

Resource

The Arc of Blackstone Valley
LIVE · LEARN · WORK · PLAY

Fall 2024

Your Commitment to Providing Access and Inclusion

Imagine needing essential equipment for a healthy life, but insurance falls short of covering the costs. Many of us have faced similar challenges, but for some, these hurdles can be insurmountable. That's where your donations to The Arc of Blackstone Valley come in. Your contributions don't just provide vital equipment; they also ensure that individuals have access to basic necessities and the opportunity to participate in community outings they otherwise couldn't afford. From covering co-pays to facilitating inclusive experiences, your support extends far beyond what you may realize, touching the lives of those we serve in profound ways. Here are some examples of how donations have made a positive impact:

Merrell needed a motorized wheelchair for safe mobility in the community, a cost covered by insurance. However,



insurance wouldn't cover a bariatric wheelchair essential for his residence. This specialized wheelchair not only aids his mobility but also strengthens his leg muscles. Thanks to your donations, Merrell now has both, ensuring his safety and health at home and in the community.

Patty required a fully electric hospital bed for her residence, crucial for maintaining her skin integrity and overall health. While insurance only covered a basic bed, your support enabled us to provide Patty with the three-point bed she needed, offering greater comfort and care. This specialized bed not only enhances Patty's well-being but also facilitates safer and more effective support from our staff, ensuring she receives the assistance she needs with dignity and comfort.



Barbara's safety was at risk due to falls, prompting the need for a rescue alarm in her bedroom. With your help, she now has a fall prevention

mat that alerts caregivers to any nighttime movements, ensuring her safety and independence.

During a family crisis, Sharon had to move abruptly, leaving her without necessities. Your donations allowed us to provide her with clothes, toiletries, and other essentials, offering comfort and stability during a challenging time.

Gale, like many others, faced financial barriers to accessing physical therapy. Your support relieved her of this burden, allowing her to use her own funds for social outings and community experiences, promoting both physical and mental well-being.

From outings to the Mystic Aquarium to visits to the Boston Museum of Science, your donations have enabled individuals to enjoy inclusive community experiences, fostering a sense of belonging and enhancing their overall quality of life.

Your generosity ensures that no one is held back from accessing essential resources and participating in meaningful activities due to financial constraints. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of those we support at The Arc of Blackstone Valley.

Achieve with us.

Letter from the CEO

We have been very busy this Spring and Summer. Flying Shuttles Art & Weaving Studio has finally moved into a new location. Our consumers have been on outings all over New England, including Mystic Aquarium and the Boston Museum of Science, while many of the people we support are hard at work every day in their individual jobs. At The Arc of Blackstone Valley, we are working to secure grants and funding to maintain these programs. Through your generous donations, we can continue to make a difference in all our consumers' lives.

A joint grant from the John E. Fogarty Foundation has allowed us to partner with The Arc of Rhode Island and The Arc of Bristol County dba proAbility. Through this grant, The Arc of Rhode Island will go into local school departments and connect with families to let them know about the services that we, along with proAbility, offer. Our agencies look forward to being able to provide necessary support services to help individuals as they

transition into the adult population. The Arc also received a grant from the Bristol County Savings Bank to enhance our staff training to be more effective in helping individuals achieve their goals.

The Flying Shuttles Art & Weaving Studio artists and team have enjoyed their new home at a re-developed mill in Pawtucket, at 390 Pine Street. The bright and airy studio is a beautiful place for our artists to create new works. The Arc of Blackstone Valley, with additional grant support, created a new online platform for the artists to sell their work. Visit <http://www.flyingshuttles.org> to learn more about our artists and see their collections. This is a very exciting and innovative time at Flying Shuttles, so stop by and check it out.

The staff at The Arc of Blackstone Valley are working hard to meet each supported individual's goals, including those seeking employment at an inclusive

employment opportunity that allows people to live their most independent lives. Anitra and Kevin are a perfect example of independent living. Both are working hard at jobs they love. Not only are they employed, but they also represent their fellow Self-Advocates on The Arc's Board of Directors. It is my pleasure to congratulate them both on jobs well done.

I want to take a moment to thank all our staff and send a special congratulations to Mary Lefort, assistant program manager at Curran Brook Court, for being selected as DSP of the Year for The Arc of Blackstone Valley.

Thank you all for your continued support and commitment to our work. Through all your donations, you make a significant difference to us and the people we serve.

Sincerely,

John J. Padien, III
Chief Executive Officer

Thanks to the generous funding provided by the **Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation** we assisted people in finding meaningful employment in their communities.



We have a rich and proud tradition of providing supportive employment at The Arc of Blackstone Valley. We feel fortunate to have the support of a major charitable donor in continuing this endeavor.



Back to School with Kevin and Anitra

Have you ever had a passion or desire for a job you wanted, yet it just seemed out of reach? Meet Kevin. He is supported by our employment staff and has been looking for a job for over two years. Armed with a strong desire to cook and a warm and inviting personality, Kevin researched many opportunities and submitted applications. He had interviews but only passed the interviewing process in April of this year.

With assistance from Skills for Rhode Island's Future, Ashley Lawton, the new Manager of Employment Services for The Arc of Blackstone Valley, was able to secure Kevin a position as a temporary line cook at The Met, the main cafeteria at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). On his first day, Ashley noted that he jumped right in, began taking orders, and fit right into place. Kevin's job duties include cooking in the kitchen, serving entrees, preparing food, and washing dishes. However, on Saturdays, he is needed to help with the grill for brunch, which is Kevin's favorite part of his duties.

Kevin's coworkers treat him as an equal, greeting him with a fist bump,

a cheerful hello, and asking about his weekend plans. His supervisors, who are professional chefs, offer Kevin feedback when corrections are needed or congratulate him on a job well done.

In a similar situation, Anitra began her current job (RISD) in the summer of 2023 with her employment coach. Last spring she worked on interview preparation, and researched jobs online in her areas of interest. Her previous work experience includes the former resale shop of The Arc of Blackstone Valley, New2You.

Nini, as she is called by her coworkers, can be found at the Café four days a week, packaging single serving food items and cleaning of the eating space. She says she loves her coworkers and her job. Anitra says her favorite part of her job is "serving the college students and preparing foods." She explains that her coworkers are extremely kind and helpful. They even brought her a cupcake and sang

to her to help celebrate her birthday.

Outside of working, Kevin and Anitra are very active within The Arc of Blackstone Valley. They both serve the agency and the members of Citizens with Power, our self-advocacy group. Kevin recently



served on the Board of Directors as the Member at Large, and Anitra ended her term as President of Citizens with Power.

The Arc of Blackstone Valley strives to meet the goal of inclusive employment for those we serve wishing to live their most independent lives. Anitra and Kevin are great examples of how inclusive employment adds value not only to the person with the disability but also to those with whom they work and interact. In fact, a recent Harvard Business Review article noted that companies hiring people with disabilities have a more collaborative workforce within the entire team. If you are interested in learning more about the employment program within The Arc of Blackstone Valley, please contact Ashley at alawton@bvcriarc.org, (401) 727-0150 Ext: 202. We may hold the missing ingredient to your business!



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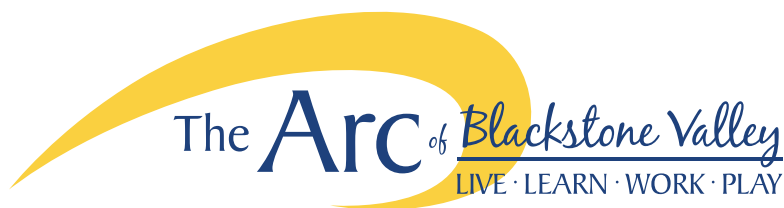
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You can make a difference in the lives of the people supported by
The Arc of Blackstone Valley.
You can help people of all abilities pursue their goals and dreams.

This holiday season, you can ensure everyone gets a chance to
celebrate in an inclusive and meaningful way.

By contributing to our \$35,000 goal, you'll provide;

- festive events
- essential resources
- personalized support services to make people's holidays and years memorable

Your support changes lives.
Will you join us?

www.bvcriarc.org/donate.html



Flying Shuttles Online Marketplace

**Flying
Shuttles**
Art & Weaving Studio

"As a people, we Americans are committed morally and ethically to the proposition that
each man and woman is entitled to the opportunity to realize his best capabilities."

- John E. Fogarty



The **FOGARTY** Foundation generously funded the creation of the
Flying Shuttles Art and Weaving Studio online marketplace to exhibit
artworks from talented artists.



Flying Shuttles: Embracing New Opportunities

Light. Warmth. Positive energy. These were the most common words used by the artists and staff to describe



the new location for Flying Shuttles Art & Weaving Studio at 390 Pine Street in Pawtucket. The Flying Shuttles studio seized upon an opportunity to relocate when Shri Yoga relocated to the same building earlier this year as the location provided a community connection for art, housing, and outreach in a revitalized mill building in Pawtucket.

The new space provides the artists with inspiration and chances to develop more relationships with others. Damon, a weaving and cross stitch artist and Shri Yoga Instructor, said the new space is "Awesome! I love Shuttles and getting to do Yoga right next door." Donna, a fellow weaving artist, agreed she likes the

new space "...because everything is in the same building. To go to yoga and come back is easy."

Flying Shuttles currently has 19 artists who work at the studio throughout the week. Also new this year the artists are embracing an additional way to sell their works, an online marketplace. With special thanks to the John E. Fogarty Foundation for their support in helping the online marketplace come to fruition, the artists are now utilizing the website as a way of connecting with more people in the public.

Program Manager of the Studio, Lisa Brien, said "This is a great opportunity for them to sell more of their artworks, and provides more exposure for (the



public) to learn more about (the artists) and their artworks." Brien and her staff are also helping the artists to develop business skills, which

she explained is an important aspect of the studio's mission.

Donna, a weaving artist, agreed that the online marketplace was a positive move for the studio, saying that more people will be able to see their art. Damon agreed saying, "I think it's great; it will be more money when we sell more."

Flying Shuttles artists have been hard at work creating so many new pieces of art for the online marketplace, in the studio, and for upcoming shows. We encourage you to invite a friend and plan a trip to visit the new space and see all of the new pieces, and to share www.flyingshuttles.org with a friend.



SHOP ONLINE WITH US!

Flying Shuttles
Art & Weaving Studio

Scan me

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