

**The Arc of Blackstone Valley**  
 LIVE · LEARN · WORK · PLAY  
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WINTER 2020

# The Arc of Blackstone Valley Resource

LIVE · LEARN · WORK

A PUBLICATION FOR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE ARC OF BLACKSTONE VALLEY



## SAVE THE DATE

**2019 Arc Awards Ceremony**  
 POSTPONED, TBA

**39th Annual Golf Outing and Live Auction**  
 RESCHEDULED, new date: Monday, August 31, 2020

For more information, visit our website: [www.bvcriarc.org](http://www.bvcriarc.org)

### Donations of \$100 or more from December 1, 2019 through February 28, 2020

Anonymous	Mr. Joseph McEnness
Mrs. Karen Bovi	Ms. Deborah Mello
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Burlone	Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Carney	Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Monagle
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Champi	Mr. and Mrs. John Moran
Crown Collision Center	Mr. Frank Plante
Elmwood Auto Group, Inc.	Ms. Susan Raposa
Ms. Kathleen Flynn	Mrs. Gloria Reis
Dr. and Mrs. Patrick Healey	Mr. Aaron Smith
Mr. William Hunt	Mr. and Mrs. David Spencer
Ms. Katherine Jacquart	USI Insurance Services
Bequest of Lester B. Keats	Mr. Matthew West
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Kelman	Mr. Charles Wroblewski
Mr. and Mrs. Dale Kennedy	Harry Yaghjian Trust Fund
Ms. Erna LaPlume	

**Grants:**  
 Bristol County Savings  
 Charitable Foundation

**Donations Received  
 in Memory of:**  
 Gerald O'Neill  
 Lester B. Keats  
 Henry Pariseau

**In Memoriam:**  
 Henry Pariseau

## A passion turns into competitive employment

Hard work and persistence paid off for Chris Barboza. His eagerness to work and a passion for working with wood led him to a job at edge and end, LLC. in Providence. Edge and end is one of two area companies that makes craft pieces for the home with locally sourced and repurposed wood.



Chris explains that he has fond memories of his dad, who also worked in the same field. "I love working with wood like my father did, and also with my hands" Chris explains. He said that he enjoys learning new techniques involved with priming and staining wood as well.

Chris' first interview for the training program didn't go as well as Claire Flynn and Dwight Phillips had hoped. "It was a learning curve for Chris and for us as well, to learn how to prepare him for the interview and to adequately showcase his strong interest and passion for working with wood" Claire explained. So they applied a second time and thanks to Chris' own handwritten note and a stronger interview with edge and end owner David Ellison, he was accepted.

Chris completed 20 training sessions in a 10-week period and was hired along with one other individual for a job at edge and end. His motivation was clear and his commitment continues as he has only missed one day since the day he was hired in October. He even purchased special boots, gloves and a measuring tape to be properly equipped for the job. "Chris has become a very valuable member of our team. His attention to detail assures that he produces

excellent results. In addition to his care and concern for his work, he is actually a very positive and constructive force in our organization," commented David.

Thanks to a grant from the Governor's Workforce Board's Real Pathways RI, David created a training program especially designed for individuals with disabilities. Participants have come from The Cove, West Bay Residential Services, The Arc of Blackstone Valley and the Corliss Institute. David stated, "Employing a diverse workforce is valuable to any small business for many reasons. A very significant one is that customers who come to the studio and witness our work environment, actually come back again and again. Through our collaborative workshop, we work with vulnerable members of our community to teach trade and job skills, create employment opportunities, and build meaningful relationships."

Congratulations to Chris for identifying a passion... and landing a paying job! The Arc congratulates edge and end for their vision and commitment to employing a diverse workforce!



Chris Barboza works on a piece of wood and shows he's happy on the job

“Chris has become a very valuable member of our team.”

For more information about our programs, call (401) 727-0150, go to our Web site at [www.bvcriarc.org](http://www.bvcriarc.org) or e-mail contact [@bvcriarc.org](mailto:contact@bvcriarc.org).

The Arc of Blackstone Valley is committed to supporting people with developmental disabilities secure the opportunity to choose and realize their goals of where and how they live, learn, work and play



## Letter from the CEO

Very little has been on our minds besides the COVID-19 outbreak. The health and wellbeing of our staff and consumers during this pandemic is our highest priority. The management team is meeting twice daily to discuss plans to mitigate exposure and to ensure that we have readily available resources including food, medical supplies and a comprehensive support system.

We have closed all center-based day programs and continue to follow the Governor's directives that include restricting group and community activities. These changes in routines are a challenge for the people we support as well as our staff and families. With spring around the corner, perhaps getting outside will offer some stress relief and much needed physical activity.

It is unfortunate that we will have to postpone our Annual Awards Ceremony, the basketball practice season, and the Rockers bowling league until we are given an "all clear" notice from our Governor. In addition, we are postponing our major fundraising event, the 39th Annual Golf Outing and Live Auction until Monday, August 31st.

I would be remiss if I neglected to thank all of the generous donors of the 2019 Golf Outing who pledged over \$8,000 to the Holiday Party this past holiday season. This holiday celebration brings the whole Arc Family together for a delicious dinner and a fun night of dancing. Let's hope that our 2020 Golf Outing can take place in late summer so that we can rally support for another exciting Holiday Party.



2019 Holiday Party in Motion

Last, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of our employees and families who remain committed to our work ---all of whom are having to re-design daily routines and schedules to respond to the stay-at-home and social distancing directives. These are challenging times indeed but I am confident we can get past this, if we continue to work together.

With all good wishes,  
*John J. Padien III*  
Chief Executive Officer

# BUILDING A STRONG COMMUNITY



The guys at Engine Company 4



Jay, John, Jim and Lydia at breakfast



Strawberry picking



Fishing

## What does community mean to three members of The Arc family who are out and about each and every day?

For Jim, Jay, and John community means visiting people and places they are familiar with and exploring new activities that they have never tried before. According to Program Director Vitnela Depina and Direct Support Professional Lydia Torres, they meet as a team at Earl Avenue to explore ideas for the creation of a two-month calendar of community-based activities. Each day begins with a coffee hour at McDonald's, where their orders are readily known by all of the employees. As Jim explains, "they are like a family to us." While the day starts at McDonalds, it doesn't end there.

They go to the MacColl YMCA twice a week for individual workouts and an hour of group activities in the gym. Bowling is popular on Fridays as well as arts and craft activities that focus on holidays. Once a month they have Breakfast Club at Tigger's where they order and pay for

their own food and submit receipts to staff. A weekly visit to the library is fun too, as they research events or activities, use computers or listen to music.

Once a month the three guys plan a full day outing which might include attending a Patriot's spring training practice or a visit to the car museum in Portsmouth. Fishing at Lincoln Woods is popular and so is Jay's favorite summer activity... hanging out at the beach in Bristol.

These three men also have a sense of civic responsibility and giving back. Every month they go to Engine Company 4 on Cottage Street to offer help shoveling snow, cleaning up or doing small jobs for the firefighters. The day before these visits, they bake treats for the firemen.

Kudos to Vitnela and the entire team for encouraging this level of community involvement for members of The Arc family!

## Congratulations



...to Joe Connors on his retirement from the City of East Providence as the Sergeant at Arms! The City recognized his decades of service with a celebration and named February 18th as Joe Connors Day. He received keys to the City, a police jacket and a fire department badge.

## In a Time of Need...

As the COVID-19 community-spread permeates our state, we continue to update safety plans daily for our Arc Family.

### Let's think about life after COVID-19!

Help us re-build our depleted resources by submitting the enclosed Membership envelope with a contribution targeting Yoga classes, Sail To Prevail, tickets to PPAC and the Bruins, Group memberships to MacColl YMCA, trips to museums and parks.



Help us re-establish our presence in the community and bring back the true meaning of self-determination, independence and social engagement.