

M&T Representatives Discuss Identity Theft at The Arc MH Renegades Meeting

Identity Theft and Credit Card Fraud was discussed at the April 2023 Renegades meeting. Each year, millions of people report incidents of identity theft and credit card fraud. It happened to The Arc Mid-Hudson receptionist, Samantha Michaels. When it occurred, Samantha (and her mother Nancy) worked proactively with representatives of M&T Bank in Saugerties to ensure that similar incidents do not occur in the future.

Samantha then invited the bank representatives (John Keher and Shane Henneberger) to present at the April 2023 meeting of the Renegades Self-Advocacy Group. Their presentation addressed different types of scams, individual responsibility, and steps people can take to prevent scammers from getting access to their personal information. The presentation was well received, and there was a lively conversation about fraud and fraud prevention.

The Renegades would like to extend a big “Thank You” to John Keher and Shane Henneberger for taking the time to discuss this important issue.



Community Pre-Voc Volunteering in our Community!

Community Pre-Voc has volunteered their time assisting at the Habitat for Humanity Restore. It is truly a win/win situation where they clean & refurbish donated items, merchandise/display items for sale, tidy the store, provide customer service, etc., all while gaining valuable work experience and developing transferrable skills to apply to future employment. This experience has not only provided a venue for building skills, but has promoted awareness and connectedness to the community. The group was given a private tour of 3 homes that were recently built by Habitat and that have been furnished with the furniture and decorative items that they refurbished and cleaned. When they realized that their efforts were directly positively impacting families, you could see the sense of pride and accomplishment in their expressions and demeanor. Their realization that they possess the ability to make a difference in people’s lives is empowering.



Recreation and Guardianship Grant

The Arc Mid-Hudson has been awarded \$73,500 in grants from the Trustee Management Board of The NYSARC Trust Services to support The Arc Mid-Hudson guardianship and recreation programs.

This year, The Arc Mid-Hudson received \$56,500 to provide guardianship services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who would not otherwise have a legal guardian or advocate. Supported by Chapter staff and community volunteers, The Arc Mid-Hudson Guardianship Program currently provides guardianship support and services to 10 people, and is ready to assist 7 people as a Standby or Alternate Standby guardian.

NYSARC Trust Services also awarded The Arc Mid-Hudson \$17,000 to support new recreational opportunities and enrich the lives of the more than 1,000 individuals it serves. The Arc Mid-Hudson plans to use the recreation grant funds to allow individuals to have opportunities and experiences that they might not be able to fund themselves.



Liz Rocks from Pinetree enjoying Equine Therapy that was paid for by the recreation grant.



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**Family member of person who receives support from The Arc Mid-Hudson.*



Greetings from John McHugh, Executive Director of The Arc Mid-Hudson

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines Resiliency as; "An ability to recover from or adjust to adversity or change." I believe that this accurately reflects our agency and more importantly, the people who are a part of it. An obvious example of this is shown by how we navigated the challenges of COVID and were able to keep people safe. Sadly, we did lose some people with comorbidities but overall we did an excellent job pooling resources and working together on creating new protocols and systems within our operations. I am so proud of all our staff who worked so hard during those very difficult times.

But as we begin to put COVID in the "rearview mirror," our organization faces new challenges in terms of human and financial capital. Shifting demographics caused by migration out of the Hudson Valley, and lower birth rates, have made the recruitment of staff — and more specifically, DSPs — much more challenging. In a recent report from the Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, during the period between 1996 and 2021, 135,000 people moved out of the Hudson Valley. Between 1997 and 2019, the annual birth rate in the Hudson Valley dropped 10%, or 3000 babies, per year. This is also evidenced in the Hudson Valley school systems, as student populations have dropped by 12%, or 45,000 students, since 2003. These decreases have shrunk the employment pool and created a labor shortage in the Hudson Valley.

Appropriate financial funding has always been a challenge in the field of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). After coming off a decade of 0% increases in financial reimbursement, last year we finally received a 5.4% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for our I/DD programs. Unfortunately, that was all but negated by high inflation rates. This year, we advocated for an 8.5% COLA — however, in the Governor's budget, only 2.5% was offered. We ended up receiving just 4%, which is woefully low.

Despite these challenges, I am proud to say that our agency continues to be innovative and effective in how we support people with disabilities. Our efforts to recruit staff never cease. We advertise on billboards and radio, as well as with traditional online resources. Our team is always looking for ways to improve our effectiveness. Even though we are short-staffed, our team pulls together and covers each other's shifts when necessary. Managers will jump in to cover direct hands-on work, and our staff will transfer programs when and where needed. Everyone tries to help one another as much as possible, despite the added stress it puts on themselves and their colleagues.

This is one of the many reasons why I am proud to be a part of The Arc Mid-Hudson. Witnessing people coming together in order to keep programs moving forward so that they help the people they are supporting succeed, is one of the most humbling and inspiring things to see. That is why I know this agency will continue to thrive, despite the obstacles that lay before us. We continue to work together and support one another. "Stronger Together" is not just a tagline; it's a reality. The Arc Mid-Hudson is stronger because of its employees, families, donors, and community members coming together and helping each other. The agency is special, and I am so grateful to lead it and be a part of it.

Sincerely,

John McHugh
 Executive Director
 The Arc Mid-Hudson



You Scream, I Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream!

R&A Ice Cream visited Parkside Preschool and treated the students with ice cream! Thank you to the Arias family, owner of R&A Ice Cream, for brightening up our preschoolers' day.



Brookside Preschool Neighborhood Week

During the first week of May, our Brookside Preschool students enjoyed some fun activities when their classrooms turned into "businesses" where they could spend Brookside Bucks on goods and services!



FOUNDATION EVENTS

Wine & Dine



The 9th Annual Wine & Dine was held at Frank Guido's Little Italy on April 14, 2023. The evening, which paired four delicious courses with fine wines, had 85 attendees and raised over \$30,000.

"This year's Wine & Dine once again was a great success. This event helped us raise funds to revitalize our Pecora Community Room at the Joseph T. Pecora Center on 139 Cornell Street in Kingston," said John McHugh, Chief Executive Director of The Arc Mid-Hudson. "Fundraising events such as the Wine & Dine are a great way to get the community together and raise much-needed funds for the people we support with intellectual and developmental disabilities."

This year's Fund in Need was to raise money to revitalize our Joseph T. Pecora Center in Kingston. The revitalization will include a Community-Based Respite program that will be open to the community members who have a developmental disability. There is also a plan to offer a Senior Day program and establish a hub for our Day Habilitation Without Walls program. Future space will be available to community organizations for club meetings, including chess, knitting, and book clubs.

Humanitarian Awards Brunch



The 41st Annual Humanitarian Awards Brunch was held on May 21, 2023 at Ole Savannah Southern Table and Bar. What a wonderful day it was to celebrate all our honorees.

Congratulations to our winners!

Humanitarian of the Year: Angelo Angerame

Heart of Gold: Nearing Butremuk Family Foundation

Jack Deyo Award for Advocacy: Susan Sassano

Personal Achievement: Miranda Carey

Employer of the Year: Shoprite, Ellenville

Employee of the Year: Andrea Richards

Thank you to all our guests who joined us, and our presenters and speakers who made this day possible. Also, thank you to our Corporate Sponsors for supporting The Arc Mid-Hudson: Hudson Regional LTC Pharmacy, Rifton, Alera Group, NFP, LW Tree Service, D&D Automotive, Ulster Savings Bank, Dutton Architects, Hudson Valley Credit Union, Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union, Rondout Savings Bank, Resorts World - Catskills, Robert & Merriam Boening, Danny's Auto & Towing, Katy Dwyer Design, & Ulster Federal Credit Union.

Putnam Golf Tournament



On Monday, June 12, 2023, 60 golfers teed off in The Arc Mid-Hudson's Summer Golf Classic at Putnam County Golf Course in Mahopac, NY. Golfers enjoyed a beautiful sunny day at Putnam County Golf Club with 18 holes of golf, a barbecue lunch, and buffet dinner with an open bar and an awards ceremony.

The Arc Mid-Hudson was able to raise funds to help support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Greene, Putnam, and Ulster Counties with the generous support of the following corporate and event Sponsors: Hudson Regional LTC Pharmacy, Rifton Equipment, Alera Group, NFP, D&D Auto, LW Tree Service, Ulster Savings, Robert and Merriam Boening, Danny's Automotive, Dutton Architecture, Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union, Resorts World, Rondout Savings, Leading Edge Aero, LLC., Lowe Plumbing, Insite Engineering, and Getler, Gomes, & Sutton, PC.

Congratulations to the winners of the Summer Golf Classic golf tournament. Winning 1st place was Team NFP, 2nd place went to Team Resorts World/Ferraro, and in 3rd place was Leading Edge Aero, LLC. Sean Cooper and Michele Cordoza won the Longest Drive, Carl Cabone won Closest to the Pin, Jeanette Chagaris won the Putting Contest, and Jeff Hewlett won the 50/50 raffle (and generously donated his winnings back to The Arc Mid-Hudson).

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insight

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8/1 through 8/25, Tuesday-Friday
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