



  
A chapter of **The Arc**  
New York

# 2023–2025 Strategic Plan



# 2024 Progress Report

# Welcome Message



**Dear Coarc Employees, Families and Friends,**

**As an agency, we are committed to our mission: “To expand abilities, one person at a time, so people experiencing disabilities can achieve their personal goals.”**

**This report outlines the progress we have made as an agency over the past year in meeting the goals and strategies outlined in the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. In an effort to improve transparency, we share key information related to goals and strategies that prove that our energy and focus is spent in the most critical areas of the agency.**

**We have made significant progress on our goals as outlined in our 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. We take pride in the progress we have achieved this year and, at the same time, recognize that there is still more work to be done. As we conclude this second year of our plan, I want to express my sincere gratitude to each and every one of you for your dedication and commitment to Coarc, the people we support and our Mission!**

**Sincerely,  
Karen Amanna  
Chief Executive Officer**

# 2023–2025 Strategic Plan

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1

**Offer quality services that meet current and future needs and desires of people supported.**

#### Strategy 1.1

Assess programs utilizing an evaluation construct that takes into consideration agency mission, financial viability, customer demand, staffing sensitivity, and government support.

#### Strategy 1.2

Develop program opportunities that are consistent with the expressed wishes of people with developmental disabilities and their families/circles of support.



## Goal 1

# Activities and Progress

- A re-designed Service Satisfaction Survey was distributed in 2024. The survey, specific to each program, shows that people supported report being happy with their services. In addition, a new program response form was introduced in the fall of 2024 which will ensure formal documentation of strengths and areas identified for improvement.
- Progress continued on assessment training for all plan writers so goals are broken down into short term achievable tasks. In 2024, the training was extended to DSPs with the focus on how to implement plans with achievable goals.
- A Community Link Seniors program was launched in 2024 serving elders in our community with a focus on socialization and maintenance of skills. The student Teen Club continues expansion. This club is for Hudson High School students and provides opportunities to socialize, learn independent living skills and receive homework help.
- A residential opportunity for young adults has been conceptualized. The new model will focus on providing independent living skills with the hope of graduating to an apartment like setting.
- A Parent Resource Group continues to evolve including opportunities for families to work one-on-one with an Eligibility Coordinator to access support as they move through the Medicaid system.
- Enhanced training for staff in behavioral health areas including sensitivity, mental health, informed consent, rights and dementia support was offered giving staff additional tools to provide better support.
- The Self-Advocacy group resumed in 2024. This is an opportunity for everyone's voice to be heard. Members of the group regularly present an introductory training to all new hires at orientation.
- Responding to people's expressed interest for meaningful work, several people supported have been offered regular work or volunteer opportunities throughout the agency at The Starting Place Preschool, Day Hab programs and the Transportation and Maintenance Departments.
- We prepared "Training on the Go" for people supported, with the first topic being sexuality.

## Goal 2

**Develop, strengthen, and support Coarc's caring, quality workforce.**

### Strategy 2.1

Improve the employee experience, including providing a competitive total compensation package.

### Strategy 2.2

Cultivate a sense of belonging and connection in the workforce (internal community).

### Strategy 2.3

Enhance current recruitment efforts, identify new pipelines for recruitment, and plan for employee succession.



## Goal 2

# Activities and Progress

- A two-week onboarding orientation program was developed and launched in 2024. This orientation is for all new hires and provides a consistent introduction and welcome to Coarc.
- We celebrated the 1st graduating class of the Coarc Leaders Academy and have enrolled the 2nd class. The Leaders Academy offers leadership training, mentoring and education to middle management staff.
- Our Career Advancement Program continues in collaboration with the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals which offers credentialing to DSPs and Front Line Supervisors. These staff advance their skills and knowledge while earning stipends and pay increases. To date, we have 22 Front Line Supervisors credentialed with another 5 in process; 36 DSPs have achieved at least one level; of those, 25 have achieved DSP 3; 6 have achieved DSP 2 and 5 have achieved DSP 1. There are currently 8 DSPs in the credentialing process and 4 supervisors.
- Advocacy work in 2024 was successful resulting in increased funding for OPWDD programs, this funding increase flowed to staff in the form of pay increases.
- We continue working on building a positive culture for staff, including hosting the first Staff Appreciation BBQ, celebrating all staff with Years of Service Awards, personal deliveries of anniversary cards by the CEO to staff celebrating 10+ years of service, and an increase in Leadership Team members regularly attending program opportunities and celebrations. Employee of the Year awards were also brought back in 2024 with award winners in the following categories; Support, Clinician, Manager and DSP.
- Our Coarc Cares initiative stocks every breakroom/site with essential items to ease the burden of food insecurity and provide access to hygiene supplies.
- Staff satisfaction surveys continued in 2024. Not only was there an increase in the number of respondents, but the results demonstrated an overall improvement in satisfaction levels.
  - When staff were asked what drives their happiness at work it was clear that the people Coarc supports and co-workers are key factors. One employee summed up the voices of many when they said "My happiness at Coarc comes from the supportive and caring environment, where I feel valued and part of a great team. The opportunity to make a positive impact in people's lives adds meaning to my work every day."
  - When asked what makes you feel appreciated by your supervisor? Coarc employees responded with similar themes which showed staff value communication/feedback, acknowledgment, and feeling respected and trusted.
- Collaboration among the HR Department and Programs allowed the agency to speed up the hiring process in 2024. We can start new hires in as little as four days from the date of offer.
- We increased opportunities for non-English speaking people to work for the agency by incorporating translation technology.



## Goal 3

**Engage with our community to cultivate a sense of connection and belonging.**

### Strategy 3.1

Develop a portfolio of communication tools for both internal and external audiences.

### Strategy 3.2

Use the portfolio of communication tools to share pertinent and timely information, in a consistent, transparent manner, with people supported, their families, employees and external partners.

### Strategy 3.3

Commit to engaging with the broader community on a regular basis.



## Goal 3

# Activities and Progress

- The 2023 Strategic Plan Progress Report was distributed to our community, highlighting achievements and keeping the connection throughout our membership.
- Coarc Cares initiative continues to blossom and expand. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on September 11, 2024 to officially unveil the pantry at our Mellenville location which serves local food pantries throughout the county. Other Coarc Cares efforts continue with participation in Home Delivered Meals, Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood, Animal Kind food/supply drive, Community Garden and Pay It Forward at Columbia Memorial Hospital.
- Coarc staff and people supported attended community events throughout the year including; Marc Molinaro's Field Day, Advocacy Rallies at the Capital, the Hudson Children's Book Festival and we had our largest attendance at the 2024 Hudson Flag Day Parade with over 100 people marching for Coarc.
- Staff commit and engage with local groups and resources to share our services and offer supports throughout the county. Staff participate in the Community Services Board, Long Term Care Council, the Workforce Board, Healthcare Consortium Board and the Community Organizations Active in Disaster preparedness to name a few.
- Collaborations continue with community partners like Two by Two Zoo, Community Access to the Arts (CATA), Art OMI, Bard College and Bindlestiff Cirkus to offer recreation opportunities and arts education to people supported.
- Students from Maple Hill Middle School regularly visit Evergreen Hall, fostering meaningful and supportive relationships while gaining valuable knowledge and experience about working with people with developmental disabilities.
- Hudson Area Library hosts story and craft time for our little ones at The Starting Place Preschool.
- The Coarc Cafe operating at Columbia-Greene Community College has been expanding. The Cafe offers work opportunities for people supported and allows us to engage with students and faculty at the college.
- Increase in work opportunities for people supported with local businesses such as Shoprite, Bioforce USA, the Firemen's Home, Hudson City School District and Price Chopper.



## Goal 4

**Ensure Coarc has an effective governance structure.**

### Strategy 4.1

Evaluate Board assets and gaps and use that information as part of the nominating committee process to strengthen and diversify our governance structure and address board succession planning.

### Strategy 4.2

Deliver training and orientation for board members using The Arc New York requirements and information/expectations specific to Coarc.



## Goal 4

## Activities and Progress

- The Coarc Board of Directors identified and formed a committee to explore unification with two sister chapters. Upon determining who our partners would be, the committee began working on the governance structure and fiduciary responsibilities of the unified organization with Saratoga Bridges.
- An overview of Coarc funding streams and computer systems was the focus of a retreat with the Coarc Board of Directors and the Leadership Team, along with identifying the expectations for board members interested in sitting on the unified Board.

## Goal 5

**Ensure the agency is financially viable.**

### Strategy 5.1

Develop a series of metrics and financial reports that will be reviewed monthly with the Budget and Finance Committee and the Board of Directors to gauge the agency's financial wellness.

### Strategy 5.2

Diversify Coarc's funding streams.



## Goal 5

## Activities and Progress

- The Board of Directors from Coarc and Saratoga Bridges (Saratoga County Arc sister chapter) unanimously approved plans to unify our two chapters. This opportunity will include many benefits for the people we support and the staff providing those supports.
- The Coarc Cafe expanded its business to include catering, increasing its revenue in 2024.
- Work has begun on setting up an on-line sales platform for the Tradewinds store and Bee Amazing products.
- Staff have attended trainings to increase the knowledge and gain experience in the acuity-based methodology for OPWDD. This will be a critical component to rate structures in the future and staff are committed to being leaders in this area.
- Work has continued on the exploration of a dashboard software that will help management and the Board stay on top of key metrics including financial, quality and staffing.

## Conclusion

Coarc is proud to highlight the accomplishments we have made towards the goals outlined in our 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. While much work remains, we are delighted to share all of the positive outcomes we have realized to date. The Strategic Plan is a roadmap to help ensure we reach our goals which were the expressed focus of people supported, staff, families and the community. We will continue to be committed to reaching our goals and celebrating the achievements. Thank you again for your support and dedication to Coarc's mission.



## Our Mission

**To expand abilities, one person at a time,  
so people experiencing disabilities can achieve  
their personal goals.**

## Our Vision

**To be an ethical organization that is a part of a  
society that recognizes people with different  
degrees of abilities as full contributing members  
of their community.**

# About Us

Coarc is one of 35 local Chapters of The Arc New York, the largest provider of supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in New York state. In addition to the programs Coarc offers in Columbia County, Chapters of The Arc New York collectively support more than 60,000 people with disabilities and their families in every county of the state, and employ more than 30,000 people in our shared mission to provide people with I/DD and other disabilities the ordinary and extraordinary opportunities of life. Founded by families more than 75 years ago, The Arc New York continues to be an influential advocate for the rights, opportunities, and inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## Our Services

**Ability Link**

**Clinical Services**

**Community Habilitation Services**

**Day Habilitation Services**

**Employment Services**

**Guardianship Services**

**Prevocational Services**

**Recreation Services**

**Residential Services**

**Respite Services**

**Self-Advocacy**

**Self-Direction Services**

**The Starting Place Preschool**

## Our Businesses



@coarc518



@coarc\_

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**Coarc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization & supports approx. 400 people with intellectual & developmental differences.**