greenwich Capital.

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. is a non-profit organization under IRS code 501(c)(3). The ARI News is published for the members, board of directors, family members, people served, staff and friends of ARI of Connecticut, Inc. Edited and designed by Barbara C. Aronica-Buck. Published by ARI of Connecticut, Inc., 174 Richmond Hill Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut, 06902-5696. (203) 324-9258. Fax (203) 324-3949. Email: www.arict.org. ARI of Connecticut, Inc. supports equal opportunity without regard to race, color, sex, marital status, age, disability, religion, ancestry, national origin, citizenship or sexual orientation. ARI of Connecticut, Inc. is accredited by CARF and funded by DMR.

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