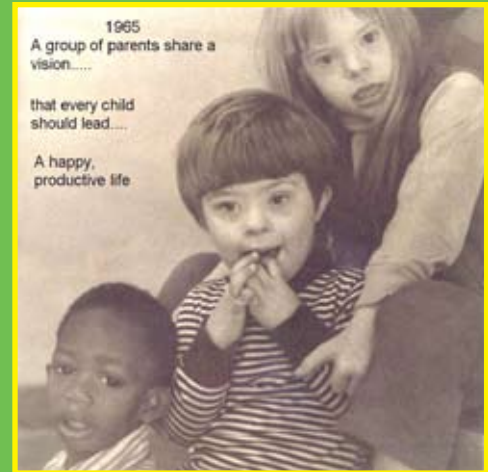


Celebrating 45 Years of Expanding Abilities

Forty-five years ago, a small group of Columbia County parents and interested community members worked together to provide a place for their children who experienced developmental disabilities to live, work and be educated. This dedicated group received an official charter on May 5, 1965 as the Columbia County Chapter of **NYSARC, Inc.**, the largest not-for-profit organization serving individuals who have intellectual and other developmental disabilities and their families. Since this beginning, COARC members and employees have worked within our community to expand opportunities and enrich individuals' lives through the sharing of common values and interests. Now COARC serves more than 500 people experiencing disabilities and employs over 400 staff members.

Camp Mahican began in 1966 as our first program and it continues to offer free summer day camp activities to children ages six to sixteen who experience disabilities. The Happy Day School was created to give pre-school children the skills they needed to enter public school. Now The Starting Place operates as our pre-school, universal pre-kindergarten for the Hudson school district and day care center for three- to five-year-olds and their families in a setting that integrates children who experience disabilities with those who do not.

Through the years, COARC expanded services to provide adults with Residential and Living Alternatives, Employment Services and Day Habilitation programs. Individuals and their families utilize our Service Coordination and Advocacy & Legal Services programs. Our Respite & Recreation and At-Home Residential Habilitation programs also provide people the support needed to expand abilities and realize their goals. COARC's newest TBI Services program now offers our 45 years of professional experience supporting individuals with developmental disabilities to adults who are recovering from traumatic brain injuries.



Above left, L to R: **Arthur Graham** and **Daniel Murray** designed and painted a COARC 45th Anniversary skateboard deck for the Crellin Park Foundation's Stoked! Silent Auction at Omi International Arts Center in March to benefit the Chatham Skate Park. Above center: **Jason Dandridge**, who also created the deck, displayed the finished artwork. Our COARC vision is 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.

Top: The Happy Day School opened in 1971 as COARC's pre-school for children experiencing disabilities. Above center: People celebrated the 1976 opening of COARC headquarters in Mellenville. Above: **Laurelin Perez**, Behavior Specialist, assists adults enrolled in COARC's new Traumatic Brain Injury Services program.



Thank you to all 2009 COARC Members

A strong membership gives us a greater voice for Columbia County
on behalf of Individuals who Experience Disabilities

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OpportuniTees Members are 2009 Golf Tournament sponsors and golfers.

Become a 2010 member online at www.coarc.org or call 518-672-4451. COARC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. We are a chapter of NYSARC, Inc. and a member of The Arc of the United States, the New York State Rehabilitation Association, Inc. (NYSRA), and the New York State Association of Community and Residential Agencies (NYSACRA).



Gerry Dam, Loren Miller and Ben Ferris of COARC's Maintenance Department spent days cutting through 11 inches of ice on Upper Rhoda Pond in Copake to make way for more than 50 swimmers in the second annual COARC Polar Plunge on February 20th. Volunteers raised over \$16,000 to benefit COARC programs, such as a new playground at The Starting Place pre-school in Hudson and other COARC programs and services for individuals who experience disabilities.

NYS Assemblyman **Marcus Molinaro**, who represents Copake, was one of the chilly Polar Plunge swimmers. **MetzWood Harder Insurance** formed a team to plunge, raising more than \$3,000. The **Chatham Lions Club** and **Kinderhook Bank** sponsored **Jason Hover** to jump in the lake. COARC Associate Executive Director **Bruce Drake** made a splash dressed as Cupid. **David Lee**, *Register-Star* photographer, braved the icy water for up-close photos. Firefighters from the **Copake Fire Department** were at the event with their ice rescue gear. The **Copake Community Rescue Squad** was also in attendance, as well as members of the **Greenport Rescue Dive Team**. The **Columbia County Sheriff's Residential Deputy** was there, along with members of the **Columbia County Sheriff's Dive Team** and members of the **Columbia County Sheriff's Explorers Post 220**. **Superior Sanitation** donated one of the portable toilets. Warm drinks, **Shelby Ensign's** Polar Plunge cake and other homemade treats were served at the new Camp Mahican pavilion, which was partially funded by 2009 Polar Plunge donations. **Lance Wheeler** made a great video of it all, posted on www.coarc.org.

Peter Klimek, Artist

Artwork by **Peter Klimek** was featured in an article written by **Jill Peck Vona** for *The Columbia Insider* in March. Here is his artist statement:

"My grandparents had a farm in Ghent, and it was there that I spent many happy days. I loved everything on the farm from cats to cows and tractors. An accident in 1978 left me with severe brain damage and blindness in one eye. It was one hundred days before I could return home from the hospital. Doctors said I needed a quiet place to live – and I had a lively brother and sister at home. My beloved farm became my home, and my grandparents provided the love and care I needed. Different kinds of rehabilitation were tried, but it was through the care and concern of the staff at COARC that I found my place in life. I had done some artwork before my accident, but it was after my injury that my talent grew. I did a variety of paintings, including many of lighthouses, but the paintings of 'my' farm were intended as special gifts for those who also knew and loved this special place."



Burfeind Farm is a painting by Peter Klimek of his grandparents' farm in Ghent. His work will be on display in April at the **NYSACRA** Annual Conference Art Exhibit & Reception at the Sagamore Hotel on Lake George.

Hudson River Bank and Trust Company Foundation Grants for New Projects

The **Hudson River Bank and Trust Company Foundation** provides funding to support charitable causes and community development activities in Columbia County. The Foundation recently awarded two grants to COARC for new projects that serve individuals who experience disabilities.

The first grant, in the amount of \$12,000, will support an exercise-gaming room at COARC's Mellenville headquarters for individuals who receive COARC services. Exercise-gaming is a relatively new amalgamation of exercise and video game equipment. Users control video game consoles with actions that conduct a variety of exercises through use of the equipment. When completed, the exercise-gaming room will be accessible to between 80 and 120 individuals on a daily basis, helping to promote a more active lifestyle for improving the overall health and fitness of individuals experiencing disabilities who may have limited opportunities for physical exercise and expression through movement.

The second grant, in the amount of \$6,000, will support the creation of an active, multi-sensory literacy project at The Starting Place, a COARC program in Hudson that serves pre-school children. The grant will fund literacy-based rugs for gross motor literacy games, listening centers, alphabet puppets and other interactive literacy materials for the multiple needs of children who experience disabilities.

Information about the Hudson River Bank and Trust Company Foundation is available at www.hrftfoundation.com.



Christina Curran, above right, Senior Legislative Analyst for **NYS Senator Stephen Saland**, met to discuss the NYS budget with (L to R, seated) **Todd Garry** and **Roger Feinberg**; (standing) **Alex Schneider**, COARC Director of Development & Community Relations; **Lori Barbini**, parent; **Karen Fritz**, Special Needs Program Training & Recruitment Specialist; **John Nagle**, COARC Substitute-Direct Care and **Joy Toothill**, COARC Day Habilitation Coordinator. Right (L to R): **Alex Schneider**; **Carla Shook**; **Cheryl Greene**, COARC Blended Services Trainer, and **Jarrod Tompkins** visited four legislators' offices.



Citizens in Action

Last November, the **Columbia County Board of Elections** trained poll site specialists and individuals who attend COARC programs at our Mellenville site how to use the new ballot marking devices (BMDs) for voters with disabilities.

"It's a lot easier to use the new machine and you can hear the names of the candidates in earphones," said Carla Shook.

Carla and other representatives from COARC spoke up as citizens by visiting the offices of NYS legislators in Albany in January and February to discuss concerns about 2010 funding for services that support individuals experiencing disabilities.

Major Grants to COARC Programs and Services

KeyBank Foundation

Stewart's Foundation

Target

Wal-Mart Foundation

Donations

Joe Kames

Nina Loewenstein

John Kemmer, Paul Kietzman & Dave Pascale

Neil Howard

New Athens Generating Company, LLC

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In memory of Frances D'Allessio Richard & Jayne Byrne Lila & Ray Schmitt

In memory of Shirley DeDominicis Geoff Krafte

In memory of Ellen Haist Eileen D'Allessio

In memory of Linda Karp Jean & Burt Krafte

In memory of Shelly Powell Ginger Tedesco

Save the Dates for these 2010 COARC Events!

If you wish to volunteer for a COARC event, please call 518-672-4451 and let us know how you can help.

COARC Annual Membership Meeting and 45th Anniversary Celebration



Monday, June 21st
COARC, 630 Route 217
Mellenville, NY 12544

The gathering begins at
5:30 p.m. to enjoy music
by singer-songwriter
Chrissy Budzinski
and the meeting
begins around **6 p.m.**

The COARC Education Committee Dollar for Scholars Chapter offers

2010 Scholarships and Summer Arts Grants!

Applications must be received by May 1st
Details are posted on www.coarc.org

To receive an application, contact
Joanne DelRossi 518-672-4451 x 3358

American Red Cross Blood Drive at COARC

65 Prospect Avenue,
Hudson, NY 12534

Thursday, July 29, 1:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Open to the Public.
Appointments encouraged.
*Please call **Donna Barrett at***
518-672-4451 x 3403

COARC's Maintenance Department hosts the

9th Annual Fishing Derby for our consumers

Saturday, June 26, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Upper Rhoda Pond, Camp Mahican
3 Cross Street, Copake 12516
Call 518-828-3890 x 103 for information.
(Sorry, this event is not open to the public this year.)

Come cheer for our
marchers & float
at the

Hudson Elks Flag Day Parade

Sat., June 12th
2 p.m.

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coarc
Expanding abilities one person at a time

opportunities

Gerald J. Dieffenbach Memorial Golf Tournament

Tuesday, September 14
(Rain Date: Thurs., September 16)
Columbia Golf & Country Club
295 Route 217, Claverack, NY 12513

**Get a team of family & friends together and
play golf with us to raise funds for COARC programs.**

Sponsorship opportunities are available!
www.coarc.org 518-672-4451