

Harc Today

STAFF AND FAMILY E-NEWSLETTER

What's New In July?



A message from our President & CEO Russell Coleman

I hope everyone had a great 4th of July and that you are enjoying the summer season. As we navigate the changing landscape of supporting individuals with disabilities, I want to reflect on the power of change and the opportunities it brings.

At Harc, we embrace change as a catalyst for growth and progress. It leads us to new avenues and unlocks new opportunities, welcoming fresh faces and ideas that enrich our organization and expand our perspectives.

I'm pleased to announce that despite the recent closure of our SockStarz store in West Hartford, SockStarz will continue to thrive as a microenterprise. We've decided to focus on selling our novelty socks online and at pop-up events. This change allows us to adapt to evolving market trends and reach a wider audience while supporting Harc's important work.

Furthermore, we're excited to explore the possibility of establishing new microenterprises. These ventures will provide employment and skill-building opportunities for the individuals we support while also contributing to our mission of fostering quality, inclusion, and dignity. We're committed to constant innovation and adaptation to serve our community better, and these new microenterprises will play a vital role in that vision.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you. The Harc family is an extraordinary force of compassion, dedication, and resilience. Your hard work and unwavering commitment continually allow us to make a positive impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities and the families we support.

Explorative Day Program



The Explorative Day Program was created in 2022 to address the interests and needs of individuals who do not fall under Employment Services or are not a match for the Bulova Center that specializes in supporting individuals with enhanced needs. The program allows people to explore various interests through a variety of activities that are offered daily. Explorative Day implements skills building through a curriculum that includes, social skills training, ground level technology training, art, math, science, reading, and writing. Through volunteer opportunities the program aims to promote community engagement, job training, and service. The goal is to provide individuals who have interest in work, develop their skills that will assist them with transitioning into the Employment program. Currently, the Explorative Day is working on a number of community service projects that include Auer Farm, Horace Bushnell Food Pantry, Fresh Start, Salvation Army, and Knox Garden. We are always open to and searching for new opportunities that encourage those we support to give back while jump starting their path to employment.

SockStarz Closing Brick and Mortar Moving To E-Commerce



We regret to inform you of the closure of Sockstarz, our cherished social enterprise that has served as a symbol of inclusion and employment for individuals with intellectual and



developmental disabilities (IDD) After careful consideration, we made the difficult decision and will closed our physical store on Lasalle Road in West Hartford on June 25, 2023, due to financial challenges, the impact of the pandemic, and rising inflation. However, we want to assure you that SockStarz will continue to thrive as an online and pop-up store.

Visit us online!



Harc's Artisan Studio/United Way Power of the Purse



Harc's Artisan Studio handmade these beautifully crafted flower purses that were displayed as centerpieces at United Way's 12th Annual Power of the Purse Luncheon and Silent Auction at the Connecticut Convention Center on Thursday, June 8th. Thank you to all who helped support our Artisans!



Day In The Life Of...

Carren James

Job Title: *Job Coach*

When did you get involved with Harc?

Miss Carren started at Harc on July 1, 2013.

What attracted you to our mission?

Before she came to Harc, Carren wanted to be a nurse. She made a career change and wanted to work with individuals who experience significant cognitive and physical involvement. She says that she loves helping the individuals, and it brings her joy, and wants to give them love as if they were her own family.

What motivates you throughout the day

The happiness of the individuals are so important to her, and seeing them laugh and smile keeps her motivated to wake up and come to work everyday.

Of what contribution or achievement are you most proud?

She takes pride in her work, and makes sure that the individuals are clean and taken care of. She is also most proud of being the second recipient of the Appleton-Storm Award.

Do you have an anecdote/story about Harc that really moved you?

At first, Carren started working at Camp Bulova with the help of Dawn Allen. She said that Dawn was eager and encouraged her to work in the Bulova Center where she was appointed to be in charge of the PCA's. She was also asked by one of the parents to be their daughter, Zoe's 1:1 support. She has now been Zoe's 1:1 for over five years, and she would make songs that would help her to be calm and she would listen more, laugh, and smile. Zoe has made tremendous improvement ever since Carren has been with her.

Fun Facts about me:

She loves to cook and says, "I love to smile!"



Great News!



SnackStarz will still be open for you to purchase snacks, beverages, and more!



Upcoming Events

Capable Kids Camp, Began June 26th and ends on August 4th

Birth to Three 30th anniversary, Day-long celebration on September 19th 2023

Annual Auction 2023, Our annual fundraising auction is on November 11, 2023



- **Fabiana Abrams** - RSA Brentmoor
- **Regine Gedeon** - RSA Asylum
- **Kereen Guy** - RSA Brentmoor
- **Dorval Phipps** - RSA Prospect
- **Niphaphone Khotpanya** - Business Office

Staff Committee Volunteer Opportunity!

Harc's Sparking Possibilities Auction and Gala

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN
VOLUNTEERING ON THE 2023
AUCTION AND GALA STAFF
PLANNING COMMITTEE OR
VOLUNTEERING AT THE EVENT ON
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11?



Steppingstones Birth to Three Program Update



Through the partnership with families, Connecticut's Birth to Three system is committed to supporting infants and toddlers with delays and disabilities to develop and grow through everyday routines. The system provides equitable access to all families and connections to resources within the community. - Connecticut Birth to Three Mission

Through equal opportunities and access to equitable services, families are empowered to further support their child's developmental skills, health related needs, and advocate for their child and family. -Connecticut Birth to Three Vision

These are the updated Connecticut Birth to Three mission and vision statements. Our Steppingstones team fulfill these statements in our day to day engagement with all families and children we serve in the community. In honor of our efforts, and those of the entire Connecticut birth to three system, all galleries at the Connecticut Science Center have been reserved by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) for a day-long celebration on **September 19th 2023**. Birth to three in Connecticut is having its 30th anniversary! Stay tuned for more information on how to join in the fun!

Steppingstones is participating in this July's OEC family coach training with Dathan Rush, Ed.D., CCC-SLP & M'Lisa Shelden, PT, Ph.D.

Coaching in early intervention promotes adult learning strategy by advancing 'the learner's ability to reflect on his or her actions as a means to determine the effectiveness of an action or practice and develop a plan for refinement and use of the action in immediate and future situations'. (*Rush & Shelden, 2004*)

Coaching is also in accordance with the birth to three capacity building mission as "capacity-building practices focus on interests and strengths and use participatory learning opportunities and participation to accomplish desired outcomes. The consequences of using such practices strengthens and promotes children, parent, family, and community member . . . abilities to engage in development-enhancing opportunities or address challenges in sustainable ways." (*Wilson, 2006*)

We wish our new family coaches well as they advance toward fidelity in this most exciting practice!

Capable Kids Camp News



Our Capable Kids summer camp began on June 26th and will end on August 4, 2023. We attend Camp Courant in Farmington from Monday-Thursday. Our campers are integrated into various activities with their peers throughout the day. Activities include: arts and crafts, STEM, music, health and wellness, and swimming. On Fridays, we venture out into the community. Trips include: Lupa Zoo, CT. Science Museum, bowling, movies, Quassy Amusement Park, and the Dr. Seuss Museum. On July 11th, the campers will participate in a mentoring project here at Harc in the mornings before they head off to camp. Projects will be a flower basket and a hot air balloon craft and also a scavenger hunt.

Exciting News In Advocacy



DDS awarded us a grant that would create and establish individual micro businesses for our individuals. This opportunity of assistive technology for our folks included, iPads, 3-D printers, TAPit Platform Boards, and other assistive technology to help with the success of the micro business. Not only will this grant help our individuals be an advocate for themselves, but will bring them that much closer to being more independent so they may enjoy lives of quality, inclusion, and dignity.

A Day In the Life of... Bob & Gerry



Brothers Bob and Gerry have been arriving at Harc at 9:00am faithfully for over the past 40 years. With full bellies of their favorite breakfast; scrambled eggs. This inseparable pair are ready to begin their day. You will see them both coming off the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) transportation shuttle and into the building with their signature baseball-caps, with their names engraved at the top. When they wear their matching caps, some people would believe that they are twins; when in reality, they are actually six years apart!

After entering the building, and getting through the heavy flow of traffic to the elevator to go to the fifth floor. The brothers put down all of their belongings and go about their morning ritual of going to the restroom, and going back to the Enrichment Day Service (EDS) room.

As the brothers make their way down the hall at around 10:00am, they are off to the dining room. This is where they do their cleaning duties of wiping off the tables and chairs. When they are finished at around 10:30am, they go back to the EDS room and get ready for the activity of the day.

Once 12:00pm hits, it's LUNCH TIME! Both of their favorite lunchtime food are peanut butter and jelly sandwiches by the way. At 12:30, the duo go back to the EDS room and do some of their favorite activities, like drawing and coloring. They will also listen to soft rock and contemporary on their old school Walkman radios; but absolutely, "NO Country music", Bob announces with passion.

Depending on the day, if it was a Wednesday, the brothers will go to the Horace Bushnell Children's Food Pantry to volunteer for about an hour to an hour and a half. If it was a Friday, they would do their well-deserved Community Activity with their pal Will.

At 1:30 sharp, Bob and Gerry head down to the lobby and wait for their ride to pick them up. When the brothers are not at Harc, they spend their nights and weekends working at Dunkin Donuts Stadium, Home of the Yard Goats.



Donate

