



NEWS RELEASE

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NYSARC CELEBRATES 60 YEARS

Mellenville, New York: On September 17th, twenty-one COARC representatives traveled to Albany to march in NYSARC's 60th Anniversary Celebration Walk, a statewide event that culminated at the steps of the NYS Capitol. COARC is the Columbia County Chapter of NYSARC, Inc., the largest parent-based organization in the nation serving people who experience developmental disabilities. Throughout New York, NYSARC supports 60,000 people in all aspects of life from birth through end of life care, including more than 500 Columbia County individuals who receive COARC services such as early intervention, health care, education, preparation for employment, help in finding and keeping a job, independent living and self-advocacy.

Thursday's celebration began with a procession of 1,500 people who walked from the Corning Preserve Riverfront Park, over the Hudson River Way Pedestrian Bridge and up State Street to the Capitol steps, lead by Schenectady Pipe and Drum. Flags representing each of NYSARC's 55 chapters were placed by individuals who use the supports and services provided by the organization. Albany Mayor Gerald Jennings, Senate Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Senate Assistant Majority Leader Neil Breslin, Assemblyman James Tedisco and OMRDD Executive Deputy Commissioner Max Chmura addressed the crowd. Other speakers included Jim Church, Director for Constituent Relations for Senator Roy MacDonald, and Michael Seereiter, Director of Mental Hygiene for Governor Paterson. Immediately following the ceremony, the walkers returned to the Riverfront Park at the Corning Preserve for a picnic and entertainment provided by the popular band FLAME.

COARC is a Columbia County not-for-profit organization whose mission is expanding abilities, one person at a time, so individuals experiencing disabilities can achieve their individual goals. Established in 1965, COARC is primarily supported through state and federal funding, and also by individual and corporate members, donors and other foundations. Information about COARC program services, employment, donation opportunities and membership is available at www.COARC.org or 518-672-4451. Information about NYSARC, Inc. is available at www.nysarc.org or 518-439-8311.

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