



The Arc™

Ridge Area

Annual Report 2015



WELCOME!

Please take the time to review this Annual Report and help us celebrate the accomplishments that were made possible by our caring staff, volunteers, community members, and advocacy groups at the national, state, and local levels.

Accomplishments such as those made by Lisa Williams who won the Direct Support Professional of the Year; Eva Monk who achieved a life-long dream of going on a cruise; employees who enabled us to celebrate one full year of no lost work time from accidents or injuries; The AKtion Club of Highlands County with their numerous community service projects; Special STARS who reached out to 400 children and adults with disabilities; and area employers who hired individuals with disabilities.

Issues that we will be watching in the coming year are The ABLE Act, a new home and community based rule, and the results of The Arc of Florida's legislative priorities.

The Arc of the US and The Arc of Florida continued to represent the needs of individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at the national and state levels. In Washington while The Arc US worked on legislation in Congress to pass The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act, The Arc of Florida worked with the Florida Legislature to pass legislation to create Florida ABLE Inc. ABLE plans will allow many individuals with disabilities to save for their disability related needs without endangering their other disability related benefits. This will assist individuals to be more self-sufficient and be able to better meet their own needs. Plans should be available to Floridians in the summer of 2016.

The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services promulgated a new home and community based rule this past year. This rule has the potential to bring major changes to services in the community which are funded by Medicaid.

Although the Florida Legislature supported several of The Arc of Florida's requests in 2015, it did not support a provider rate increase. As a result, The Arc of Florida made a provider rate increase the focus of their legislative platform for 2016. And on that note, we look forward to the future.

Rhonda Beckman, CEO

Board of Directors

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Donna Doubleday - 2nd Vice Chair
Manuel Cortazal - Secretary
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Ralph Meyers - Advocate Liaison
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Twenty Year Employment Anniversary

Rhonda Beckman - Chief Executive Officer
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South Florida State College (SFSC) has involved their faculty, students and administration in helping individuals with disabilities. As a result of SFSC's encouragement of their faculty to serve the community, Ridge Area Arc has benefited by having several faculty members serve on The Arc Board of Directors and Arc Foundation Board of Trustees.

The SFSC Volleyball Coach Kim Crawford has had her volleyball team come out to Arc to teach volleyball in the spring on our campus for at least the past 8 years. Just recently this past January they developed a volleyball program for Special STARS. In return, Special STARS athletes attend a Panther Volleyball Game in the fall to cheer them on to victory. They make it a special night for the athletes by posing for pictures.

The SFSC Baseball Coach & Athletic Director Rick Hitt has involved his team with Special STARS by hosting a Tailgating Party and Baseball Game for the past 4 years. A special athlete is always invited to throw out the first pitch of the game, meet and greet the players and get their autographs, run the bases with the players, and meet the mascot and pose for pictures.

SFSC's Nursing Program receives hands-on sensitivity training at Ridge Area Arc. This training has been going on for 6 years. Nurses get an opportunity to meet and work with people with disabilities. Many of them have volunteered in Special STARS events or even helped with Aktion Club events.



People First! Advocate

Honors an individual, group, or organization which consistently demonstrates a leadership role in the advocacy of people with developmental disabilities.

Melody Taylor

Melody Taylor has a long history of advocating and working for individuals with developmental disabilities. She worked in the field of Developmental Disabilities as a provider since 1974 and then in several positions with The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) since 2006. Her various positions included: Human Services Counselor III, Human Services Program Analyst/Licensing Specialist, and her current position of Human Services Program Specialist.

Duties with APD that have had the most impact on Ridge Area Arc include: licensing and monitoring group homes, technical assistance, follow-up on Incident Reports, background screening checks for group home staff, attend quarterly Delmarva quality assurance meetings, and maintaining Disaster Plans for group homes.

Melody's willingness to answer questions is greatly appreciated. If she doesn't know the answer, she gets it. She has been a help to our program and human resources staff for many years during her position with licensing. During LTRC monitoring Melody is always willing to give input into an issue of how to best handle the situation for the betterment of Arc and more importantly, the individuals that we jointly serve.

She questions issues, not willing to accept the first, easy explanation. She sees both sides of issues or disputes and helps to get what the individual really wants. Melody's ability to actively listen to the individuals served enables her to take a lead role in the advocacy of individuals with developmental disabilities.



Arc Hero of The Year

Recognizes an individual or group who has provided on-going services and/or resources to promote Arc's mission.

Florida Department of Transportation

The Federal government allocates funds to the state of Florida each year for the Section 5310 Program. The Federal Transit Administration's goal of the Section 5310 Program is to provide assistance in meeting the needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities where public transit services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has been designated by the Governor to administer the Section 5310 Program. Ridge Area Arc then applies for operating and/or capital assistance each year to meet the Arc's transportation needs.

Operating funds were received the past several years while vehicles were received over the past twenty years or more. In fiscal year 2014-2015 alone Ridge Area Arc received \$25,706 in operating funds and two wheelchair vans with a total value of \$145,677. \$47,616 was received in operating funds in the prior fiscal year.

FDOT's staff of professionals is there to provide unlimited supports and technical assistance so that Arc employees can successfully maneuver through the entire grant cycle from application to receipt of the funds and/or vehicles.



Florida Department of Transportation

Volunteer of the Year Award

Acknowledges a person who has the desire to elevate the lives of people with developmental disabilities and has actions and commitment to make change happen.

Julia Brock

Julia is unique in several ways but perhaps the most notable is that she was employed by Ridge Area Arc first as a Companion and then as a Resale Assistant. After retiring, Julia returned as a volunteer at the Resale Store.

A hard worker with a high energy level, Julia is constantly on the move and always totally wrapped up in the task at hand. More than once she has been startled by someone talking to her because she was so focused. She is knowledgeable about antiques and has helped many times to determine the value of an item.

Thanks to Julia, the Arc Resale Store window and store displays are always attractive. Using items found in the store she creates displays based on holidays or other special occasions. The store manager is most appreciative of Julia's talent and interest in completing the displays.

Several years ago Julia took the initiative to find outside sources to buy our overabundance of donated flower vases. Ridge Florist continues the relationship and Julia added Jimmy's Florist during the past year. She gathers the vases and drops them off to the florists. Julia also found an outlet for items that the store cannot sell such as medical supplies. She boxes these items and takes them to Samaritans Touch and Doctors Without Borders.



Residential Consumer of The Year

Charles Hodgkinson



Charlie has been a part of the Cornell Group “family” since May of 2011. When he first joined the Arc he had demonstrated very limited communication skills. He used some non-verbal communication, such as various facial expressions and the use of a tablet. A number of goals were established in order to help Charlie improve his communication skills with staff and peers.

Through all of these goals and the assistance of staff working with Charlie on a daily basis, communication has come a long way. He indicates his wants and needs without prompting through the use of pointing at objects, pictures for choosing where he wants to go, and at times will even use single syllable words when prompted by his group home staff and peers.

Charlie has become more independent with his personal hygiene, shaving his entire face thoroughly. He seems to enjoy working hard to perfect other tasks with the assistance of staff.

He lets staff know when he wants to participate in an activity, especially STARS, which is very active and socially orientated. Charlie very much enjoys going fishing or participating in races with his brother, John who assists him.

Charlie loves to greet people with a smile on his face and a wave of his arm and perhaps a hello.

Community Employment Consumer of The Year

Leigh-Ann Carrero



Leigh-Ann is a great example of what hard work and dedication is in finding the right job for the right person. She was dedicated and determined to find employment in Highlands County, but wanted to make sure the job was a good fit for her.

After many meetings with her job coach, applications on-line, phone calls, and interviews, Leigh-Ann landed a job at Office Depot in Sebring. Her duties are working the cash register, stocking shelves, and assisting customers find the supplies they need.

Leigh-Ann is very independent. She drove herself for many months to meet with her job coach and search for employment opportunities. She never missed a scheduled meeting and was always on time. Now Leigh-Ann is excited to be driving herself to work.

Leigh-Ann also works well with Heather Padgett, her manager at Office Depot in scheduling her hours and other work related issues.

Leigh-Ann takes great pride in her work and the responsibilities she now has.

Supported Living Consumer of The Year

Mark Anderson



Mark had two important goals for 2015: learning to be safe in his community and developing and staying within a budget. Through Mark's hard work and commitment he has achieved those goals.

Mark, a very friendly and social person, enjoys walking to a local night club. With training from staff, Mark is safely walking (wearing clothing that can be seen by drivers after dark), not accepting rides from people who have been drinking, and being aware of his surroundings. This has enabled Mark to make and continue social connections with his friends at the club while practicing safe travel.

Mark has a paycheck that is deposited into his checking account which must be used to help pay his bills. Mark and his coach worked on identifying ways of saving money for some things that he would like. He has built a nest egg for unforeseen issues or occasional wants. He is also working toward saving money for a computer.

Harold (Bill) Wheeler



Coming from working at the Ridge Area Arc Resale store, Bill adapted himself instantly to several different roles with his new work team. He is a hard worker who not only works on the janitorial crew and lawn maintenance crew, but makes an overall contribution to the ADT program. He really enjoys mowing, operating the weed eater, and being outdoors. Bill takes great pride in his work.

Bill never hesitates to lend a hand to any of our consumers to help them in whatever situation may arise. He has worked on becoming a mentor for his peers and has shown improvement in getting to know them. Bill also assists his peers with learning tasks they may not understand or yet know how to do that he excels in. He is the ultimate team player who will do whatever it takes to get a job done.

Bill always has a smile on his face and is always willing to strike up a conversation with anyone who has time to chat. He has worked hard on his goal to improve his social skills. At home he enjoys watching Monday night wrestling.

Christa Martin



Christa just joined The Arc's Adult Day Training program in April of 2013 when she moved to the Lotela Group Home. She appeared withdrawn and very anxious. At times she would sit quietly and not interact with anyone.

Christa has made great strides this past year and is displaying many new talents and efforts. Through the use of sensory stimulation, especially the manipulation of beads and other items, she has flourished with her ability to participate and focus. Now she enjoys laughing and joking.

She loves to try new things and concentrates so hard to accomplish them. Her smile is contagious and she literally lights up the room. She enjoys music and loves to look at pictures in magazines where she studies the pictures intently and gets some great laughs by doing it. Christa is a very bright and energetic person who now seems to enjoy the company of others.

Samuel Clegg



Sam has become a very valuable member of the Arc Resale Store team. When he first started at Resale his attempts to assist the customers often involved excessive small talk and trying to be too helpful. Arc staff helped Sam by coaching him on being polite and helpful to the customers. They also gave him more work assignments on the sales floor and in the receiving area.

As a result of spending time on the sales floor each day he is now very helpful to the customers and to the individuals who drop off donations. Sam greets customers in a courteous manner, asks if they need assistance such as helping them find items in the store or take their purchases to their cars. If his assistance is not needed he lets the customers shop and he moves on with his other duties. He offers assistance to donors and will help them to unload their donations if needed.

Sam assists the store in many ways. He gathers and returns carts to the proper place, helps the cashier by bagging items, empties the clothes hanger bin in the back of the store, and takes out the trash. Sam also helps restock, straighten items to keep the store neat, and helps the driver with pickups when needed.

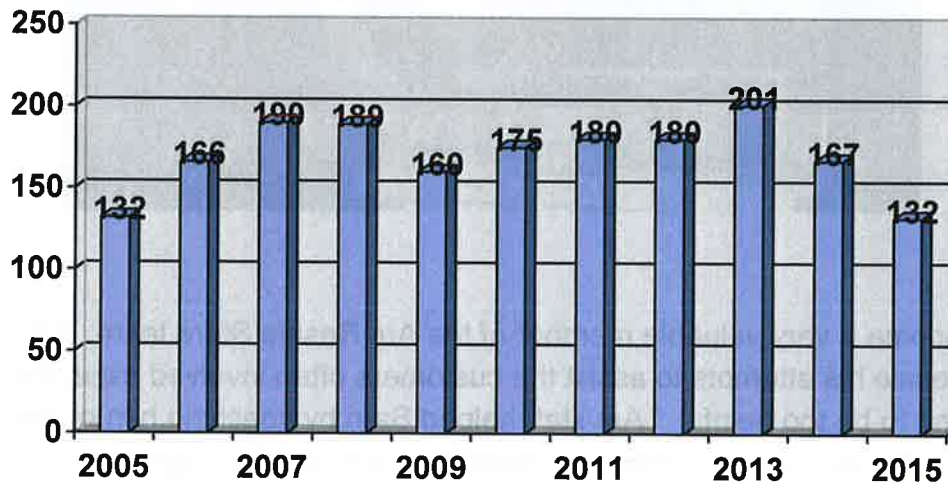


Outcome Measurement Report 2015 Annual Summary

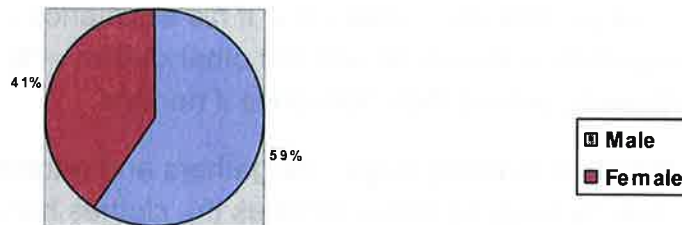
AGENCY OVERVIEW:

The following charts reflect the 2015 Agency Overview for Ridge Area Arc.

Number of People Served:



Gender:



Board of Directors

Dee Dee Harstine - Chair
Kimberly Batty-Herbert - Vice Chair
Donna Doubleday - 2nd Vice Chair
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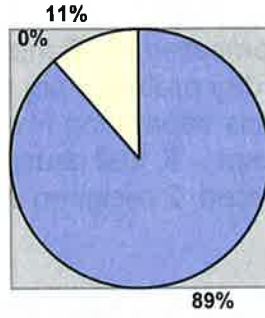
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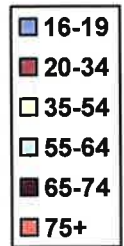
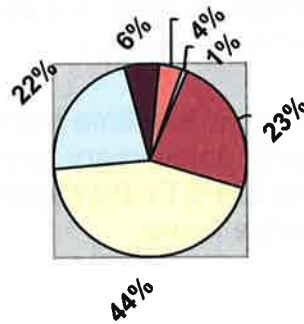
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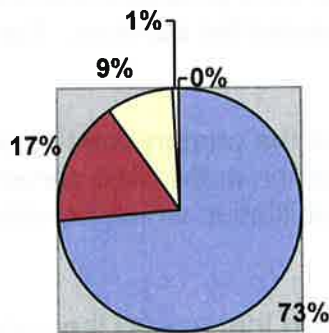
Service Area:



Age:



Ethnicity:



EMPLOYEES

Ridge Area Arc hired 11 new employees in 2015, down from 23 in 2014, and had 14 employment separations compared to 18 the prior year. Three employees were terminated within the 90 day probationary period and one was permanently laid off. The other 10 employees separating from employment left for either retirement – 0, other employment – 5, just cause – 0, relocated – 1, or no reason given - 4. Of those who separated, 2 resigned with notice and 8 resigned without notice.

82% of Ridge Area Arc's workforce has been employed for more than two years. 57% have been employed five or more years while nearly 9% have been employed less than a year.

Lisa Williams, Queen Palm Group Home Manager received the Direct Support Professional of the Year award at The Arc of Florida state convention in October. Lisa, a long term employee, was selected as a result of her advocacy efforts for the men who reside at Queen Palm. Lisa is one example of the many wonderful, caring individuals who work at Ridge Area Arc.

In 2015 we celebrated one year of no lost time due to workplace accidents. We anticipate celebrating our two year anniversary very soon. We believe that the efforts of our employees and the \$AFETY PAY\$ program will result in lowered Worker's Compensation fees in the future.

PERSONS SERVED

In 2015 132 individuals were served which is a decrease of 35 from 2014. This data does not include Special STARS or AKtion Club members. Supported Employment experienced the largest decrease (19) which was a result of including only those to who, services were provided and billed for rather than everyone who was referred and accepted for services. Each of the other programs decreased slightly.

The Medicaid Waiver continues to be the primary funding source, providing funding for services for nearly 73% of the individuals served. The second largest funding source was Vocational Rehabilitation which provided funding for 9% of the individuals served.

The cumulative agency report revealed that overall the consumers were 100% satisfied with the services offered by Ridge Area Arc. Stakeholders, predominately the funding provider, were satisfied with Ridge Area Arc at 100%. Ridge Area Arc achieved the goal for persons achieving the goals on their support plan. The goal was set for 80% and cumulative programs averaged 86%.

COMPARISON OF CUMULATIVE AGENCY OUTCOMES

| Comparative Report for Cumulative Agency | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| | | RESULTS | | | | | | |
| | PROGRAM OBJECTIVE | 2010 Data | 2011 Data | 2012 Data | 2013 Data | 2014 Data | 2015 Data | Difference 2014-2015 |
| 1 | Persons achieve goals on their support plan or make improvements toward their goals during the year. | 78% | 77% | 80% | 82% | 93% | 86% | -7% |
| 2 | Persons served are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed. | 96% | 99% | 99% | 100% | 99% | 100% | +1% |
| 3 | Stakeholders are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed. | 100% | 99% | 99% | 100% | 99% | 100% | +1% |

ADULT DAY TRAINING (ADT)

102 individuals were served in the ADT program during 2015 which is a combination of the Training Center (formerly known as Ridge Industries) and Avon Park Resale. This was a decrease of 9 individuals, primarily from the Training Center, compared to 2014.

As a part of Arc's Strategic Plan, strategies were developed to limit the number of consumers earning wages in the ADT programs and thus reducing the liability to the Arc. During 2015, additional measures were taken to continue with this plan. The Avon Park Resale site reduced the number of consumers earning wages down to 8. Ridge Industries provided paid work opportunities such as janitorial, lawn maintenance, and horticulture to 10 individuals.

The reduction of paid work resulted in very few negative comments and at least two positive results. It opened up the opportunity for those no longer working to learn new skills by going into the three class rotation between the

computer lab, arts & crafts and a recreation & fitness room. It also gave the few consumers who stayed on the janitorial crew the opportunity to take on more responsibility as workers and to increase their ability to multitask and meet deadlines.

The plant nursery was closed and janitorial training reduced when Arc lost two positions provided by South Florida State College. SFSC lost their funding for the two positions when the state budget for the adults with disabilities was slashed by the Governor.

The Training Center opened an exercise room which gave the consumers a chance to participate in daily endurance and cardiovascular exercise, learn about nutrition and healthy living, as well as play some games. Additional employment related training focused on hospitality job functions such as rolling silverware in napkins, making beds, washing and folding towels, and ironing.

Consumers enjoyed going into the community to volunteer at Nu-Hope Elder Care, trips to Highlands Hammock State Park, Avon Park High School Talent Show, monthly birthday lunches at area restaurants and walks to South Florida State College. There were several outdoor fun activities including the Wacky Olympics and volleyball clinics led by SFSC volleyball players. A volunteer came monthly to play the piano and lead a sing-a-long.

16 individuals in the ADT program participated in Arc's Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services (PRS) program. PRS was offered for two hours, three days per week and was funded by Medicaid. PRS served individuals with a dual diagnosis of a developmental disability and a mental health disability. The goal is to provide training and assistance in a wide variety of activities to reduce the recipient's mental health disability and restore the best possible functional level for that person. Goals specific to the PRS program were not established.

Projected Service Outcomes Achieved

Persons served are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 99% (no change).

Stakeholders are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey are addressed – 100% (no change).

As per the services requested on the support plan, persons served are provided with necessary supports to achieve the support plan goal(s) – 88% (down from 90%).

Persons served annually who have a stated support plan goal to be employed in the community, have been provided with specific information, opportunities for exploration, and the necessary support to make progress toward this goal on supported employment, competitive employment opportunities, or volunteer opportunities – 100% (no change).

Persons are assisted in being healthy and free from injury, abuse, or neglect.

- a) Number of medication error reports – 4. Not achieved – goal was set at zero.
- b) Average percent of persons who, as a part of accident/injury/exposure reports, have appropriate follow-up actions – 100% (no change).

Quality Improvement Plan:

The goal of zero medication errors during the year was not achieved. The medication errors were primarily due to medications not being brought to the ADT in a timely manner and/or ADT staff overlooking the morning delivery of medication. The following corrective action was implemented: the number of ADT staff assigned to receive medications was limited to only two so they could be responsible for tracking down medications if they had not been received.

RESIDENTIAL HABILITATION TRAINING:

34 individuals (down from 35) were served in the residential program for 2015. One group home resident successfully transitioned to living on his own in an apartment with support from a Supported Living coach. Another resident returned to Puerto Rico to live in a group home to be closer to his family. Another individual that has resided with us for almost 10 years was moved to another facility in August due to the need of skilled nursing care. Lotela Group Home welcomed a resident in March that was well known to us as she has attended ADT for an extended period of time.

Currently, 23% of our residents are over 65 with another 35% between ages 55 to 64. Our oldest resident turned 80 years old. As the years progress, the health and medical issues of our residents increases requiring our staff to be more competent in the needs of elderly residents including those with dementia.

Accessible transportation on Ridge Area Arc's vans will continue to be an issue as the individuals' mobility continues to decrease. Two additional vans with lifts were purchased through FDOT grant funds.

Hiring qualified staff in the residential program has been difficult for the past 5 years. Due to the hiring requirements set by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, finding staff to meet the requirements continues to be a challenge. Additionally, once staff members are hired many of the staff are not able to pass the rigorous trainings that they are required to do for the job. Another potential

hiring issue is the schedules of each of the group homes requiring individuals to be available in the later evening and weekend hours when the residents are home. Several existing staff members have requested a transfer off the night shift.

The menus created by a licensed dietician in 2014 resulted in drastically increased costs to the group homes. A different dietician was engaged in 2015 and while still providing meals created to meet all of the nutritional requirements, the menus have reduced the costs and still improved the quality of the daily meals.

Recognizing the importance of residents participating in a range of social and physical activities throughout the year, STARS contributed to the overall health and social life for all. STARS sports activities included softball, tennis, basketball, swimming, bowling, billiards, volleyball, and Track & Field. Social events included performances at the Highlands Little Theatre and South Florida State College as well as attending volleyball and softball games at SFSC.

Several of the homes have hosted parties for different events, such as a Halloween party with a haunted house that was designed and assembled with the help of staff and residents. Super Bowl parties were held in several of the group homes. Group Home residents do various community outings throughout the week and on weekends, included in this is their personal shopping, dining out, and going to the movies.

When a new go-cart facility opened in Avon Park, one individual chose to celebrate his birthday with several invited friends at "12 minutes of Sebring". This was his first experience at driving a go-cart. This same resident was reunited with his family in Miami. Staff worked with the train station and the resident's family to ensure a safe and enjoyable event. Another resident was surprised by a visit from his mother and sister whom he had not seen for several years. The visit was a great success and Christmas presents were given to the resident from family for the first time in many years. The mother was very pleased with the care that was shown and given in the house by staff. In July a number of residents attended Camp Thunderbird in Apopka, located NW of Orlando. They stayed for 5 days and experienced camping, doing arts and crafts, outside activities, and making new friends.

Projected Service Outcomes Achieved

Persons served are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 100% (up from 99%).

Stakeholders are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 100% (up from 97%).

As per the services requested on the support plan, persons served are provided with necessary supports to achieve the support plan goal(s) – 95% (down from 98%).

Persons are allowed maximum freedom of choice, including being informed about rights, service options, and making all possible decisions with regard to the conduct of their lives – 92% (down from 93%).

Persons are assisted in being healthy and free from injury, abuse, or neglect.

- a) Number of medication error reports – 23. Not achieved – goal was set at zero.
- b) Average percent of persons who, as a part of accident/injury/exposure reports, have appropriate follow-up actions – 100% (no change).

Quality Improvement Plan:

The goal of zero medication errors during the year was not achieved. The medication errors ranged from family members not administering the medications correctly during home visits, the pharmacy not delivering in a timely manner, and staff incorrectly administering and/or documenting.

The following corrective actions were implemented: family members were reminded of the medication protocol prior to home visits; some staff received additional training; physicians adjusted medication administration times; and staff worked with the pharmacy to get medications delivered at a more appropriate time.

RESPIRE:

Ridge Area Arc received very few respite services since implementation of the individualized budget (ibudget). Most individuals do not have room in their ibudget to request respite services. Respite services were utilized this year by one consumer within the year. This consumer returned back home to their family.

Projected Service Outcomes Achieved

Persons served are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been address – 100% (no change).

Stakeholders are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 100% (no change).

Percent of referrals met – 100% (no change).

Quality Improvement Plan:

No Quality Improvement Plan needed due to each of the Respite goals being met.

COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Community Services provided Supported Living services to 13 consumers in 2015 (down from 14). Two of these individuals were also provided Personal Supports.

This was a bitter-sweet year for the community services department. We lost Sue Randolph and her big hugs early in September due to medical conditions. Unfortunately, arrangements had not been made which made the program realize the importance of advanced directives. This is something that the program is working towards for the other individuals served.

One individual transitioned into supported living after residing in group homes for many years. He signed his first lease ever in October 2015 and has been enjoying a lot of new experiences since that date. Originally, he would not tolerate people sitting at tables with him and preferred to eat alone. Now, he asks his coach to join him at his table and have a cup of coffee and frequently dines out with his coach. His first grocery shopping trip was a struggle with him sitting on the bench waiting for the staff to proceed to unload and load his groceries onto the cash register belt. Now, however, he takes pride in loading and unloading his groceries. He has learned to make his very own coffee, cook simple meals, and take his medications on his own. We are looking forward to 2016 as he continues to enjoy all the pleasures of living in his own apartment.

Several individuals in the community services program have diabetes requiring insulin. Fortunately, the individuals have been on a standard dose of insulin rather than a sliding scale insulin adjustment depending on their sugar levels. The individuals continue to be educated on the insulin levels and healthy eating habits. This particular medical condition is of major concern for the community services department due to unlicensed staff not permitted to administer insulin if or when the time comes. This could jeopardize the individual's placement in the community unless other supports are located.

In late 2015, one individual in supported living took a fall in the shower which required time in the hospital and then rehabilitation. Ultimately, he has returned back to his apartment and is very thankful to be home.

One individual had a life-long dream of going on a cruise! Her dream was finally realized this year with a cruise to the Bahamas with two companions. She enjoyed her cruise and was especially excited to return with the wonderful pictures taken on her trip. She states that she would like to cruise again in the future but with her boyfriend. She is striving to see that this occurs in 2016 or 2017.

In addition to the many social activities that individuals engage in on their own or through Special STARS, several went on a group picnic to the Gulf of Mexico for a beach and dining experience. They enjoyed a morning on the beach, collecting sea shells, sunning, and playing beach volleyball. On their way back, they decided to have a nice dinner before returning to Highlands County.

Projected Service Outcomes Achieved

Persons served are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 100% (no change).

Stakeholders are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 100% (no change).

As per the services requested on the support plan, persons served are provided with necessary supports to achieve the support plan goal(s) – 80% (down from 86%).

Persons are supported to live in their own homes – 84% (down from 85%).

Persons demonstrate freedom of choice in the areas of their lives as evidenced by being fully informed about service options - 100% (no change).

Quality Improvement Plan:

No Quality Improvement Plan needed due to each of the Community Services Program goals being met.

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT:

Community Employment provided supports to, and received funding for, 24 individuals in 2015. Last year's report indicates that 43 were served, however not all of those were we able to bill for. 54% of the funding for community employment was received from Vocational Rehabilitation, 25% from General Revenue from The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), and 20% from the Medicaid-Waiver program. 11 individuals resided in Highlands County and 13 resided in Polk County.

Financial constraints made it necessary to close Supported Employment Services in Polk County. An insufficient number of referrals and successful placements along with the distance from our other services did not make the program cost effective.

Vocational Rehabilitation provides referrals based on short-term employment outcomes; such as placing the individual into competitive employment until the employee reaches their 90/150 day benchmark. Once the employee has reached this benchmark, the services are closed with Vocational Rehabilitation. For some, if a developmental disability is identified, then the individual may have the potential to receive ongoing supports through the either the Medicaid Waiver or General Revenue through the State of Florida.

Of the 24 individuals five received services to maintain their employment and 19 were assisted with job seeking or job placement. Employers included Walmart, Publix, Winn Dixie, Legoland, Petco, Dollar Tree, Taco Bell, and Little Italy.

Projected Service Outcomes Achieved

Persons served are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed - 100% (no change).

Stakeholders are satisfied with the services based on the results of the annual satisfaction survey, or are satisfied that their concerns raised during the survey have been addressed – 100% (no change).

As per the services requested on the support plan, persons served are provided with necessary supports to achieve the support plan goal(s) – 87% (down from 89%).

Assistance is provided in securing employment according to desired outcomes, including type of work environment, activities, hours of work, level of pay and supports needed – 97% (down from 100%).

Persons in the individual model, during follow along (phase 2) do not need paid job coaching in excess of an average of 20% of the person's average work hours – 100% (no change).

Quality Improvement Plan:

No Quality Improvement Plan needed due to each of the Community Employment goals being met.

Special STARS

Special STARS celebrated its 11 year anniversary in 2015. It was organized in Highlands County in 2004 under the direction of Volunteer Coordinator Cindy Marshall. Special STARS offers 12 different sports and eight recreational activities for approximately 400 children and adults with mental and physical disabilities in Highlands, Hardee and Okeechobee counties.

Sporting events offered included bocce, horseshoes, shuffleboard, cycling, track and field, volleyball, basketball, softball, golf, tennis, swimming, and bowling. After the Special STARS Softball Classic, the winning team took a trip to watch the Tampa Bay Rays play baseball.

Membership continues to grow in Highlands in sports and the Special STARS Recreation Club. This club offers eight different parties a year for approximately 150 adults with disabilities. Club members added a Halloween Party to their party list this past year. The club enjoys camping at Highlands Hammock State Park, watching volleyball and baseball games at South Florida State College, movies at Fairmount Cinema 6, shows at Highlands Little Theatre, dancing at the luau at the Highlands Senior Center, and singing Christmas carols at nursing homes.

School students participate in the Highlands County School District Track & Field event in the fall. There are approximately 150 students competing in Special STARS. Some children also participate in the other sports and recreational programs offered throughout the year. Frannie Gillilan is the liaison for the school district.

Hardee County started its program in 2012 to offer bowling and track and field competitions. They also competed in the Special STARS Softball Classic. There are approximately 50 athletes in Hardee competing. Hardee and Okeechobee athletes compete in a district-wide bowling competition with Highlands County athletes in June.



Aktion Club

Aktion Club of Highlands County, formed in 2006, is a community service group composed of adult citizens who have disabilities. There are currently 70 members in the club which is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Sebring and Ridge Area Arc.

This club has won numerous state and international awards for their community service projects, public speaking, scrapbook, and posters. In 2015, the club won second place internationally for its scrapbook and Sara Canali won third place for her poster design. In the state level, the club won the Jake Swartout Club of the Year award, second place for their service project, two Walter Zeller Fellowship Awards, first place for their poster and scrapbook, third in speech contest, and 22 participation ribbons for speeches and posters.

The club members have organized service projects like Diaper Dump Day where they collected more than 11,000 diapers and 6,000 wipes for needy children in Highlands County; Adopt-A-Child Project at Christmas where they helped 64 children in 29 local families with food, clothing and toys; Back to School Drive where they gave more than \$500 worth of school supplies to the Guardian ad Litem Program in Highlands County; Easter Basket Delivery where they assembled and donated 100 baskets filled with goodies for children at Avon Park Community Child Development Center; Keep Highlands County Beautiful where they pick up roadside trash along College Drive on a quarterly basis; Nu-Hope Elder Care Services Parking Lot Sale where they sorted clothing for the Resale Store and helped generate funds for the organization; The Blueberry Festival where they did cleanup for the Rotary Club; Thanksgiving Food Baskets where they collected food for the Family Safehouse; along with various other groups who needed their assistance.



Financial Report

The information contained in this annual report was taken from the 2014-2015 financial report prepared by Wicks, Brown, Williams & Co. As indicated below, Ridge Area Arc requires a substantial amount of revenue to provide essential services and training for persons with developmental disabilities. We use our resources to assist individuals become as productive and independent as possible. All contributions from companies and individuals in the community are essential in assisting the agency in offering a better quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities. A copy of the agency's most recent audit can be obtained by contacting Ridge Area Arc, 1200 West College Drive, Avon Park, Florida 33825.

Revenue

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-----|
| Public Contributions | \$ 483,845 | 15% |
| Contract | \$ 328,431 | 10% |
| Consumer Entitlements* | \$ 16,952 | <1% |
| Medicaid Waiver | \$ 1,814,409 | 56% |
| Screen Printing/Resale | \$ 485,078 | 15% |
| Private Pay | \$ 125,956 | 4% |
| Other Revenue | \$ 1,177 | <1% |

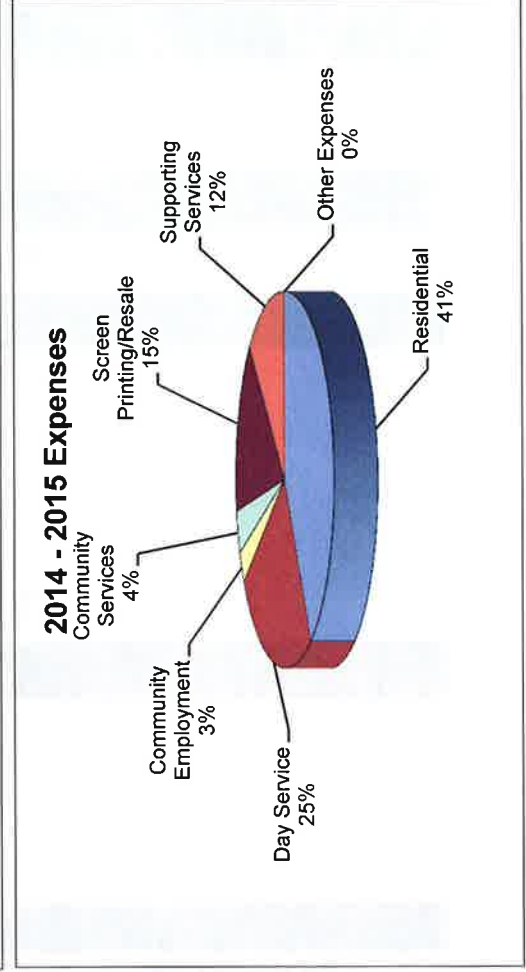
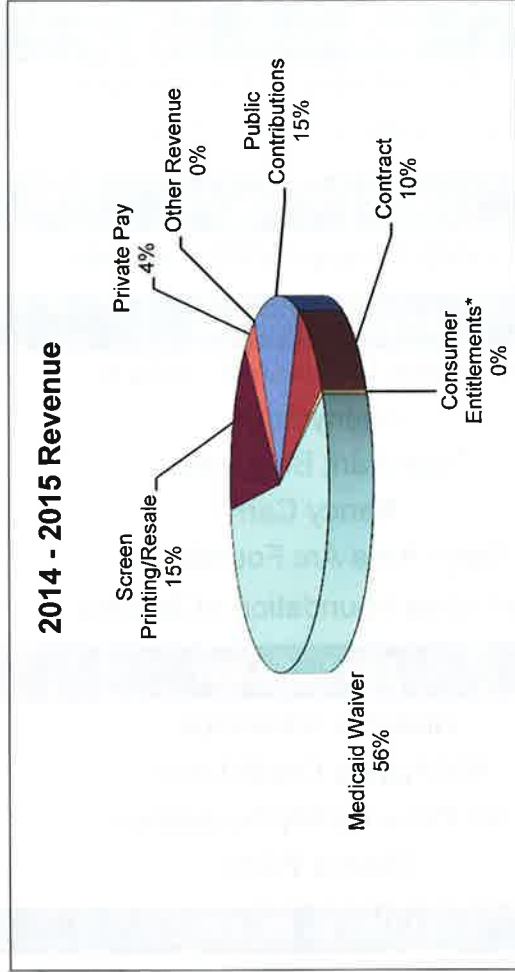
Grand Total: \$ 3,255,848

*Food Stamps

Expenses

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-----|
| Residential | \$ 1,339,864 | 41% |
| Day Service | \$ 796,739 | 25% |
| Community Employment | \$ 90,219 | 3% |
| Community Services | \$ 119,510 | 4% |
| Screen Printing/Resale | \$ 490,749 | 15% |
| Supporting Services | \$ 407,055 | 13% |
| Other Expenses | \$ - | 0% |

Grand Total: \$ 3,244,136



Donations

A special thank you goes out to the following individuals and organizations who provided monetary support to the agency in fiscal year 2014/2015

\$25,000 and up

Florida Department of Transportation
United Way of Central Florida

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Highlands County Health Facilities

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Mr. & Mrs. Stephen R. Aldrich
Anonymous
Avon Park Bingo, Inc.
Nancy Carr
Ridge Area Arc Foundation
The Palms Foundation of Sebring

\$2,500 to \$4,999

Heacock Insurance
Mid Florida Credit Union
Tom Perry Family Foundation
Marcia Ward

\$1,000 to \$2,499

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 64 West Collision Repair, Inc. | Rep. Cary Pigman |
| Anonymous | Publix Super Markets Charities |
| Duke Energy | Charles R. Schumacher |
| Mr. & Mrs. Richard Farmer | Scott Lake Country Club |
| Florida Blue Foundation | Sons of The American Legion |
| Florida Hospital - Heartland Division | The Matred Carlton Olliff Foundation |
| Heartland National Bank | Vitas Hospice Services, LLC |
| Johnson-Stivender Wealth Managers | Waypoints Financial |
| Knights of Columbus #14717 | Wells Motor Company |
| Mr. & Mrs. David Magowan | |

\$500 to \$999

Alan Jay Automotive Management
 Alliance Bus Group, Inc
 Ben Hill Griffin, Inc.
 Lois Brown
 Patricia Davis
 Southwood Garage Doors
 Marilyn Eldred
 Mr. & Mrs. Miles "Nick" Gillis
 Glades Electric Cooperative, Inc.
 Senator Denise Grimsley
 Harbor Community Bank
 Highlands Sertoma Club, Inc.

Lampe & Kiefer Hearing Aid Center
 Janice Peterson
 Dale Ramsey
 Mr. & Mrs. Terry Reynolds
 Sebring Elks, Inc.
 Mr. & Mrs. James Snively
 Stephenson Nelson Funeral Home
 Tanglewood Resort
 Taylor Oil Company
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul VonMerveldt
 Wheeler Farms, Inc.

\$250 to \$499

Agero Administrative Service Corp.
 Arc Parents Group
 Mary Basso
 Beef O'Brady's
 Blinds ASAP of Sebring
 CDF Sales and Associates, Inc.
 Clark Air, LLC
 Dees Place
 Mr. & Mrs. George Devore
 William Gullen
 Sherri Lynn Hunt
 Mr. & Mrs. Phil May
 Mr. & Mrs. Curtis McCullough

Mr. & Mrs. Darrell McCullough
 C. Raymond McIntyre
 Musselman's Appliance and TV
 Mr. & Mrs. William O'Donnell
 Pathology Assoc. of Sebring, PA
 Sebring Sunrise Rotary Club
 Sebring Breakfast Lions Club
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Sutton
 Mr. & Mrs. Larry Swisher
 The Palms of Sebring
 Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Vogel
 Wicks, Brown, Williams and Co.
 Wild Turkey Tavern

\$100 to \$249

American Legion Post #69
 American Outback Holding Company
 Annett Bus Lines
 Barben Fruit Company, Inc.
 Sheri Bates
 Big "T" Tire Man
 Blue Brew, Inc.
 Bob Evans Restaurant
 Dr. David Boersma
 Boom Booms
 James Brooks
 Central Florida Hearing
 Colleen Chambliss
 Citrus Animal Hospital
 Kevin Cleghorn
 Coffee News of Florida

Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Connelly
 Dr. Catherine P. Cornelius
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Crowder
 Mr. & Mrs. Tom Crutchfield
 Mr. & Mrs. Joel Cruz
 Mr. & Mrs. Jerry DeJonge
 Delray Plants Co.
 Victor Divietro
 M. Linda Ebrite
 Edible Arrangements
 Charlene Edwards
 Flirty Dirty Dozen
 Germaine Surveying, Inc.
 Mr. & Mrs. Roy Gonzalez
 Good Sheppard Hospice
 Jennifer Gravelle

\$100 to \$249 continued

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. F. Herman Groezinger | Rent - A - Wreck |
| Hardee Homes Specialized Services, Inc. | Mr. & Mrs. C. L. Reynolds |
| Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Harstine | Mr. & Mrs. Rafael Rivera |
| Heartland Bowl | Robbin's Nursery, Inc. |
| Heartland Title Insurance Agency | Rotary Club of Avon Park - Noon #1813 |
| Mr. & Mrs. George Hensley | Rotary Club of Lake Placid-Noon #8079 |
| Erin Hess | Ruby Tuesday Restaurants |
| Patricia Kufnowski | Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Schuld |
| Dr. & Mrs. Michael A. Lamp | Mr. & Mrs. Frank "F. C." Schwartz |
| Mr. & Mrs. J. Norman Langston | Christopher Shoemaker |
| LaQuinta Inn & Suites | Johanna Souther |
| Dawn Lewis | Spas, Pools & Patio |
| Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Mechlin | Barbara Stewart |
| Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert Mettling | Mr. & Mrs. Richard Sunderland |
| Mr. & Mrs. Peter Monteforte | Will Swaine |
| Morris Funeral Home | The Arc of Florida |
| Nu-Hope Elder Care Services, Inc. | The Carpenter's Apprentice |
| Nut'n Fancy Grillin | Wabasso Road Dairy, Inc. |
| Mr. & Mrs. James Phipps | Steven J. Warnaar |
| Laura Rankin | Mr. & Mrs. John Weed |

Major In-Kind, Non-Cash Donations (\$500 +)

In addition to the donors below, Ridge Area Arc received many non-cash gifts in 2015 valued at less than \$500 which are not listed here. This list also does not include gifts made to the Resale Store. The value of the gifts below are established by the donor.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| News Sun | Highlands Today |
| Michelle Poole | Cohan Radio Group |
| Walt Disney World | South Florida State College |

Ridge Area Arc Foundation

The foundation, governed by a board of trustees, is responsible for building an endowment fund, the interest from which will support the Arc for years to come.

The goal of the foundation is to cultivate contributions through wills, estate plans, and major gifts to insure that the foundation will grow. The foundation does not solicit money through local fundraising events.

The Arc Foundation realized a net decrease of \$53,117 due to a loss on investments.



The Arc[™]
Ridge Area

Achieve with us.

The Arc is supported by:



120 West College Drive
Avon Park, FL 33825
(863) 452-1295

