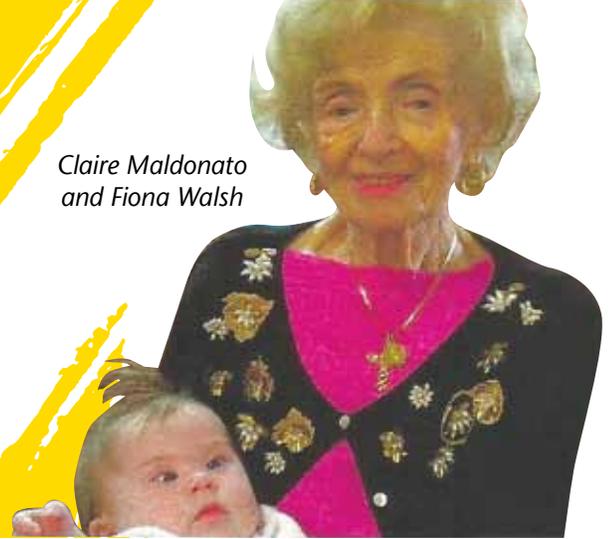


# The Arcticulate

Claire Maldonato  
and Fiona Walsh



## Vivian's Story

Over a decade ago my mother Vivian Dudeck began attending the Arc of NEPA's day program at Robinson Park. My brothers and I knew the services provided at this program would help our mother learn new skills, provide recreational activities and make available the opportunity for daily social interaction, but we could not have imagined then what an invaluable service this would ultimately become to our family.



Maryann Schlessler and Vivian Dudeck

My mother was not born with any intellectual or developmental disabilities, but due to an illness that affected her intellectual development, she was diagnosed with moderate mental retardation in early childhood. She was one of 13 children and unfortunately did not receive much in the way of social services. The life skills she learned were acquired by simply living life. She was a dedicated daughter and sister

to her siblings. While intellectually limited, her ability to love and care for others know no bounds.

As the years went on and my brothers and I were born, my mother did her very best to raise us the only way she truly knew how; with understanding, caring and boundless love. As children we did not know exactly what happened to our mother during childhood, nor could we comprehend how she persevered and became so strong and independent, but that is exactly what she did. A selfless and compassionate woman, our mother took pride in being just that. She loved her children far more than herself and while there were times when money was scarce, to say the least, there was never a lack of love beaming from her eyes and filling our home.

As we grew older, went to college and began

our adult lives, my brothers and I worried about our mother's future. She had dedicated her life to us and against all odds raised four children on her own. How would she adjust to a home not filled with children? How would she make the transition from being a caretaker to needing someone to take care of her? The questions weighed heavily in our hearts and minds until we discovered the services provided

the by The Arc and more specifically the Robinson Park program. This program was ideal for our mother. It allowed her to showcase her skills and abilities, to feel needed as part of a group, to socially interact regularly and become involved in various recreational activities.

Without the services provided at Robinson Park, my brothers and I would have struggled to move forward into adulthood and still meet all the needs of our wonderful mother. It is due to the caring and dedication of the staff at Robinson Park that we are able to be assured that our mother is happy and is having her needs met in ways that would not be possible but for them. For those that do not recognize all the ways social service agencies, such as The Arc and programs like that at Robinson Park enrich lives, they need look no farther than the case of our family as an ideal example the invaluable role they play in the lives of those and the community which they serve.

*Respectfully Submitted, Wendy*



Northeastern Pennsylvania

115 Meadow Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18505  
Tel: 570-346-4010 Fax: 570-346-8436  
www.thearcnepa.org  
Email: frontdesk@thearcnepa.org

# President's Message



## **MARCH IS INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES MONTH.**

Our messages remain the same... Although the month of March is set aside to bring awareness to people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, our focus and attention for

inclusion and fairness continues throughout the year. One of our greatest challenges is the dramatic cuts in our budget leading to cuts in services and programs.

YOU can help raise awareness of the issues facing the many programs that are in need of money

to keep them afloat. Take time to contact your representatives and enlighten them to these vital issues. Together we need to protect what has been accomplished and be able to continue with the incredible care and programs being offered.

SPRING is finally upon us – and with spring comes GOLF! Please reserve June 10 for The Arc Golf Tournament. We have a very exciting change of venue this year—Elmhurst Country Club. Please mark your calendar and bring all your friends for a great day of fun and golf. More information to follow.

Respectfully,  
Carol Chisdak, President



## **Exec's Corner**

We have just received some wonderful news from Harrisburg. Our good friend, Fred Lokuta, was just named Deputy Secretary of the Office of Developmental Programs! Mr. Lokuta has served as Acting Deputy Secretary since

November 2012 when former Deputy Kevin Friel resigned. Before becoming Deputy Secretary, he spent 28 years with the Commonwealth and most recently, he served as the Facility Director at White Haven Center.

Mr. Lokuta has been nominated twice for the Governor's Award for Excellence and has been recognized by the Department of Public Welfare for the development and implementation of a local Leadership Development Institute for future leaders.

Former employee Jason Keolsch along with Barb Day, Pat Quinn, board member and self-advocate Sara Wolff and I all have been a part of that institute. Mr. Lokuta is a wonderful advocate; he well understands the state center and community systems. He is well-informed about The Arc and our mission and vision for people with Intellectual Disabilities and their families. We thank him for his many years of service and congratulate him on his new appointment. We have a good friend where it counts.

And now about the Governor's budget....let me say first of all that there are no additional huge budget cuts like the ones that we have encountered over the past 18 months and there is room for hope and optimism. Even though most programs and services that affect people with Intellectual Disabilities are flat-lined (no "new" money

for current programs like ours), there is an attempt to serve more people on the waiting list. PA has been embarrassed for years that there are over 16,000 people with Intellectual Disabilities on various waiting lists for services. Nearly \$20 million will be made available to provide 380 new individuals who are living with aging parents unable to care for them with home and community based services; 700 students graduating from Special Education and 100 individuals currently residing in state centers, who wish to return home. There will be \$2.2 million made available for Adult Protective Services and \$1.5 million to provide home and community based services to 118 additional individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

The Block grant that was implemented last year in a twenty county pilot program will be expanded allowing counties to participate on a voluntary basis. However, there is no new money made available for this to happen. Representative DiGirolamo (R-Bucks) will be presenting legislation soon that will seek to replace the \$84 million that was cut from the Block grant program last year.

We will be participating in the upcoming Systems Advocacy Governmental Affairs (SAGA) conference in Harrisburg on April 9th and The Arc of the U.S. Disabilities Policy Seminar in Washington D.C. April 15-17. Part of our job is to keep our legislators informed and well-educated on how their decisions affect their constituents with intellectual disabilities back home.

That's all for now. I wish you all well. Spring is right around the corner!

Respectfully Yours,  
Don Broderick

# The Arc Nor'easters vs Scranton Police Department



Pictured are: R to L: seated: Andy Warner; Mari Pizur, Arc Responds Chair; Jerry Madesky; Garrett Brown. Standing: Russell Ballino; Karl Sussman ; Chris Minich; Scranton Police Chief Carl Graziano; Kyle Juice

The Arc Nor'easters versus the Scranton Police Department Basketball Game is being held on Thursday, March 21st

at Scranton High School beginning with doors open at 6:00 p.m. and the game starts at 6:30 p.m. Admission

for adults is \$5.00, students are \$3.00 and children under five are free. For more information please call The Arc - 346-4010. There will be food, baked goods and the proceeds from the game benefit Arc Responds. The Arc Responds project is a special discretionary fund that has been created to assist individuals and families affiliated with The Arc. These people may be experiencing difficulty and have no other means available to them. This project was created as another way The Arc can and will be there for those who have nowhere else to turn. This event is one way the Arc employees are fund raising and seeking support to build The Arc Responds. A BIG thanks goes out to Chief Carl Graziano, the Scranton Police Department, Coach Quinn, all the players and cheerleaders.

## Recreation and Meaningful Activities

People often ask, what are the benefits of the Recreational Activities? To anyone who has worked in our Recreation Department, or has experienced a Thursday night at The Arc, that is most definitely a silly question. Our recreation opportunities encompass numerous types of activities, ranging from social interactions to physical exercise to arts and crafts. It is our job to enhance our consumers overall Quality of Life and ones well being.

esteem, and most important have fun.

As Recreational Service Coordinators it is our job to offer various approaches of meaningful activities for individuals and groups. Therefore, a lot of hard work goes into planning each Recreational Activity for our participants, we want everyone to have the best experience possible. When planning activities for adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities we must



recreation and fun in a way that is meaningful to them.

*"These programs have enriched my life and given me the opportunities to make new friends"*

All of our activities are consumer driven through our Advisory Meetings. Our participants play a huge part in our department activities because we are here to serve them and meet their needs. We want the activities to be fun and games, along with providing meaningful recreational opportunities. We would like our programs to provide individuals with physical activity, sensory stimulation, a chance for self-expression, opportunities for socialization, to enhance their self

keep in mind each participant's skill level. It is important we know the skill levels of the adults with whom we work because we want to provide activities that everyone can participant and enjoy. Recreation activities are a means to provide a meaningful structure to the lives of our individuals. Our activities are planned on drawing out the residual strengths of our individual, while also strengthening the remaining functional abilities. Overall, we want our participants to experience leisure

It is clear that our recreation activities have positively influenced our participant's quality of life. The smiles and laughter at our programs are absolutely contagious. It really gives you a good feeling when a participant show you how proud they are of the craft they made, or proud of themselves for getting up in front of a crowd of people to sing their favorite song!

As one of our consumers quoted, "These programs have enriched my life and given me the opportunities to make new friends"

The possibilities are endless! Family, Friends and Fun!

# March is Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Month

Locally and across the nation children and adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and their families and friends will come together this month in celebration.

The Arc of Northeastern PA has dedicated over 55 years to assist in creating a community that embraces citizens with IDD. Today, there are more opportunities available in employment, education, community residential living and integrated recreational opportunities than ever before. Communities are enriched when people accept diversity that brings with it strength, respect for others and opportunities for understanding and growth.

There was a special mass of awareness with Bishop Bambera at St. Peter's Cathedral on Sunday, March 10th . Many additional events are planned including World Down Syndrome Day

on Thursday, March 21, sponsored locally by the Parents of Down Syndrome (PODS), an affiliate of The Arc.

This month we celebrate the many contributions and achievements of children and adults with IDD. I have had the privilege of witnessing the joy and elation of children graduating with their classmates, and adults moving into their own homes and many earning their first paycheck. Much has been done, but until every child and adult is accepted and included regardless of their ability, the work of The Arc will continue.

We invite members of our community to join us in this mission. For additional information on upcoming events or to become a member, please contact The Arc at 346-4010 or visit our website at [www.thearcnepa.org](http://www.thearcnepa.org).



*Corey Martin enjoying himself with festivities at the Thirteenth Annual Christmas Program which was held on December 14, 2012.*

## Connie Wolff

*founding member of  
The Arc Auxiliary Board*



Connie Wolff was a founding member of The Arc Auxiliary Board. Being Sara Wolff's mom, she was a powerful advocate for her daughter as well as all people with intellectual/developmental disabilities. As a Board member, Connie was a "Gift" to all. To be among parents, teachers, friends, nurses and artists is a positive commitment to the GIFT OF LIFE. Connie's presence was always so affirmative and uplifting at every gathering. Her experience as a mother of a daughter with a disability was enlightening as she traveled across the United States with Sara. Sara brought her message of HOPE, ABILITY and COURAGE to all everyone she spoke to. Connie's positivity toward life, her education on Down syndrome and

a being a TRUE friend was unique and shared in a special way. Connie never stopped thinking of ways we could educate adults and children as she shared her life as a mother and advocate. When we look at the HEROs in our lives I think of Connie as a HERO. Though her passing was way too soon, her presence will always be among those she served with on the Auxiliary board. We are proud to have shared over the years her Values and Gifts with which we have been blessed. THANK YOU CONNIE for being YOU! You will never be forgotten.

Love to All,  
Eileen Williams,  
Auxiliary President

# FEMA - Seaside Heights, NJ

On November 17th myself and fellow coworkers Marisella Lugo, Kathryn Strupcewski, Nathan Minich and our families delivered much needed supplies that were donated by our consumers and staff to the Seaside Heights, NJ FEMA center.

I didn't know what to expect to see but when we arrived the picture in my head was far from the reality of what is happening to so many families that have been affected by Hurricane Sandy.

The FEMA center was located in a strip mall. School buses filled with displaced families lined from one end of the mall to the other. But what really grabbed my attention was a woman in her late eighties with two floral patterned suitcases filled with her only possessions left and a look on her face of "where do I go from here?"

Not knowing where the drop off location was Marisella and I went into the FEMA center. Many families were in line to receive much needed supplies of canned goods, cleaning supplies, clothing, etc. As we were waiting in line to talk to a FEMA volunteer, Marisella ran into a high school friend who was affected by the hurricane. She explained that she and her young children lost everything but was grateful

they made it out safely and are currently living with family in the area.

When we found out where the drop off location was and began to unload our cars packed with donations the FEMA volunteers asked "Where are you guys from?" to which we proudly replied "The Arc of NEPA in Scranton, PA". One of the volunteers was so taken aback that we made the trip all the way from Scranton she formed tears in her eyes and said "We can't thank you enough for your generosity".

The need is still great for supplies such as clothing, cleaning supplies, pet food, diapers and even toys for children to open on Christmas Day. We are working on a second collection and plan on delivering them on December 22nd.

I have learned a huge lesson on this trip and that is "we may not be rich in terms of

our bank accounts but when it comes to love and compassion we are millionaires, my friends". No matter what happens in our life our Arc family is always there to lend a helping hand and that is why I am proud to say I am a member of the Arc family!!  
-Carrie Akers-Minich



Pictured: Anthony Santiago; Carrie Akers-Minich; Nathan Minich; FEMA Volunteer; Marisella Lugo; Kathryn Strupcewski



## Donate Your Vehicle

### An Easy Way to Turn Cars into Cash for Charity

The Arc Vehicle Donation Program accepts all cars, trucks, motor cycles, RVs, regardless of the condition of the vehicles. Towing is free to the donor. If you want to donate your vehicle please click on the link on The Arc's website [www.thearcnepa.org](http://www.thearcnepa.org) or call 1-877-272-2270. All you will need to do is provide the year, make and model of a vehicle, the general condition, the vehicle identification number and the title of the vehicle of the must be available for information purposes when calling. All vehicles that are donated to our program must have a clean title. Please indicate The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania as the chapter to receive the proceeds of the sale of the vehicle.



**Donating is easy!**  
**It may be tax-deductible.**

## Upcoming Events:

**Arc Membership Drive**

**Spring Flower Pick-ups** are on March 25-27

**Arc Responds Basketball Game** – The Arc Nor'easters vs. the Scranton Police Department. – March 21st – Scranton High School – Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

**Opening Day** – April 4th – The Inaugural Season of SWB RailRider's Baseball! The Arc-NEPA is the featured Community Organization of the Night. The game begins at 7:05 p.m. and the RailRiders will be playing the Pawtucket Red Sox. Bleacher seats along the first base line are available for \$8.00. Please call for tickets.

**Peter Pan at the Cultural Center** – Saturday, April 6th Leadership Lackawanna/The Arc-NEPA Bowl-A-Thon – Saturday, April 13th

**Auxiliary Bus Trip to Mt. Airy Casino** – Saturday, April 20th – Bus leaving The Arc at 9:15 a.m. – Cost is \$25.00

# Leave a Legacy – Estate Giving Program

## Remembering...

The Arc's founding parents, concerned community members and friends have passed on a legacy of commitment to a new generation. Today, we seek to sustain this legacy.

## Building...

Looking toward tomorrow may often be intimidating but at The Arc we continue the mission and grow with the needs of the children and adults we serve.

## Leaving a Legacy...

By giving a gift to The Arc, you are ensuring a bright future for the people served in programs. Estate Giving allows for a variety of ways for individuals to choose the support most appropriate for planning their legacy: Outright cash gifts, designated life insurance policy, bequests, real estate.

We appreciate your kindness you show on an annual basis. As we move forward today and throughout

the year, we also need to be remembered as we go into the future. With your generosity we can continue offering the services to the individuals who need them. If you would like to explore a method of giving that is right for you, please feel free to contact us and we will be happy to meet with you. For specific financial or legal advice, please consult with an attorney or financial planner.



**United Way**  
of Lackawanna County

The United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties has established the Mike Munchak Community Service Scholarship program to assist high school students from Lackawanna and Wayne Counties, PA, who plan to pursue a post-secondary education.

To be eligible, candidates must be actively involved in community service activities in program funded by this United Way, be full-time resident and/or students of school districts within Lackawanna or Wayne Counties and accepted by an accredited university, college or trade school, in a two or four year degree program track, for the 2013/2014 school year.

Following are program eligibility criteria and highlights:

- The scholarship amount for 2013 is \$6,300.00
- The scholarship will be awarded for a one year period only
- Only open to graduating seniors within our school districts
- Demonstrate commitment through community service activities
- Demonstrate financial need
- Demonstrate academic achievement

Applicants must be graduating seniors from a public, private, parochial or charter school within either of the two counties.

Please contact Frank Kincel at the United Way – 570-343-1267 ext 233 or email him at [fkincel@uwlc.net](mailto:fkincel@uwlc.net) with any questions pertaining to the program outline or application. Completed applications are due by April 30, 2013.

## Elected Officials Visit The Arc of NEPA

The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania believes that keeping in touch with the region's elected officials is critical to advocacy efforts on behalf of those we serve. In customary fashion, we have invited newly elected legislators to meet with us at Meadow Avenue to discuss our programs and services, our positions regarding budget and legislative issues, and to tour the Arc program and meet with program participants in the process.

In recent weeks, state Representatives Kevin Haggerty (D-112) and Marty Flynn (D-113) visited the Arc, accompanied by Don Broderick, Ann Hoffman, Sara Wolff, Pat Quinn, and Kelly Peters. A good exchange of information was prevalent during both visits.

Additional visits with other legislators are being planned. The Arc encourages all of its members to contact local legislators on issues relating to services for our families, friends, and neighbors with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Please contact the Arc at (570) 346-4010 for assistance in reaching out to elected officials, or visit [www.house.state.pa.us](http://www.house.state.pa.us) on the web.



Details of the upcoming are as follows:

Leadership Lackawanna and The Arc of Northeastern PA present:

## **Bowl-A-Thon 2013**

**Saturday, April 13, 2013**

*Idle Hour Lanes*  
2008 Scranton Carbondale Highway  
Scranton

**\$10.00 per person**  
Teams of 5  
Snacks Provided

Please list team captain and member's name when reserving.

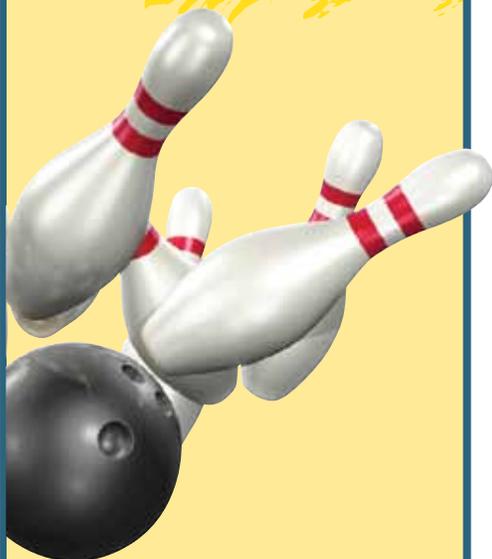
### **Two times available**

- Registration at 12:00 noon with bowling between 1-3p.m.
- Registration at 3:00 p.m. with bowling between 4-6p.m.

Please make checks payable to Leadership Lackawanna and mail to: Leadership Lackawanna 222 Mulberry Street P.O. Box 431 Scranton, PA 18501

If you have any questions please call Nicole Barber at 342-7711.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you on the 13th!



## **Tomorrow's Leaders Today**

The Tomorrow's Leaders Today (TLT) Class of 2013 has been diligently planning their community service project, which will benefit The Arc-NEPA! The class has planned a Bowl-A-Thon to be held on Saturday, April 13th at Idle Hours Lanes in Dickson City. The overall goal of this event is to unite teenagers and individuals with developmental disabilities. Each TLT participant is responsible for securing a team of bowlers to compete in the event. They are also

responsible for registration, marketing and publicity efforts and securing and awarding prizes to the top teams. "The TLT participants and the consumers at The Arc just want to have a fun day of bowling. They want to enjoy each other company and rival in some friendly competition," commented Leadership Lackawanna director Nicole A. Barber. "We are excited about this collaboration and look forward to implementing a successful project with The Arc."

## **Exercise**

We have all heard that we need to exercise because it is good for us. There are many good things about exercise such as:

- Weight control
- Gives us good posture
- Helps our hearts to work better
- Develops healthy bones and healthy muscles
- Provides us with more energy
- Helps us sleep better

- Decreases joint stiffness
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces cholesterol

Remember that any type of physical activity is good such as walking, dancing or whatever you enjoy. Small changes of adding activity into your daily life help make exercise a part of your life. You must continue to exercise throughout your life to be healthy.

## **13th Annual Golf Tournament**

**The Arc of NEPA  
13th Annual Golf Tournament  
Monday, June 10, 2013  
Elmhurst Country Club**

*Please mark your calendars - the date has been set!*

Through the awesome work of our Golf Tournament Committee and the outstanding benevolence of all the participants and sponsors, The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania's Annual Golf Tournament is a HUGE success! We wish to thank each and everyone of you and we sincerely hope we can count on your continued support.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call Eileen at The Arc - 346-4010.





Northeastern Pennsylvania

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*Our Vision*  
"People with intellectual  
and developmental  
disabilities are entitled to  
live full, self-determined  
respected lives."

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[www.thearcnepa.org](http://www.thearcnepa.org)  
Find us on Facebook

Affiliated with the , The Arc of PA and The Arc of US.

DESIGNED BY: BILL PILLING GRAPHICS

*Sign  
Up!*

## Membership is the key...

You can help. Become a member of The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania today. Benefits include:

- National, state, and local newsletters with current information on intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- The opportunity to participate in The Arc affairs at a local, state, and national level.
- Attend conferences, conventions, and seminars at a reduced cost.
- Discount prices on publications.
- Insurances services, credit card program, and free one year subscription to ABILITY digital magazine.

### Stay Informed!

#### Membership Registration

New Member

Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Type of Membership

- \$25.00 - \$49.99 Friend
- \$50.00 - \$99.99 Sponsor
- \$100.00 - \$499.99 Supporter
- \$500.00 - \$999.99 Benefactor
- \$1,000.00 + Partner

Please remit to:

**The Arc**  
Northeastern Pennsylvania  
115 Meadow Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18505