



## Supporting Underserved Culturally Diverse Communities

*Check out the amazing impact stories thanks to The Flutie Foundation Grant!!!*

The Arc of Greater Haverhill-Newburyport is pleased to announce we have received another \$10,000 grant from the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism! These funds will provide direct financial support to families with immediate need. This flexible funding will allow our Family Support Center to have a tangible and immediate impact in the lives of individuals and their families.

*“We are beyond grateful to receive this grant for the second year in a row. The impact this grant has on the people we support, and their families is profound. We look forward to continuing our valuable partnership with the Flutie Foundation for many years to come.”*

**Andrea Morris, Director of Family Support Center.**

*“The Flutie Foundation Autism Community Impact Grant helps our partner agencies address a variety of significant needs in the autism community,” says **Nick Savarese, Executive Director of The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism.** “Programs like these are helping people on the autism spectrum live life to the fullest and we are proud to support their efforts.”*

This grant will support traditionally under-served, under-funded, culturally diverse communities reflected in the Foundation's areas of interest; providing a path for educational and vocational skills, supporting recreational and active lifestyles, and ensuring people with autism are safe, supported, and informed.

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**Family Support Center Team**



*“Give Light and People will find the Way” – Ella Baker*





Greater Haverhill–Newburyport



# Letter from the CEO



## “Lighting the Way Together”

### MISSION

*“To Advocate, Educate, and Explore Opportunities for Personal Growth and Fulfillment”*

### EXECUTIVE TEAM

*Luis Bachman CEO*

*Lisa Aiello CFO/COO*

### PROGRAM DIRECTORS

*Heather Hess  
Director of Adult Family Care*

*Grimaldy Rios  
Director of DDS Programs*

*Andrea Morris  
Director of Family Support Center*

*Bridget Crowley  
Director of Peer Support & Self Advocacy*

### EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

*Bianca Gill  
Manager of Marketing & Administration*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Steve Kapp President*

*Peter Carbone Vice President*

*Dana Marks Treasurer*

*Mary Ann Dunlavey Secretary*

*Eileen Duff*

*Diane Hanley*

*Sandra Jones*

*Therese LaPorte*

*Milva Santarelli*

*Joe Graham*

*Joe Romatelli Director Emeritus*

**Achieve with us.**

A candle is something that serves to light a dark area or room, it also serves to illuminate, enlighten, or guide our path. Therefore, a candle because of its light is a common emblem of both enlightenment and hope. This year’s theme, “**Lighting The Way Together**”, invites all of us to unite and celebrate the light we all bring together. Together, we can find a richer and fuller life, a sense of fulfillment that goes beyond what any one of us can achieve alone!

At The Arc we have learned that our work calls us, challenges us, and brings us together. We need each other, especially when it gets dark and difficult! Some of us are good at seeing Needs and Dreams, others track the Money in the budget, others help to coordinate services and fill out all the needed documents and paperwork, and others work directly with the people we support and their families.

I am a dreamer and I love my job. It is my pleasure to serve and to work together with everyone at The Arc, and DDS, building our relationships, searching for the hidden treasure in everyone, and creating dream teams to reach the impossible. And the older I get, the more amazed I am about the power and infectious enthusiasm of the team. When we work together as a team, one plus one equals three, or five, or ten!!!

**Lighting the way together** is a dynamic quality that provides benefits to everyone. To celebrate the great splendor and light, we must first overcome the barriers and darkness we face, as well as those we put on ourselves and others. Ultimately, what defines great relationships is not only how we get along when everything is going well, but also how we manage the storms in our life. There is a sign at The Arc that I really enjoy which says: Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning how to dance in the rain!!!

Therefore, we are all invited to rise above it all and allow our lives to shine. And as the people we support let their own light shine, they model to us, and they give us the permission to let our own light shine. All of us need to come to the table together to create bright futures for the people we support and for each other. We are all important!

Today, The Arc movement continues to represent a unity of people that advocates and fights for the human and civil rights of those we support, and against discrimination. I believe that deep down we all long to share our lives with others, to live together, to play together, and to work together! And the more I think about it, the more I realize how most of us know how important it is to support each other, and light the way together!!!

Whether at home or at work, when we support each other, we all grow! When we speak about being independent, I cannot find a single person I know who is truly independent. The independent and strong remain alone! We all need each other as well as some level of independence. But there is a balance! When we become too independent, we run the risk of becoming intolerant, impatient, and isolated. It is time we stop feeling shame for needing help, assistance, or each other! It is time we all light the way together, bring our light to the room and hopefully someday soon, the whole world! And I believe it is possible, but not something we can figure out in our heads, it is something that our own hearts and others can reveal to us with time, patience, and experience.

*Luis M. Bachman*  
Chief Executive Officer

# Family Support Connects

## Flutie Funds Impact on the AFTER Program Participants

Thanks to the amazing Flutie Grant donation we have been able to offer recreation opportunities to help enhance the lives of those that we support. This has specifically included scholarships for art classes at The Studio in Newburyport MA. Within a short period of time these art classes have helped transform their confidence and motivation to aim higher. Here are a few quotes from the participants when asked “How has the studio changed your life for the better”:

*“Makes me the Artist that I know I am” - John*

*“We do great stuff like art here and sometimes we play games here, Nintendo games and games that are not electronic” - Matt*

*“I’m good at it (art) so I like to be here” - Corey*

*“Because I love it, I do it, and I like the people around here. They’re wicked friendly, they understand us, and they treat us the right way” - Cathy*

*“Well, it’s changed my life for the better, I mean I’m working on this painting and stuff” - Tyler*

*“I don’t know where to begin but I think it helped me so I can pull out some pretty good ideas I can build upon. Like making these (pointing to comic book characters he created), and beyond that” - Kevin*



**Corey Hardy at The Studio**

For more information on the Family Support Center visit us at [www.thearcofghn.org](http://www.thearcofghn.org)

**Andrea Morris, Director of Family Support Center**  
[amorris@thearcofghn.org](mailto:amorris@thearcofghn.org) or 978-373-0552 x211

**Rowan DeAza, Bilingual Family Support Navigator**  
[rdeaza@thearcofghn.org](mailto:rdeaza@thearcofghn.org) or 978-373-0552 x216

**Margot Kopp, Outreach & Communication Coord.**  
[mkopp@thearcofghn.org](mailto:mkopp@thearcofghn.org) or 978-373-0552 x217

**Locations:**

57 Wingate St, Suite 301, Haverhill MA 01832  
4D Winter St, Newburyport MA 01950

# Peer Support & Self Advocacy Connects

## *Socializing with Friends and A Little Advocacy on the Side*

So my name is Dan and I have been with The Arc a.k.a AFTER Program since I was 16 years old. I've made great connections with a lot of people alongside my friend I've known since preschool and someone I met in High School. I also met other interesting people through AFTER as well.

I also love staff who are very caring and supportive, alongside the other members of the AFTER some I've known since 2019.



**Dan O'Neill, right, and friends at Bowling**

We do a ton of fun activities such as Bowling every Wednesday night, a Dance once a month, a Semi Formal, one year The Spinners, going out to dinner, Walking the Rail Trail, Veasey Park, music therapy in the evening, movie nights and a semi formal dance.

Overall, I've made great friends and great memories through this program, I'm glad to be a part of the AFTER Program and The Arc in general and I'll continue it for a long time.

**So I am also about self-advocacy. I advocate for making my own decisions and being listened to.**

Advocating is important to me, and it should for everyone. Who wants decisions made by others -- I don't.

Advocating makes you happier and you gain more freedom and more opportunities as well.

**Dan O'Neill, Advocate and AFTER Program Participant**

## *Update from the Green Mountain Self-Advocates' Conference!*

"I went to Vermont for a self-advocacy conference, and it was life changing. We learned a lot about self-advocacy.

What I took away from the conference is to love your disability and it made me accept my autism as who I am and embrace it. If you want to learn more about self-advocacy, I recommend you go to a conference if you can. You will leave inspired.

Find yourself and the positive things about who you are instead of thinking of the negative. If you think of the negative it will weigh you down and make you feel you have no place in the world."

**Nichelle Delgado, Peer Support Member**



**Sandy Jones and Nichelle Delgado**



*peer support*

## **Upcoming Meetings & Events**

- **Peer Support Gathering**  
First Thursday of every month, 5:30pm  
HC Media
- **Peer Support Coffee Time**  
Third Wednesday of every month, 11am-12pm
- **Annual Peer Support Celebration**  
6/20, 5-8pm – Maria's Restaurant, Haverhill

# AFC Connects

## *Flutie Grant Impact - Alyssa Clark*

Alyssa Clark is an active 23-year-old young adult who is currently enrolled in our AFC Program. She lives at home with her parents Lisa and Jeff. Alyssa attended the Transition Opportunities Program (TOPS) until the age of 22 and while there was introduced to many newfound passions. She became a social butterfly while at TOPS and was involved in multiple extracurricular activities such as tennis, horseback riding, volunteering at the MSPCA and Sweet Paws. Now she has started a new chapter in her life.

Alyssa and her family's goal was to help her maintain a meaningful schedule that would allow Alyssa a variety of activities that were enjoyable to her. After much consideration and with the help of her family, Alyssa decided to self direct her own services when she turned 22 years old.



***Alyssa Clark at the YMCA***

Her mother Lisa used the connections she had made in the community to find field staff that could help Alyssa with her activities. Alyssa is currently playing tennis and volunteering at the MSPCA as well as taking spin and swimming lessons through the YMCA's Y-Abilities inclusion program. This program's goal is to include all individuals who would like to be active despite their abilities.

Thanks to funds from the Flutie Foundation, Alyssa and her family have been able to fund some of these activities and ensure she has access to continue attending these fulfilling activities.

While balancing her full schedule, Alyssa also finds time to hang out with friends and practice self-care like getting her nails done, something she prides herself on.

Alyssa is part of our Arc family, and we are so happy to have her and watch her grow!!

***Idelsy Infante, AFC Bilingual Care Coordinator and Cynthia Tejada, AFC Bilingual Nurse***



***The Arc's AFC Team***

## ***Learn more about our Adult Family Care (AFC) Program***

Adult Family Care (AFC) is a MassHealth funded program that offers a non-taxable stipend to family members or non-family members to care for people with disabilities in a home setting.

The AFC model provides resources, nursing oversight, and case management to support caregivers in caring for their loved one at home. This includes healthcare oversight through monthly home visits, phone consultations and 24/7 on-call emergency support. The goal of the program is to keep people living in a comfortable home setting.



**If you are interested in our AFC Program please contact Heather Hess, Director of AFC, 978-373-0552 x222 or fill out the referral form on our website at: [thearcofghn.org/services/adult-family-care/](http://thearcofghn.org/services/adult-family-care/)**

# DDS Programs Connects

## *DDS Northeast Regional Awards*

It is with great honor that we announce and congratulate Grimaldy Rios and Kerri Bergeron for being selected by the DDS Merrimack Valley area office to receive the **DDS Northeast Region Providers Recognition Award!!!**

Grimaldy Rios and Kerri Bergeron were nominated specifically by Courtney Edwards and Carolyn Coppola, Service Coordinators at the DDS Merrimack Valley area office for the Provider Recognition Award. Please give a huge CONGRATULATIONS to Grim and Kerri when you see them! Of all the providers in the entire Merrimack Valley, only three awards were selected. Wow! This is a huge honor to have two of The Arc's very own be recognized! And as Michelle Vercellone, DDS Merrimack Valley Area Director, mentioned "Grim and Kerri are so well respected - they really deserved it!"

### **Grimaldy Rios, Director of DDS Programs**

Grimaldy is always ready to get the job done! Aside from his work ethic and dedication, Grim is known for his teamwork and loyalty. Moreover, his commitment and passion for the people we support, and the spirit of teamwork is an inspiration to many at The Arc office. Grimaldy is very respectful of the individual's central place in voicing what is right for their lives. Therefore, aside from listening to individuals with disabilities and their families, he is always ready to seek what their wants and needs are and to figure out and explore new and creative ways to meet their needs.

### **Kerri Bergeron, DDS Support Supervisor**

Kerri started at The Arc over five years ago as a field staff worker but was determined to climb the hill to become a Support Supervisor in the DDS Program. She may be quiet, but she is a force to reckon with when it comes to advocating for those that she supports. There is no "us" and "them" but there is a "we" when it comes to Kerri. She is a genuine down to earth person and loves helping others. We are lucky to have her!

There are many kinds of workers and employees in our field. And many years ago, I heard a DDS Trainer say that in his opinion there are two major types. Those that came to walk with the people we support, to laugh with them and cry with them, and then, there are those that came to take from them. ***Grimaldy and Kerri not only came to walk with them, but to dream and shoot as high as possible!***



## *The Arc's "Spa Day" Collaboration*

We are excited to share the outcome of our "Spa Day" on December 28<sup>th</sup>.

It all started when the Director of DDS Programs, Grimaldy Rios, was looking to coordinate a makeover for a young woman looking for employment. Inspired by this idea our CEO, Luis Bachman, decided to instead host a Spa Day including a makeover for 10 young women.

Just in time for the New Years, we had a group of young women in our DDS Program and Peer Support Program to enjoy a day of feeling beautiful and taken care of. This included hair makeovers, manicures, facials, and more!

We also partnered with Uncommon Threads out of Lawrence, to put together a few professional outfits for the participants to feel comfortable yet stylish. They all walked out feeling like a million bucks! One of the ladies mentioned "This is the first time I have ever felt beautiful". That comment alone made this Spa Day even more worth organizing! We look forward to collaborating with Vicky and Uncommon Threads again to host another Spa Day and possibly a "Men's Spa Day"! Stay tuned!



# AFTER Program Connects



## New Activity - Music Exploration with Edgard

The AFTER Program has recently launched a new free activity, Music Exploration with Edgard who will help you explore your musical talents, hidden or known. Come join us with your musical instrument and/or voice and a desire to be with others who enjoy all kinds of music! Showcase your musical talents or come to explore your musical side. All abilities are welcome!

*“Sometimes music is the only medicine the heart and the soul need” - Unknown*

Join our next Music Exploration session on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup> at the Nevins Library in Methuen MA. Register online at [thearcofghn.org/events](http://thearcofghn.org/events) or email Neala Mercier at [after@thearcofghn.org](mailto:after@thearcofghn.org) for more information.



The AFTER Program offers other monthly activities listed below:

- **Arts & Crafts**
- **Bowling, Walking Trails**
- **Seasonal Activities**
- **Cooking Classes & Dinner Club**
- **Live Music & Dances**
- **Gametime, Storytelling**
- **Morning & Evening Chats**
- **Monthly Community Connections**

For more info or to join contact Neala Mercier, AFTER Coordinator, at [after@thearcofghn.org](mailto:after@thearcofghn.org).

## Upcoming Arc Events

### *The Candlelight Ball*

**June 7, 2024**

Michael's Function Hall, Haverhill  
\$50 per person



**Newburyport Bank**



**Pentucket Bank**

### *Peer Support Celebration*

**June 20, 2024**

Maria's Restaurant, Haverhill  
\$20 per person

### *20th Annual Tee Off for The Arc!*

**August 19, 2024**

Haverhill Country Club  
\$250 per golfer, \$900 foursome, \$60 After Party



**Haverhill Bank**  
Just One Bank

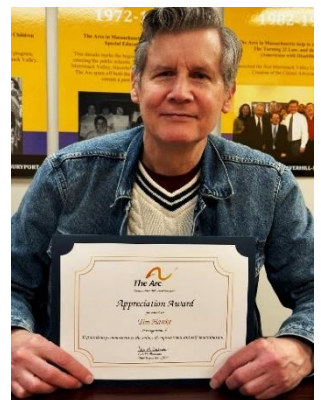
For more info on our events please contact Bianca at [bgill@thearcofghn.org](mailto:bgill@thearcofghn.org) or 978-373-0552 x204

## Field Staff Appreciation Award

Congratulations to our current Field Staff “Appreciation Award” recipient, **Tim Hanke**! Tim has been a great addition to our team and goes above and beyond in supporting one of our clients Mark. He has been supporting Mark for about a year now and helps Mark remain as independent as possible, as independence is something very important to him. They make a great duo and enjoy going out on adventures in Salisbury.

Tim is hard worker and works 7 days a week with a smile on his face, always willing to help where needed. Thank you Tim for all that you do!

-Kerri Bergeron, DDS Support Supervisor



Our Field Staff are a significant percentage of our workforce and an intricate part of the work we do. They are key to the many successes of the individuals and families we support.

# Legislative Action Needed!

## *The Annual Legislative Reception - Our Trip to the State House!*

On March 6th, The Peer Support Advisory Committee and Arc of GHN Staff attended the annual Legislative Reception at the Boston State House. It was a full house! This year's theme focused on advocating for those who remain in the strongest need, with thousands going unserved or underserved for nearly four years now due to the coronavirus pandemic

We also got the chance to visit with some of our legislators to let them know of our personal concerns and help advocate for better wages for direct support professionals and rent control. *If you wish to express your thoughts and concerns please follow the instructions below:*

### **How to Take ACTION!**

**Call your Representative or go to [www.thearcofmass.org](http://www.thearcofmass.org) and then:**

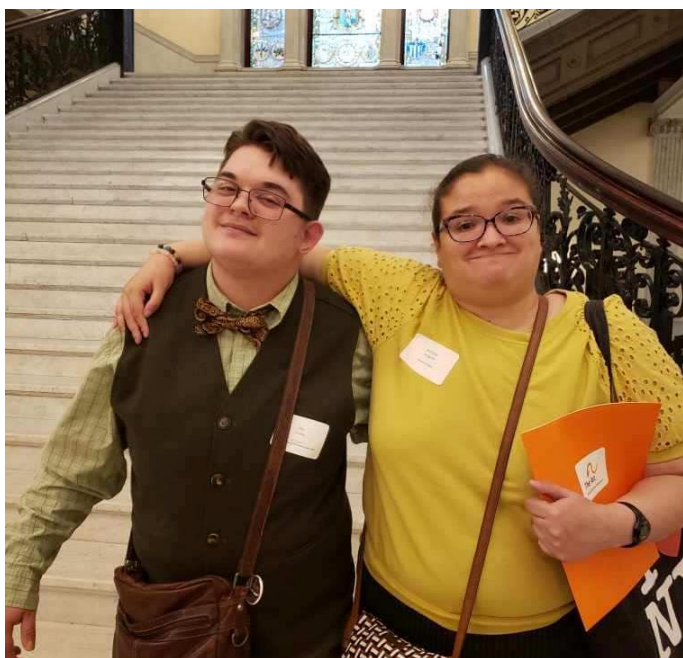
1. Click on Advocacy,
2. Click "Take Action"
3. Click on green "Take Action"



*The Peer Support Group and The Arc Staff*



*Group photo with Leo Sarkissian, third from left, Director at The Arc of Massachusetts*



***Hablamos Español, contacte a Rowan DeAza [rdeaza@thearcofghn.org](mailto:rdeaza@thearcofghn.org) o 978-373-0552 x216***

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