



Annual Report *2008-2009*



**Residential * Vocational * Advocacy
Day Programs * Clinical and Nursing
TBI Programs * Zip 'N Sort Mail Services
Quality Assurance**

Berkshire County Arc is committed to assisting and supporting

From the Executive Director and Board President:

Even in the midst of difficult economic times, Berkshire County Arc has had an extremely successful year. Two new homes for individuals with traumatic brain injury were opened in Westfield, followed by a new home in West Springfield that is supported by the Department of Developmental Services. These beautiful new homes will provide accessible housing for twelve individuals. Presently, there are three new HUD homes under construction in Berkshire County. Two of these homes are located in Lanesboro and one is in Pittsfield. We are very excited as we anticipate these new homes to open in the first half of 2010. The agency has worked very hard to provide accessible housing for those we serve, as this is a great need for the future.

During the past year, we have given great emphasis to our community Employment Program, both through the Advantage Employee Network and Zip 'N Sort Mail Services. We currently have over 100 people employed through the Advantage Employee Network (AEN) and an additional 16 people employed through Zip 'N Sort Mail Services. The agency recently received a \$500,000 federal grant through the University of Massachusetts Medical College. This money will be used to develop a Berkshire County collaborative on employment of people with disabilities. Through this initiative by Governor Deval Patrick, five agencies statewide were selected for these grants. BCARC received the *only one* in Western Massachusetts. Zip 'N Sort Mail Services has recently expanded its First Class Pre-Sort to the Pioneer Valley. A number of new companies such as Westfield State College and BayPath College are now using this service. Zip 'N Sort now provides services to approximately 250 local businesses, assisting them in their mail service.

Our Family Support Department has worked very hard to find new resources for our families. We recently have started providing Adult Family Care services that will bring added financial support to many families.

Facing financial cuts, much emphasis has been made talking to our state legislators and officials. We continue to look for creative solutions and ways to advocate for the important work we do. We are proud of the many accomplishments made by our individuals during the past year and we are most grateful to our extremely dedicated and caring staff. Their hard work has made a huge difference in people's lives.

We look forward to the many exciting things that will happen in the next year to enhance the lives of those that we serve.

Joseph P. Woitkoski, Board President
Kenneth W. Singer, Executive Director

Agency Highlights

- Recipient of a \$500,000 federal Employment Grant administered through the University of Massachusetts Medical College
- Senator Ben Downing met with BCARC families on 5/11/09 to share their personal concerns about budget cuts
- Successfully launched the Adult Family Care Program
- Awarded a Three-Year Accreditation by CARF
- Sprout Film Festival was held on 4/05/09 at Images Cinema in Williamstown
- Attended Boston Statehouse Rally on 5/19/09 to protest Budget Cuts. Peter Yarrow & Paul Stokey (of Peter, Paul & Mary) were there to help our fight
- Opened two new TBI Programs in Westfield: Sammy Lane and North Road
- Opened new home on Woodland Road in Westfield through the Department of Developmental Services
- Broke ground and started construction on three new HUD projects: Kowchuk Drive and Hollow Road in Lanesboro and Gamwell Avenue in Pittsfield
- Autism Program (Saturday Sensory Integration Program) expanded and received grants to keep it operating
- Expanded Social Development Center to implement specialized day habilitation services for people with traumatic brain injuries
- Continued relationship with Good Dog Foundation to provide therapy dogs in each of the Day Hab programs
- BCARC Down Syndrome Family Support Group Buddy Walk was held on 10/03/09 with over 500 participants and raised over \$13,000
- Co-hosted Sib Shop Conference with several local agencies on 9/12 and 9/13/08
- Expanded Zip 'N Sort Mail Services to Pioneer Valley
- 9th Annual Legislative Breakfast and 12th Annual Disability Pride Day were held in 2008/2009
- Special Needs Pooled Trust currently over \$2.5 million
- Three educational seminars were presented by Zip 'N Sort Mail Services to inform customers of postal regulation changes
- Annual BCARC Golf Tournament raised \$40,000 to go directly to individuals served
- Presented six high school seniors interested in Human Services with scholarships valued at \$4,000

AEN Highlights

- Awarded a \$500,000 collaboration grant to improve the employment of individuals with disabilities in Berkshire County through UMASS Medical School
- Awarded a \$100,000 United Way grant for the employment of individuals with disabilities in partnership with the United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) of Berkshire County
- Provided a wide range of effective employment services to over 160 individuals
- Conducted successful school to career services for 16 students from 7 local school districts

individuals in their quest to identify and realize their chosen lifestyles.

Day Program Highlights

- Started specialized day habilitation services at the Social Development Center for people with Traumatic Brain Injury
- Participated in a Statehouse Rally to advocate for no funding cuts to DDS/DMA services
- Volunteered services that include Meals on Wheels and Elder Services shopping

Residential Highlights

- Opened a new home in Westfield for two individuals who lived in a small apartment
- Improved housing for four individuals who live in the community by assisting them in finding new apartments
- Supported 132 individuals in a range of housing options that promote health and safety, while maintaining community involvement
- Continued to address accessible housing and work with individuals with aging issues
- Provide support for 24 residences, 1 apartment, 1 supported living placement and an individual who owns his own home
- Created a Falls Prevention Training Manual and Full Body Check Procedure to be used in all programs. All staff will be trained in the format
- Several individuals went on various vacations: a cruise to the Caribbean, Hawaii, Florida and Cape Cod

Quality Assurance Highlights

- In an effort to maintain high quality services and Agency compliance with licensing and accreditation standards, conducted comprehensive office and onsite record and safety audits at all 32 residential sites (including Traumatic Brain Injury homes), Respite House, all 3 Day Habilitation programs, AEN individuals and Zip 'N Sort Mail Services
- Successfully coordinated preparation for 2009 CARF survey resulting in Agency receiving 3 year accreditation in all surveyed services
- Continued to participate in the monthly 2-day new staff in-service training, taught 24 CPR and 13 First Aid (FA) classes, and is in the process of preparing 6 more CPR/FA instructors for the Agency
- Began using Task Management software to ensure more thorough and comprehensive follow up on Quality Assurance report recommendations

Traumatic Brain Injury Highlights

- Opened two new houses for eight men with TBI in Westfield
- Provided Individual Aide Services for an individual living independently in the community
- One individual took continuing education courses at Berkshire Community College
- Individuals participated in community volunteer activities, including Housatonic Beautiful, Pittsfield Mayor's Office, Berkshire United Way
- One individual took her first vacation of her whole life

Clinical and Nursing Highlights

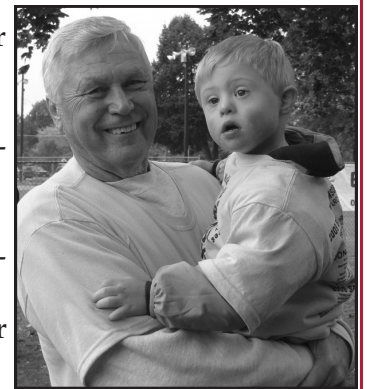
- Provided CPR and first aid training to over 450 staff, who take those skills with them wherever they go
- Nurses worked with physicians and other medical personnel throughout the state to coordinate services for complicated health situations
- Clinical staff worked with the Brien Center and other community providers to ensure quality clinical supports for individuals who need them

Zip 'N Sort Mail Services Highlights

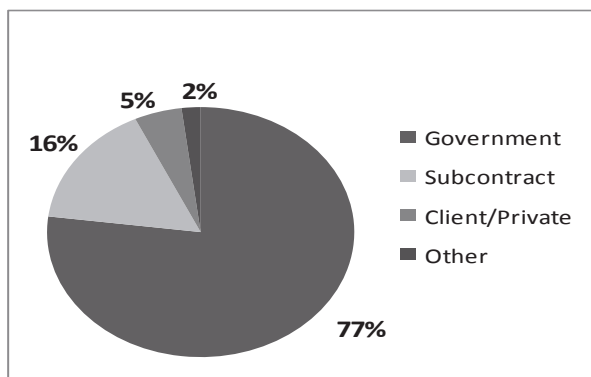
- Maintained market share during a huge business decline
- Now serve over 250 customers
- Initiated expansion of first class presort services to the Pioneer Valley. Positioned well for moderate growth in the next few years
- Maintained employment opportunities for 18 individuals with disabilities
- Continued to assist customers to make sense of the rapidly changing postal regulations

Advocacy Highlights

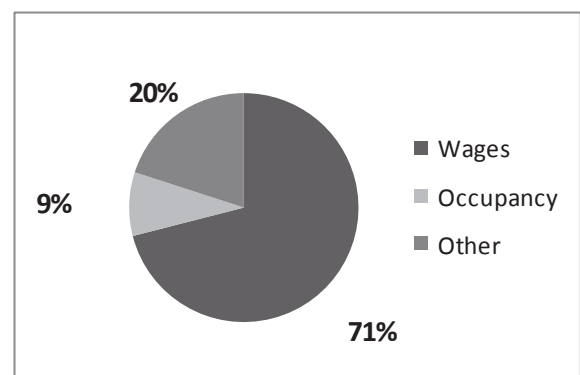
- Interfaced with over 400 families or individuals to provide Human Rights training, advocacy, respite, Adult Family Care, workshops, support groups and social activities
- Continued to meet the need for emergency relief and planned respite for families at BCARC's Respite House
- BCARC Down Syndrome Family Group hosted third annual Buddy Walk of the Berkshires, generating over \$13,000
- BCARC Down Syndrome Family Group sponsored the second annual Sprout Film Festival
- Partnered with Community Resources for People with Autism, BFAIR, Central Berkshire Regional School District Parent Advisory Council, United Cerebral Palsy of Berkshire County, and Pittsfield Public Schools Parent Advisory Council in the Berkshire Collaborative Workshops
- Provided educational advocacy services for families in Berkshire County
- Berkshire and Southern Berkshire Self-Advocates attended regional conferences and events
- Increased Pooled Trust membership by 15 new accounts and Pooled Trust value to 2.5 million dollars
- Continue to market special Needs Pooled Trust across the state of Massachusetts
- Chaired Operations for 12th Annual Berkshire Disability Pride Day; assisted with 8th Annual BDPD Legislative Breakfast
- Processed over 245 Individual Support plans and all related documentation for individuals supported by BCARC
- Organized staff appreciation events and award recognition
- Presented DDS-approved Basic Human Rights Training to all directors, assistant directors and Human Rights Officers
- Developed new marketing materials for Advocacy Department initiatives
- Supported full community integration for individuals by continuing to promote and market the *Citizen Advocacy Program*
- Launched BCARC's *Adult Family Care Program*, a caregiving program for individuals with disabilities, and hired a Case Manager and Registered Nurse for the program
- Continued advocacy efforts for families by attending rallies and holding meetings with local legislators



Income 2009



Expenses 2009



Berkshire County Arc Board of Directors

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Kenneth W. Singer
Executive Director