

# Dutchess ARC's 2008 Annual Appeal

## Meet Zemar,

a member of the Dutchess ARC family and a person with an inspirational story. Over the past five years, she has transformed her life by utilizing services from the Dutchess ARC Medicaid Service Coordination (MSC) department.



Zemar has defied the odds against her and with great determination, has achieved major milestones.

In 1976, doctors deemed Zemar a stillborn child when a heartbeat was not found during labor. What was detectable was her immense will to live, and she shocked doctors

around her when she survived her own birth. Zemar was diagnosed with Arterial Septal Defect (ASD) and Valvar Pulmonary Stenosis, which created a hole in her heart.

Zemar was also lacking a thyroid gland, which created developmental obstacles coupled with physical swelling, making it difficult for Zemar to perform daily tasks for herself.

Zemar's condition made it impossible for her to continue

attending school past the seventh grade, leaving her with little options for entertainment or social interaction. She began to feel burdensome to her family and often confined herself to her bedroom. Zemar's heart condition was an emotional struggle for family members and her mother constantly monitored her, living in fear that the day would arrive when she would not awake from a nap or night's rest. Relief was offered in 2000, when doctors were successful in repairing the tear in her heart via open-heart surgery.

In 2003, Zemar began working with Dutchess ARC's MSC department, setting a personal goal of living on her own. Residential-habilitation services provided support to Zemar as she learned to cook, manage a budget, monitor her medications and develop her independence.

More milestones followed, as Zemar received her General Equivalency Diploma and was placed in her own apartment through Dutchess ARC. The seemingly insurmountable task of obtaining a driver's license was achieved more recently, aiding in the transition to an independent lifestyle. She is currently majoring in Graphic Design at Dutchess Community College, and is involved in the school's Student Government Association. When she isn't spending time with her boyfriend, reading Agatha Christie novels, or writing poetry, Zemar is planning her future, aspiring to one day develop her own stationery business specializing in promotional marketing and special event materials.

"I can't pinpoint one person that has helped me," said Zemar, recalling her experiences with the agency. "It's Dutchess ARC as a whole that helped me, along with the support of my family." Zemar credits the MSC department at Dutchess ARC with helping her achieve her goals. She encourages the community to support the agency, stating, "Without Dutchess ARC there would be so many people [in a similar situation], that wouldn't be able to become independent. So many people need Dutchess ARC."

Describing each milestone as, "another step up the ladder," Zemar is one of many lives that have been directly impacted by services provided by Dutchess ARC. You have the ability to influence how far she, and others like her, can climb.

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Once again we are reaching out to our generous friends, neighbors and community members to ask for your continued support through a donation to Dutchess ARC. Your tax deductible gift will help us continue to provide the educational, residential, vocational and quality of life opportunities that have been the pillars of our service to the community since 1971.

Thank you for your continued support, and best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!



## A Message from the Executive Director & Board President

In 1971, a small group of parents came together to change the way that individuals with developmental disabilities were treated and provided with crucial services in Dutchess County.

While we do our work in a quiet, unassuming and often imperceptible way, we all take the daily work required to achieve it, very seriously. We are gratified that we have been able to assist thousands of individuals and families like Zemar's in leading productive, fulfilling lives.

As with most not for profit organizations, funding from state and federal sources is shrinking, while the costs of providing services and 'keeping the lights on' continue to rise. That's why we turn to you, the private sector – our friends and supporters – to continue our work to serve the families of these individuals.

Clearly, there are many not-for-profit agencies in Dutchess County performing many vital services

for its citizens. However, we're proud of our record of achievement and efficiency, and of the fact that almost 91 cents of every dollar we receive is invested in our programs.

And so we are asking you to remember Dutchess ARC and the families we serve when you make your charitable contributions this year. Please help us with as generous a tax deductible annual gift as you are able, so that we may continue to provide services with the compassion and respect that has been the hallmark of our existence.

Thank you for your generosity!

Crys McCuin  
Executive Director

Ronald E. Cole  
Board President

## Advocacy ■ Respect ■ Community

Dutchess ARC started off 2008 by officially removing the 'r' word as a descriptor of our services. Formerly *Association for Retarded Citizens*, Dutchess ARC now stands for *Dutchess Advocacy, Respect, Community*, after the Board of Directors voted unanimously to change the name on January 17, 2008. The newly adopted acronym now offers an accurate description of the services we provide to the individuals that we serve.

**Advocacy** because we are relentless advocates for the people we serve and their families; **Respect** because people with disabilities want to

be respected more than anything; and **Community** because that is precisely where we belong.

These words were chosen specifically and carefully ...

*Advocacy ...*

because we are relentless advocates for the people we serve and their families.

*Respect ...*

because people with disabilities want to be respected more than anything.

*Community ...*

because that is precisely where we belong.

These words were chosen carefully and not only offer a more precise representation of who we are as an agency, but provide a clearer description of who we are to the community, the individuals we serve and our staff.

By taking action against the negative connotation and stereotypes associated with the 'r' word, we hope other agencies providing services to individuals with disabilities will follow suit, thus creating an increasingly typical trend in what we hope is a changing world.

# 2008 Highlights

## The Residential Revolution

Dutchess ARC is proud of the great strides 2008 brought the Residential Services department. In September, a new family officially moved into their new home, *Hillcrest* in Poughkeepsie, New York. The house is a residence for eight individuals and is designed to accommodate the changing needs those we serve face during the aging process. *Hillcrest* will offer an environment that safely supports their needs while maintaining their independence, allowing them to age with grace & dignity.

Additionally, Dutchess ARC completed renovations on our *North Avenue* residence in Salt Point, New York, and a new family was formed in October. 960 square feet of living space was added to the home, making *North Avenue* 100% handicap accessible. Designed with individuals with increased medical or physical needs in mind, *North Avenue* received three bedrooms, a new sitting room, a laundry room, and a full handicap accessible bathroom during the renovation process. A rear porch featuring a handicap accessible ramp was also installed.

Most importantly, Dutchess ARC is proud to be able to improve the quality of life for almost 20 individuals as a part of our 'right-sizing' initiative within the residential component of our agency. *Hillcrest* and *North Avenue* had a positive impact beyond the individuals that call these residences their home, due to the downsizing in other agency residences that occurred as a result.

## Exemplary Employment

October is *National Disability Employment Awareness Month*, and two business partners through the Dutchess ARC Employment Services department were honored for hiring and demonstrating that having individuals with developmental disabilities on staff has a positive effect on business.

In October, **MTM/CCRx Pharmacy** in Poughkeepsie, New York received one of four awards presented at The Egg in Albany from OMRDD (Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities) as a part of their *Works for Me* initiative. Additionally, **Rosicki, Rosicki & Associates, P.C.** in Fishkill, NY was honored with the Regional Mid-Hudson 2008 NDEAM award on October 22.

## Recreation and Teen Clubs

The Dutchess ARC Recreation and Teen Clubs offer adults and teens the opportunity to attend recreational outings, social events, and participate in volunteer initiatives and sports through Special Olympics New York. Recently the clubs collaborated, holding a food drive that collected over 12 boxes of nonperishable food items. These items were donated to food pantries in Dutchess County and supported community members in need during the holiday season.

Additionally, the Recreation Club participated in the Special Olympics New York Fall Games in Rochester, New York, where the softball team earned a personal best, placing third in their division.

## WOW! Dayhab Without Walls

Dutchess ARC's Day Services department oversees the **Dayhab WOW**, or Dayhab Without Walls, program, which allows active youth and seniors the chance to become involved in the community through local volunteer programs and recreational outings. Dayhab WOW, in conjunction with the Dutchess County Office for the Aging Meal Delivery Program, delivers meals to individuals in need twice per week to various locations in Poughkeepsie.

In addition, the program is regularly involved in volunteer programs with the Lunch Box, Dutchess Outreach, Vassar Brothers Hospital and Institute for Ecosystem Studies. The participants have already logged over 1,200 volunteer man-hours for 2008. Many of Dutchess ARC's programs, such as Dayhab WOW, directly benefit the Dutchess County community and the efforts of the Dayhab WOW participants are evidence of that.

Dutchess ARC is a non-profit agency that has been serving children and adults with developmental (and other disabilities) and their families in Dutchess County since 1971. Our services are diverse and located in every corner of Dutchess County.

- Clinic Services
- Day Services
- Employment Services
- Family Resources & Educational Advocacy
- Guardianship
- Recreation and Youth Services
- Residential Options
- Service Coordination
- School To Work & Transition to Adult Services

For more information, visit our website: [www.dutchess-arc.org](http://www.dutchess-arc.org)

Enclosed is my gift to Dutchess ARC in the amount of:

\$25    \$50    \$100    \$250    \$500    \$1,000    Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card:  MasterCard    Visa

Name as it appears on credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_