

HART HAPPENINGS

4th Edition Spring 2007

Newest Addition to our Family of Group Homes



Woods Circle Group Home



Steven Z., Steven R., and Chris R.

LaShun Duggan,
Facility Coordinator for Columbia House & Woods Circle

In October 2006, HART United, Inc. opened another group home in the Waterbury area, Woods Circle, which houses four gentlemen. Three of the four men transferred from Columbia House to Woods Circle Group Home.

All the men were excited about the move, especially Steven R. He has created lasting friendships with his housemates and staff. Steven feels the move is like a dream come true for him because being able to have his own private room with bath is like having his own apartment. Steven goes on to say that the move to Woods Circle has made him feel closer to the independence he so desires. He enjoys the added space and loves the surroundings of his new home with the occasional visits from deer that eat from the bird feeder in his backyard. Steven R. has since participated in Special Olympics along with his housemate, Steven Z., in bowling and has demonstrated his competitive side.

In October of 2006, we welcomed Christopher to the HART family and what a welcomed addition he is! Christopher enjoys going out for ice cream, going to the movies, shooting hoops and being helpful.

In January of 2007, we also welcomed Richard, or "Rusty", as he likes to be called. Rusty, Matt, and the ladies at Columbia Boulevard Group Home are enjoying the new-found peace and quiet of fewer house mates while still getting to partake in many recreational and leisure

activities with their neighbors at Woods Circle Group Home.

This past year has been a busy one as we have attended NBA games, trips to the casino, weekend camping, and concerts on the green in New Haven and Southington. We also saw several theatrical productions.

Both Columbia and Woods circle are great houses with a SUPER group of guys and gals and supportive staff who are willing to go that extra mile. The men are looking forward to attending more NBA games, camping, Special Olympics, parties, theatrical productions, concerts, and MLB games.



We are pleased to announce our new name and logo.

HART United, Inc.

Service & Respect for People with Disabilities

A PARENT'S NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Annmarie McConville



Shortly after moving to Connecticut from New York, my son, Donald, age three, was diagnosed with autism. When he was eleven I was divorced. Life at home centered around Donald and the structured environment he needed. And because of his behavior in public, our life was “at home”. It was just easier to avoid outside activities.

Donald attended Foundation School from age three to 13 and graduated from ACES at 21. He spent summers and Saturday afternoons at Camp Rainbow and later became involved in Special Olympics. Still, most of his life was spent “at home” pacing, uninvolved, frustrated and purposeless. There were locks on doors and windows to keep him safe and from wandering off.

His sister, Nancy, also had to learn Donald was the priority. We rarely attended events she was involved in. (I remember sitting in the car with Donald when she played softball.) It was hard for her when friends made comments or fun of him, as it would be for any child. I am glad to see more attention is being paid now to the siblings of special needs children because it is so difficult for them.

The older he got, the harder it got. It is impossible to get a babysitter for a difficult 16 year old. DMR was able to find before/after-work daycare, so I could continue to work. And, that was what life came down to. It was a very sad situation for all of us with no light at the end of the tunnel.

That all changed when Donald was accepted into Lawrence Hall.

There was never any “separation anxiety” because I knew HART was the gold standard for group homes and it was wonderful to see how happy Donald was to be moving into

Lawrence Hall. On his moving-in day, he was actually shoving me out the door to make sure I was not taking him back with me. I love to hear him say he wants to go “home” (Lawrence Hall).

Donald is not the easiest person to deal with, but the staff at Lawrence Hall always look for the positive in him and are there to guide him in the right direction. He was given the chance to grow to his fullest potential, even beyond my expectations. He learned to do his laundry/chores, take care of his needs, participate in preparing meals, and even to use the telephone. He goes shopping, to movies, ball games, dances, parties and walks. This is, of course, made possible by the quality of people who work at Lawrence Hall and HART.

After almost 14 years I still can't believe how lucky Donald and I are. I hope HART really knows all they have done for all of us. Donald now has a full and complete life and a second family. I have my life back and enjoy every minute. I also volunteer at St. Raphael's, am a member of the Hamden Woman's Club and the Town of Hamden Disabilities Committee.

Donald and I are just one story. HART should be very proud of the work they do and the incredible impact they have on the lives of others.

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Donald and his sister Nancy

Human Resources Department

Julie Zalegowski, H.R. Director

2006 was a fabulous year for the Human Resources Department at HART United, Inc. Each quarter the agency recognized employees for striving towards excellence in their jobs. Achieving these goals was no easy task. It took dedication, commitment, follow through, and a lot of hard work. We recognized employees for having no medication

errors in the first quarter, no “call outs” in the second quarter, perfect staff meeting attendance in the third quarter, and 90% team documentation in the fourth quarter.

I would like to congratulate over 100 employees who won one or more of these initiatives! Keep up the great work and let's continue to strive for excellence in 2007!

DIRECT TALK

Diane R. Tanenbaum,
Executive Director

We welcomed in the New Year with an exciting name change and logo. HART United, Inc. embraces the agency's mission and philosophy of inclusion and unity for all of the individuals we support throughout Connecticut. As you read about the individuals and view the many photographs and stories displayed in this newsletter, I hope you feel pride in the support and loyalty that you have shown to our agency over the years.

The opening of a new group home in Waterbury, which supports four adult men, has been a major accomplishment. Two of the four men had been on the DMR emergency waiting list indicating that their families were in urgent need of support services. As things have settled in, the men have individualized and created a beautiful home with each



Diane Tanenbaum,
Executive Director

person having his own bedroom. Recreational and community outings have been an on-going source of enjoyment for the men. The city provides many favorable places for shopping, theatre, bowling, restaurants and unique opportunities to access community resources. Welcome to all the family members of the Woods Circle Group Home!

The development of a new program to provide services to individuals with ABI (Acquired Brain Injury) is progressing according to the expected timeframe. A specialized training program for prospective employees and families seeking our services is expected to open this coming spring.

It has been a successful year for

HBCC, HART Behavioral Center for Change. The Center presents seminars, workshops, training and dynamic presentations to employees of human service agencies in a variety of settings. The training is geared for residential directors, managers, vocational coaches, social workers, youth coordinators and other professionals that seek training. Some of the training topics this year included "An Introduction to Applied Behavioral Analysis", "Challenging Behaviors in the School System", "De-escalating Techniques", and "Writing Behavioral Programs". A unique feature of the program is that the HBCC team of behavioral specialists will come to your setting or home and design a training session.

The major accomplishments from this past year would not have been possible without the dedication and loyalty of the HART employees and vision of our Board of Directors. The dreams and potential for the individuals we serve is what inspires our "United" team.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

HART United, Inc. would like to congratulate the following employees for their dedication and many years of loyal service.

20 Years or more

Linda Clark
George Fappiano
Aline Galat
Richard Morton
Diane Tanenbaum

15 – 20 Years

Barbara Joyner

10 – 15 Years

Jane Dugan-Yantosca
Donnelle Fidalgo
Rsheemah Gregg
Anne Kane
Terry King
Elaine O'Connor
Karen O'Connor
Claire Pilon
Stephanie Sessions
Audra Spina
Janette Todd

5 – 10 Years

Debra Adams
Susan Allen
Susan Battaglino
Dawn Boyette-Langley
Deborah Brown
Margaret Burney
Delores Byrd
Andrew Champion
Carol Condo
Donna Darcy
Barbara Dupuis

William Gause
Eva Green
Donna Howard
Tanya Johnson
Charlaine Julien
Carrol Moyer
Joseph Papa
Ariane Racow
Mary Ann Sola
Susan Tandler
David Velardi

**We can do no great things –
Only small things with great love.**

Mother Teresa

Lawrence Hall

Susan Battaglini, Residential Supervisor

There has been another exciting year for Lawrence Hall. We spent 3 days and 2 nights on a trip to Camp Harkness. The fellows enjoyed taking a walk on the beach, as well as seeing all the farm animals that were at the camp. There was friendly competition and a lot of fun in the game room at the pool table where the guys beat the staff two games. We had a great time and plan on returning in September 2007.

October was a busy month as we were invited to a Halloween party. It took the entire month for the men to get ready for the big event. They went shopping for just the right costumes to wear. Prizes were awarded for musical, funniest, most original and best homemade costume. Some of the guys decided to make their own and, as you can see, they won most of the prizes.

All of the residents at Lawrence Hall are always ready to try new activities and continue to grow and learn every day.



Camp Harkness:

1. Allan, Louis, David, Donald, Eliot, Chris
2. Louis & David Walking on the Beach 3. Eliot Shooting Pool



Halloween 2006

4. Off to the Party: Batman - Chris, Tinman - Donald, Scarecrow - Louis
5. Best Costume - Allan 6. Cutest & Funniest - David

CTH program

Deb Roberts, CTH Coordinator

The Community Training Home Program is a unique program that gives individuals with developmental disabilities the opportunity to live in a home where they have the stability of a family setting.

We have had three new DMR case managers join our team. In the next year along with DMR, we hope to expand the program and recruit qualified candidates to be trained and licensed by the State of Connecticut under the Community Training Home regulations.

There are many individuals with developmental disabilities in Connecticut who would benefit from living with a family in the community. If anyone is interested in finding out more information

on how to become a CTH provider, you can contact me at the HART Office.

I would like to feature a consumer who has lived in a Community Training Home with the Powers family for 28 years. Jamie and his provider, Tim Powers, have a great relationship. He has become an important part of the Powers family. Jamie has always dreamed of traveling to Graceland to visit Elvis' home. This year that dream came true. In October, with SPROUT, Jamie was able to travel to Graceland and fulfill his dream. He had a great time and bought several souvenirs and took many pictures. Jamie had such a great time that he is saving his money and planning another trip with SPROUT in the coming year.



Jamie fulfilling his dream in Graceland

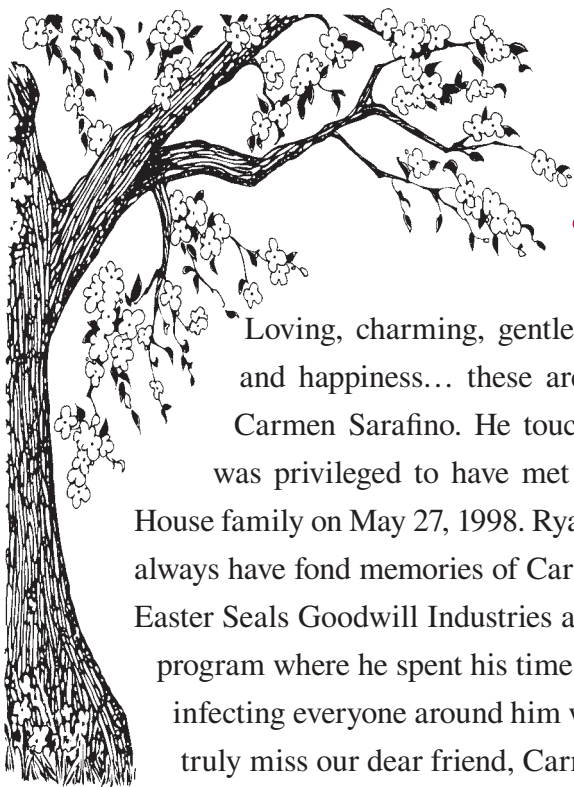
Susan Allen & Barbara Brandon, Area Residential Directors

Have been reminded over the last several months that many of our individuals have challenges for us to meet. These challenges allow staff, the management team and the two Area Residential Directors (Susan Allen and Barbara Brandon) opportunities to grow, learn and take pride in our accomplishments. Our management team receives and provides training to staff, so that we can all better meet the challenges that come our way on a regular basis.

Being a member of our team means that we treat the individuals we serve with respect and dignity. We also listen to both the struggles and the successes that take place in our residents' lives on a daily basis.

As Area Residential Directors we are clearly striving to refine and improve our service delivery system. Through teamwork, collaboration, and the sharing of resources, our job is to provide those support services that will enhance the lives of the individuals we serve. To truly enhance the lives of our residents is an extremely large and important job and HART employees are just the staff members to take it on.

We are sure there are great things waiting for us all in 2007!



8/24/1931 – 6/8/2006

*In Loving
Memory of
Carmen Sarafino*

Loving, charming, gentleman, happy, social, full of joy and happiness... these are just a few words to describe Carmen Sarafino. He touched the lives of everyone who was privileged to have met him. Carmen joined the Ryan House family on May 27, 1998. Ryan House staff and residents will always have fond memories of Carmen. He was employed through Easter Seals Goodwill Industries and was a member of the SPICE program where he spent his time engaged in social activities and infecting everyone around him with his peaceful smile. We will truly miss our dear friend, Carmen.

MILFORD HOUSE NEWS

Carol Condo, Residential Supervisor

Everyone at Milford House is still going strong. John, Beth B., Dina, and Beth V. have all had another great year. Once again we went on our annual camping trip to Camp Harkness and had a wonderful time! Our camping family has grown since the first trip. All five cabins were filled with HART residents. The weekend started out with rainy weather, but that didn't stop us from having a great time. Our recreation was carefully planned with games, arts and crafts, and more games. In addition, Dina brought along her Karaoke machine and tunes were being belted out with gusto! It's hard to believe we actually got a lot of exercise with all the walking we did during our time there.

Thankfully, we did get to enjoy our campfire the second night. What kind of camping trip would it be without the campfire and those sticky s'mores to enjoy!

John and Craig celebrated their fiftieth birthdays this year. Many of their friends gathered together to celebrate this landmark birthday and a fun time was had by all.

All of Milford residents continue to hold a very busy social life playing bingo, making ceramics, participating in Special Olympics, swimming and much more. Life at Milford House is very fast-paced and we wouldn't have it any other way!

Come see us on the Internet.

At: www.hartinc.org

Email: info@hartinc.org

And tell your friends to visit us too!



Hearts to HART

Dinner Dance & Silent Auction
April 29, 2006
at New Haven Country Club



Kevin Kopetz, First Selectman North Haven was the keynote speaker.



A festive atmosphere surrounded the bidding.



While viewing the auction items, our guests enjoyed listening to a violin duo.



Board Members, Donna Levine, Pat McGalliard and Shirley Ryan discuss their bids.



Silent Auction Committee

Having a Fantastic Time at HART
Dinner Dance and Silent Auction

A Special Thank You to the HART Contributors....Your generosity and support are appreciated.

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Tom Meehan
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Merry Maids of Cheshire
MetLife Financial
Mohegan Sun
Kathy Mongillo
Steven Morrow
Murals by Helene
Napoli Deli
Netmartin Photography
New Haven Country Club
North Haven Health & Racquet
Tom & Carol Ort
Paul & Sharon Palanzo
Richard & Linda Parlato
People's Bank
Personal Touch Landscape
Plumb Farms Nursery & Flowers
Prime Pay
Jessica Otlowski/Pampered Chef
Quiznos Sub
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Uncle Louie G
Unger's Flooring America
University of Connecticut
Value Health Care (Omni H.C. of CT)
Tony Vessicchio
Viny's Showplace
Walker Systems Support
Wal-Mart
Webster Bank
Rich Wilson
Yankee Clock Peddler

The Wonderful World of "The SLA's"

Tanya Johnson, SLA Coordinator

"Count Your Blessings"! Well, I would like to count it an honor, joy and a privilege to run one of HART's largest programs - The Supported Living Apartments and In-Home Family, better known as "The SLA's".

When I became Coordinator in March 2006, there were ten SLA's which included one 24-hour SLA and one In-Home Family Support Program. Now there are eleven SLA's and three In-Home Family Support Programs, and by March 2007 we hope to have up and running our second 24-hour SLA.

Currently, there are 23 fun-loving and exciting residents in the SLA program. In the year of 2006, we welcomed aboard Marisa G. (who loves Elvis), Cheryl R. (who enjoys going on many recreational

outings), and Claudine T (who never forgets a face or name and has a smile that lights up a room). All of the SLA residents live full and wonderful lives. They work hard to be able to pay their

All of the SLA residents live full and wonderful lives.

billing. They all like to participate in various recreational activities and go on vacation. We even have some residents who take cruises. The SLA residents gather together weekly in one of the apartments at Stony Brook to participate in bingo, arts and crafts, etc.

We must mention that none of

this would be possible without the 25 extremely dedicated, loyal, and flexible staff and substitutes; for which I am very grateful. This program also has an awesome Area Director, Barbara Brandon, and trusted Administrative Assistant, Susan Burlingame (who helps most of the residents with their bill paying). Because this program is steadily growing, we have added a new SLA Assistant, Alicia Arnold, who goes out into the field when needed. She has already proven to be a wonderful and much needed asset to the program.

As you can see, there are many wonderful happenings taking place in the "SLA World". We will continue to count our blessings as this program continues to grow!

Condo News

Linda Macy, Residential Supervisor Condo's 57 & 69

The residents at the Condo's are always out and about. One of the special trips that they went on was a trip to New York City. The excited bunch left at 5:00 a.m. to attend the "Today Show"

After attending the "Today Show" the group went on the "Dr. Keith Ablow Show".

No trip would be complete without going to Rockefeller Plaza enjoying the ice skaters and the Christmas tree, shopping on 5th Avenue and enjoying the many delicious treats NYC has to offer.

Everyone had a wonderful time and would like to make this trip an annual event.



First Row - L to R - Chrissie, Nick, Margaret & Jose (staff)
2nd Row Jennifer, Michelle & Latasha (staff)

Ryan House

Jennifer Grasso-Torlish, Residential Supervisor

First and foremost, we want to welcome a new addition to Ryan House, Enrique Ortiz. Enrique has brought much enthusiasm and laughter to our group home.

Ryan House hosted its First Annual Valentine's Day Party. Laurie assisted making Valentine's Day decorations. Wendy, Enrique, Andrew and Frances assisted with the shopping. All the residents worked well together to make the party a huge success.

Residents will be hosting a monthly bingo night at Ryan House. We are very eager about this recreational activity and hope to start in March. Also, we will be hosting a monthly "Happy Hour Penny Bingo Night". Andrew will be hosting this event with the support of all the residents and staff.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



DAMARIS GARCIA was born in Puerto Rico and moved to the U.S. at the age of five. She lived most of her childhood years in Pennsylvania, and when she became a teenager, her parents moved to Connecticut. Damaris's parents are ministers and she has eight siblings.

Damaris has four children ages 16, 11, and 2-year old twins.

Damaris began her financial career in banking at the age of 21. As banks changed names, Damaris moved through many mergers and continued moving along and growing in the banking industry. Today Damaris works for Citizens Bank, one of the largest banks in the world, as a Vice President and Manager.

A few words from Damaris: It has been a pleasure for me to serve on the board of several non-profit organizations, one being Marrakech. As a minister's daughter, I learned to appreciate the small things in life, to help make small differences to those that might need a bit of a helping hand, and to appreciate those small differences between human beings. Today, it pleases me to be part of the HART United Board which is comprised of wonderful people that truly want the best for all.

NAN HOLLOMAN is a 2004 graduate of the Quinnipiac University School of Law, where she received awards for both Superior Classroom Performance and Distinguished Academic Achievement in Legislation. She also took part in the University's



Civil Law Clinic where she defended race and disability based housing discrimination matters. Nan worked in the Office of the CT Attorney General as a legislative intern where she researched and briefed a variety of legal issues involving proposed legislation as well as a variety of inquiries from members of the public requesting legal advice or action from the Attorney General.

Nan is a volunteer with Friends of the New Haven Animal Shelter, Inc. where she has been active in caring for the animals, fundraising, adoption, and various committee work including one year on it's executive committee as recording secretary. She is employed by the Rockville Superior Court, Judicial District of Tolland clerking Habeas matters for Judges Patricia Swords and Stanley Fuger.

Damaris and Nan both have the qualifications and integrity that HART seeks in the selection of board members.

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HART HAPPENINGS

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