

The Arc of Blackstone Valley  
 500 Prospect Street  
 Pawtucket, RI 02860  
 www.bvciarc.org  
 contact@bvciarc.org

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## 2020 YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS

- 40 Years Dale Newton
- 35 Years Darlene Cavalario-Camara
- 30 Years Lisa Silveira
- 25 Years John Arruda, Kim Freitas, Carol Heit, Allen Parent-Welmore, Monica Scott, Suzanne Sullivan, Michael Tavares
- 20 Years Maria Jenkins, Michelle Retray, Tammy Rivera
- 15 Years Tiffany Brown, Tori Carroll, Sherri Mills, Marrie Morris, Lisa Ramos, Robert Timoney
- 10 Years Gabriela Algami, Jo-Ann Odsen, Renita O'Leary
- 5 Years Tiana Agosto, Rely Brennan, Melissa Brito, Marie Carroll, Raquel Castellar, Raheem Collins, Susan Dorrance, Valquiria Dos Santos, Jonisha Gibbs, Carla Franco Martins, Michelle Laroché, Sleya Monteiro



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

FALL 2021

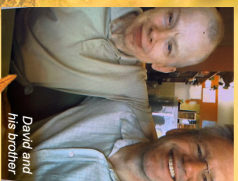
The Arc of Blackstone Valley  
 LIVE • LEARN • WORK

# Resource



When David came to the Arc, he had been living alone in an apartment. He wanted to become independent, so moving out of his parent's home would complete his journey into adulthood. Sleeping fully dressed arrested his concerns of experiencing an emergency, interacting with police or needing a quick escape in the case of fire. He soon recognized that he was afraid of living alone.

David needed a safety-net in order to feel safe and to gain the trust of others. It took well trained staff and a new living environment to help David learn the triggers of his fear and imaginary thoughts and to begin to develop self-worth and confidence. The Arc team knew that David needed security at night, so the presence of overnight staff was critical...and it worked.



The changes in David over the last 14 years have been remarkable. He now enjoys and participates in household chores, especially dishwashing. He keeps an eye out for his three fellow roommates and advocates for them when they need help. One time, after a fall, he worried that he would lose his dishwashing job and his role in getting everyone organized and ready for outings. However, he was reassured that the dishwasher job was still his and as a result, he was very happy to get back to it. The message is clear: Thanks to the staff and his team at The Arc, David's structured environment and predictable schedule has opened his world up to many new experiences. He is happy, productive, and now hoping to learn how to drive.



"I have been with The Arc for almost 22 years working at Earl Avenue and Seabiscuit Places. What brings a smile to my face is knowing that we are all doing whatever it takes to keep the consumers healthy -- so they can enjoy everything that makes them happy. This keeps me motivated daily."



Seanah began her career with The Arc at age 21 as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). As a DSP at Estrel, she loved building relationships with all of the residents. "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in this group home. I have seen such growth in each individual, especially during Covid when we were homebound. We had to be creative as well as diligent about planning meals, daily activities and sanitizing, etc. It was a team effort and everyone helped." As a first generation American born to Liberian parents, Seanah's parents valued education above all else. She credits her academic success with the private schooling she had as a young person, which led her to CCRI and eventually, a bachelor's degree in science from Rhode Island College (RIC). Seanah knew her real passion focused on issues related to diversity, differing abilities, race and gender equality which led her to RIC a second time, for a Masters in Social Work (MSW). This spring, Seanah graduated with her MSW thanks to The Arc's Tuition Reimbursement Program. Because of this support and a Graduate Assistant position at RIC, Seanah was able to graduate debt-free. While she plans to apply and study for her state licensure, her work continues at Estrel with all of her "hadies" -- a job she continues to love. Congratulations Seanah!

The Journey through Covid 19 has been challenging for our entire Arc of Blackstone Valley family. We have worked hard to keep our consumers healthy and happy. On behalf of the Board of Directors of The Arc of Blackstone Valley we thank all of our frontline workers, especially our Direct Support Professionals. You are the heroes we celebrate in this newsletter with a few short stories that showcase your work during a challenging time.

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

As we start to heal from the Covid pandemic, we remain cautious. Many challenges face us as we work to re-establish and re-invent safe, community-based programming. It is my belief that we will get there, and this is due to an amazing staff, all of whom continue to work tirelessly to keep our folks safe and healthy.

When I review our 2020 Years of Service Awards, I am amazed at the longevity of many of our employees. I especially want to celebrate the dedication of Dale Newton, our Administrative Director who has been with us for 40 Years! Thank you to Darlene Cavallaro-Camara for 35 years of service, and Lisa Silveira for 30 years. Please take a look at the Years of Service Awards list in this newsletter, celebrating many more employees who have dedicated their time and service to The Arc.

I also wish to thank our outgoing Board President, Tom Hodge, for his service and leadership of The Arc over the last several decades. We are grateful to Tom for coordinating and leading the Board through a lengthy strategic planning process and for supporting our fundraising efforts over the years. Congratulations to Bill Szafranowicz for accepting the position of President this year. We look forward to his direction as we move past a pandemic, strengthen our employment program and re-establish community-based programming.

Our Twelve Weeks of Giving summer campaign has generated over \$32,000 to date, thanks to the leadership of Board member Melanie Cherry. We recognize our generous sponsors and the countless small businesses and individuals who will make our individualized holiday celebrations safe, from Halloween to the New Year.

Although we have an approved State budget that includes a substantial increase in wages, we are still dealing with a staff shortage. Our work is still ahead of us. Thank you again to our active Arc workforce whose loyalty is evident by our 2020 Years of Service Awards!

Sincerely,

*John J. Patten III*

Chief Executive Officer

# Thank you to our Major Sponsors of the 2021 Twelve Weeks of Giving Campaign

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