

Harc Family

STAFF AND FAMILY E-NEWSLETTER

What's New In January?

A message from our President & CEO Russell Coleman



Happy New Year Everyone!

As we say farewell to the past year, we embark on a new one filled with promise. In the last part of 2023, we successfully finalized our eagerly awaited strategic plan, a collaborative effort involving our incredible Harc team, the individuals we assist, their families, dedicated board members, and the entire community.

Our mission goes beyond words on paper, it's about changing lives and encouraging a world where everyone belongs. We are dedicated to supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families throughout their lifetimes. We believe that every person, regardless of their abilities, deserves a life of quality, inclusion, and dignity.

Reflecting on our history, Harc was established in 1951 by parents who recognized amazing potential in their children with disabilities. Their determination laid the foundation for what we do now and the strong bonds we've built with people, groups, and leaders in our community.

Today, we carry forward the legacy of these families by ensuring that individuals with intellectual disabilities have every opportunity to lead meaningful lives. From our Birth to Three Program onwards, we offer a comprehensive range of services, including support, education, employment assistance, and housing, with the goal of maintaining a diverse community and providing opportunities for all.

Our strategic plan emphasizes our unwavering commitment, outlining our goals and the strategies to achieve them, ensuring the best for those we serve. It serves as our promise to create more opportunities for individuals we support and strengthen our connections with the community.

I want to thank every single person in our Harc family. Your hard work, your passion, and your belief in what we do are what make this all possible. Together, we'll keep changing lives and changing minds, making sure everyone feels included, and creating a lasting impact.

[Click Here to Read the Strategic Plan](#)

New Legislation to Benefit Our Staff and Individuals and their Families

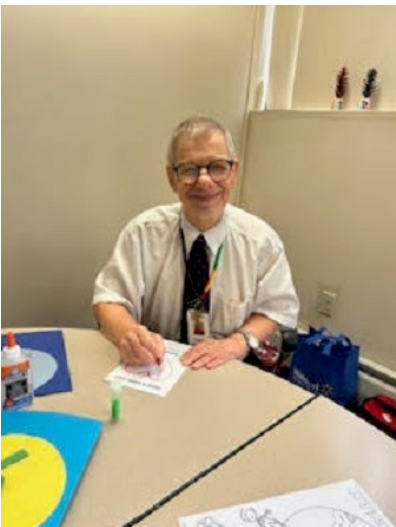
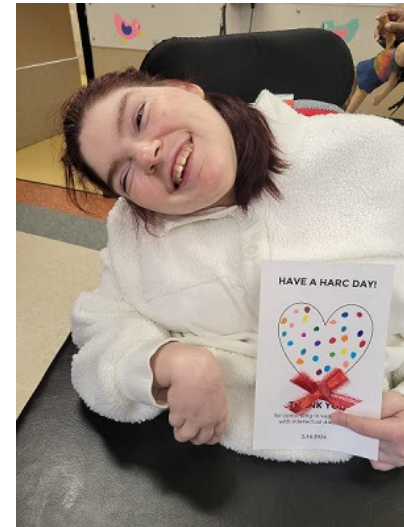


Our individuals helped us prepare for Have a HARC Day which is coming up on February 14th! They did a wonderful job decorating the paper hearts that will be given to legislators and guests that have our advocacy agenda printed on the back.

Have a HARC Day is our annual opportunity to host a meeting at the Legislative Office Building.

Local Legislators will hear from and interact with some of the individuals and families we support, as well as our dedicated staff and advocates.

We will tell HARC's story and discuss the challenges and successes we face and propose ways our legislators can help us reach our goals!



What are we advocating for.....

This year's Advocacy Agenda includes five main points...

1. Ensuring a Strong, Sustainable Direct Support Workforce by increasing funding and career training.
2. Employment options for individuals with I/DD that offer fair wages and benefit the employers with tax incentives.
3. Housing options that are affordable, adaptive and readily accessible.
4. Transportation options that support individuals with I/DD that are accessible and affordable.
5. Improved Health Outcomes to individuals with I/DD so that they may have access to quality health, dental and behavioral care.



[Read the Full Advocacy Agenda](#)

[Register to Join Us](#)

New Job Opportunities For Our Individuals



Sockstarz is pleased to announce our Mystery sock subscription service. Customers receive a mystery sock every month along with other mystery swag from the Artisan Studio.

This service not only provides our customers with a fun mystery shipment to open every month, it also provides more job training for our individuals. The price of the subscription is \$13.99 per month with free shipping.

Our customers have the option to choose from a men's sock, a women's sock or children's sock.



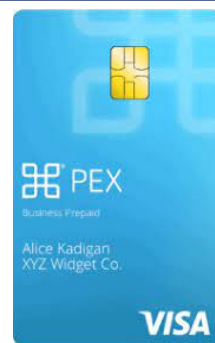
[Click to check out Sockstarz](#)

A New Year Means a New Process for Shopping

We have implemented a new way to shop for the individuals in our community living arrangement homes. PEX cards are prepaid expense cards that are loaded with a budget that can be used for personal items, groceries, dining out, etc.

Soon all of the houses will be using them.

This new process prevents theft and eliminates the need for cash. It's better for the finance department, easier and quicker for the individuals and safer and more efficient for the organization.



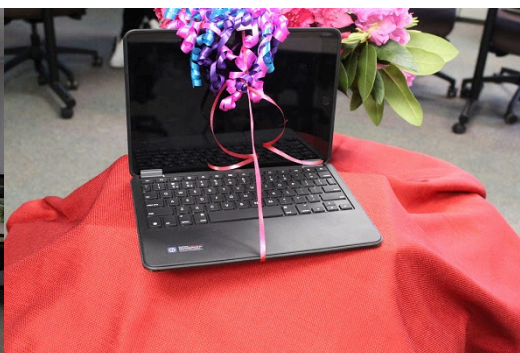
The New Year Brings New Technology in the Birth to Three Program

Our Birth to Three department is set to soar to new heights with the launch of a fully customized electronic platform! Valuing the benefits of early intervention and the unique needs of our early intervention team, Harc, Inc. chose to partner with Protective Harbor to develop this transformative system. Efficiencies amid the new platform will greatly serve our families, along with our clinical and administrative team.

Key features include:

- + Digitized forms with pre-population of common items for rapid entry
- + Electronic signatures with instant access amid the team
- + Appointment scheduling with auto email and text reminders
- + Compliance tracking
- + Storage management, protection, and support

A big thank you is extended to Daniel McLaughlin, Ramona Rancourt, Sheila Murrhly, Robert LaBun, Russell Coleman and the team at Protected Harbor: Richard Luna, Nick Solimando, and Shivam Santosh for their expertise!



New Year, New Website

2024 is the year we will implement our new Website. The newly redesigned harc-ct.org site will have enhanced security features, intuitive organization, including a new navigation pane and search feature, shopping options from Harc logoed swag to Artisan Studio Gifts and Sockstarz, event registration, a staff training portal and advanced accessibility features. It is expected to launch mid-year.

Are you curious about how stuff like this comes to fruition?

In order to get a new website, we created an RFP or Request for Proposals. It's a document that outlines what we want to see in our new website and provides details about all the new features and functions we want and how much we are willing to pay for it and provides a timeline to explain when we need each phase of the project completed by. Then website creating companies can choose to submit a proposal. If we like their proposal and select them to do the work they commence and are expected to meet the milestones and ultimate deadline.

Are you curious about how a project like this gets funded?

One part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2023 allocated funding, to nonprofits like us, for technology improvements. Like all the funding we receive, there are specific types of purchases the moneys can be used for and thankfully a website redesign is one of them.

New Bank Accounts!



Want a \$100 Amazon gift card?

All you have to do is open a checking account with Hartford Federal Credit Union and have your Harc paychecks direct deposited into it. It's really that easy. About a week later you will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card in the mail.

Who is Hartford Federal Credit Union:

Actually, they are our neighbors! Their headquarters is just a couple doors away at [964 Asylum Avenue](#). This makes banking with them super convenient. You can walk there and access your accounts on your lunch or after work.

New Wheels!

We are excited to be driving around in new wheels thanks to our partnership with [Enterprise Fleet Management](#).

Over the next five years, we are working together to modernize our fleet and will be bringing in even more newer vehicles.

These new vehicles feature state of the art wheelchair lifts and other modern technology that will make our staff's job easier and make the ride more comfortable for the passengers and drivers.

The vans represent our dedication to offering upgraded, reliable, and comfortable transportation while providing our staff and the people we support more options and more comfort.



Say Hello to Some New Faces :)

Erin Harris - new Physical Therapist, Birth to Three Program



How's it going so far?

Good! I'm working in the Birth to Three program and getting to know some of the physical therapy clients and their families.

Why did you want to come to Harc?

I had been working in early intervention programs for about 20 years now, mostly in Massachusetts and I wanted to work closer to home, since the nature of the job involved a lot of driving because I'm working with children in their homes.

What programs were you involved in prior to coming to Harc?

I was at the Thom Westfield Infant Toddler Program and Bamsi in Brockton, Mass.

Where did you study?

I went to University of Hartford.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I love exploring hiking trails and spending time with my three daughters.

William Hardee - new Director, Day Programs

How's it going so far?

Things are going well. The teams are in the process of regrouping our individuals to provide better program opportunities and activities for them to participate in. We are also working on a number of initiatives to help grow the programs over time.

What do you love about Harc?

I love the individuals and the people in this agency! Harc, Inc. has great energy and the executive team here is aligned with the vision of what day programs should be.

Why are you passionate about helping folks with special abilities?

I think it's important to give back to people and to our communities regularly. Assisting those with disabilities accomplishes this and also provides us an opportunity to educate others in our communities about persons with disabilities.

Tell me a little about your background.

Over a thirty-one year career, I have been very fortunate to help a wide variety of persons with disabilities. In a management role, I have supervised in many DMHAS and DDS settings as well as managed several career services programs. I think we have so much to learn from people who face more significant life challenges than ourselves and I am constantly humbled by their stories and what they have been through. I have also worked with some truly amazing staff, providers, and family members which has contributed to my continued interest in staying in this field!

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I enjoy landscaping, hiking in the woods with my kids and dogs. I also like cooking.



Let's Work Together to Bring on Some New Staff

Do you know someone who may be interested in working at Harc? Get their resume and send it to HR or encourage them to apply on the careers page of the website. They could be a great addition to our staff AND your pocket!

You'll get \$100 once they reach 3 months of employment, and another \$100 when they reach six months, and another \$100 at one year. Now that's easy money for you and also benefits your friend, the department they work in, the individuals we support and the organization as a whole!

Let's Make Some New Friends

Let's make some new friends and reconnect with old friends at Mandell JCC.

They have a bunch of great events coming up. Ask your supervisor about getting involved with any of the events below or the others listed on their site:

The Adults with special needs fashion show will be on April 3rd. Register to be a model by Feb 1st. The Valentines day dance is Feb 11th. We'll be playing Bingo on Feb 25th and March 24th and hosting a Spring Gardening Workshop on March 10th.

[Click Here to See More](#)

A Note from the Finance and Administration Office

W2s, W4s, and More

It's tax time! W2s were mailed to all employees early in January. If you need to obtain a copy, you can do so from ADP. Once you log in to ADP, click "Myself," then under "Pay" click on "Pay & Tax Statements," then in the section "Tax Statements" click "View Statement." Now is also a good time to think about updating your W4 if you need to change your tax withholdings. This is really important to do if you had a change to your marital status or number of dependents in 2023. To update your W4, log in to ADP then click "Myself," then under "Pay" click on "Tax Withholdings," then click "start." You can update your W4 at any time during the year. For our Birth to Three contractors, 1099-NECs were mailed mid-January. If you do not receive a copy by the end of January you can contact the business office to obtain a copy.

Now is also a good time to consider updating your retirement contributions. This can also be done via ADP. Click "Myself," then under "Benefits" click on "Retirement Savings," then in the section "Contributions" click "Edit Contributions." Our plan allows for either a percentage of pay or a set dollar contribution each pay period.

Upcoming Events



SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, February 14th, 2024 Have a Harc Day

Our staff, families, individuals and advocates will meet in the legislative office to discuss their challenges and success stories and consider how our legislators can help.

Saturday, May 11th, 2024 Walk n Roll

Get ready for the 2024 return of Harc's Walk n Roll!

We'll be at Dunkin Park, from 10 am to noon.

Gather your team and prepare for another spectacular event filled with joy and camaraderie!

[Donate](#)

