



## A Message from the President

### OFFICERS

Mary Blass  
*President*

Mary Ann Harris  
*Vice President*

Annette Dennis  
*Secretary*

August Sena  
*Treasurer*

### DIRECTORS

Nelson R. Alford, Jr.

Denise Barry

Karen M. Blass

Anne F. Connor

Donna Knight

Priscilla Moore

Barbara G. Roemer

Pamela Silkowski

Andrew Small

Dorothy Wheeler

Lenore Whitbeck

Elizabeth Young

More than 200 Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) work in COARC programs and residences to assist individuals experiencing disabilities who need support to lead self-directed lives and to participate fully in our communities. COARC is a member of the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals, which states in its code of ethics that, "it must be the mission of the DSP to follow the individual path suggested by the unique gifts, preferences, and needs of each person they support, and to walk in partnership with the person, and those who love him or her, toward a life of opportunity, well-being, freedom, and contribution."

Individuals experiencing disabilities who are enrolled in COARC programs participate in personalized services planning with family members, advocates, COARC staff and other professionals in the field of disabilities. Our Direct Support Professionals offer the interpersonal skills and expertise that bring these plans to life in daily activities that assist individuals toward reaching their own goals. The working relationships between Direct Support Professionals and individuals who receive our services give dual meaning to COARC's mission to expand abilities, one person at a time, so individuals experiencing disabilities can achieve their individual goals. One-to-one support by COARC Direct Support Professionals is a key component of individuals' successes in expanding their abilities, determining the direction of their own lives and becoming full contributing members of their community.

Mary K. Blass  
President  
COARC Board of Directors



## A Message from the Executive Director

2009 was a very successful year for COARC and each of the people we support. As an organization, we are successful when the people we support grow and move closer to achieving their individual goals. And they can do this with the personal support of over 375 dedicated employees, including over 200 Direct Support Professionals, but our success only happens "one person at a time."

Each COARC employee plays a key role in helping to "expand abilities, one person at a time," whether it is a finance employee who helps pay the bills, a bus driver who gets people to and from needed services or a Direct Support Professional who works closely with individuals with disabilities to help them realize their dreams.

Society is beginning to acknowledge what we have known at COARC all along, that no employee is more important or visible in helping individuals expand their abilities than the Direct Support Professional. That is why we participated in helping to establish the Direct Support Professional Association of New York State (DSPANYS) and initiated our first annual Direct Support Professional of the Year Award, presented in October to Isaiah Mackey, Habilitation Counselor at Promenade Hill Center.

To quote Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful people can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has." A handful of dedicated employees working together can change the lives of people with disabilities. Isaiah and his co-workers are fine examples of this.

Kenneth R. Stall  
Executive Director

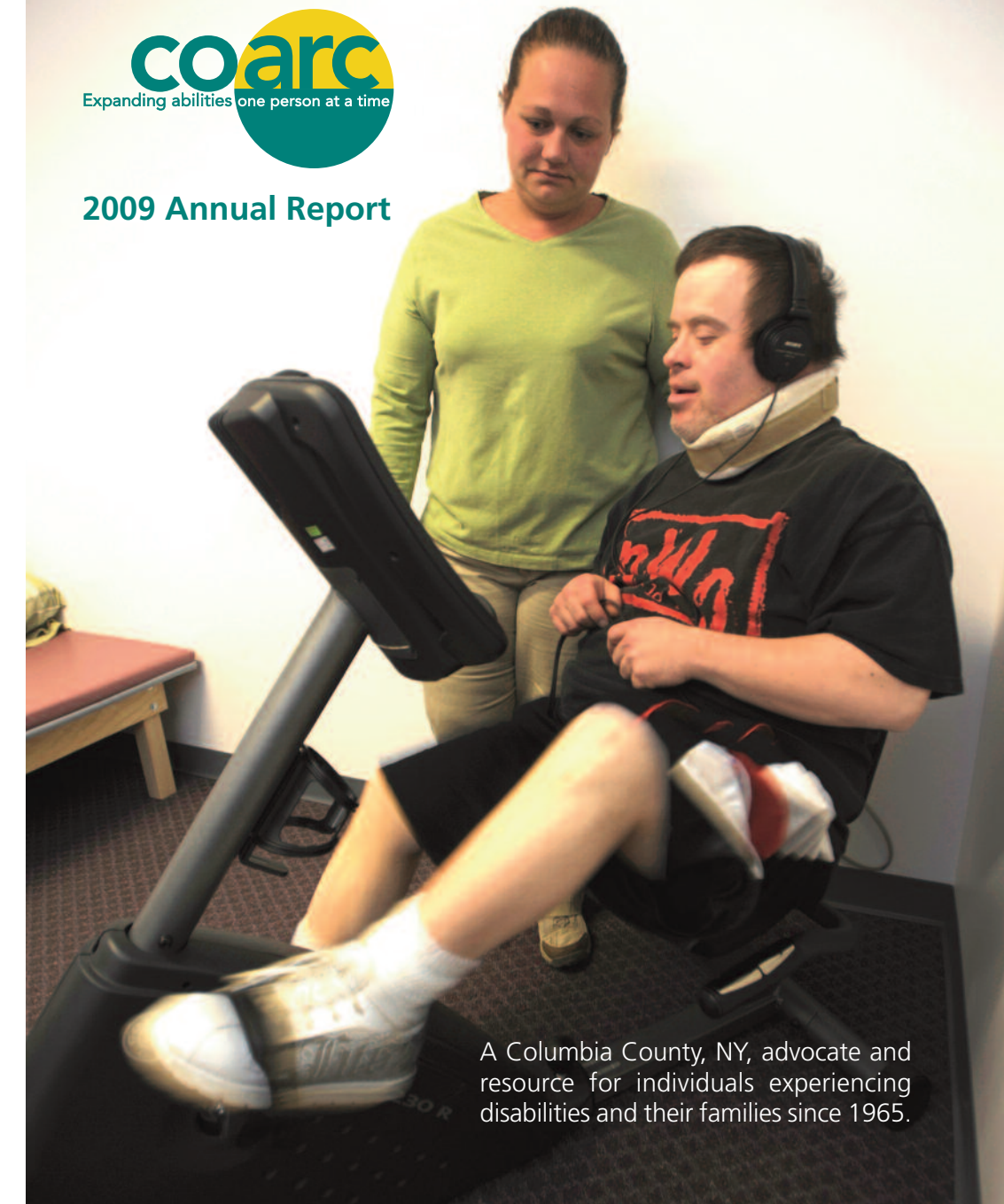
NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CRST:NET  
12550

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

P.O. Box 2, 630 Route 217  
Mellenville, New York 12544  
(518) 672-4451 info@coarc.org  
www.coarc.org



## 2009 Annual Report



A Columbia County, NY, advocate and resource for individuals experiencing disabilities and their families since 1965.

COARC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and the Columbia County Chapter of NYSARC, Inc. We serve 500 individuals who are experiencing disabilities, offering Residential and Living Alternatives, Vocational and Employment Services, Contract Manufacturing, Day Activity Programs, Service Coordination, Advocacy and Legal Services, Children's Services, Recreation Opportunities, At-Home and Respite Services and Traumatic Brain Injury Services. COARC is supported through state and federal funding, our membership, and contributions from individuals, businesses and foundations. We are grateful to our members and to our community for this support. Membership is available online at [www.coarc.org](http://www.coarc.org) or by contacting us at our Mellenville, NY, headquarters at 518-672-4451 or [info@coarc.org](mailto:info@coarc.org).

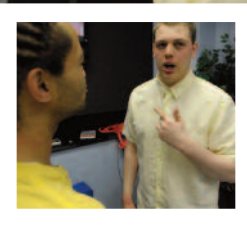
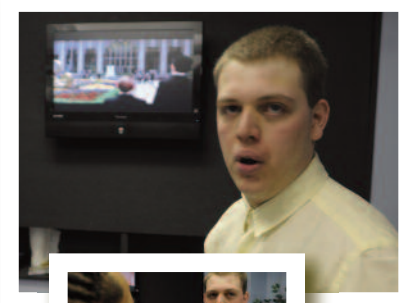


**Our Mission** To expand abilities, one person at a time, so individuals experiencing disabilities can achieve their individual goals.

**Our Vision** To be an ethical organization that is part of a society that recognizes people with different degrees of abilities as full contributing members of their community.

## Robert Barbini

Robert Barbini, better known as Bobby, is a friendly young man who began his transition to the adult day program at Promenade Hill Center (PHC) two years ago, during breaks from high school. When he graduated in 2009, Bobby enrolled in PHC full time. Initially, he had some frustration in adjusting, especially when he was unable to express his wants and needs. A behavior plan was developed to minimize outbursts, with Habilitation Counselors Besham Burgess and Walter Bailey alternately working 1:1 with Bobby and consistently addressing his behaviors. Bobby learned the expectations of the day program and how to handle frustrations appropriately.



With support from Besham and Walter, Bobby now joins groups for longer periods of time. He also accepts direction to move on to other activities when it appears he is becoming frustrated or upset. He greets people by shaking hands and smiling instead of touching or poking. Bobby now uses a bus for transportation to the program, rather than a van with limited passengers. His parents say that Bobby looks forward to coming to the program and gets excited when the bus comes. He is more expressive and often describes his PHC activities to his father. Sometimes, on weekends, Robert even tries to make his lunch to go to the program.

## Adam Hagen

Many COARC employees have interests outside work that contribute to their communities. Shane Stewart, a Residential Counselor at our Ridge Road home, is also a volunteer fireman. He worked his way up the hierarchy of his fire company to become second in charge. Shane brought his passion for the fire department to his work at COARC when he introduced a couple of individuals who live at the residence to the local fire department.



Adam Hagen's grandfather was a fireman, so he felt it was in his blood. Adam was determined to follow in those footsteps. Shane helped Adam with the initial paperwork. He met with the Chief of the Valatie Fire Department to advocate and support Adam with trainings and requirements. Although Adam had difficulties with some classroom instruction and written exams,



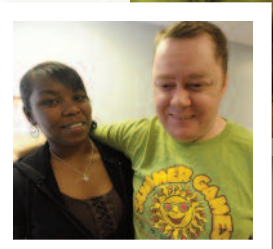
his fellow firemen accompanied Adam and helped him with the requirements. Adam's enthusiasm and willingness to learn and follow directions assured the Chief that Adam was going to get through the probationary period and become a full-fledged fireman.

Adam runs or rides his bike to respond to calls on his scanner, easily making his quota. He enjoys hanging out at the firehouse and developing friendships with fellow firemen. He is being fitted for a dress uniform for parades. A fireman's work is inherently risky and Adam's family had concerns, but Adam rose to the job, showing what he can accomplish with determination and support. Shane has nurtured Adam as a shining example of integration and inclusion into the community.

# one person at a time

## David LeBlanc

David LeBlanc is a quiet and polite gentleman who experienced quite a few life changes in recent years, including moving into his own home away from his mother and attending new programs at COARC. Initially, David moved into a COARC residence in Hudson and attended two COARC day programs. He expressed that work was too hard and he was feeling overwhelmed. David became withdrawn from his peers, often spending most of his time at home in his room and sitting by himself at lunch. David was also feeling distressed about being away from his mother.



Last year, David decided to try out COARC's Promenade Hill Center (PHC) day program on a part-time basis. There David became involved in many activities, including Meals on Wheels deliveries and helping his peers with activities in his program area. David stated that he loved coming to PHC, strongly advocated for himself and requested a permanent change to attend PHC full time. He also moved to COARC's Copake residence where he feels less stress since he lives closer to his mom.

Since these changes, there have been a number of successes for David. He remains close to his mother as she supports him with Special Olympics activities. He assisted with "Daffodil Days" to raise money for the American Cancer Society. David has made a number of friends at PHC and joins peers for lunch and conversation. His mother observed that the difference in David's demeanor is like night and day, and he genuinely feels happy to be at PHC and happy to help others.

## Luke Whitbeck

Like so many people, Luke Whitbeck has always struggled with his weight and has had difficulty staying motivated toward making healthy lifestyle choices. His success through COARC's Blended Service program started with his mother expressing her concerns at a team meeting. As a result of his mother's request, Blended Services started a weekly exercise program designed specifically for Luke, working 1:1 with a staff member. For the first few months, Luke still lacked motivation, but when he began working consistently with Blended Services Counselor Amy Sheak, his perspective changed. Amy paid attention to what motivated Luke, including having Luke choose his own music for workouts, doing the exercises with him, giving him control over whether he does a routine or an exercise bike and adding humor to the workouts. Luke's residence adopted a new healthy eating philosophy at the same time. Luke is appreciating the consistent message which has contributed to his great success. He began to seek out staff for his exercise time and looked forward to spring so he can exercise in the park. Within the last year, Luke lost approximately 40 pounds. He looks great and reports feeling better.



## Corinn Haskin

When Corinn Haskin entered The Starting Place in September of 2008, she rarely spoke a word. Corinn had little independence or self-care skills and she had a very difficult time transitioning to the school setting and participating in group activities. Corinn required much assistance to meet her daily needs.

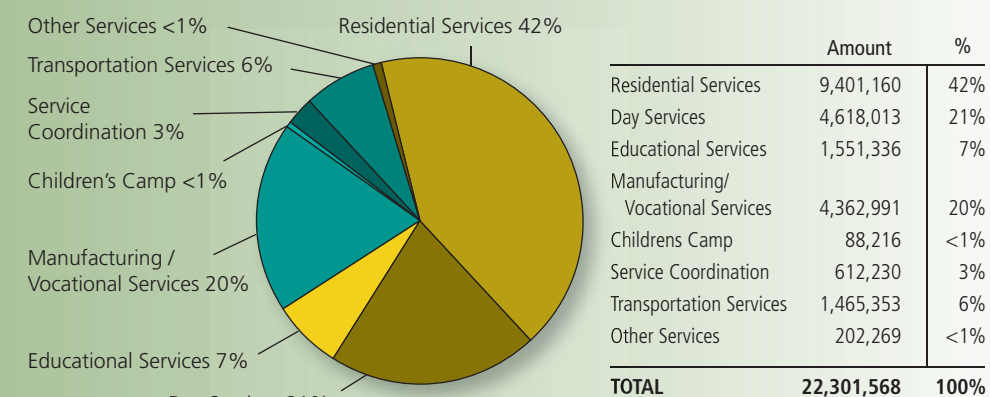


Through the dedicated work of her teacher, Vernea Diehl, other classroom staff and therapists, Corinn began to grow in independence and communication skills. Over the last year, she has blossomed into a child with a strong vocabulary who communicates in complete sentences and enjoys participating in classroom activities. In the fall, she will be entering kindergarten with some support. Vernea and the staff at The Starting Place will miss the sparkle in Corinn's eyes and her infectious smile as she continues her education.

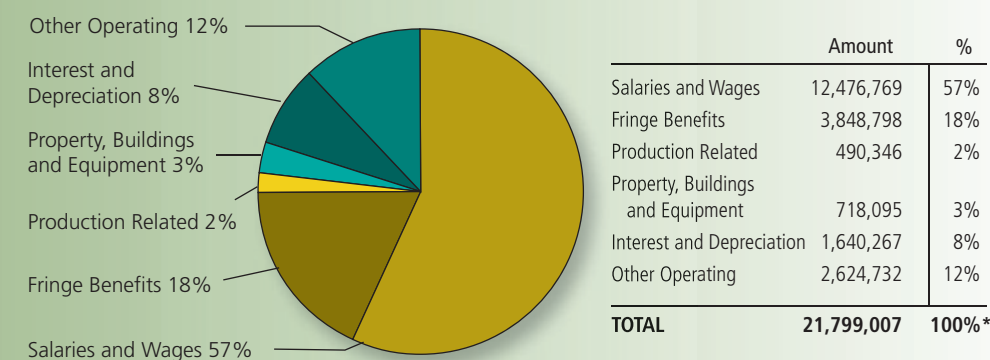


## Financials

### Income by Program Services



### Expenses by Category



\*91¢ of every dollar is spent on direct program services.