



ARC Life



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WITH CHANGE COMES NEW OPPORTUNITY

Due to circumstances brought about by the pandemic, it has proven to be a turbulent year with plenty of change and uncertainty for all of us. Alexander "Xan" Bacon, a former chef at Nolan's Restaurant, and MJ, a former employee of Nolan's who is supported by Ontario ARC, found

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Ontario ARC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to assisting individuals with disabilities or other challenges and their families. We offer personalized services and supports that foster life-long fulfillment through active citizenship and enriched community living.

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On the Cover: Xan and MJ, former coworkers at Nolan's Restaurant, begin a new chapter together at KiX ON MAIN.

MESSAGE FROM ANN SCHEETZ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Ann Scheetz

As Summer comes to a close, we feel fortunate for all we have been able to accomplish despite the current climate and uncertainties surrounding our field. We feel thankful to be part of such a wonderful community that supports our mission of fostering lifelong fulfillment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities or other challenges through active citizenship and enriched community living. In this edition of ARC Life, you will read about the community connections

that make Ontario ARC a truly remarkable place – from a special bond formed through our Community Experience program, to graduating from college, and celebrating a 100th birthday, there is much to celebrate here at Ontario ARC.

First, we are proud to congratulate our recent College Experience graduate from Finger Lakes Community College, Rob R., along with the rest of the 2021 class. Rob displayed a tremendous drive and personal commitment to accomplish this milestone, and we are incredibly proud of his achievements. Please join me in congratulating him on a fantastic job.

We also celebrate the individuals we support for spending countless hours giving back to their communities. Whether volunteering at local churches, delivering Meals on Wheels, collecting donations, or helping to clean and sanitize donated items, the people we support are always sharing their time to help make a difference in the lives of many. As you read on, you will learn more about the impact our volunteers continue to have throughout the community.

You will also read about an amazing bond formed between MJ, a former member of our Community Experience program, and Alexander “Xan” Bacon, her close friend and current employer at KiX ON MAIN Restaurant. Community connections like these allow the individuals we support to truly flourish and become one with their communities.

We would like to congratulate Anne N., a participant at our Silver Connections program, on celebrating her 100th birthday in July. We are grateful to have gotten to celebrate such an incredible milestone together. The special occasion included a musical performance, cake and other birthday goodies as specially requested by Anne.

Lastly, we would like to thank our residential families for donating more than \$8,000 for home upgrades and renovations at Ontario ARC's 16 residential homes. Your commitment to those we support is truly inspiring and we are incredibly grateful for your continued support.

As Fall approaches, we are looking forward to all the season has to offer. Stay tuned for more amazing stories happening every day at Ontario ARC, and be on the lookout for details about our upcoming events! You can learn more at www.ontarioarc.org/events.

Warm Regards,

Ann Scheetz, Executive Director, Ontario ARC

With Change Comes New Opportunity, continued from cover

that out firsthand when a series of events led them apart, but later wound up bringing them back together again.

MJ is a former participant of Ontario ARC's Community Experience program, where she met Xan during one of her internships at Nolan's. She really enjoyed working in that atmosphere and she excelled at her duties. Xan served as her supervisor, and after spending a couple years together at Nolan's, the two developed a unique bond that would transcend their time together at the restaurant.

"MJ's great," said Bacon. "We've had a few people from Ontario ARC come in the past, but MJ was definitely the best," he continued. "She enjoys being here, and we really enjoy having her."



Alex "Xan" Bacon (right) and MJ (left) sharing a laugh as they fold silverware at KiX ON MAIN.

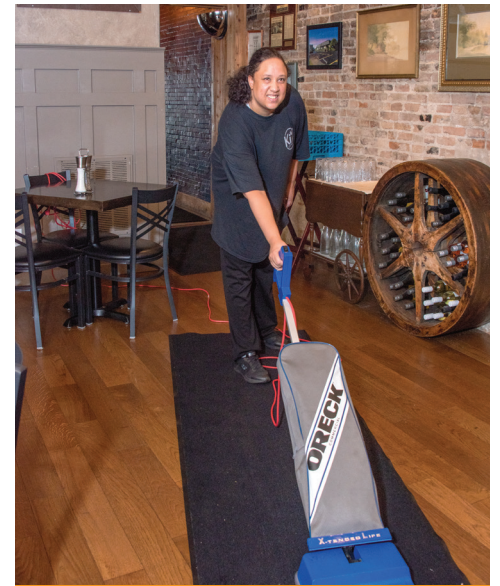
After spending more than 10 years at Nolan's, Xan decided he was ready for a change. After getting married last October, he and his wife decided they wanted to open up their own restaurant in Downtown Canandaigua. Xan left Nolan's and ended up opening KiX ON MAIN. Around that time, Xan discovered that MJ was out of work due to the pandemic, and he knew just what to do.

"When we finally opened, MJ was the first person we thought of," said Bacon. "My kitchen was small, so we knew we were going to have to tweak some things. We ended up creating a whole new position for MJ, and we contacted Ontario ARC to help get her started as soon as possible," he continued.

MJ jumped at the opportunity to reunite with Xan and get back to work. She is now

happy to be back doing what she enjoys most: working in a restaurant setting with people she cares for. As part of her newly created position, MJ now spends her workdays folding silver wear, vacuuming, washing windows, and doing other prep work at KiX ON MAIN to accommodate the daily lunch rush.

"I wanted to take care of MJ – she does a great job and she's wonderful to be around," said Bacon. "We love MJ, we love Ontario ARC, and we're happy to help our community," he continued. "I'll always have a place for her, and she'll be here as long as she wants." ✨



MJ spends her shifts assisting with prep work and light cleaning to accommodate the daily lunch crowd at KiX ON MAIN.

JET CONNECTIONS FINDING NEW WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY

On May 28, participants from Ontario ARC's JET Connections program assisted with stuffing fundraising envelopes at Canandaigua Emergency Squad. They truly enjoyed the experience and welcomed the opportunity to support their community.

Over the past several months, our JET Connections participants have stayed busy volunteering at various sites throughout the community, including local churches,

libraries, the Salvation Army and Bloomfield Shoppe. They have assisted with a wide range of activities including helping clean and sterilize toys, sorting donations by item and size, stocking shelves for those receiving support at CareNet, and assisting with light general cleaning at various sites. JET Connections flights have also been out delivering meals, along with special monthly gifts created by program participants, to community members in need, demonstrating the program's commitment and passion for helping to make our community a better place.

It has been a difficult year, but our JET Connections program is always finding new and creative ways to get involved in our community while also providing

valuable, firsthand job skills and training opportunities that will help the individuals we support achieve their goals. Stay tuned for more JET Connections adventures! ✨



Individuals from Ontario ARC's JET Connections Program and members of Canandaigua Emergency Squad after spending a day volunteering together.

COLLEGE EXPERIENCE GRADUATION AT FLCC

Ontario ARC would like to congratulate Rob R., a member of Ontario ARC's College Experience program, on his recent graduation from our program at Finger Lakes Community College!

Rob was one of more than 300 FLCC graduates from 2020 and 2021 who chose to participate in FLCC's commencement, which was divided into nine ceremonies on May 21 and May 22 to adhere to COVID-19 protocols. Students lined up with their friends and families, were allowed to take off their masks on stage, and were given extra time to take photos. It was a wonderful day marked by incredible achievements.

Ontario ARC's College Experience program, with locations at Finger Lakes Community College and Hobart and William Smith Colleges, is an innovative approach to post-secondary education for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities or other challenges. These college campus environments provide personal growth opportunities surrounding work, life,

and social skills with the end result being employment, just like traditional college students.

"Rob has stated that he wants a job for as long as I can remember," said Wendy Nelson, Manager of Pre-Employment Programs at Ontario ARC. "My job is to support each person with whatever is needed – visual tools, contracts, calendar tracking, etc. – so I gave Rob the control of his own 'calendar' action steps. He was to have this chart and know what he needed to master in order to move on to the college program. HE did it, and within one year he was at FLCC," she continued.

"Rob accepted the challenge and was able to master the program's benchmarks. He was so happy and proud of this achievement, and his whole team celebrated right along with him," said Nelson. "Rob has matured these past few years, and he has proven that if you are having a hard time, all you have to do is apply yourself and you can achieve your dreams," she continued.

Congratulations to Rob and all of the other graduates on the outstanding accomplishment – we can't wait to see what the future holds for you! ✨

To learn more about Ontario ARC's College Experience program, please contact JoEllen Schaefer at (585) 919-2118 or jschaefer@ontarioarc.org.



Rob R. smiles during his recent graduation from FLCC's College Experience Program.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS ARTWORK AT NORTHWEST MUTUAL



Ontario ARC is teaming up with Northwest Mutual to showcase the artistic abilities of Ontario ARC's Creative Expressions program. Artwork created by participants will now be displayed in even more locations throughout our community after Greg Constantino, a member of Ontario ARC's Community Advisory Board, reached out to the agency about displaying artwork at his Northwest Mutual offices in Pittsford, NY. We thought of no better way to highlight the incredible work done by the talented artists of our Creative Expressions program.

We are grateful for the support from Northwest Mutual and our Community Advisory Board, and this serves as only the latest example of the board's unwavering commitment to always finding new ways to support Ontario ARC. The artwork displayed at Northwest Mutual will be available for purchase, and purchased artwork will then be replaced by a new piece created by one of Ontario ARC's Creative Expressions artists. ✨

If you are interested in getting involved, or if you would like to learn more about our Creative Expressions program, please contact JoEllen Schaefer at (585) 919-2118 or jschaefer@ontarioarc.org.

SILVER CONNECTIONS PARTICIPANT CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

One of Ontario ARC's Silver Connections program participants, Anne N. celebrated her 100th birthday on July 16 at Ontario ARC's Eberhardt Center. Staff and other program participants planned a special day for Anne, with music performed by Ontario ARC's Music Specialist, Nathan Merrill, and plenty of birthday goodies, including apple cider as requested by Anne. It was a wonderful day and a milestone we were thrilled to be able to celebrate together.

Silver Connections is a social adult day program operated by Ontario ARC. The program provides a welcoming and caring environment for aging adults. Families can rest assured that their loved ones are socially engaged, supported, and safe throughout the day. The program helps people maintain their independence with access to social activities and a team of experienced staff members

providing the quality care and compassion loved ones deserve.

Silver Connections is a perfect fit for anyone who wants to maximize their potential through socialization, activities, and professional supervision. ✨

To learn more about Silver Connections, please contact JoEllen Schaefer at (585) 919-2118 or jschaefer@ontarioarc.org.



Anne N. and Ontario ARC Silver Connections staff members celebrate her special day.

RESIDENTIAL FAMILIES DONATE OVER \$8,000 FOR UPGRADES AT RESIDENTIAL HOMES

As Ontario ARC continues to advocate against budgetary cuts, it was recently suggested by members of our Community Advisory Board that we try implementing a registry for items needed at our residential homes. Residential staff members then compiled wish lists for each of our 16 homes throughout Ontario County. Once the lists were complete, the agency reached out to residential families requesting support to help purchase the items needed. We received a wonderful response and an overwhelming show of support.

In total, the agency received over \$8,000 worth of donations used to purchase new items ranging from furniture, dining room sets, accessories for the homes (such as end

tables, window treatments, etc.), to flat screen televisions and new carpet/flooring.

"We are incredibly grateful for the tremendous show of support from our residential families," said Michele Wistner, Director of Development at Ontario ARC.

"As we continue to face budgetary cuts in the current climate, it is truly inspiring that our residential families stepped up to make the needs of those we support a top priority." ✨



Donna T., a resident at Ontario ARC's White Springs Road home.

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LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY THROUGH PLANNED GIVING

As we navigate these difficult times in our field, we are making a concerted effort to solicit Planned Gifts from our friends and community partners. Planned Giving offers donors a broad range of options for supporting the Friends of Ontario ARC Foundation, plus the potential for significant financial benefits and tax advantages. It is a great way to help secure Ontario ARC's future while protecting your assets at the same time.

We have had to make some extremely difficult decisions in order to keep the individuals we support and our staff safe. By doing so, we have experienced a significant decrease in revenue, and we need your support now more than ever. Please consider leaving a lasting legacy through Planned Giving at Ontario ARC. For more information, please contact Michele Wistner at (585) 919-2156 or mwistner@ontarioarc.org. ✨