



jobs • home • services

always  
reaching for  
independence

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. Annual Report 2011

# ari president/ceo



It gives me great pleasure to present you with our annual report for fiscal year 2011. This year's special section, "A Day in the Life of an ARI client" (page 4) highlights the perseverance of our clients and the ingenuity of our staff.

Our year was filled with partnerships and collaborations. We began in August, 2010 with the International Sibling's Conference at the Greenwich Hyatt, held in partnership with the Sibling Leadership Network and the Kennedy Center. The conference was attended by siblings and speakers from all over the world. The three-day event was filled with speakers and presenters who brought knowledge of the trials, tribulations, joy, and excitement of being a sibling of a person with developmental or physical disabilities. One attendee said; *"this was an exciting worthwhile event and really gave me the opportunity to learn more about some of my responsibilities and the innovative ways to prepare for my role . . . knowing I am not alone, access to other siblings helps when problems come up."* Another said; *"I hope you have this again next year or the year after. This conference allowed me to connect with people from all over the country with similar struggles. I learned from them so I can know the system better."*

In March, 2011, we co-hosted a conference at UCONN Stamford with The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education, a Stamford-based agency. We analyzed the difficulties and vulnerability of people with disabilities regarding sexual assault and gave participants an opportunity to network with their peers. This was a successful and enlightening collaboration.

In April, 2011, we co-hosted a conference at UCONN Stamford with our sister agency Abilis of Greenwich called "Building Communities." Nationally-known speakers, Jack Pearpoint and Lynda Kahn facilitated discussions on promoting a just and caring society. This workshop was very well received by all participants.

During the year we continued the building renovations of our day services facility on Richmond Hill Avenue. With "energy efficiency" a driving force in our work,

we installed a new natural gas heating system to provide a comfortable working environment. We also installed a new electrical system to ensure that all of our systems meet our current and future needs. Our plan for a new ramping system will be accomplished by the end of 2011. In addition, all interior restroom facilities will be updated.

While our revenues from our major funding sources have remained stagnant, new opportunities continue to arise. With our partners, The Ridgefield Sunrise Cottage Board of Directors, we will continue to make plans for expansion in the Ridgefield area. The need for residential services continue to evolve in Stamford (and throughout the state) with the reclassification of some Individualized Home Support to people with needs through a continuous residential supports model. This model allows for clients to pool resources together and provide a staffing model that maximizes coverage without compromising support. ARI continues to provide quality supports to people in the CRS model and is prepared to take advantage of the future growth potential with this model.

Additional clients continue to be referred by Department of Developmental Services (DDS) for day services support, employment support and individualized day programs. Our contract with our local school systems continue to provide that vital transition from high school to adult life. Our New Haven program has also grown with additional resources this year.

Thankfully, the results of our fundraising efforts have continued to rise. Our events promote our mission and attract funding sources that allow us to continue the excellent level of support and care that our clients need. Next year we will celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with various fundraising and community events.

Our staff, board of directors, donors and benefactors continue to inspire the agency to reach greater goals. While we have accomplished a lot in a year, more is needed to be done. We are up for the challenge. I know that you are too!!

Warmest regards and thanks,  
Matthew P. Reyher

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# human resources

We are fortunate to have an extraordinary staff at ARI and we are privileged to honor so many for their longevity and special talents. This year's HR Staff Awards are presented to:

## **2011 LONGEVITY AWARDS**

### **15 Years of Employment**

Max Brisseaux

### **10 Years of Employment**

Julia Edwards; Sherri Norwood

### **5 Years of Employment**

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, Skills Instructor, Medical Department

**Heart of the Agency** – Darlene Caviness, Manager of Day Service Options

**Always Reaching for Independence** – Valerie Ennis, Job Coach

**Team Award** – Tally Ho Residential Staff (Octavia Pollard, Tysha Smith, Ahisha Douglas, Taria Hunter, Tanika Miller, Willie Clark, Marnie Dupree-Nelson, Beverly Burke, Asiah Matthew)

Here are a few excerpts from the outstanding nominations we received this year – without naming names;

“ . . . for her commitment to be creative in devising new strategies to accommodate the needs of the consumers. She always keeps in mind that challenging behavior is communicating an unmet need. She views such challenges as an opportunity to find new ways to meet needs and never personalizes an individual's actions. She is a great motivator and a great example to all of her co-workers.”

“She appreciates that in serving our consumers the need goes beyond simply being safe . . . the need for our consumers to feel valued, to be seen as important, having friends, and even having relationships. It is for her commitment to seek a quality life for our consumers that most of us take for granted, that I nominate her for this award.”

“This group continuously works together toward a common goal for success, shows flexibility and always assists when other departments are short-staffed. They are always in a teaching mode and motivate consumers to reach their highest potential. For example, there is a consumer in their group who is now in a wheelchair and often becomes frustrated. Staff members encourage her to push hard and to use her body strength to move around. This helps her become more independent and renews her self-esteem.

“She's jumped into her position and demonstrated great organizational skills. She communicates very well with the team. She's developed a rapport with our consumers allowing her to assist them with some of their most intimate and private issues. She has also been able to maintain the same quality of work (if not better) during the time she was without a supervisor.”

# quality assurance

All of the following accomplishments indicate that the ARI Quality Assurance Systems continue to be effective:

- We have new clients receiving services from the school system, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).
- The five group homes managed by ARI all received a two-year license—the highest level an agency can attain.
- The state Quality Service Reviews have consistently documented few if any deficiencies. Incidents continue to decrease, indicating that the ARI staff and management believe in and provide the best quality services.

- ARI offered 183 recreation activities during our fiscal year, which 2,270 clients attended (duplicated.)
- Six proposals were submitted for funding to various organizations, foundations and trust funds to enhance our present programs and to offer services to other disability populations.
- Managers have become better trained and have adhered to Department of Developmental Services standards.
- All of the goals in the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan for the Department of Developmental Services have been met.

# a day in the life . . .



LaToya arrives to the ARI day program at approximately 8:30 a.m. Upon arrival she greets her friends and, with support from direct care staff, she puts away her personal belongings. She is the chairperson of the “self advocacy group” which meets with the support of a staff member to discuss ideas and issues. By the end of the meeting, the members of the group are assigned particular tasks and a date is set for the next meeting. LaToya spends the next few minutes visiting with her boyfriend. Although they are in a large building with many people around, they find a quiet area where they can talk and enjoy each other’s company.

LaToya will have lunch a little early today so she can make it to her volunteer assignment on time. With the assistance of a direct care professional, and her power wheel chair, LaToya makes it over to the New Covenant House to cover the “lunch time” meal. With enthusiasm, she greets and logs in every person who arrives. After lunch she compiles a report, hands it in. Once back at ARI, she spends time in the computer lab where she works on her poetry. She always finds time to visit with friends before she gets ready to leave.

Often LaToya heads to an afternoon activity, like the ARI Artists’ Initiative art class. Some of her work has been featured in art shows and in the annual ARI Artists’ Initiative calendar. After class, she heads home where she is greeted by her six roommates in a community living arrangement. Once there, LaToya cleans up and prepares for dinner. She

helps set her place at the table and eats a delicious meal prepared by both clients and staff. After dinner she cleans up and heads to the lounge. With assistance from a staff member, LaToya gets out of her wheelchair and into a more comfortable chair where she watches her favorite shows on the new 55" HD TV.

On some nights, LaToya will invite her boyfriend over for dinner and to watch TV. Occasionally they will go out on dates to the movies or dinner at the park. She also is responsible for helping with her laundry, preparing meals, and cleaning her room. And, she is a very prolific poet:

## *Wings*

*The wings I've flown with over the years  
Roads I want to pass throughout my lifetime  
The seeds I want to plant  
Are for love and happiness  
And peace throughout the world  
For I would like to see  
Humanity come together and not divided*

*~LaToya*

LaToya has received services at ARI for nine years, since she joined the high school transition program. She is just one of many who live in one of our residential options, work in the community, spend their day mastering skills that foster independence, and enjoy our wide range of enrichment programs. Each one of our clients participates in creating his or her own plan with goals toward developing personal growth, social relationships, new skills, and ways of advocating for themselves. Not a day goes by without witnessing the way our mission facilitates their accomplishments.



LaToya helps present the 1st Annual “Self Advocacy Staff Award”

# development

Your support enables us to continue delivering the highest quality of services despite the continued decrease in State funding. This past year we have seen a significant increase in donations and other direct community support.

- The 2nd Annual Fall Comedy Night took place last October. Over 100 attendees enjoyed the comedy of three nationally-known comedians, dinner, drinks and a successful auction at the Hibernian Hall in Stamford.
- The 2010–2011 Annual Appeal continues to provide donors the opportunity to make an annual contribution.
- The 5th Annual Walk for Independence, held at Cove Island Park, on May 1, 2011, was the most successful yet! Over 350 clients, family members, staff, volunteers, and friends joined Grand Marshall Christel Truglia, Mayor Michael Pavia, and State Representative Michael Molgano in the festivities. Overall, we saw an increase in donations *and* sponsorships. Breakfast and lunch were donated by Liz Sue Bagels, Subway and Grade A Markets. Lapine Associates provided the grills.
- The 15th Annual Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament took place on August 19, 2010. Over 110 golfers played and over 125 attended the lobster dinner. Bennett Salvatore assisted in the live auction. The 16th Annual Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament will take place on Thursday, August 18, 2011. For information please call (203) 324-9258 ext. 3023.
- This year ARI was fortunate to have many volunteer groups come in and spruce up its facilities. Through Rebuilding Together Fairfield County, groups from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in New Canaan, The First Congregational Church in Stamford, and Pitney Bowes worked at various sites, painting and cleaning the grounds in April. Through the United Way Day of Caring, a group from Ernst & Young painted and cleaned the grounds at an ARI residence last October.
- The ARI Artists' Initiative produced its fourth annual calendar with artwork produced by 13 ARI artists.
- Over the last year, ARI received grants from the Fairfield County Community Foundation, First County Bank, and the United Way. The FCCF funds the respite program, which allows families to hire someone to help while they take a much-needed break. Both the First County Bank and United Way provide funds that pay for emergency expenses incurred by the clients in the Individualized Home Supports program. This year we also received a new grant from Purdue Pharma L.P. to help fund the Individualized Home Supports Program.

We sincerely thank everyone who supports the agency throughout the year.

# recreation and volunteers

From vacations to sporting events, Special Olympics to art shows, we have been busy! Over 90% of our ARI clients participated in recreation events throughout the year.



The monthly calendar offers a myriad of activities. This year, ARI offered trips to see the New York Mets, the Bridgeport Bluefish, and the Bridgeport Sound Tigers. Activities based on physical exercise are also available, such as the popular weekly aqua-aerobics program at the Darien YMCA and the Challenged People in Motion golf program at Sterling Farms Golf Course. Twenty clients participate weekly in the ARI Artists Initiative classes, producing artwork that is featured in the ARI calendar as well as in shows throughout the state.

Social gatherings continue to be a big part of the program. Over 100 ARI clients attended the Halloween, the Winter Holiday, the Valentine's Day and the St. Patrick's Day parties at the Knights of Columbus. Clients danced, socialized and had a great time with friends. Also, over 25 clients attended the monthly Men's & Women's Nights Out at various local restaurants.

Our recreation activities serve multiple purposes; allowing clients to have fun, socialize, develop friendships, and be physically active. Over the past year many relationships have been formed and cultivated through the various programs we offer.

ARI is grateful for the many volunteers who donate their time. Whether helping at recreational activities, serving on the board of directors or serving on committees, volunteers are vital to the agency. This past year, over seventy people gave over 1,300 hours of their time and talent. We are also fortunate to have a number of groups like BuildOn, Community Volunteers in Action (CVIA), ARI Youth Corps, GE Asset Management, Ernst & Young, First Congregational Church, The Church of Latter-Day Saints, and Pitney Bowes give their time and share their resources with us. Thomson Reuters sponsored three bowling parties and provide lunch at the annual holiday party. Thanks, as well, to the three members of the Stamford Police Association who presented gifts to each of the ARI clients at the party.

# finance

Through a year long process, the Finance department provides quality service to help support management's decision making and improve financial management of the agency's resources. An agency budget is prepared each year for management to use as a guide to ensure that revenue and expenses are falling within projections and to alert management to act when there is a variance.

ARI is also the trustee of our client's financial funds. All of our clients receive some type of subsidy from the State or Federal government to help them with their daily financial needs. The Finance department oversees these funds to ensure that the client's personal needs are being met and that these funds are being properly managed.

Additionally, under the umbrella of the Finance department, is the oversight of the maintenance and IT departments. Our Maintenance Specialist consistently has provided us with invaluable support in the upkeep of our Group Homes and Administrative and Main facilities. Within our IT department, our Systems Administrator has successfully upgraded the database and software used in the Finance Department, along with the configuration and deployment of new and more efficient computers, which will improve the level of service we provide to our clients, vendors and staff.

Finally, Bea Grabell, one of our key employees for the past thirty plus years, has retired. She will surely be missed.

## ARI Of Connecticut, Inc. UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT 2010 – 2011

SUPPORT & REVENUE	
Fees	\$6,265,000
Subcontracts	\$280,000
Grants	\$15,000
United Way	\$8,100
Contributions	\$240,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$6,808,100
EXPENSES	
Administration	\$935,000
Day Programs	\$1,665,000
Residential Programs	\$3,885,000
Other	\$410,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,895,000
NET OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES BEFORE DEPRECIATION	(\$86,900)
Depreciation	\$166,000
NET OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES AFTER DEPRECIATION	(\$252,900)
Investment Earnings	\$188,000
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$64,900)

The financial report presented is an unaudited financial report.  
The audited financial report will be completed by October 15, 2011.

# professional staff

Arleana Adams	Tionaya Jackson
Wendy Aldershof	Solange Jacques
Christine Alexander	Carey Jaffee
Judith Alphonse	Elaine James
Lisa Anderson	Sharon Jennings
Carline Archer	Rosie Jones
Ana Arnzen	Jolene Kalinowski
Renee Atkins	Herbert Kasedde
Yvette Banks	Elizabeth King
Clifford Beauleau	Kouassi Blah Irene Kouakou
Dekenya Bell	Debbie Krasner
Philomene Bien Aime	Carl Lewis
Toneichia Bolden	Marvin Lewis
Hope Boone	Caston Lowe
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Willie Clark	Alexandra Rey Molina
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Robert DiDomenico	Nanotte Pierre
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Ahisha Douglas	Ann Rabuse
Felicia Drungo	Pauline Rafalko
Sharil Dumas	Wayne Reid
Marnie Dupree-Nelson	Matthew Reyher
Julia Edwards	Elsa Richardson
Valerie Ennis	Jacques Richeme
Veola Flemming-Kelly	James Roan
Laura Floyd	Bryant Roberts
Tiajuana Fogle	Roberto Sanchez
Virginia Foldoe	Monretha Sinclair
Micheline Gabriel	Marie Sistrunk
Christina Gallegos	Nicole Smart-Young
Regina Garcia	Tysha Smith
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Renita Holley	Matt Whyte
Tracey Hudson-Harrison	Kendra Williams
Taria Hunter	Paulette Wilson
Gloria Jackson	

# donations

July 1, 2010 – June 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.aricr.org.

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