

# Coarc Public Relations Monthly Report to the Board of Directors, October 10, 2016

## Events and Important Dates throughout the Year, 2016:

Date	Event	Fundraiser?
1/30, 2/20, 5/18, 6/14	Parent & Caregivers Support Group for families with loved ones who have developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorders. Location: Coarc – The Starting Place preschool/daycare, Hudson	
2/29, 3/8, 3/21 and other dates	Coarc staff and individuals receiving supports and services participated in legislative events in Albany and the Capital Region to raise awareness about important issues	
March 17 <sup>th</sup>	St. Patrick's Day Dance for all individuals receiving Coarc services. Held in Mellenville	
March – April	Movie program for Employee Appreciation (employees received movie tickets)	
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Coarc Spring Dance	Yes – donations support the event
May and beyond	Annual Coarc Membership Drive	Yes
May 13 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Coarc Art Exhibit at Art Omi	
May 2 <sup>nd</sup> – May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Book Fair at Coarc – The Starting Place	Yes
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Coarc-to-College Graduation Ceremony	
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Open House at Coarc – The Starting Place	
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	ECycle Ribbon Cutting Ceremony @ 1 Industrial Tract, Hudson	
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Premier of "Faces of Coarc," a long-term media project whose mission is to share the stories of people whose lives are touched by Coarc	
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Coarc participated in the CDPHP Workforce Team Challenge 5k in Albany	
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Pajama Night at the Movies! The Peanuts Movie! Fundraiser by "4 Ourselves" Self Advocacy. Location: Coarc in Mellenville	Yes (4 Ourselves)
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	St. Jude Trike-a-Thon at The Starting Place	
June-July	Annual Employee Awards	
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Hudson Flag Day Parade; Coarc designed a float. Staff and individuals participated	
June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Columbia County Relay for Life (Coarc had a team participating)	
June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Hudson Pride Parade; Coarc designed a float and staff and individuals participated	
June 20 <sup>th</sup>	Coarc Annual Meeting for members, at the Mellenville Cafeteria	
June 23rd	Ceremony at the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce. Coarc voted Best Nonprofit/Community Agency (2015 and 2016); Tradewinds voted Best Gift Shop	
June 25 <sup>th</sup>	Coarc Fishing Derby	Yes – donations support the event
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Dance Party hosted by Fusion Day Habilitation (theme: Independence Day)	
July 20 <sup>th</sup>	Camp Mahican Open House	
July 27 <sup>th</sup>	Play by Fusion Day Habilitation: "The Trial of Alice in Wonderland"	
July 28 <sup>th</sup> August 24 <sup>th</sup>	Summer Training Series: for families of children with developmental disabilities, Coarc's Mellenville site	
August 27 <sup>th</sup>	Car Wash & Bake Sale for "4-Ourselves" Self Advocacy and Tim Simpson, parking lot of the Starting Place preschool, Hudson	Yes (4 Ourselves)
August 28 <sup>th</sup>	Trip to see the Valley Cats with the Parent & Caregiver Support Group	
August 31 <sup>st</sup> – Sept. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Coarc at the Columbia County Fair	
September 9 <sup>th</sup>	Fusion Picnic	
September 11 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup>	Direct Support Professionals Week. Employee appreciation: Coarc staff received coupons for a bagel and coffee from Bagel Tyme. Raffles were held	

## Coarc Public Relations Monthly Report to the Board of Directors, October 10, 2016

September 15 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup> Annual Gerald J. Dieffenbach Coarc OpportuniTees Golf Tournament	Yes
September 18 <sup>th</sup>	Columbia County ABATE Benefit Run/Motorcycle Ride for Coarc	Yes
September 23 <sup>rd</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup>	Book Fair at Coarc – The Starting Place	Yes
September 24 <sup>th</sup>	Flapjack Fundraiser for Coarc's Self Advocacy Group. Applebee's, Hudson	Yes (4 Ourselves)
September 27 <sup>th</sup>	Open House at Coarc – The Starting Place	
October 14 <sup>th</sup>	Coarc Fall Ball	
December	Holiday lunch and dance, held in Mellenville	

### Grants and Large Donations Received, 2016: *The compilation of this list is a work in progress*

Grantor	Amount	Purpose
Bank of Greene County Charitable Foundation	\$1,000	Film project by Fusion Day Habilitation
Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation		Film project by Fusion Day Habilitation
NYSARC Trusts	\$46,500	Guardianship Program grant
Dorothy and Mark Nelkin Charitable Fund, Vanguard Charitable	\$1,000	Area of Most Need
New York State	\$50,000	Technology
NYSARC	\$12,500	Recreation
Google Grants for Nonprofits (received 10/3/16)	\$120,000/year, indefinitely	Free advertising
Donor	Amount	Purpose
Four Corners Energy	\$500	Coarc Bottle Redemption Center
Stewart's Foundation	\$750	Coarc – The Starting Place playground
Dr. Neil Baillargeon	\$500	From the Membership Drive
Judy Grunberg (wishes to be anonymous to the public)	\$4,000	Arts Endowment
Anonymous donor	\$1,000	Spring Dance

### Major Fundraisers: Progress to Date:

Event	Funds Raised
Golf Tournament	Amount pledged: \$24,100; Amount received: \$22,850 (as of 10/10/16)
Membership Drive	Estimate of funds raised to date: \$10,419; Number of members: 404 (as of 9/19/16)

### Media Coverage, September – October, 2016:

Theme	Title	Media	Date
Golf tournament	“Coarc hosts golf tournament to fund programs for people with disabilities”	The Scene, Columbia-Greene Media	Sept. 8-14 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
Golf tournament	(Included in “In Brief” section)	Register-Star	Sept. 13 <sup>th</sup>
ABATE fundraiser/motorcycle ride for Coarc	(Included in Calendar of Events)	The Columbia Paper	Sept. 15 <sup>th</sup>
DSP/Faces of Coarc	“DSP Spotlight: Betsy Fels”	BFair2DirectCare Facebook Page	Sept. 18 <sup>th</sup>
DSP Week	“Thank you to our Direct Support Professionals”	Advertisement in Register Star online	Week of Sept. 18 <sup>th</sup>
ABATE fundraiser/motorcycle ride for Coarc	“Bikers ride for Coarc movie”	Columbia-Greene Media online	Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup>

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Board Member Dr. Denise Barry featured	“Zonta Club of Upper Hudson Valley honors three women, will host dinner”	Register-Star	Sept. 20 <sup>th</sup>
Flapjack Fundraiser	(Included in Calendar of Events)	The Columbia Paper	Sept. 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Coarc’s County Fair exhibit	“Top Scarecrow at the Fair”	Register-Star	Sept. 24-25 <sup>th</sup>
Self-Advocate	“Coarc applauds self-advocate Amy Gregory, winning logo”	The Columbia Paper	Oct. 6 <sup>th</sup>

*Please note, press releases were submitted to other newspapers, besides the ones listed above. They may have been published in those papers, but Coarc does not receive copies. Stories, events, news, and “Faces of Coarc” articles were also shared on the Coarc website, Facebook page, and the local social media site “IMBY” (In My Backyard).*

Please see the following pages for recent media coverage, as well as recent “Faces of Coarc” stories.

Page 8 - Thursday - Wednesday, September 8-14, 2016

The Scene

COLUMBIA-GREENE MEDIA

## Coarc hosts golf tournament to fund programs for people with disabilities

MELLENVILLE — Coarc, the county's largest nonprofit serving persons with disabilities, is proud to host the 10th annual Coarc OpportuniTees Gerald J. Dieffenbach Memorial Golf Tournament on Thursday, September 15th (rain date: 9/22) at Copake Country Club. The event honors former Coarc Board President and avid golfer Gerald J. Dieffenbach. Funds raised by sponsors and golfers support Coarc programs and services.

The tournament is a four-person scramble. Registration check-in begins at 8:00 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9:15 a.m. Registration includes greens fee, golf cart, lunch, refreshments during play, and cocktails and dinner follow-



ing play (fee: \$115 if paid by 8/26; \$125 if paid after 8/26). Prizes will be awarded for putting contest, longest drive, closest to the pin, and closest to the line; plus first, second, and third place gross scoring teams. Copake Country Club is located at 44 Golf Course

Road, Copake Lake. Registration information is available at [www.coarc.org](http://www.coarc.org) or call 518-672-4451.

Thank you to our generous sponsors: Rose & Kiernan, Inc. (Platinum); Doplkins & Co. (Silver); Sickler, Torchia, Allen & Churchill, Anna &

Media sponsor is iHeart radio. Thank you to the many businesses and donors who sponsor flags and tees; and to other businesses who contribute prizes for winning raffle tickets sold at the tournament.

Voted the county's Best Nonprofit/Community Agency (2015 & 2016), the mission of Coarc is to expand abilities, one person at a time, so individuals experiencing disabilities can achieve their individual goals. Coarc is the county's Chapter of NYSARC, Inc. To support our programs, please visit [www.coarc.org/donate-now/](http://www.coarc.org/donate-now/) or call Katie (672-4451, x 2093). Follow us on Facebook to learn more.

Derek Nolan, Tip Top Furniture, and Mid-Hudson Cable (Bronze); AXA Foundation and Todd Farrell's Car Care Center (cocktail hour sponsors); Dutton Architecture (Golden ticket raffle prize -- Apple Watch). Hole-in-one contests are sponsored by Village Dodge.



## MEDIA COVERAGE

Register-Star  
<http://www.registerstar.com/>

A6 Tuesday, September 13, 2016

COLUMBIA-GREENE MEDIA • REGISTER-STAR

MELLENVILLE — Coarc, the county's largest nonprofit serving persons with disabilities, is hosting the 10th annual Coarc OpportuniTees Gerald J. Dieffenbach Memorial Golf Tournament on Sept. 15, rain date Sept. 22, at Copake Country Club. Funds raised by sponsors and golfers support Coarc programs and services.

The tournament is a four-person scramble. Registration check-in begins at 8 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9:15 a.m. Registration includes greens fee, golf cart, lunch, refreshments during play and cocktails and dinner following play. The fee is \$125. Prizes will be awarded for putting contest, longest drive, closest to the pin, and closest to the line; plus first, second, and third place gross scoring teams. Copake Country Club is located at 44 Golf Course Road, Copake Lake. For registration, call 518-672-4451.

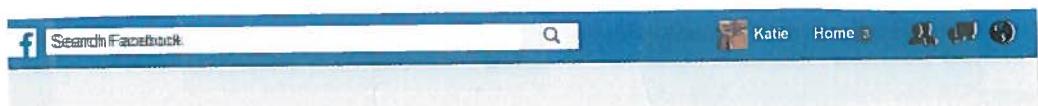


## MEDIA COVERAGE

THE COLUMBIA PAPER • [www.columbiapaper.com](http://www.columbiapaper.com)

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

MOTORCYCLE RIDE, Plaza  
Diner, 300 Fairview Ave,  
Greenport, 10 am registration,  
\$20 riders and passengers, \$10  
post-ride festivities only.  
Columbia County ABATE  
Chapter Benefit Run for Coarc.  
Post ride festivities 3 pm,  
Claverack Town Park, 91  
Church St, Mellenville. BBQ,  
games, music. [daniellep@coarc.org](mailto:daniellep@coarc.org).



## DSP SPOTLIGHT: Betsy Fels

BFair2DirectCare FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 2016

**MEET BETSY-** I moved here three years ago from Los Angeles. I was a filmmaker for my whole career. When I came to Columbia County, my friend Nancy Kohler suggested that I talk to staff of Coarc's Fusion Day Hab Program (it was called the Blended Program at that time). They introduced me to Coarc's programs and I decided to become substitute staff (A big thank you to Karen Wolff for hiring me and pushing me along!). I subbed for the program for six months and then Chris Nardone, who works in Community Employment, talked me into becoming permanent staff.



I look at this as my second career. My skills as a filmmaker have come into play here at Coarc. I started the drama group with Fusion and we've conducted five plays so far (most recently, "The Trial of Alice in Wonderland"). Currently, I'm working on a documentary with the individuals who attend the Fusion program, as well as Danielle Palleschi and the "I AM: International Foundation."

Being a DSP (Direct Support Professional) is an amazing job! It is my giveback job. The individuals I work with are interesting, funny, and fun and we do lots fun things; we learn things! We have been to the Capital to fight for funding for the wage increase; we have met amazing people; and we have gone to concerts at the Egg, among so many other things. On our outings, I get to see all sorts of places I have never seen before. My life now, living in Kinderhook, is peaceful. I live in such a beautiful place and love my drive to work every day. There is no traffic! I don't miss L.A. at all."

*Please join the bFair2DirectCare Coalition in thanking Betsy, and all the other New York DSPs, during DSP Recognition Week! The tireless and selfless work they conduct day in and day out is inspiring. Thank you, Betsy! Your hard work has not gone unnoticed!*

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/bfair2directcare/dsp-spotlight-betsy-fels/34485>

The Daily Mail • Chatham Courier • Windham Journal • The Mountain Eagle • Ravana News-Herald • Greene County News • River Chronicle

## The Power of Print

The conventional wisdom is that **everything print is dead**, but plenty of people didn't get the memo.

- 1 Print Has Gravitas
- 2 Print Readers Are Focused
- 3 Sometimes Unplugging Is Very Appealing
- 4 Print Offers Ad Buyers Flexibility and More Personal Attention

# Register-Star

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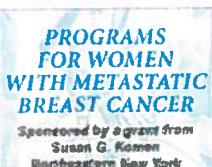


Thank you to our  
**Direct Support Professionals**



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**PROGRAMS  
FOR WOMEN  
WITH METASTATIC  
BREAST CANCER**  
Sponsored by a grant from  
Susan G. Komen  
Breastcure New York

**PHYSICIAN PANEL  
FROM NY PRESBYTERIAN  
/LAWRENCE HOSPITAL:  
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

—This panel will cover topics including Emerging treatments, Standard of Care for different types of disease, Localized vs. Systemic, Testing for effectiveness of treatments, What to do about treatment side effects, Palliative care...not just for end of life, Discussion on testing for progression using tumor markers and scans should not be done too often and why.

### October 1 at Noon

Columbia County, Columbia  
Greene Community College  
4400 NY-23, Hudson

**Registration  
Is Required!**

Light lunch will be provided  
Open to the public

**REGISTER**

Home

coarc

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Displaying article results 21 - 30 of 31 for coarc.

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### Parade awash in all the colors of the rainbow

Sunday, June 19, 2016 12:30 am



HUDSON — Shop windows and flag poles along Warren Street were dressed with rainbow flags Saturday afternoon in honor of the annual Pride Parade.

### Arcs frustrated by unfunded wage hike

Saturday, April 16, 2016 12:00 am

Despite lobbying state lawmakers and Gov. Andrew Cuomo, Twin County nonprofit Arc organizations will be required to raise minimum wage for their employees.

### Columbia County Rescue Blotter

Friday, May 6, 2016 12:00 am

The following incidents were among those reported to the Columbia County 911 Office:

### Blue & Gold Senior Awards

Wednesday, June 22, 2016 12:15 am



HUDSON — The annual Blue & Gold Senior Awards Night was held June 2 in the high school auditorium.

Popular Commented

#### Stories

Graziano out as police  
commissioner

Three-car accident

briefly closes section of  
Warren street

Search on for missing

### Flag Day parade and waterfront festival

Wednesday, June 8, 2016 12:00 am



HUDSON — The Hudson Flag Day Parade will kick off at 2 p.m. June 11, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the parade. Festivities begin at 10 a.m. in the Seventh Street park with the Hudson Elks Lodge 787 Flag Day Ceremony at 11 a.m. The lodge will describe and display the different flags of our country from the past to present. The Lodge will also award a monetary scholarship to Hudson High School Senior who is a child of an Elk member.

Chatham

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## Bikers ride for COARC movie

By Roger Hannigan Gilson Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Monday, September 19, 2016  
12:30 am

GREENPORT — Two motorcycle clubs held a benefit ride Sunday afternoon to raise funds for an advocacy group to make a film about the views and lives of intellectually disabled people.

The Columbia County chapter of American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE) and the Kinderhook-based East Coast Riders made the run to get COARC closer to its \$10,000 goal to produce the film.

Betsy Fels, who moved to the area two years ago after working as a filmmaker in Los Angeles, said COARC is collaborating with Art/OMI and the I AM: International Foundation to produce the film, which she expects to run about 15 minutes.

"Our goal is to put this in (film) festivals," she said, mentioning the Woodstock film festival as a possibility.

The film would be a day in the life of an intellectually disabled person, showing their activities and showcasing their worldviews and beliefs, Fels said.

"We want to show what life is really like," she said. "It's a really fantastic world we're trying to show."

The film would "show the commonalities we all share, that everyone shares," Danielle Palleschi, of COARC, said.

President of the Columbia County ABATE chapter John Boice Jr. said fundraising for COARC was a natural choice.

"Basically, we're all family," Boice said.

The run was to go down Warren Street in Hudson, through Hillsdale, and end at Claverack Town Park, where there would be a barbecue, a prize raffle, a 50/50 raffle, and games including a bike

[http://www.registerstar.com/news/article\\_f91aa96e-7deb-11e6-acb5-1766dcd8cceb.html?...](http://www.registerstar.com/news/article_f91aa96e-7deb-11e6-acb5-1766dcd8cceb.html?...) 9/22/2016



Bike run

Bikers set off for a charity ride to benefit the creation of a film meant to show the lives and views of those with intellectual disabilities.

Bikers ride for COARC movie - Columbia-Greene Media: News

Page 2 of 2

slalom and a game where bikers would try to scoop up stuffed animals with a net as they circled around them, Boice said.

All money collected, including registration fees, money from the 50/50 and the raffle, as well as donations, would go to the production of the film.

Dodie Wheeler, president of COARC's board, said she was excited for the run and thanked the motorcycle clubs.

"These guys support the community pretty much every weekend," she said.

Wheeler said the movie would try to upend people's perceptions of those with intellectual disabilities.

"There's a perception of what [they] can and can't do," she said.

Todd Garry, a client at COARC, said he was there as a volunteer to help out the bikers.

In COARC, Garry said he participated in many community events, working with Meals on Wheels and the Columbia Land Conservancy.

"I love COARC very much, I love the staff," he said.

Garry added he recently went to a regional conference with the organization at a Marriott hotel in Albany that focused on self-advocacy and "standing up for yourself."

The ride was escorted through Hudson by the Greenport police and was to last a little more than two hours.

Those interested in COARC, the movie or donating to the cause are encouraged to email Danielle Palleschi at [daniellep@coarc.org](mailto:daniellep@coarc.org).

Register-Star  
<http://www.registerstar.com/>

A6 Tuesday, September 20, 2016

# Zonta Club of Upper Hudson Valley honors three women, will host dinner

CHATHAM — The Zonta Club of the Upper Hudson Valley has announced three winners of its "People Making A Difference" award: Denise Barry of East Chatham; Benita Zahn, and Senator Kristen Gillibrand.

"This award is presented to women who have made an impact on their community, their nation and/or the global society," said Irene Waldorf, Zonta Club president. "These three people exemplify women who are working daily to improve the lives of women and children."

Zonta will host an awards dinner which is open to the public at 6 p.m. Sept. 29 at Winding Brook Country Club, Route 203, Valatie. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are \$40. Tickets include appetizers, dinner and desserts, the award ceremony, raffle prizes and musical entertainment. To purchase tickets, make a contribution or donate a raffle prize contact Waldorf at 518-392-5515.

Barry, who holds a doctorate degree in education, taught special education for 40 years in the Hudson City School District. For the past 28 years she has spent summers as a teacher and/or administrator in local correctional facilities. Active in the Columbia County community, Barry is a member of the board of directors of Catholic Charities for Columbia/Greene Counties and is outreach coordinator at St. James Church in Chatham. In addition, she is the longest, continuously serving member of COARC's board of directors, having joined the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kristen Gillibrand



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Denise Barry



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Benita Zahn

Zahn, who holds a doctorate degree in professional studies/bioethics, co-anchors News Channel 13 Live at 5 and 6 p.m. broadcasts. Zahn is also a health reporter, covering issues including wellness, treatment breakthroughs, aging, nutrition and the latest health care trends. She also co-produces and hosts "Health LINK" on WMHT and writes a weekly column for the "Live Smart" page in the Albany Times Union newspaper. Her work has garnered her numerous awards such as the Distinguished Communicator Award/American Women in Radio and Television, Women Against MS honoree, and media awards from the American Cancer Society, American Lung Association and American Heart Association.

Senator Gillibrand, a resident of Brunswick, has been committed to many causes as she represents New York state especially raising her

voice on behalf of women. These efforts include military reform for sexual assault cases, targeting the sexual assault epidemic on college campuses, equality for women in the workplace, and making government more open and transparent.

All proceeds from this event will be used to provide an annual Zonta scholarship to local high school students and to support efforts by local domestic violence centers in Columbia and Greene counties. Zonta is an international organization that strives to improve the lives of women and children.



## MEDIA COVERAGE

SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

THE COLUMBIA PAPER • [www.columbiapaper.com](http://www.columbiapaper.com)

**September 24**

FLAPJACK FUNDRAISER,  
Applebee's, 420 Fairview Ave  
Greenport, 8-10 am, \$5.  
Supports Coarc's Self  
Advocacy Group. 518 672-  
4451. [Coarc.org](http://Coarc.org).

COLUMBIA-GREENE MEDIA • REGISTER-STAR

Saturday - Sunday, September 24-25, 2016 - A11

## TOP SCARECROW AT THE FAIR



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This white rabbit from Alice in Wonderland, made by a group from Coarc, was judged Best in Show in the Scarecrow Making Contest at the Columbia County Fair held Labor Day weekend. Coarc also entered seven other scarecrows depicting Alice in Wonderland characters.

THE COLUMBIA PAPER • [www.columbiapaper.com](http://www.columbiapaper.com)

OCTOBER 6, 2016



*Amy Gregory with her Self-Advocacy Association of New York State winning logo.*

Photo contributed

## Coarc applauds self-advocate Amy Gregory, winning logo

MELLENVILLE—Coarc applauds Amy Gregory, the proud winner of the Self-Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS) logo contest. The contest focused on “speaking up for ourselves and others” – the major focus of self-advocacy.

In early September, Ms. Gregory attended the annual SANYS conference, along with many friends from Coarc. She is the Secretary of Coarc’s own self-advocacy group, “4 Ourselves.” Her passion is art and being in “4 Ourselves” helps her to share that.

“I want to teach individuals how to draw,” says Ms. Gregory in a press release. About being a member of the group, she

says “I get to have my drawings out there. I love meeting new people and doing activities like fundraising and getting out in the community.”

Self-Advocacy is important in the disability rights movement. According to “4 Ourselves” President Desiree Elliott, self-advocacy means helping people “so they can do things on their own, be more independent, live on their own, have jobs on their own.”

Coarc’s “4 Ourselves” helps people with disabilities to speak up for themselves and talk about important issues, such as housing and staffing to support those who experience disabilities.



## Faces of Coarc: Susan Schuhknecht

Susan Schuhknecht is a Teacher Aide at Coarc – The Starting Place preschool/daycare in Hudson. In her own words: “I like [working at Coarc]. I love the children. I love taking care of the children, helping meet their daily needs, playing and reading to them, watching them grow, and their cute smiling faces and hugs...I don’t look at the students as having disabilities, I look at them as who they are – as individuals. Each is unique.” Susan has worked at The Starting Place since October of last year. Prior to that, she was a Direct Support Professional at Coarc’s Cardinal Hall Day Habilitation program in Hudson.



This October, Susan and her husband will celebrate their 29-year wedding anniversary (congratulations!). They have a five-year old grandson and a daughter and son-in-law. A native of Poughkeepsie, NY, Susan loves to walk for exercise, go out to lunch with good friends, and travel to Puerto Rico to visit relatives.

~\*~

Coarc - The Starting Place in Hudson is our pre-school and day care center for three- to five-year-olds and their families in Columbia, Greene, Dutchess, and Ulster Counties; and universal pre-kindergarten for children in the Hudson City School District. Classrooms and daycare are staffed with a high adult-to-child ratio and integrate children with and without disabilities. To learn more, please visit:

<http://www.coarc.org/services/#all>.

~\*~

*Faces of Coarc* is a media project whose mission is to share the stories of people whose lives are touched by Coarc. To become a member of Coarc and support our programs and services, please visit:

<http://www.coarc.org/donate-now/>.



## Faces of Coarc: Mary LaBelle



Mary LaBelle, from Kinderhook, has been with Coarc for 37 years. She loves to visit with family and she especially likes taking trips to Massachusetts to spend time with her sister. In the Pathway to Employment Program, Mary works part-time for Coarc Manufacturing and Coarc's retail store in Hudson, Tradewinds. She enjoys assembling Snazzy Beads for Coarc Manufacturing. Mary says "I like to come over here [to the workshop]. Nobody bothers me. It feels good to work and earn a paycheck." Mary also participates in Coarc Day Habilitation programming. She is a member of the Self Advocacy Group, "4 Ourselves." This past February, she traveled to the State Capitol, along with other Coarc representatives, to advocate for important issues.

~\*~

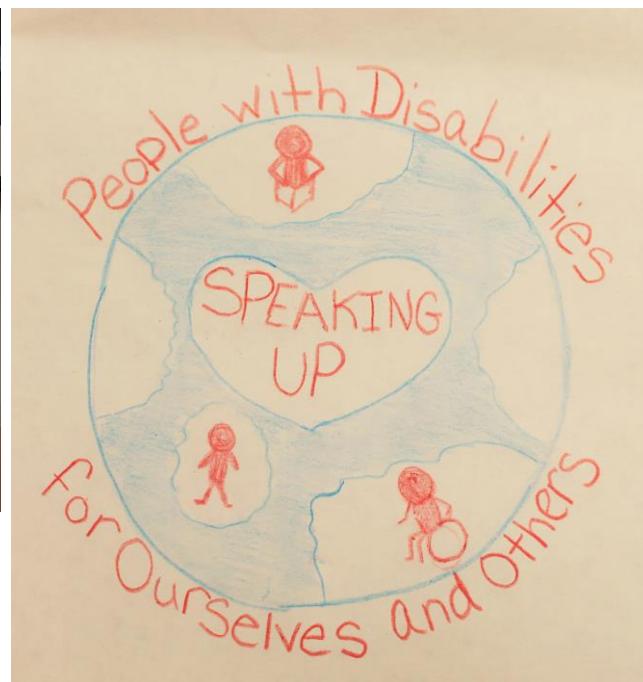
*Faces of Coarc* is a media project whose mission is to share the stories of people whose lives are touched by Coarc. To become involved or share ideas, please contact Katie (518-672-4451, ext. 2093; [katherines@coarc.org](mailto:katherines@coarc.org)).



## Faces of Coarc: Amy Gregory

Amy Gregory's passion is art. "I want to teach individuals how to draw," says Amy. She is excited to be the winner of the logo contest of the Self-Advocacy Association of New York State. She recently attended the annual conference, along with many friends. It was her second year attending and she had a wonderful experience -- participating in the "no drama" workshop and sing-along, and meeting new friends. She has been in "4 Ourselves," Coarc's Self-Advocacy group, for a year and is currently Secretary. About being a member of the group, Amy says "I get to have my drawings out there. I love meeting new people and doing activities like fundraising, getting out in the community, and doing different things."

In Amy's words: "I was raised by my grandmother and she's a big part of who I am today. She told me to never give up. Every Christmas, my grandmother and me would put the tree up. I love to draw, like to knit, and love watching sports with my father. I love shopping with my aunt and sister. I love watching the leaves change. My favorite holiday is Christmas and I love watching Christmas shows with family." Images below: Amy and her sister Jamie Simpson, who works for Coarc Manufacturing and is Vice President of "4 Ourselves;" and Amy's winning logo.





## Faces of Coarc: Russell and Jamie Hall



“Love at first sight” is how Jamie and Russell describe their beginnings. They met in the Coarc workshop on July 11, 2011 and were drawn to each other’s personalities. They happily recall their first date – a dinner date and Jamie’s father came along. Russell and Jamie love doing things together. They like going to the movies, bowling, listening to country music, and they root for the same sports teams.

On August 13<sup>th</sup> Russell and Jamie wed in the town of Wells in the Adirondacks. Russell says “[Our wedding was] one of the days we’ll never forget.” “It was perfect,” Jamie says. They have plans to start a family together in the future. Congratulations and best wishes to Jamie and Russell for a joyful life together! More about Russell and Jamie, in their own voices:

“Hi. I am Russell Hall and I started out at a group home in another agency. In my group home I was told that I would never get alone time in the community. The reason behind why I was never going to get alone time was because of my past. I then spoke up for myself because I was not being treated fair and when I spoke up I was treated with respect and then I started getting alone time. I started spending my weekends away from the other agency and with my fiancée Jamie Weaver. I then spoke up more and I was on the verge to be able to become the first to move out of the group home to my first apartment, which I got accepted into a Coarc program called Self-Directed Services, which enables me to do what I want in my own apartment. I then got approved to move into my first apartment...I have been there for almost two years this December. In my two years living in my apartment I asked my fiancée to move in with me. Then on August 13, 2016 I got married to my love of my life Jamie. In conclusion, my life started crappy but ended up with the most amazing successful outcome. I also have an outside job at Applebee’s, which I have been there for a year and a half, all thanks to my wife Jamie Hall. I also have been at Coarc for 5+ years.”

“Hi, I am Jamie Hall. I started out in my own apartment through Coarc. I had staff help me with my basic needs. I have been at Coarc for 11 years and in all that time, I have grown to be the most successful woman I wanted to be. I have an outside job at Applebee’s and I have been there for 2+ years and I love my job. I then got approved for a program called Self-Directed Services and I moved out of my Coarc apartment and moved in with my fiancé Russell Hall into his apartment. Then I got married on August 13<sup>th</sup> to my love of my life Russell and he became a part of my family. I have an amazing family. They have been my biggest support starting with my mom. My mom has helped me through a lot of things that happened in the course of my life. She is my most amazing person in my life. Then I also had the amazing Dad in my life. He was my best friend ever who was always there when I needed to talk. Then I have my brothers and sisters who have been the shoulder I needed to cry on or just to talk about anything. My family is my most amazing part of my life. I lost my Dad on November 29, 2015 and he was a WWII vet and I miss him very much and I just wish he was still here in person.”



## Faces of Coarc: Seven Questions with Sean

(Sean Delaney, DSP Floater)

### Why did you decided to come work for Coarc?

### What's something you're doing at your job that you love?

"I came to Coarc because I love helping people. I have many years' experience in the field working with all different types of individuals... So, when Karen [Wolff] offered me the opportunity to join the Coarc family I jumped at the chance. Right now I love to visit my mentee and work closely with him to promote his well-being. I am currently helping him find work, and I take him to the gym and to run around the middle school track. I enjoy mentoring; it is a passion of mine. It brings me joy to see my mentee's progress since we started."

### Please tell me about your rap song about autism...

"I was compelled to write a song about my work as a Direct Support Professional and was able to connect with a film maker from NJ who would create a music video starring the individuals I served. We reached a quarter million people with our video [On Youtube]. I won the NYS Excellence Award for the lyrics of the song along with the Frank Mulhern Scholarship. I also had the opportunity to travel to the Capitol in Washington and other conferences with NYSACRA as a consultant promoting 'Open Your Eyes.' I am proud of this accomplishment and feel lucky to be declared the artist who changed the face of Autism." (Hear the song here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSdfCN5ewHY>)

### You were recently featured in a magazine?

"I was recently featured in a 4-page article in England regarding my life as an artist and a fashion designer and a family man. I also talked about 'Open Your Eyes' in the article, continuing to bring Awareness to all of the Direct Support workers who work day in and day it to bring a smile to the faces of the individuals we serve."

### Can you tell me about your clothing and jewelry designs?

### What's your inspiration?

"My clothing company is Sincerely Dedicated Co... The company is for anyone that is dedicated or passionate to what they believe in. We create custom hoodies, bracelets, hats, and more. We are proud to be a grassroots company... We donate money of every product sold to our charity Fender Music and we have created awareness for causes with our special designed bracelets including Autism, Coarc, Breast Cancer, [and more] and the list continues to grow. The company is just a continuation of bringing awareness to positivity in the world."

### Where did you grow up?

"I was born and raised in Hudson, NY. I have traveled all over the place but Hudson has always been my home. My grandfather was the mayor of the city years ago, my father was the Fire Commissioner so my roots are deep and I am on a mission to make my city proud by putting the best and most successful and positive stories in the spotlight. Now I reside with my family and continue to grind to bring all my dreams to fruition. Thank you, Coarc, for the opportunity to tell my story; the agency is something I am proud to be a part of."





## Faces of Coarc: Dodie Wheeler

“I have always believed that volunteering is everyone's responsibility—it's what makes you part of a community...it's giving back.” – Dodie Wheeler



“My name is Dodie Wheeler. I'm a parent member of the Coarc Board of Directors and I currently am honored to be serving as President of the Board. I also represent Coarc on the NYSARC Board of Governors. I live in Ghent. I have two wonderful adult sons, one of whom receives employment services from Coarc. I was lucky enough to retire in May of this year from an almost 40 year career in Human Services. That has given me more time to spend supporting the agency that supports so many people in our county. I have thoroughly enjoyed working side by side with Coarc staff (I think they are awesome!) in a variety of events in recent months. Coarc staff go way above and beyond their job titles to keep the train moving down the track. I have always believed that volunteering is everyone's responsibility—it's what makes you part of a community...it's giving back -- If everyone found one day a year to give to a not-for-profit like Coarc, there would be nothing we couldn't do.”

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*Faces of Coarc* is a long-term media project whose mission is to share the stories of people whose lives are touched by Coarc. To become involved or share ideas, please contact Katie (518-672-4451, ext. 2093; [katherines@coarc.org](mailto:katherines@coarc.org)).