

FOUNDATION OF THE ARC/MORRIS

Touchstones

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS

Best Friend
Geoff McGrane

Bill Sackter Award
Gary Genovas



The Bill Sackter Award is given to an individual who has become an integrated, achieving member of his or her community and has overcome adversity to accomplish beyond the expectations placed on them. Our Best Friend Award is given to an individual or group that has stepped forward to support the mission of The Arc—the care, support and advancement of people with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities.

In early 2014, Geoff McGrane sent an email to Special Olympics stating that he had a request that might be a little unusual. He was looking to compete in a marathon while pushing a person with disabilities in a wheelchair, like the now famous Dick Hoyt did for many years with his son, Rick. Special Olympics referred Mr. McGrane to us and after a careful vetting process, it became quite apparent that Gary Genovas, a resident of the Ketch Road Apartments could be a great running mate—adventurous, enthusiastic and as many who know him would admit—fearless!

Needless to say, when approached about the possibility, Gary made it real clear that he was up to the job and wanted to immediately meet this guy. But it was also obvious that we were entering new territory and had a whole lot of work to do, especially in the area of medical clearances and liability.

But with the assistance of Geoff, Gary's family; Debbie Bunk, the Manager at Gary's Apartment Program, and a number of others behind the scenes, everything started to fall into place. A special racing chair needed to be built for Gary, so Geoff fully arranged for all of the specifics, while he began working out with a similar type chair. When the completed chair arrived, Geoff and Gary began to train.

On October 12, 2014, Geoff and Gary ran in the Steamtown Marathon in Scranton, Pennsylvania. With Gary's family and Arc/Morris staff there to

cheer them on, Geoff and Gary finished the race in 3 hours, 1 minute and 1 second.

The significance of that time was that it allowed them to qualify for what Geoff was ultimately aiming for—the Boston Marathon. So once again, the work began on the many logistics, and ultimately, Gary and Geoff made the trip to Boston and, on April 20, competed in the Boston Marathon.

However, they didn't just compete, they finished first in their division! But beyond this incredible accomplishment, a partnership and a friendship between two truly remarkable men was further strengthened.

Gary Genovas was one of the original residents of the Ketch Road Supervised Apartments when they opened back in 1993. Despite medical challenges, Gary refuses to be inactive, thoroughly enjoying time out of his wheelchair and loving everything about sports—including competing himself. Active in Special Olympics, he is an avid bowler and won a Silver Medal last March at the state games. He also keeps a boxing dummy in his apartment and regular works out to stay in shape—it's quite a site to watch him taking care of business on the poor thing when you visit Gary!

But what really makes him stand out is his attitude and outlook on life. Gary is one of the most positive people you will ever meet and you can't help but know that he truly embodies the spirit behind the Bill Sackter Award.

And if Gary has a kindred spirit, it is Geoff McGrane.

A Randolph High graduate, Jeff received his undergraduate degree from NYU in economics and is currently pursuing a Master's degree. As you would expect, he is, and has been, an avid runner for years. But what obviously sets him apart is his passion to participate in something as challenging as long distance running—and doing so by partnering with an individual who shares that passion for competition, but would otherwise never be able to compete.



Above: Gary and Geoff on race day
Above, right: Left to right, Geoff McGrane, Bill Testa, Gail Paradise. Center, Gary Genovas

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After more than three decades of being part of our annual awards event, I have seen hundreds of very worthy organizations, groups and individuals recognized for their commitment to our mission—the care, support and advancement of people with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities.

To say that this year's group of award winners were on par would be an understatement. They truly make up one of the most remarkable groups we have ever recognized.

As the professional of the year humbly accepted his recognition for a career that spanned 30 years, the audience was clearly taken aback by his heartfelt appreciation for the role others played in his success. Moments later, a family that carried on a tradition begun by their mother was recognized with the very same award she had won 23 years earlier.

And then, what we knew would be a show stopper, the combined presentation of Best Friend and Bill Sackter, nearly brought the house down. Truly exemplifying the finest of what can and should happen in our work, two incredible men came together to partner in a way neither ever dreamed of—and forged a remarkable friendship along the way.

Not missing a beat, a long standing program to increase understanding of the wonderful opportunities of community living was recognized for the countless lives they have helped enrich by returning people to communities and neighborhoods they left years earlier. Following this inspirational award was the recognition of a remarkable group of committed volunteers making up one of the strongest Special Olympics areas in the state.

And we were just reaching our stride!

A middle school teacher in Chester, who had actually attended the very school she now teaches in, was heralded for accomplishments unimaginable. Joined by one of her students, there were few in the room who were not moved by the obvious impact she has had on so many young people. And following our Teacher of the Year, from the impressive group recognized earlier, came recognition of the leader of that group with the coveted Volunteer of the Year.

And culminating an evening that just seemed to get better with every presentation was the highest honor bestowed by The Arc/Morris. Acknowledged for contributing in virtually every imaginable way—professional, parent, advocate and board member—this year's recipient of the Distinguished Service Award brought us all back to a time, when as just a child, her questioning what was acceptable behavior was just not tolerated. Fortunately, because of her and so many of the others recognized this year, we were all reminded of the progress we have made over the last 60 years.

BILL TESTA

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS



Reverend Wendy Abrahamson and Wendy Utberg

Distinguished Service Award

Wendy Abrahamson

Abrahamson began her professional career with the Sussex County Arc, rising to eventually serve as Director of the chapter's Residential Services Department. She then left SCARC to serve as Executive Director of Skylands, a Sussex County non-profit serving people with autism.

Around this time, her youngest son was diagnosed with a developmental disability and entered the Early Intervention system. This only solidified her commitment, by providing a very direct experience of the system that only deepened an already significant sense of advocacy for individuals and families with special needs.

After several years, a longing that almost seemed inevitable was fulfilled when she left developmental disabilities to begin preparing for the ministry, a calling no doubt a result of being the daughter of a Lutheran Minister herself. While attending Gettysburg College and simultaneously raising her two sons, she found the time to maintain contact in the field and ironically was assigned to the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Florham Park—the long time site of our Personally Fit McARP program!

Not long after settling in Morris County, she joined the Board of Directors, beginning her term in 2004. Following the election of long time Treasurer Jim Gallagher to the Presidency in 2012, she assumed responsibility in that position and has been able to effectively fill the shoes of a long line of very competent players in that important Treasurer office.

Despite a very hectic and demanding schedule, Wendy has given an incredible amount of time and expertise to the board, representing just the latest chapter of a lifetime of service.

Distinguished Community Service Award

Special Olympics Area 3 Committee

The Special Olympics Area 3 Committee is one of 13 "areas" across New Jersey, and covers Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties. While many people are under the impression that the Special Olympics leadership consists of paid staff, that is not the case. In addition to the many fantastic volunteer coaches, chaperones and event day volunteers, the Area Committee/Management Team is also comprised solely of volunteers.

Eighteen talented, dedicated and truly remarkable volunteers make up the Area 3 Committee. With three volunteers having served for over 30 years, the total experience of this group of people totals 279 years of volunteering!

In addition to a broad array of annual events, the Area 3 Committee handles a tremendous amount of the "behind the scenes" work, from completing mounds of paperwork, purchasing tons of materials necessary for the actual events, handling the public speaking—and doing the fundraising.

But in the end, every one of these 18 volunteers, families and professionals know that it is worth the effort for one reason—the 460 Area 3 athletes, whose lives are so enriched as a result of the work of this close knit group of extraordinary people!



Frank Shapiro and Wally Bender

Media Excellence

Community Living Education Project

The Media Excellence Award recognizes outstanding efforts to create better understanding of intellectual and related developmental disabilities and their families. This year, we were honored to recognize the Community Living Education Project, a program of the Rutgers University School of Public Health.

Commonly referred to as "CLEP", the program began in 1991 as part of New Jersey's Olmstead Plan to reduce the number of individuals residing in state institutions. Its role has been to educate families about community living and it has done so for hundreds of individuals, families and staff so that they can make informed decisions concerning pursuing community living.

Among a number of activities, events and media efforts they engage in is their annual publication entitled My Life Now. Featuring stories of individuals who have successfully returned to the community, they provide real life examples of the journey of both the individual with Intellectual Disability, as well as their family.



Dr. David Wright and Tom Baffuto

In November, 2013, one such story told of the successful transition of one of the many consumers The Arc/Morris has served from New Jersey's Developmental Centers. Like many, she has thrived upon returning to the community, thanks in part, to this year's Media

Parent Guardian Award The Waradzyn Family

Back in 1992 The Arc/Morris Chapter created a special Parent Guardian Award to recognize a remarkable individual fulfilling that important role. One such family member, Dorothy Waradzyn, was the first to be recognized. Always there for her son, Joseph, she was also there to help other individuals whenever she could, personifying all of the best in an "Arc parent".

Fast forward 23 years and you can see that Dot passed those same wonderful traits on to her children—all five of them—Joan, Mike, Jim, Cathy and Junior! While she passed away just a year after Joe moved into his new home in Hanover, his supportive and dedicated family continued to be by his side.

Joan, Cathy and Jim serve as Joe's guardians. They support Joe and are involved in all aspects of his life. Joan and Cathy live in Texas but still keep up and see Joe whenever they can. Jim and Junior visit Joe almost every single Sunday, without fail.

Joe went through some serious health problems back in 2010, and we believe what got him through was this incredibly supportive and dedicated group of siblings—his family.



Joseph and Junior Waradzyn

Teacher of the Year Jennifer Yeager

A Special Education Teacher at the Black River Middle School, Jennifer Yeager exemplifies all of the qualities of a great teacher—creativity, high standards, determination and a love for what she does.

Despite teaching students with significant challenges, they all make substantial progress, both academically and socially. Her savvy use of technology and the most up to date teaching techniques bring out the best in her students. A commitment to her student's acquiring real life skills is evidenced in the amount of firsthand community experiences that she insures take place for every one of her kids.

Jennifer created the Abilities Awareness Club to educate students about disabilities, the Pal Project to support nearly 60 students to volunteer in her classroom and at the same time, Jennifer has become an active participant in the Chester Community through a 5k Run for Downs Syndrome and a host of other activities. In her spare time she coaches field hockey and cheer leading and serves on countless committees within the district.

Beyond the classroom, Jennifer's resume is equally impressive—and exhausting!



Katherine Cascioli and Jennifer Yeager

Professional of the Year Mark Stephenson



James Gallagher and Mark Stephenson

While it is not uncommon for a professional in human services to have a career span 30 years, it is far less common to have that career be as distinguished as Mark Stephenson's.

Mark has truly excelled in the field of vocational rehabilitation, and for the last 18 of those years, at Employment Horizons in Morris County.

While the Morris County agency does not exclusively serve people with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities, they are a significant portion of their service recipients. Mark develops, directs, and coordinates facility and community-based vocational and rehabilitation services through the management and supervision of the professional and job placement staff.

Among the many achievements in his outstanding career, Mark was a leading player on a quality assurance committee organized to conduct annual conferences in cooperation with the Division of Developmental Disabilities back in the 1990's. It was there that he made such a strong impression on his fellow Developmental Disability professionals.

Mark's hard work, outstanding attitude and utmost professionalism impresses everyone who has contact with him. Incredibly respected in the voc rehab field, more recently, Mark emerged as one of the leading advocates to address problems surrounding the sub-minimum wage issue last year—and led the way to resolve that huge statewide problem in New Jersey Workshops.

Volunteer of the Year Betty Lunn

After awarding this year's Distinguished Community Service Award, it is only fitting that one of the 18 incredible people who are part of that group would emerge as our 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award winner. And sure enough, one did—her name is Betty Lunn.

Betty not only serves as Director of the Special Olympics Area 3 Committee, but has been an active member of the group for over 30 years. Without reiterating what that amazing group has done, suffice it to say that Betty has done even more—being at the helm of that fantastic group of individuals.

In June of 2014, New Jersey was preparing to host the Special Olympics USA Games. Over 3,500 athletes from across the country descended on our state for an unforgettable couple of days. There is no way that the three athletes who were chosen from our area to compete would have done so if it wasn't for Betty's work.

This year's Volunteer of the Year was also behind the major donation from Novartis that was earmarked for our Recreation Program back in 2012. It was Betty's prodding that put The Arc/Morris on the radar screen, leading to the decision to have us as the beneficiary of the organization's Annual Tricky Tray to benefit a local charity. Her fundraising didn't stop with Area 3!

Car Donation Program

We are pleased to remind members and friends of The Arc/Morris that we have partnered with the Charity Car Donation Center to operate and manage our car donation program. Since the program started, we have received many generous donations of vehicles to support our programs and services. We are happy to accept donations of your used cars, vans or trucks, all of which are tax deductible.

Call 1-877-ARC-CAR0

Matching Gifts

Your donation to The Arc/Morris can be matched if your company participates in a Matching Gift Program. Check with your Human Resources Department to see if your donation qualifies for a matching gift.

Memorial Donations

Honor the memory of a loved one with a donation to The Arc/Morris. Please remember us in your wills and trusts.

United Way Contributors

If your company participates in the United Way, please designate your gift for The Arc/Morris. Our agency identified number of 003864 must be included as well as our address of P.O. Box 123, Morris Plains, NJ 07950. Thanks to our many supporters for their continued participation.

Online Donations

You can make online donations now through PayPal on our website (www.arcmorris.org). Just click the Donate Now tab under the How to Help section.

AmazonSmile Program

What is AmazonSmile? AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support The Arc/Morris every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to The Arc/Morris. On your first visit to AmazonSmile, select The Arc/Morris to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Go to Smile.Amazon.com and sign up today!



Tom Horn and Betty Lunn

For more information, please contact the Development Office at (973) 326-9750, Ext. 211.

Annual Meeting

On May 20, 2015, The Arc/Morris held its Annual Meeting at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum's Haggerty Education Center. The following were elected to serve as officers for 2015-2016:

President: Gwendolyn Utberg
1st Vice President: Katherine Cascioli
2nd Vice President: Barry E. Levine
Treasurer: Wendy Abrahamson
Secretary: Thomas Horn
Immediate Past President: James F. Gallagher

Board members for 2015-2016 include: Alan Adler, Peter Babits, Michael Basile, Walter Bender, Irene Hansen, Kathleen Hyland, Kathleen Ingargiola, Lawrence McEntee, Jr., and Philip Sheehy.

Foundation Focus

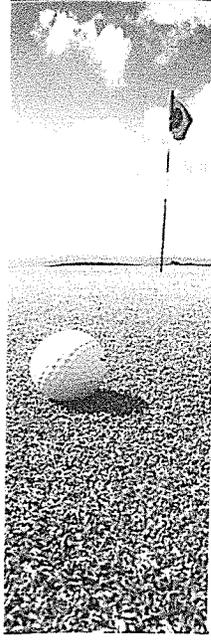
27th Annual Golf Outing

The 27th Annual Golf Outing was held on June 11 at the Black Bear Golf Club in Franklin, NJ. The event welcomed over 100 golfers and volunteers and raised over \$32,000 for the programs and services The Arc/Morris provides. We wish to thank the following sponsors for their generosity:

ASCO
The Norman and Bettina Roberts Foundation
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Gary and Sue Marcello
McIntee Fusaro DelCorral, LLC
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The Mountain Lakes Women's Club
The Testa Family
Sack's Shell
The Misko Family
The Arc/Morris Directors
XL RE

And a big thank you to our Booster Club and our many door prize and silent auction donors! Hopefully, we will see you next year!



Touchstone

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The Arc/Morris,

please write us at:

P.O. Box 123,

Morris Plains, NJ 07950,

call us at (973) 970-9326,

Ext. 326, or find us on the

web at www.arcmorris.org

12th Annual Walk

The 12th Annual Walk will be held this year on September 20, 2015 at the Central Park of Morris County with registration at the F.M. Kirby Administrative Center. Visit www.arcmorris.org for more information or call (973) 326-9750, Ext. 211.



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