Making a Difference Daily

While Congress officially designated October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month years ago, ARC provides jobs for people with disabilities every day. More than 200 people with physical, intellectual and developmental challenges work on-site and in the community through ARC, receiving a regular paycheck and the boost in self-esteem that comes with it.

Providing work is especially important now. Statistics show that even though employment numbers recently increased, it is still difficult for someone with disabilities to find a job.

The results of ARC’s employment initiatives can be seen firsthand:

- In Chesterfield, ARC is part of a beautification initiative that includes the clean-up of roadside debris, as well as managing more than 600 acres of landscaped grounds at facilities across Virginia.

- In Richmond, ARC employees perform custodial work and construction clean-up for project:HOmes; assemble, pack and ship Fatwood for Plow & Hearth; and learn valuable work skills that lead to jobs at places such as Aramark, where two former ARC employees are now employed.

- Outside Virginia, ARC is also having an impact, with three employees helping oversee shipments at a U.S. Naval Academy warehouse in Annapolis.

Is ARC in your will?
Contact Kim Watson for more information: kim.watson@RichmondARC.org

WE LOVE OUR EMPLOYEES!
National Disability Employment Awareness Month
A Man For All Seasons

No matter what the time of year, Bobby, 43, is having a great time at Greater Richmond ARC. Over the summer, Bobby canoed, rode horseback, and swam at ARC’s Camp Baker.

Now that the weather has turned colder, Bobby works at ARC’s Westwood production location two days a week, where as a material handler, he assists fellow employees by loading and off-loading materials, along with keeping the work area clean. His mom Claudette says he loves the work and earning a paycheck, which he spends at yard sales, “where unfortunately he gets too many things."

The other weekdays are spent in Adult Day Support, where Bobby socializes with friends and goes on trips that are both fun and meaningful, such as attending a movie or sporting event, or delivering Meals on Wheels as a volunteer.

Bobby has a full week. “He’s learning on the job” in production, points out Claudette, and in Adult Day Support “can try a variety of different things… like gardening. Just knowing he is in a good program provides peace of mind. I am delighted Richmond has this.”

Keeping Chesterfield Beautiful

Greater Richmond ARC has been tapped by the Chesterfield County Department of Community Enhancement to help keep roadsides clean. ARC Employment Services (AES) employees helped collect and remove roadside debris during Earth Day last April, and again this fall.

“We are very pleased to have been selected by Chesterfield County to participate in this important initiative,” said Matt O’Connell, ARC’s vice president of employment services. “Our employees take enormous pride in their work and are happy to provide a valuable service to the community.”

Greater Richmond ARC and its Employment Services program, which provides employment and workforce development services for more than 200 people with physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities, has been accredited by CARF International for three years in the following program areas: Employment Support, Job Development, Employee Development Services and Occupational Employment Services.

CARF accreditation “signals a service provider’s commitment to continually improving services, encouraging feedback, and serving the community,” says their website.
On September 24, 2018, Irene Poindexter and Bill Poole received vaACCSES Awards at the Virginia Collaborations Conference in Norfolk, Virginia.

Irene, a Project Manager at Greater Richmond ARC for eight years, was nominated by ARC’s Assistant Vice President of Facility Management Services Mike Atkins, and was selected from among nominees statewide for her “dedication, innovation, flexibility, leadership and collaboration in the service of individuals with disabilities,” according to vaACCSES.

Bill Poole, a member of ARC’s Board of Directors as well as Camp Baker’s Management Board, was nominated by ARC’s Assistant Vice President of Development Mike Foley in the “Community Partner” category for “fostering community inclusion of individuals living with disabilities,” according to vaACCSES.

Congratulations to both on receiving this prestigious honor!

Michelle Mayo Is On the Go

“I like being busy,” says Michelle Mayo, the energetic production manager at ARC’s Westwood Avenue location, who supervises a team of about 60 doing everything from scanning documents to repackaging security equipment. There is never a dull day.

Michelle started at ARC as a temporary employee more than two decades ago and has been steadily promoted ever since. In her position, “I don’t see anyone as having a disability. I see who they are,” she says.

Starting out, she was a “diamond in the rough.” But her early jobs at ARC helped Michelle learn the organization’s “ins and outs.” In production, people with disabilities not only earn a paycheck, but can socialize and be surrounded by what Michelle calls “a whole lot of family.”

Michelle is clearly enthusiastic about her job. “You help someone accomplish something. You help their life be better,” she says. And with that, she is already on to another task.
We LOVE our DONORS!

**Birdies for Charity**

This year ARC is participating in a charitable fundraising program offered by the Dominion Energy Charity Classic to raise $5,000 for purchase of a wheelchair lift for the pool at Camp Baker. The program, called Birdies for Charity Presented by TowneBank, will pay us a 10% bonus on the funds that are donated! If you would like to help us purchase the wheelchair lift you can send your donation through the Birdies for Charity program and amplify your gift with the added 10% bonus. Birdies for Charity offers the option to gift a flat amount or an amount based on the number of birdies made by PGA TOUR Champions players at the Dominion Energy Charity Classic in October (a birdie is one stroke under par). PGA TOUR Champions players made 789 birdies at the last year's tournament. So as an example, if you donated $0.10 per birdie in 2017 your total donation would have equaled $78.90, to which the PGA TOUR adds the additional 10% bonus. Thank you!

Please visit our unique link at [http://bit.ly/2xTVhrr](http://bit.ly/2xTVhrr) to donate!

Questions? Contact Nita Starr at nita.starr@richmondarc.org or 804.358.1874.

**Ladybug Fund Donors Enrich the Lives of Children**

Remember the old Mastercard commercial that always ended with a “priceless” experience? Ladybug Fund donors help give priceless opportunities to babies and children with disabilities who need a little (or a lot) extra to reach their full potential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Here’s how the Ladybug Fund is helping ARC families (through July 2018):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Translator for non-English speaking ARC families served in Infant and Child Development Services (ICDS) - $7,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Therapist travel into homes of ARC children under the age of three - $17,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Program Support for ICDS - $52,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ After School Services equipment maintenance and supplies - $4,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ After School Services food and beverage - $2,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What you do for these children is priceless. Thank you!

Want to know more about the Ladybug Fund? Contact Nita Starr at nita.starr@richmondarc.org or 804.358.1874. Sponsorships for 2019 are now available!

And mark your calendar for the 2019 Ladybug Fund Winetasting and Silent Auction on March 30 at The Torque Club (Richmond Raceway Complex)!
We LOVE our VOLUNTEERS!

Summer camps may be over, but ARC has plenty of opportunities for volunteers to engage in ongoing service throughout the year! See what some of our active volunteers below have to say about their experiences, then send an email to Alison.jones-nassar@richmondarc.org to find out what volunteer position is right for you!

“Over the past [seven months] I have been working with ARC Day Support program participants as a volunteer in conjunction with Art on Wheels on Thursdays. It has been exciting, heartwarming, informative, and...yes, loving. It has reminded me once again that we are all the same. All of us want to be loved and accepted for who we are, as we are. After fourteen years in higher education, I have found the continued joy of knowing that I am making a difference through teaching self-expression and the arts at ARC.”

“I am an aspiring genetic counselor and was looking for more experience interacting with children with disabilities and ARC has allowed me to see how amazing, funny, and good-hearted these children are. I look forward to my volunteering every week as I know our activities always vary making it more exciting. I am excited to continue my volunteering role and look forward to making more smiles.”

“I have found that ARC participants, employees and volunteers are some of the most lovely and attentive individuals I’ve had the pleasure to play for.”

“The ARC’s Adult Day Support Program provides the space for me to serve adults with disabilities, and to build community with others doing amazing work in Richmond. I love it.”

“I have learned so much this past [seven months] working with ARC Day Support program participants as a volunteer in conjunction with Art on Wheels on Thursdays. It has been exciting, heartwarming, informative, and...yes, loving. It has reminded me once again that we are all the same. All of us want to be loved and accepted for who we are, as we are. After fourteen years in higher education, I have found the continued joy of knowing that I am making a difference through teaching self-expression and the arts at ARC.”

“I am an aspiring genetic counselor and was looking for more experience interacting with children with disabilities and ARC has allowed me to see how amazing, funny, and good-hearted these children are. I look forward to my volunteering every week as I know our activities always vary making it more exciting. I am excited to continue my volunteering role and look forward to making more smiles.”

“I have found that ARC participants, employees and volunteers are some of the most lovely and attentive individuals I’ve had the pleasure to play for.”

“Volunteering [at ARC] has afforded me the opportunity to be a part of what the ARC family community is all about. I look forward to donating my time whenever possible in the future and supporting Greater Richmond ARC where it’s needed.”

“My internship here really has grown into a cohesive and well-rounded learning opportunity. I’m gaining experience in a variety of areas, all of which are relevant to my career aspirations. I am so thankful for the opportunity to work with and learn from such a passionate, driven, experienced team, and I look forward to continuing my work at ARC when I return to complete my honors thesis fieldwork in the fall.”
ARC Afterschool Provides Fun and Friendship

Nick, 17, loves coming to ARC @Saunders after school because of the staff, who are “fantastic and make him feel special and important,” says his mom Kelly. “He seems better when he comes here.”

For Nick, who has autism and an intellectual disability, the trips to parks and to movie theaters with his ARC friends are priceless.

“It gives him the option to be out with everyone,” says Kelly, adding that these trips allow Nick the chance to socialize with people from all over Richmond, “not just the center of the world where we live” in western Henrico.

Similarly, for 15-year-old Jamon, ARC @Camp Baker is also a place to spend time with friends after school. Without Camp Baker, “I truly don’t know what I’d do,” says his mom Cymondria.

Greater Richmond ARC’s afterschool program for youngsters ages five to 21 enrolled in school is held weekdays at 3600 Saunders Avenue in Richmond and 7600 Beach Road in Chesterfield from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on school holidays from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cost is $12.67 an hour or the equivalent in Medicaid waivers.

This year ARC @Saunders participants can participate in woodworking, where they learn how to measure, add and subtract, while making key chains, personalized plaques, and cell phone holders. At ARC @Camp Baker, arts and crafts recently took center stage when afterschool participants created their own tie-dye T-shirts.

“In so many ways, (ARC) has made a huge difference for Jamon,” his mother explained, saying the organization has “improved his quality of life. Camp Baker is truly a blessing.”

For more information about ARC’s afterschool programs, visit www.richmondarc.org or call (804) 358-1874.

Respite Now Held at Two Locales

For the first time, “Saturday only” respite is available this fall at ARC’s 3600 Saunders Avenue location from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for $107.44 or the equivalent in waivers. This is in addition to regularly scheduled respite weekends at ARC @Camp Baker in Chesterfield for children and adults.

Providing respite at both ARC locations is in response to requests by families. Upcoming Saturday field trips include “A Day at the Zoo” on November 24, with participants traveling to the Richmond Metro Zoo to see giraffes, penguins, and pygmy hippos.

In addition, ARC @Saunders respite will host an “Outdoor Movie Night” on Thursday, October 18 from 5 to 8 p.m. Participants are invited to come as their favorite movie character and walk the red carpet. (Paparazzi included.) The cost is $53.42 of equivalent in waivers.

For more information about ARC respite and its intake process, contact Brian Parson at (804) 665-1228 or Meredith Clark at (804) 748-4789.
Both programs are similar in their person-centered care plans, with specific goals for each individual’s skill development, personal health and fitness, hygiene, independent living skills, recreation, community engagement outings, and volunteer opportunities.

The difference between the two programs is in regulations and funding. Adult Day Support is licensed by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and Adult Day Health by the Department of Social Services.

“We are grateful to our donors for their support, and proud of our progress in providing programs and services at our new Staples Mill location,” said John Walker, ARC’s president and CEO.

ARC @Staples Mill is currently accepting new clients. For more information, contact intake specialist Kris Smith at Kris.Smith@richmondarc.org or call (804) 665-1283.

ARC @Staples Mill is growing

ARC @Staples Mill has touched the lives of many families in need of Adult Day Support since opening earlier this year at the former A Grace Place location.

Linda Adams, mother of 22-year-old Justin, who has autism, says it best:

“When A Grace Place closed, our family was heartbroken. It is extremely difficult to get quality adult care with trustworthy individuals, especially for someone like Justin who is nonverbal and cannot tell us if he is being mistreated. I looked for over a month, but none stood up to the level of care I would expect for my child. I put Justin on the waiting list for ARC at Saunders Avenue.

Then the most unexpected and wonderful thing happened. I will never forget the day I received the phone call to ask if we would like to be considered for an opening at ARC at Staples Mill. Justin was one of the first adults served on opening day. He transitioned as if nothing had happened. The building was restored and refreshed, and the staff who greeted us made us feel right at home.”

As of September 21, 2018, Adult Day Support has 39 program participants, with more joining nearly every week. In addition, Adult Day Health opened at ARC @Staples Mill on September 4, with four clients enrolled and another 22 in the pipeline for services; five of which are seeking enrollment in the Adult Day Health Memory Unit for those with dementia and Alzheimer’s.

More than thirty guests gathered at ARC @Staples Mill on Thursday, September 20 to celebrate the generous donors that made the project possible and ensured families in Henrico would not go without care for their loved ones with disabilities. The evening included tours of the newly renovated facility, during which guests received information from various program coordinators and practitioners and words of thanks from John Walker, President and CEO of Greater Richmond ARC, and Linda Adams, whose son Justin previously attended A Grace Place and was overjoyed to return to ARC @Staples Mill.

(L-R): Linda Adams spoke about the importance of ARC @ Staples Mill at the reception whose attendees included ARC’s Director of Day Services Monique Davis and Director of Case Management Operations Kim Jones.

Other attendees included Henrico County’s Community Support Services Division Director Michelle Johnson (left) and Executive Director of Mental Health and Developmental Services Laura Totty (center) with Greater Richmond ARC President and CEO John Walker.
Books Bring Joy All Year Round

As the holidays approach, ARC’s Infant & Child Development Services (ICDS) is sponsoring a 2018 Holiday Book Drive for children ages birth through school age. The deadline is December 1. Board books for children ages birth to 3 years with high contrast, texture, and sound are especially welcome. About 25% of ICDS children are elementary and middle school age. Fifteen percent are Spanish-speaking.

Here’s how to help:

◆ You can purchase a NEW and UNWRAPPED book and deliver it to the box in the lobby at the ARC Center. Please let us do the wrapping so we can match your book with the right child.

◆ You can make a monetary contribution and give it to LeAnne Kemp in ICDS. We will shop on your behalf and buy age appropriate books.

Thank you for considering the gift of a book to bring joy to a child!