

# NEWSLETTER

## WINTER 2026

### PERSEVERANCE IN ACTION: CELEBRATING STEVEN'S EMPLOYMENT MILESTONE



The first time that Steven came into the employment office was in December of 2022. He filled out application after application, went on interview after interview, and developed new skills along the way; patience above all others. Throughout the process, Steven tried out many different avenues to gain employment. He went through a self-employment training program, and started selling hand-made crafts like flowerpots and butterfly lawn decorations. After more than 2 years of searching, Steven got a job at 212 Health and Performance in February of 2025. Every Tuesday and Friday Steven goes through two separate gyms and sweeps, mops, cleans windows, takes out trash, and sanitizes the equipment. Steven is now coming up on one full year of employment. When asked about the most important piece of advice he would give someone currently looking for work, Steven said "just keep looking, and it will come."

### BACK IN ACTION: BVC BULLETS REUNITE FOR A SUCCESSFUL 2025 SPECIAL OLYMPICS SEASON

After taking a year off, the BVC Bullets basketball team came back together this fall for the 2025 Special Olympics basketball season. Chris Gibbons stepped in as the new coach this year with the help of long-time coach, Michelle Rattray and assistant coach Nayib Batista. Every one of our players this year gave their best effort including Deven Ainsburg, Steven Banks, Jose Delgado, Kevin Spencer, Eric Major and John Wood. The team would not have been a success without the help of volunteers such as Antoine Tavares, Claudio Rodriguez, Mary Kim Denny, Eliaquim Dos Santos and Victor Inyangala. The team competed in the end of year tournament at Providence College and came in 4th place in our division.



Are you or someone you know looking for a career that truly makes a difference? Are you caring, compassionate and love to help others achieve their goals? Join our team of dedicated professionals... become a Direct Support Professional Today!

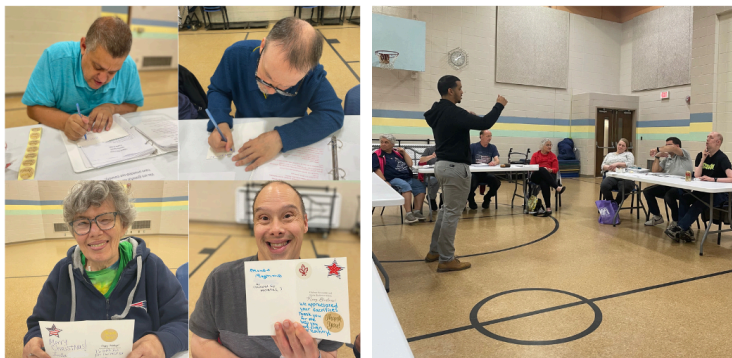


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## CITIZENS WITH POWER SHARE MESSAGES OF GRATITUDE WITH VETERANS

One of the most important meetings our self-advocates hold is the service project meeting. They recognize the importance of giving back to community members who have served our country. In the fall, members met and wrote messages of gratitude in holiday-themed greeting cards to be delivered during the holiday season. Nayib Batista, a job coach in our Employment Service department, shared his experience in the National Guard, answered questions about the military, and explained what it means to be a veteran. Thank you to our Service Coordinators for coordinating and organizing this valuable project!

## HOLIDAY FUN AT THE RIVIERA RESTAURANT

December was full of joy, connection, and festive celebration as we hosted two Holiday dinners at the Riviera Restaurant in East Providence. With over 95 attendees at each gathering, program participants and our dedicated staff brought holiday cheer once again!



As our Twelve Weeks of Giving fundraiser comes to a close, we want to take a moment to say thank you. If you've already made a gift, we are deeply grateful for your generosity and support.

If you haven't had a chance to give yet, there's still time to make a difference. Your support—at any level—helps ensure that individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their families have access to the advocacy, programs, and resources they need to live full, successful lives.



To make your contribution, please scan the QR code, visit our website at <https://www.bvcriarc.org/donate.html> or mail your donation to:

The Arc of Blackstone Valley  
500 Prospect Street  
Pawtucket, RI 02860

Thank you for being part of our community and for supporting our mission.