

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Awards Ceremony

April 11, 2018
12:30pm
Auditorium, Independence Square

37th Annual Golf Outing & Live Auction

Monday, June 4th
Pawtucket Country Club

For more information, visit our website: www.bvcriarc.org

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Pawtucket, RI

WINTER
2018



Damon Mahan: A Certified Outreach Yoga Instructor!

As yoga students gather and settle into their chairs, Damon greets the class with "Thank you all for coming today. Now let's all sit up tall and take a deep breath in." Everyone follows the first movement which includes a deep breath in with arms floating overhead followed by the cue "now... snow down gently with an exhale"...and individuals sequentially move their arms down to the ground while fluttering their fingers like falling snow.

Bologna, owner of Shri Studio in Pawtucket. Over the course of three weekends, Alison led devoted yoga students through the principles and techniques of instructing yoga outreach classes. Through the process, Damon had to learn the philosophy of Karma Yoga and service-based outreach programs, practice yoga asanas (poses), complete field work and develop an "outreach project" for a presentation to the class. Damon developed an outreach project devoted to members of his church.



Damon demonstrates Tree pose

Damon asks, "Who inspired us to be loved? It could be friends, family or even a pet." The answers from each participant are individual and thoughtful. The sense of community in the yoga practice comes alive with Damon.

Damon completed a 60-hour yoga teacher training course with Alison

The sense of community in the yoga practice comes alive with Damon.

Along with learning and mastering the practice and teaching of yoga, Damon had to learn how to take attendance, collect signed releases and in some cases, process payments. Using his own tablet now, Damon logs-in, downloads music, inputs attendance and records teacher notes. Each class is modified as needed, using chairs and extra blocks. An adapted Sun Salutation is developed using a chair and the following sequence led by Damon, "Reach up high, bend down low, lift your head, touch your toes, bring your nose to your knee, reach back up and follow me."

In 2012, Alison started the non-profit Shri Service Corps to bring yoga to shelters, schools, recovery centers, hospitals, veterans and social service agencies.

Each Shri project is provided with a curriculum developed by Alison to accommodate students both on and off the mat.

Shri stands for Support, Honor, Respect, and Inspire. Damon brings this philosophy to each and every class he teaches. His accomplishment is an inspiration to all of us at The Arc!



Damon showing the Warrior One yoga pose

Donations of \$100 or more from September 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017

DONATIONS:

Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Champi
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Mr. Kevin Tracy
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GRANT: Harry Yaghjian Trust Fund

IN HONOR OF: The Marriage of Ann Telfer and David Thomas

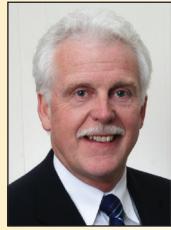
IN MEMORIAM:

Mr. Robert Shea

DONATIONS RECEIVED IN

MEMORY OF:

Ms. Mary Hird
Ms. Ellen McCarthy
Ms. Nancy Collins



Letter from the CEO

One of the things that make The Arc of Blackstone Valley such a special place is the philanthropic commitment of our Board, family members and friends. Last year we raised over \$9,000 during our membership campaign in March, a testament to the enthusiasm of over 100 donors. Membership contributions are critical, because they fund social and recreational activities that are not supported by State dollars. We hope we can count on you this March, to surpass our 2018 goal of \$10,000!

This fall we celebrated the opening of a new computer center at one of our housing complexes, Veterans For Tomorrow (VFT). We are grateful to Jason Martins of Phoenix Property Management for his efforts in bringing this project to the attention of the Institute for Real Estate Management, Greater Rhode Island, Chapter 88 (IREM-RI). Thanks to IREM, funds were raised to support the creation of a computer center to help residents pursue job opportunities and online applications. We are especially grateful to Secure Future Tech, Inc., which generously donated three desktop computers which were unveiled on Thursday, November 9th before a crowd of supporters.



Members of IREM celebrating the new computer center at VFT on November 9th

In addition, we acknowledged Art Connections-RI for the donation and installation of twelve new works of art that adorn the walls of the community room and the computer center.

As we move into 2018, we need to shift our focus towards looking strategically to the future. Times have changed for The Arc and many other agencies in our field. We need new models, new ideas and new ways of securing employment opportunities for our consumers. This is what the US Department of Justice's Consent Decree is all about. I hope you will take time to read our feature article about a local business, Out of Eden, which recently hired two of our consumers for paid work in the landscaping field. We would so appreciate any help connecting The Arc to any businesses that might open their doors to our participants for either volunteer placements or paid work.

Thank you again for your support and belief in The Arc of Blackstone Valley!

Sincerely,

John J. Padien III
Chief Executive Officer



The Out of Eden Team: Joshua Pereira, Eric Major and Floriano Pereira with Arc Program Director Jon Robillard

“ We here at Out of Eden Landscaping pledge to treat you, our customer, with respect and individual attention. ”

When a company publicizes a pledge to the community like this, you can be confident that it is also a reflection of how it values and respects its employees. And this couldn't be truer for two members of The Arc family, Eric Major and Kris Richards who now work for Out of Eden Landscaping.

For Owner Joshua Pereira, it began with an honest commitment to individuals with disabilities in part because of his previous position at an agency similar to The Arc. "I was a psychologist and very active writing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for children ages 3-9 years of age. Later, I became familiarized with transition services for students ages 18-21. What I learned over time is that these young adults never get a fair chance. Society is quick to put a label on them, but identifying skills and interests and moving them beyond their disability just doesn't seem to happen."



But Joshua is sure about his commitment to these two employees and is excited that The Arc has taken a leadership role in its approach to community-based employment. Just in the last few months, seven individuals have either started new jobs or are interning for several

months with the hope of future employment and six others have been in long term positions with area companies

According to Arc Program Director Jon Robillard, both men were well prepared for a paying job in the community, from years of training and contract work with Valley Landscaping. Both Eric and Kris have Safety and Compliance certifications from Beacon Mutual which was very appealing to Joshua and his Operations Manager Floriano Pereira.

"Both Kris and Eric are awesome, they come to work on time and work really hard all day long" says Joshua. "It is a pleasure having them on our team as they have great attitudes about everything expected of them. We really needed help this past fall with cleanup work. Kris is great trimming with the weed whacker and Eric uses the big power mower for large properties."

"What can I say to other potential employers out there," asks Joshua. "These individuals have skills and abilities and represent an untapped resource in our community. It is time for the community to open its doors to people with disabilities."

March is Membership Month
Your vision...our Work. Members are critical to the success of The Arc. Every dollar raised supports new and ongoing recreational and educational programs that are not typically funded by the State. You will receive a membership letter in February, but just in case, a membership envelope is enclosed with this newsletter in case you are eager to contribute now! And don't forget, you can donate through our website and secure Paypal portal at www.bvcriarc.org.

Thanks to our 2017 Golf Outing donors, we raised over \$8,000 for the Holiday Party!



A crowded dance floor!



Brenda and Damon



Team 2

2017 Holiday Party Donors: Robert Adams, Mark Barrett, Sean Cottreal, Anne Duffy, Cathie Gilligan, Jennifer Healey, Robert & Lisa Hird, Tom Hodge, Kevin Hundley, Brian & Kathy Hunt, Charlie Kave, Kathleen Kohls, Sue Kolc, Ted Larson, Camille Letourneau, Brian Littleton, Nathan Lusk, Mary-Kathryn Lynch, Michel Manosh, Marthe-Anne Monagle, Peter & Liz Morley, Bill O'Gara, Jim O'Sullivan, Tom Robinson, Maura Rogers, Joe Sabatino, Sean Follick, John Silva, Robert Skurka, Bill Szaferowicz, Ann Telfer, David Thomas, Kevin Tracy, Angie Tucker

EMPLOYMENT CORNER:
DO YOU HAVE A LEAD?

Individuals supported by the Arc of Blackstone Valley are looking for work experience and employment opportunities in the following area:

FOOD SERVICE:
• KITCHEN HELPER
• FOOD PREPARATION
• DISHWASHER

Two job seekers are interested in working in a restaurant, catering business, cafeteria or health care facility cafeteria. One individual has extensive food service experience working in a hospital. He recently lost his job when the hospital closed. The second individual has had extensive training and is ready to find a competitive job in his community. Both individuals are eager to find jobs in the Pawtucket area.

Call Armand Gaudet at (401) 727-0150 if you have a lead or email him at agaudet@bvcriarc.org