

A Change of Leadership

It was her experience with a family member who has a disability that brought April Archer to Central Aroostook Association. She began her career at the Association in December of 2006 as a Direct Support Professional in the Adult Services program. In 2014 she began assisting Allen Deeves with his programs and soon took on the role of Home and Community Support Coordinator, a position that she has held for the the last five years.

Now April is excited to return to the program that she started in, this time as the Director of Adult Services. She will take the reins from Pam Powers who retired in December. April laughed when she said, "I've always told Pam that I was going to take her job when she retired." She is excited to see this dream come to fruition.

There are a lot of great things already happening with the program but April acknowledges some things that need to change due to evolving rules. When asked what three things she wants to accomplish; her list included more involvement with the community, exploring new activities, and increasing the number of people who attend the program.

She's looking forward to getting back to the program where she started and spending more time with the individuals and staff that she hasn't worked with in a while. There are a lot of new faces that she looks forward to getting to know as well.



Upcoming Events

1/18 Rank Cards for 2nd Quarter (OTC)
1/27-1/31 National School Choice Week
2/14 Valentine's Day
2/10-2/14 Spirit Week (OTC)
2/21 National Caregivers Day
2/19-2/21 Winter Break (OTC)

March Dates TBA

Inservice (OTC)
Orono Field Trip (OTC)
Snowdogs-Special Olympics basketball tournament-University of Southern Maine

3/6 National Employee Appreciation Day
3/17 World Social Work Day
3/23 OTC 3rd quarter ends
3/26 Epilepsy Awareness Day

Program

Adult Services

Adult Services welcomed a new individual who will be attending our program one day a week. We toured Domino's Pizza and made our own pizzas. The Presque Isle School Farm hosted us for a tour. OTC invited us to ride Molly the Trolley with them. To celebrate Halloween we had a party and consumers participated in putting up a haunted house. Some of our consumers participated in Special Olympics Swimming early in November. We celebrated Christmas with a party at the Elks Lodge in Presque Isle.

Case Management

The Case Management program has continued to grow. Tracy LeVasseur has joined Children's Case Management as a case manager. The program is currently serving 69 children.

Case Manager, Angela King, has earned her LSW. The adult program is currently serving 185 individuals and acting as Rep Payee for 64.

The program distributed turkeys supplied by the United Way to eight families for Thanksgiving.



Children's Support

The kids in Children's Support have started taking turns to plan activities. They are responsible for all portions of the socials including, invitations, decorating, and activities. So far different kids have helped to plan a Halloween social and a Christmas social. The kids also enjoyed making creative ornaments from games for the Association's tree at the Festival of Trees. Over the school break there was a movie day at OTC complete with snacks and fun movies chosen by the children.



Festival of Trees

The Association once again sponsored a tree at the St Apollonia Dental Clinic Festival of Trees. The festival took place December 6th-8th at Northern Maine Community College. This event helps the clinic to aid those most in need of dental services; particularly the children and adolescents of Aroostook County.

Our programs helped to create ornaments that complimented the board game theme. Decks of cards, puzzle pieces, scrabble tiles, monopoly money, and other game pieces were used in creative ways to make ornaments that dressed the tree. The lucky winner also found an array of cookies and games under the tree.



Highlights

Opportunity Training Center

The students enjoyed field trips to the firehouse and the Francis Malcolm Science Center where they learned about dinosaurs. Approximately 100 people gathered in the OTC gym for the Thanksgiving Luncheon on November 21st. OTC served all of the Thanksgiving staples you would expect and finished the meal off with delicious Death by Chocolate. Students completed NWEA testing to measure growth and proficiency throughout the school year. Teachers participated in an in-service day where they had first aid and CPR training. The Director of OTC also discussed principles of behavior. Students who participate in cooking class prepared meals for the homeless shelter twice in December.



Home & Community Supports



The ultimate accomplishment in Central Aroostook Association's eight programs is to maximize the level of independence for each person we serve.

A young lady within our Association is celebrating an anniversary this December. Rena Young, a long-time attendee of our Adult Services day program, has accomplished being in her own apartment for one year. Rena's history involved living in a residential setting with a provider who supported her with activities of daily living. Rena's dream was to call a place her own. With much focus and perseverance, that time came a week prior to Christmas 2018. She was determined and would enthusiastically remark "I want my own place to live and have my own Christmas tree." Mission accomplished! Rena currently receives supports for a short time in the morning five days per week, and services in the afternoon six days per week. She has become a known member in her apartment complex and now resides in the same town as her mother, who visits regularly. They are active with community events and attend church together. Rena's example of desire proves that we all can accomplish great things with determination.

Residential

Our residents celebrated the season's holidays with many fun events. A spooktacular Halloween Dance Party was held at OTC, the Lombard home hosted Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners for all of the homes. The Association's Main Street location was the site of our annual Christmas Party and Ornament Swap. A new consumer joined our Sweden Street Home in October. The residents also enjoyed getting together for dinner at Grammy's Country Inn Restaurant and pie making at Lombard home.

From the Executive Director

What will 2020 bring?

Who would have ever thought that we would reach the year 2020? Our Association has made it through the first 60 years, so what will the 61st year bring? Hopefully we will continue to see growth in our programs. There is no question that we would love to establish a new waiver home and provide more shared living opportunities for the individuals who attend Central Aroostook Association. We would like these shared living homes to be in the Caribou and Presque Isle area.

With the closing of County Box & Pallet in 2019, we continue to look for business opportunities and integrated work settings for those individuals who would like to be employed. We are excited to see what changes will occur in our adult programs as the new home and community-based setting rules become law. Our homes and our adult programs will be required to provide more integrated activities for the individuals.

We have seen growth in both adult and children's case management, and in 2020 we hope to continue to see that growth. In our children's program, we hope to maintain the current level of services that we are providing.

It's always interesting to see what the new year will bring, but rest assured that with our dedicated staff and involved Board of Directors, we will continue to provide the highest quality of services that we can possibly deliver. I'm looking forward to 2020 and I am very pleased with all the good things that happened in 2019. But, I have a good feeling that 2020 will be our year.

- Steve



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