

This Week at

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Special Edition

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One Year Anniversary of COVID Quarantine News at

We come to the completion of one year of being quarantined from the COVID pandemic. It was on March 16, 2020 that the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities mandated that we close down our 8-day program locations and keep home all of our residential individuals, as well as cancel most of our Family Support services. That major change in our lives and operations gave to us many challenges and a “new non-normal life” at SCARC.

We learned that flexibility, safety, and clean hygienics were part of our new life. We learned all about the COVID virus and how to prevent its spread throughout our group homes. We knew that our excellent employees had to adopt a new awareness of how the pandemic works, and how to prevent infections in our vulnerable residents. We learned how to manage our agency with new funding sources, new uses of Medicaid resources, new foundation grants, and new definitions of what is eligible for federal reimbursement. We learned that the most basic needs of people became our highest priority within our unchanging mission.

We learned about the renewed dedication of our direct support professional staff. We call our staff CHAMPIONS because they rose to champion the challenges and become even more courageous and bold to meet the new pandemic difficulties we faced. Staff were eager to have more training using a new virtual world of online instruction as classroom trainings became extinct in this new virtual world. We extend a huge THANK YOU! to each and every one of our honored staff who navigated new waters with stormy pandemic winds.

We became creative in our services with several online virtual day habilitation services after having to close down our excellent day program operations. We were leaders in our previous fields of day habilitation services, and we became even more excellent leaders in virtual options for those living in group homes and in their own home. We were motivated to deal with our challenges and difficulties while maintaining our identity as an agency dedicated to providing high quality services to persons with developmental disabilities and their families in Sussex County.

And now at the end of our year, we can proudly say that none of our residential individuals acquired the COVID virus. Some staff came down with the virus, but quickly recovered and came back to work. We thank God for this kind providence to us. Although some were ill with other conditions, we managed our affairs well with our excellent and qualified direct support staff, our nurses, our management and administrative employees, and our guiding board of trustees. We stand today very thankful for our eminently good circumstances, and our achievements. We are thankful for our donors and community partners who supported us through the pandemic, as well as those who contributed Personal Protective Equipment to us.

At the end of our first year, most all of our residents have received their two doses of COVID vaccine. A large amount of our staff have also received at least one dose (if not two) of the vaccine. Our thanks are extended to Walmart of Franklin and Walgreens of Newton for their service to SCARC with the vaccines. We are thankful for the additional funding from the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the magnificent advocacy of the Arc of New Jersey. Our SCARC team performed as a fine tuned symphonic orchestra, and the music was harmonic and superlative.

For all who were a vital part of our year’s journey, we thank you all.

Richard Lecher, SCARC President and Chief Executive Officer, on behalf of us all.