**A People-Friendly Employee Succeeds at Walmart**

Julia Lottinville loves her job and it shows. “A typical shift for me at Walmart might include encouraging customers to try my samples,” says Julia, “or offering a coupon for a discount on a particular item that I am displaying.” Promotional shifts at Walmart are typically called events, and these events change each week. “Each shift is different and this is one reason why I like my job so much,” she explains.

Julia is always excited to go to work at Walmart in part because her supervisor Mike is nice and also because she gets great support from Arc staff. In preparing for the job market, Julia spent hours in The Arc’s Resource Center working on her resume and searching the internet for jobs in the community. One thing that was clear to all that know Julia is that she is very social, so a promotional position in a large store like Walmart was a perfect fit. Even though Julia actually works for Advantage Solutions, her 12-hour work week takes place in an Attleboro Walmart.

Julia wears a uniform and uses an app on her cell phone to punch in and out of her scheduled shift. At the end of all shifts, she uploads two photographs of her station which are sent to the company whose product she is promoting. Julia then fills out a survey on the app documenting the number of samples that she gave out and how many items customers selected for purchase.

If a child comes up and is interested in a sample, “usually candy or cookies,” she laughs, “I ask to speak with the parent before I give the child a sample.” She has strict instructions about children, mainly because of allergies, especially peanut-based allergies. But still, her favorite spot in Walmart is in the candy aisle, “Because children are fun to talk to and they are always happy to sample candy,” she explains.

Each day, Julia receives a packet of instructions that helps her with the day’s event. In some cases, she prepares her display after she has cooked something in a crockpot. For these tasks, she relies on help from Arc staff members Kathy, Elizabeth, or Irene. Six hour shifts can be long, but for Julia, it is the perfect job in a people-friendly environment and she loves every minute of it.
As spring finally reaches us in New England, we are reminded of the new beginnings that this season brings. We recently celebrated the incredible work of Arc employees during our Annual Awards Ceremony in April and acknowledged three employees who have been with The Arc for 35 years. Our March membership drive brought in critical dollars for services that are not funded by the State as did our Annual Golf Outing and Live Auction last June.

In our last newsletter I stated the critical need for The Arc to embark upon strategic planning and to look at new models, new ideas and new ways of securing employment for our consumers. In May, we will be gathering the Board of Directors for a daylong retreat. The US Consent Decree will factor into our discussion as well as the enhancement of our membership drive to bring in critical dollars for services that are not covered by the State. By the time this newsletter is published, President Tom Hodge and I will have returned from a three day Disability Summit, sponsored by The Arc/USA, where we will join others in taking action against new legislation that will potentially have a negative impact on our Arc family. We will keep you posted on the outcomes of this important meeting.

As you read this newsletter, join me in congratulating Julia Lottinville on her new position at Walmart as well as all of the individuals who received awards for their stellar work in 2017. We are a great agency because of our employees! I hope you will consider supporting our Annual Golf Outing on June 4th... by gathering a foursome, supporting a sponsorship, purchasing raffle tickets or by attending the dinner after the outing. It is always a lively event! Please follow up with Claudette Lineberger or Ann Telfer if you are interested in participating:

Sincerely,
John J. Baden III
Chief Executive Officer

The Annual Awards Ceremony
Honor the Arc Heroes of 2017

“Today we are gathered to celebrate and appreciate all of you,” says CEO Jack Padien, as he introduces the Annual Awards Ceremony to hundreds of attendees on April 11th. “This is the one day each year when we stop and take time to honor and thank you for the work you do every day that makes a difference in the lives of others,” he stated.

The Annual Awards Ceremony highlights the exceptional work of many employees, all of whom are part of The Arc family. Special Recognition Awards went to Mary LeFort, Assistant Director at Curran Brook Court group home and Kathy Ryan, who works in our Resource Center. Both were recognized for their dedication, professionalism and eagerness to go the extra distance in their respective roles at The Arc.

This year’s honorees include the following:

- Daron Malton receives the Community Involvement Award with Dale Kennedy and Kathy Hunt.
- Maria Cedaro received the Individual Service Accomplishment Award for her work as a Direct Support Professional at the Roger Williams group home.
- Toni Carroll, Nancy Tumidjaski of Flying Shuttles Weaving and Art Studio received the team award of Service Accomplishment recognizing their efforts in five categories, including community integration and skill and competency development.
- Flying Shuttles receives the Team Service Award: Karen Gilbert, Tony Carroll, Nancy Tumidjaski and helpfulness of a program participant toward him or her peers. Lisa is Vice President of Citizens With Power and is a new board member of the statewide advocacy group, Advocates in Action.

Our Employee of the Year award went to Suzanne Sullivan from the Community Options program for her long standing dedication and loyalty to the people she has worked with, over the past 23 years at The Arc.

And last but not least, is the Professional of the Year award which was given to Michelle Wright, who demonstrated outstanding expertise and success on behalf of one or more persons supported by agency programs. According to her colleagues, Michelle demonstrates the promotion of self-reliance, empowerment and community presence in the women she supports at the Pawtucket Avenue group home.

Congratulations to all of our 2017 award winners!