



always
reaching for
independence

ARI of Connecticut, Inc. Annual Report 2010

ari president/ceo



It gives me great pleasure to present our Annual Report for fiscal year 2010. The recovery in the nation's economy has been slow for the non-profit sector, but we continue to be optimistic as we approach our new fiscal year.

I am proud to report that we began the renovation of the Richmond Hill facility where our Day Services programs take place. We are upgrading the building to a fully-accessible and inspiring facility. We have added group home capacity and day program opportunities that give us the ability to attract more funding streams from the Department of Developmental Services. With the implementation of the attendance-based funding plan, the challenges to overcome service delivery has not been easy. However, level and reduced funding has made us an agency of efficiencies and effectiveness.

Inadequate funding is our fiscal reality. We must continue to meet the expectations of our clients, families and partners with fewer resources. We continue to strive to do more with less. Health care, energy, and insurance costs continue to grow and exceed our cost-of-living increases.

Thus, fundraising has taken on a vital role at ARI and, thankfully, we have seen an increase in the last fiscal year. This is a testament to the commitment of our donors, volunteers and local community. Without their support we would be in an even more precarious financial situation.

We have enjoyed many "mission moments" during the year in which clients achieved their goals and aspirations with the help and guidance of our supportive, dedicated and caring staff. We are proposing new strategies that ensure excellence in our programming and service provision models.

On behalf of our staff, board, volunteers, and the community – and most importantly our clients – I want to commend you for your continued support. Together we continue to make the lives of people with disabilities better each and every day.

– Matthew P. Reyher

board of directors

Celebrating "mission moments" and building a path for the future go hand-in-hand with being the Board Chair. There have been many "moments" that have given me that special "feel-good" feeling, even though so much of my time was spent fundraising and formulating and implementing long- and short-term goals.

The fourth Walk for Independence was such a "moment." Raising over \$100,000 in four short years is a true accomplishment, but seeing the look on the clients' faces added so much more to the experience. Our clients had fun, enjoyed a day in the park, and proudly carried signs in support of their homes and friends.

This past year, the Board tried a different kind of event – our first Comedy Night. With the hard work of the committee and staff, it became one of the agency's most important fundraisers overnight. We found a *fun* way to raise money while making a significant impact on the quality of lives of our clients and the programming they can continue to receive.

The beginning of the renovation of our Richmond Hill facility is another significant and very special accomplishment. Just as the founders of ARI must have felt when they purchased the Richmond Hill building many years ago, we are proud of the positive impact that a state-of-the-art, accessible facility will have for many years to come.

Last year, I presented a plan to establish the ARI Endowment Fund to our Board of Directors. After months of discussion, presentations, and agency-wide meetings, the program was adopted. As the Endowment is funded, the financial security of the agency will become more secure. I believe strongly in its potential, and look forward to watching it and the agency grow.

I've experienced many notable "mission moments" as Board Chair. These moments *and* challenges inspired me to dedicate myself to ARI and to take on the extra work and responsibilities. Be it watching our clients at a dance, or hearing them describe the satisfaction they get from a day's work, it is easy to experience "ah ha" moments that stay with you for years to come. As we close out a very successful year, I'm sure that those who follow will experience their share of special moments.

– Allan Sussman

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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:

30 Years of Employment

Gloria Clark

15 Years of Employment

Elizabeth King; Theresa Brown

10 Years of Employment

Yvette Banks; Joy Henry; Carlette Brisseaux

5 Years of Employment

John Gorcynski; Simone Desvarenes; Bryant Roberts; Vickie Manuel; Judith Alphonse; Robin White-Dimmock; Arleana Adams; Gerard Gasparino; Valerie Ennis; Gloria Jackson; Jolene Kalinowski

Rookie of the Year – Hector Torres, Skills Instructor

Heart of the Agency – Max Brisseaux, Residential Counselor

Always Reaching for Independence – Laura Floyd, Skills Instructor

Team Award – Sunrise Cottage (Virginia Foldoe, Kouassi Kouakou, Ann Rabuse, John Conrad, Caston Lowe, Marie Sistrunk, Wendy Aldershof, Christina Gallegos)

After an overwhelming number of nominations for HR Staff Awards – and because of these trying and difficult times – the Human Resource Department is sharing some of the inspiring comments made by staff about their fellow nominees. These are just some excerpts from the nominations – and we believe they could apply to everyone here at ARI!

“ . . . displays a quiet confidence in all situations . . . has the needs, desires and wants of the clients foremost in his mind. Is definitely mission-driven – everything that he does is to make the lives of the clients better. Is always positive and upbeat both to the clients and his coworkers. Willingly accepts any and all challenges with a positive and proactive outlook.”

“ . . . the evidence of team work is glowing . . . One mother, at a house meeting, said that she is at rest knowing the manager and staff are devoted to taking care of her daughter.”

“ . . . staff members, individually and collectively, were willing to learn new teaching strategies and were patient in the development and implementation of new programs and services. They have also worked tirelessly with the other residents in accepting and understanding the new client and the purpose of the home and ARI's mission.”

“ . . . over the past year staff have gone the extra mile to assist residents toward independence in all areas of their lives – from joining a local bowling league with them, going on road trips to check out truck dealerships, petting kittens at a shelter, hiking, cooking a Passover dinner and starting a kitchen garden. Staff took it upon themselves to find the time and resources to make it happen. They are invested in the residents and in making their lives as full and independent as possible.”

quality assurance

Satisfaction surveys of clients and their employers remain positive, signifying that quality services continue to be the focus of ARI. Throughout the year, various agency reviews are completed and scrutinized regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of our programs, goals and objectives.

Group Home Family Meetings have begun in addition to quarterly ARI family meetings to increase involvement. Input from all stakeholders, as well as analysis of the Risk Management, Public Relations, Marketing, Performance Improvement, Outcomes Measurement and Accessibility plans, are monitored throughout the year and used to guide the direction of ARI.

Dr. Bob DiDomenico is spearheading the International Conference for Siblings of Children and Adults with

Disabilities, which will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Greenwich, CT on August 7 and 8. ARI, The Kennedy Center, Inc., and the Siblings Leadership Network have been working diligently together on this unique and historic event in our community. People from all over the U.S., Australia, London and Japan will be attending this event for individuals and professionals. Headliners include Chris Burke, a well-known actor with Down syndrome, Larry Oliveri, a 17-year-old singer who has autism, and Allison Becker, a deaf contestant on last year's "So You Think You Can Dance." The conference details can be viewed at www.siblingconference.org.

Grant proposals have been submitted to various Federal, State, and other organizations to work with various populations related to our mission. This includes working with homeless disabled veterans, seniors, and families with people with disabilities.

day services



Success!

“I can do it on my own!”

Nefi has long been a part of the ARI family. In 2005, he started a job at Stop & Shop. For the last 4 years Nefi relied on staff members to transport him to and from his job. This past year Nefi focused on becoming more inde-

pendent and learned how to take public transportation. Today, Nefi gets his weekly schedule from his employer and is able to get back and forth to work all on his own.

ARI's Day Programs

ARI's Day Programs focus on employment and independent living skills. These basic skills influence one's self-sufficiency, self-esteem and quality of life. Over this past year we delivered skills training, career development and employment opportunities to 131 individuals.

The Community Employment program helps people work in competitive employment by finding and keeping jobs. Extensive training is provided on the job site. Long-term follow-up support helps individuals remain productive and employed. The ARI Work Crews – both landscaping and cleaning services – and our Production Center offer more supervised employment opportunities.

Our High School Transition program helps prepare young adults for adulthood. This past year we have focused on career exploration, getting around the community, healthy relationships, personal social skills, and independent living skills. This year all of the high school graduates with whom we are working have chosen to remain and receive adult services at ARI.

The Day Options program provides individuals with disabilities opportunities to develop and maintain functional skills in a variety of settings. The program is designed to maximize independent functioning by providing training in the areas of self-care, socialization, communication, physical and emotional maturation, cognitive, leisure, and pre-vocational skills. Services are provided to develop valued, non-work related adult roles in the community and are based on individual choice and preference.

residential

This has been a year of growth and change for Residential Services. We regularly assess our services and how those services meet the needs of current and future residents.

Our group home in Ridgefield expanded from five to six residents. The sixth person came to us from one of our sister agencies in Fairfield County and was looking for a group home with a younger, more appropriate peer group. Since moving to Ridgefield, she has maintained her connections and continues to receive services in Fairfield – which contributed to a smooth transition. As we are approaching her one-year anniversary at Sunrise Cottage, we will help her become a member of the Ridgefield community by helping her obtain services in her new “home-town.”

On July 1, 2009, we officially filled a vacancy at our Lotstein group home. A young woman who grew up in Stamford and was aging out of the school system, moved in – we had been providing services to her in a ‘respite’ status. As the youngest resident of the group home, she has contributed to the lively, upbeat atmosphere and views Lotstein as her home. Since moving in, she has expanded her verbal communication, increased the number of community outings that she enjoys, and has begun attending ARI's Day Program on a regular basis.

Through our Individualized Home Supports (apartment) program, we serve a number of individuals who, although they do not live in traditional group homes, require twenty-four hour staff supports. This past year, we combined two of these programs by renting a two-family house and having the women share staff and activities. This has resulted in a very lively and diverse group of ladies coming together, forming friendships and relationships that they may not have had in the traditional IHS setting.



development

Despite the economy, we've continued to welcome new donors and supporters. We have been working hard to share the ARI story throughout the community by attending functions and speaking to businesses and volunteer/nonprofit groups. Here's a snapshot of the year:

- The 2009 Annual Lotstein/Martin Golf Tournament was held on June 25 and was a huge success. The 15th Annual Tournament will be held on the afternoon of August 19, 2010, followed by a lobster dinner celebration. For those interested in playing or sponsoring, please call 203 324-9258 ext. 3023.

- Our first ARI Comedy Night took place in October and instantly became a successful fundraiser! Over 100 people enjoyed cocktails, dinner, a silent auction and three nationally-known comedians at the Hibernian Hall in Stamford. Come join us October 23, 2010 for another round of laughs and fun.

- The 2009–2010 Annual Appeal provided the opportunity to make an annual contribution, and so far, the numbers are matching last year's. (It is never too late to give!)

- Over 250 people, including 50 clients, walked in our 4th Annual Walk for Independence in May. Congressman Jim Himes, Mayor Michael Pavia, and State Representative Gerry Fox joined us for the opening ceremony. We collected more pledges and support than previous Walks.

- In July 2009, over fifty volunteers from GE Asset Management cleaned and painted the six bedrooms at our Lotstein home. In April 2010, Rebuilding Together Fairfield County coordinated over fifty volunteers from four different groups to paint the downstairs of the Richmond Hill facility. Included were volunteers from the Greenwich Jaycees, Pitney Bowes, the Convent of the Sacred Heart and the Association des Femmes en Action, Inc. Also in April, the Affinion Group (located in High Ridge Park in Stamford) brought over forty volunteers to paint the Minor Place facility via HomeFront, Inc.

- The ARI Artists' Initiative produced its third annual calendar with original artwork by thirteen artists.

- First County Bank provided ARI with a grant to cover the costs of emergency expenses incurred by the Individualized Home Supports program.

- The Fairfield County Community Foundation helped fund the ARI respite program which allows families the chance to take a break from their daily care-taking duties.

- The United Way awarded us a grant to provide services to an individual not currently receiving funding for residential supports through our IHS program.

- The development committee is cultivating the ARI Endowment and the Building Campaign to fund the ongoing renovation project at the Richmond Hill Facility.

recreation and volunteers

From vacations to sporting events, Special Olympics to art shows, over 75% of ARI clients participated in recreation events throughout the year.

Clients attended New York Mets and Bridgeport Bluefish baseball games,

Bridgeport Sound Tigers hockey games, and much more. Many participated in the weekly aqua-aerobics program 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 was featured in the annual ARI calendar and art shows throughout the state.

Social gatherings continue to be a highlight. This year over 80 ARI clients attended the Halloween, Holiday, Valentine's and St. Patrick's Day parties at the Knights of Columbus. Over 30 clients attended the monthly Men's and Women's Nights Out where clients meet at local restaurants to share dinner and good times.

All of the recreation activities serve multiple purposes; clients have fun, socialize, develop friendships, and are physically active. Over the past year many relationships have been fostered through the program.

We wouldn't be able to offer so many programs without the support of our dedicated volunteers. On average, volunteers donated over 100 hours per month working with our clients. In addition to the many individuals who volunteer their time and talent, we are fortunate to have BuildOn, Community Volunteers in Action (CVIA), ARI Youth Corps, Affinion Group, GE Asset Management, Greenwich Jaycees, the Kiwanis Club of Stamford and other organizations helping us throughout the year.

Once again, Thomson Reuters sponsored three bowling parties. They generously provided lunch at the annual client's holiday party, where they were also treated to presents and cake donated by the Stamford Police Union.

ARI thanks all of our volunteers for making sure these vital programs can exist and for providing so much happiness to our clients.



finance

The Accounting Department ensures that the agency's funds are being properly accounted for and used for the mission of ARI. It consists of five dedicated staff members who provide service in the following areas: Accounts Payable, Payroll and Benefits Administration, Internal Audits and Consumer Entitlements, Billing and Accounts Receivable, Bank Reconciliations, Financial Budgeting and Reporting, and Cash Management, and Investments.

We experienced a number of challenges this year, from a major computer crash to a change in the way we bill for services. Earlier this year, our computer system "crashed," but with the help of our IT Director and outside consultants we were able to get it up and running in a few days. We instituted new systems to ensure that should this happen again, we will be able to recover even faster.

The way we bill for our services in our day programs has been overhauled. The state has switched to attendance-based billing as opposed to billing for one twelfth of the annual amount per client each month. This has created additional reporting requirements to which we must adhere. To this end, the department has been performing internal audits on all billing that is sent to the state each month while ensuring that the proper backup is in place.

Lastly, we are happy to announce that our payroll administrator will reach her 30th year at ARI this year. Congratulations, Gloria!

ARI Of Connecticut, Inc. UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT 2009 – 2010

SUPPORT & REVENUE	
Fees	\$6,297,340
Workshop Contracts	\$199,623
Grants	\$92,780
United Way	\$10,000
Contributions	\$120,257
TOTAL REVENUE	\$6,720,000
EXPENSES	
Administration	\$936,661
Day Programs	\$1,785,468
Residential Programs	\$3,802,061
Other	\$233,827
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,758,017
NET OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES BEFORE DEPRECIATION	(\$38,017)
Depreciation	\$176,855
NET OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES AFTER DEPRECIATION	(\$214,872)
Investment Earnings	\$175,188
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$39,684)

The financial report presented is an unaudited report. The audit for the fiscal year 2010 will be completed by October 15, 2010.

professional staff

Arleana Adams	Taria Hunter
Wendy Aldershof	Gloria Jackson
Christine Alexander	Tionaya Jackson
Judith Alphonse	Solange Jacques
Magdelah Alphonse	Carey Jaffee
Lisa Anderson	Elaine James
Carline Archer	Sharon Jennings
Renee Atkins	Rosie Jones
Armando Azana	Jolene Kalinowski
Yvette Banks	Herbert Kasedde
Clifford Beauleau	Elizabeth King
Dekenya Bell	Kouassi Kouakou
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Kislene Bosse	Marvin Lewis
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John Conrad	Maxine Mereigh
Mary Cook	Tanika Miller
Thaddeus Cuffee	Yolanda Morales
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Felicia Drungo	Pauline Rafalko
Sharil Dumas	Wayne Reid
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Julia Edwards	Elsa Richardson
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Veola Flemming-Kelly	James Roan
Laura Floyd	Bryant Roberts
Tiajuana Fogle	Roberto Sanchez
Virginia Foldoe	Marie Sistrunk
Micheline Gabriel	Nicole Smart-Young
Christina Gallegos	Tammy Smith
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Gerard Gasparino	Sherland St. John
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donations

july 1, 2009 through june 30, 2010

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.aric.org.

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