

Programs and Mission

ARISE promotes the social, economic, educational, and individual interests of people with disabilities. We are guided by the philosophy that individuals with disabilities have a right to dignity, personal responsibility, self-determination, and full participation.

Our current programs and services include:

ADVOCACY

Individual Advocacy (helping individuals develop self-advocacy skills)

- Benefits
- Education
- Health Care
- Housing

Systems Advocacy (helping to change policies & remove barriers)

Breast Health Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities

Project Emerge – Working to End Domestic Violence Against People with Disabilities

Advocacy & Support Groups

EMPLOYMENT

Benefits Advisement

Supported Employment

Staffing Services – Services for Businesses

High School Transition Program

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

Accessibility Resource Center

Consumer-Directed Personal Assistance Program

Habilitation Programs – Individual & Group

Housing Search Assistance

Independent Living Skills Training

Information and Referral

Medical Equipment Loan Closet

Peer Counseling

Ramp Construction Assistance

Regional Resource Development Centers for

- Persons with Brain Injury
- Nursing Home Transition & Diversion

Respite Programs

Service Coordination

Youth Services

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Child Abuse Prevention Services

Counseling for Persons Who Are HIV+

Crisis Pregnancy Counseling

Domestic Violence Counseling

Individual, family & group therapy

School-Based Mental Health Program

RECREATION

ARISE at the Farm (accessible recreation facility for people of all abilities)

ARISE & Ski

Our mission is to work with people of **all abilities** to create a fair and just community in which **everyone** can fully participate.

Message From Our Leadership

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SHARING OUR JOURNEY

The past decade has been quite a journey for ARISE, for the consumers with whom we work, and for the Independent Living movement.

ARISE began the decade as a stronger and more diverse agency as a result of its merger in 1999 with Child and Family Service. Adding mental health services to our wide array of activities and programs fit perfectly with our goal to engage with people having any kind of disability.

ARISE Child and Family Service continued to provide high quality mental health services for individuals and families and now offers those services in more than a dozen sites throughout our communities. Having licensed ARISE professionals in schools, community centers, and convenient locations means that people can more easily access this benefit.

ARISE at the Farm, our integrated recreation facility in Chittenango, also experienced tremendous growth since we first began operation in the late 1990's, following the generous donation made by Dr. Jim Marshall.

ARISE & Ski, the fully inclusive winter recreation program offered at Toggenburg, retained its committed volunteer leadership and increased both the number of volunteers and the number of participants. It is so important for families to be able to experience recreation together, and we are proud to be associated with Jim Hickey and his staff to make that dream possible.

We grew dramatically throughout the decade. Of the 40 independent living centers in New York State, ARISE is the 4th largest.

On July 26th, 2010 we joined in commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. While it was important to acknowledge that many things have changed for the better, there are still significant ways in which people with disabilities do not fully participate in our nation's opportunities.

Our mission as an Independent Living Center in Onondaga, Oswego and now Madison Counties, compels us to advocate with and for individuals to support each person in achieving his or her goals. Our mission requires us to advocate constantly for systems change where barriers and inequities remain.

The quest for true independence and access for everyone continues. We are glad that you are on this journey with us. We are proud to stand with consumers on the journeys of their choice and we are pleased to share some of their stories – and ours – with you.



Tania S. Anderson

Board President

Tom McKeown

Executive Director

Advocating for Access & Independence

THREE DECADES OF SYSTEMS CHANGE

What differentiates ARISE from other organizations that provide services to individuals with disabilities? Our ongoing systems change efforts. Our Systems Change Advocates and our Consumer Council are constantly working to make the community more open to individuals with disabilities. These efforts require patience and determination, and it can take years of behind-the-scenes work to achieve desired outcomes.



In our three-decade history, ARISE has achieved some amazing systems changes.

SUCCESSES

In 2010, several years of hard work with the Onondaga County Department of Social Services yielded new internal policies that transformed one of our local DSS offices into one of the most accessible in the State. An individual with a disability can request and receive assistance in filling out forms, ensuring they are filled out correctly the first time. This service allows individuals with disabilities full access to DSS services.

Our Oswego County Self-Advocacy Group is part of the large push to “Spread the Word to End the Word.” Their efforts to remove the hurtful word “retard” from everyday speech, along with the efforts of groups throughout the State, led to the change in name from the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) to the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).



ONGOING PROJECTS

ARISE continues to work with the City of Syracuse to speed up the ramp approval process. Though the application process has been streamlined, surveyor approvals are still slow. Unlike other kinds of external home modifications, ramps are a necessity for individuals who have mobility impairments. A well-constructed ramp can be both functional and visually appealing.

It allows individuals the dignity to enter their homes and receive guests. The power of ramps to drastically improve lives can be seen in our successful ongoing Ramp Program in Oswego County.

LEADING THE TRENDS

One of ARISE's core beliefs is that individuals with disabilities have the right to live in the community if that is what they want. We can now see this trend in government agencies and other organizations. In 2010, ARISE began to operate a two-year pilot program funded by the New York State Department of Health to inform nursing home residents about their right to choose to live at home. Spread over an eight-county region, the program dovetails with the Regional Resource Development Center for Nursing Home Transition and Diversion. Both programs demonstrate that, for a majority of people, it is more cost-effective to receive services at home.

20 YEARS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The most visible mark of systems change is the Americans With Disabilities Act, which was signed into law on July 26, 1990 by then President George H. W. Bush. It represented decades of work by advocates with all types of disabilities. It was an acknowledgement that equal access is a fundamental part of equal treatment.

Many times, small reasonable accommodations can be made that allow individuals with disabilities to participate fully in the workforce and in the community. Many outcomes from the ADA, such as curb cuts, ramps, and doors that open automatically, benefit other people, including those who are pushing strollers or pulling luggage.



Three Decades of Systems Change

MAKING STREETS SAFER FOR ALL



ARISE partnered with the local chapter of the AARP to conduct an audit of streets in the City of Syracuse. The audit assessed the condition of curb cuts, which allow people who use wheelchairs or who push strollers to navigate easily from the sidewalk to street level and back. Auditors timed the traffic signals to see if the lights allowed enough time for people to cross safely, and checked to see if crosswalks were marked. The effort is part of an ongoing AARP initiative to make streets safer. “Complete Streets” legislation passed the New York State Senate in 2010, but no action was taken in the Assembly. The legislation would require the Department of Transportation to make accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians of all abilities in the road-planning process.

Photo courtesy of the AARP.

CREATING LARGE-PRINT MENUS

For people who have vision impairments, going out to eat isn’t always relaxing. The type face on menus tends to be small and difficult to read. Over the past two years, ARISE and the Vision Network have partnered to make dining out a more pleasurable experience for people who previously had to rely on companions to read the menu.

Thanks to these efforts, three restaurants in the City of Oswego now offer large-print menus. To save space, descriptions are omitted, leaving the name of the dish and its price in an easy-to read large-print font. All patrons have to do is go to Friendly’s, Bridie Manor, or Canale’s in Oswego and ask for the large-print menus.



WORKING TO MAKE HOMES VISITABLE

For the second year in a row, Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse proclaimed May as Visitability Advocacy Month. ARISE partners with Syracuse Habitat for Humanity and the Fair Housing Council of Central New York to increase awareness about “visitable” homes. A “visitable” home has the following features: at least one no-step entrance to a door that is at least 36 inches wide; and a first floor bedroom and bathroom that can accommodate a person who uses a wheelchair.

These inclusive home designs, when incorporated into the original plans, add no significant costs to construction. The modifications also support aging in place, meaning that people can grow old in their own home. Visitable homes are truly homes for a lifetime.

PROJECT EMERGE GETS RESULTS



ARISE has been proud to partner with Vera House over the past four years in Project Emerge, an initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Violence Against Women. The culmination of the first four years was a series of accessible videos about how to recognize and avoid domestic violence and abuse, and where to turn for help.

The series of six videos is aimed at individuals who have disabilities, particularly women who are Deaf. The videos feature Deaf actors communicating in American Sign Language, and the script is also voiced and captioned to make the information accessible to everyone.

We were thrilled to learn that Project Emerge will be funded for another two years, and will expand to include the Syracuse Police Department and the Onondaga County Sheriff’s Department.

Living Independently at Home

FINDING A HOME

Determination can sometimes only go so far. Eddie was always determined to be an independent person. Despite his struggles with personal care and literacy, he managed to move out of a group home for people with disabilities. That's when he found that he needed a helping hand.

Eddie turned to the ARISE Advocacy Department. He worked with Gail, one of our Housing Advocates, and Lisa, our Benefits Advocate, to apply for Medicaid and find an affordable apartment. They helped him get his rental agreement settled and to find a Service Coordinator. Now, he participates in a habilitation program, where he is learning how to take care of himself.

When Eddie needs advice or support from someone who truly understands living independently with a disability, he calls one of our Peer Counselors. Peer Counselors also have a disability of some sort and are willing to share advice, tips, and lend an open ear.

When he celebrated his 60th birthday near the end of 2010, Eddie wanted to celebrate with the staff of the Advocacy Department, who used a team approach for over two years to help him live on his own. The Advocacy team continues to work with Eddie on a less-intensive basis to make sure that he is succeeding.

Advocacy and Peer Counseling are two of the four fundamental programs of Centers for Independent Living. Over the past ten years, ARISE has increased the number of advocates in Onondaga and Oswego Counties. We are looking forward to expanding advocacy services in Madison County as we increase our presence in Oneida into an official Center for Independent Living.

ARISE Advocacy Services are available to people of any age with any type of disability.

From grab bars to ramps, and even a new staircase, ARISE offers programs that can help with environmental modifications.

HOME MODIFICATIONS PROMOTE SAFE LIVING

Andy and June were used to making their way in spite of their disabilities, but it felt as if their world collapsed when the staircase to the second story of their house caved in. The only bathroom in the house was on the second floor, making the repair an emergency. Living on very low income meant that they did not have the funds to hire a contractor. Andy and June were both resourceful, so they began using portable commodes that were emptied at their neighbors' home.

They sought help from a number of places. It seemed that their situation was bounced around from agency to agency, with no solution in sight. Andy and June feared they would have to move into a nursing home. Then their county legislator called ARISE. Although we did not have an automatic solution for this particular situation, our staff members were determined to help. When members of Alliance Church, a new partner in our Oswego County Ramp Program, learned about Andy and June's predicament, they jumped into action. The caring and generous church members purchased the necessary materials and gave their time and expertise to repair the stairs.

Through a shared commitment to helping people maintain their independence and dignity, Andy and June are once again able to live comfortably in their own home.

Living Independently at Home

HOME MODIFICATIONS MEAN INDEPENDENCE

Since 2004, ARISE has helped over 100 Oswego County families to obtain ramps needed to live at home.

The Ramp Project is an ongoing partnership between ARISE and:

- United Way of Greater Oswego County
- Oswego First United Methodist Church
- Fulton First United Methodist Church
- Alliance Church

When Carol heard that her sister Mary's mobility was declining and she needed help, Carol immediately opened her home to Mary. Making room for Mary was easy, but making it possible for Mary to live there seemed almost impossible. The entrance to the house had two sets of stairs, which Mary could not manage. Carol learned about ARISE's Ramp Program in Oswego and was relieved to hear that help was on its way.



As planning for the ramp design began at the First United Methodist Church in Oswego, the size and scope of the project quickly became apparent. It would be the longest and most complex ramp ever constructed through the Ramp Program. In addition, the ground near the entrance was uneven and sloped in multiple directions. Designing and building the ramp was possible, but it was definitely going to be a challenge. The builders received help when the Lowe's Oswego store chose the ramp as its 2010 Heroes Project. Lowe's donated construction materials and employees to volunteer their skills to build the ramp.

Early in October, the chilly air and overcast skies could not dampen the spirits of Carol, Mary, and their entire family as the Lowe's construction crew, church members, additional volunteers, and ARISE staff showed up to build the ramp to the home. At the end of a very long day of hard work, Mary navigated the new ramp using her wheelchair and truly found home again with her family.

Ramps are just one possible kind of home modification. ARISE works with individuals to find the home modifications that fit the needs of each person. Changes can include installing grab bars wherever they are needed, chair glides to move up and down stairs, and even bathroom remodeling. Our Medical Equipment Loan Closet can provide a variety of necessary equipment, from wheelchairs and shower chairs to walkers and canes.

"It's like Christmas. With the ramp, I am getting my independence back."



Living Independently at Home

GETTING HELP AT HOME

When Matt had a stroke, he and his wife did not know what to do or where to turn for help. After his initial rehabilitation ended, he still needed a lot of assistance with basic tasks. Matt was working hard with an ARISE Community Integration Specialist to re-learn how to perform daily living and other tasks. He knew that it was going to be a long road. With his wife working all day, Matt used the ARISE Consumer-Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) to fill the gap.

Matt utilized the Medicaid Buy-In Program to qualify for CDPAP. He and his wife met with the CDPAP Coordinator and identified the tasks that he needed help accomplishing. Matt then selected people to interview from the list of pre-screened Personal Assistants that we provided. He interviewed candidates and chose the person with whom he felt most comfortable. Over the course of several years, Matt recovered from the stroke, and required less and less help. He no longer needs an Integration Specialist or a Personal Assistant. With the right help at the right time, Matt regained his independence.

Some individuals with disabilities only need Personal Assistants for a few hours each week to help prepare dinners and clean up. Other individuals require care on a more intensive basis. Either way, CDPAP allows each person to choose who provides care.

Over the past decade, ARISE Consumer-Directed Personal Assistance Programs in both Onondaga and Oswego Counties have doubled in size, and increased in scope. Recently, ARISE began partnering with the Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth to provide Consumer Directed Services to individuals who are over the age of 60 or individuals of any age who are veterans.

Consumer Directed Personal Assistance is the most empowering and one of the most cost-effective ways of delivering personal care.

ARISE programs not only help individuals with disabilities find housing, they also teach individuals the skills needed to retain their housing and create a stable home life.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

When Lara began participating in ARISE Habilitation Programs, she agreed to a long-term goal of moving into her own apartment. Lara has Autism and a minor intellectual disability, but the real barrier she faced was low self-confidence. Her family did not think Lara could live on her own, and even after three years in the program slowly building skills, Lara still thought they were right.

Her world opened up when she met Kelly, her new ARISE Community Integration Specialist. Kelly and Lara clicked, and Lara blossomed. Within six months, Lara moved into her own apartment with determination and confidence. Lara and Kelly worked together to get the apartment set up. Lara opened her first bank account and learned money management skills. She pays her bills on time, and even has a little left over at the end of every month, which greatly decreased her anxiety about living alone. Lara learned first-hand the rewards of saving when she bought herself a piano.

Part of ARISE's individualized services include matching program participants with staff members to create strong partnerships and a positive attitude toward accomplishing goals.

Living Independently at Home

MOVING BACK HOME

When asked why she wanted to leave an area nursing home, Angela always had the same answer: “Everyone here is very nice, but it’s not home.” Angela has mild Dementia and is unable to fully care for herself. With most of her family living out of state, she was moved into a nursing home three years ago when she started requiring nursing home level care. Her chances of being able to leave looked slim.

Through the Regional Resource Development Center for Nursing Home Transition and Diversion, Angela obtained a Service Coordinator who created a feasible plan for her to transition out of the nursing home. With the assistance of a home health care agency, Angela is once again experiencing a sense of home in her own apartment.

ARISE now administers the Regional Resource Development Centers (RRDCs) for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs) and for people seeking to transition from or avoid entering nursing homes. Spanning eight counties in Central and Northern New York, the RRDCs provides oversight to participating service agencies. We work to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive high quality of care.

The New York State Department of Health developed these programs that provide benefits to the individuals who are able to remain in the community, and to the community as a whole. The cost of providing supports to a person living independently can often be significantly less than the cost of care in a nursing home.

ARISE is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities can live in the most independent and least restrictive environment. Our Health Care Advocates will work with individuals with all types of disabilities to find the resources that make it possible to live at home, even if the individual does not qualify for services through the RRDCs.



The Regional Resource Development Centers at ARISE help individuals in the following eight counties:

- Herkimer
- Jefferson
- Lewis
- Madison
- Oneida
- Onondaga
- Oswego
- St. Lawrence

“Why do you want to leave the nursing home?”

“I want to be free!”

Participating in the Community

A CAREER AT LAST



Nicole knew that she wanted to work with children. A single mother who has Cerebral Palsy, Nicole worked her way through college while caring for her daughter and working part-time in a restaurant. Finding a position in child care was proving to be a difficult task. In spite of her skills and determination, she was not receiving any offers. Then Nicole came to ARISE.

Working with one of our Employment Consultants, Nicole learned how to improve her resume and her interviewing skills. Not only did she find a position as an assistant preschool teacher, she found one only a few miles from her home. Nicole loves her job, her coworkers, and the children. She feels so satisfied to be doing the work she longed to do.

The ARISE Employment Department works with individuals who have disabilities to help them find meaningful employment. ARISE Job Coaches work with individuals with disabilities as they learn what is expected of them in their new position, and provide support until the individual is confident in his or her abilities. Employment Consultants also help with resumes, job search skills, interview skills, and how to continue to receive benefits until stable employment is achieved.

ARISE Employment Services connect individuals with disabilities looking for work and employers seeking skilled staff.

We work hand-in-hand with and are supported by ACCES, the State Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (formerly VESID).

Over the past decade, ARISE has quadrupled the number of individuals served in Onondaga County through Community Habilitation (formerly Residential Habilitation).

We provide Community Habilitation in Onondaga, Oswego and Madison Counties.

Our Habilitation Programs are supported by the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).

COMMUNITY HABILITATION AS COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Like any young man in his twenties, Connor wanted to move out of his parents' house and live in his own space. He had spent the last several years working hard to build his skills through ARISE Habilitation programs, and felt he was ready to take the next step to independence.

Though his parents agreed that moving out was part of growing up, they hesitated. As a teenager, Connor had sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) in a car accident, and his parents were concerned about him living alone. Among their concerns was the fear that he would not have much social contact.

Connor, his parents, and his Community Integration Specialist were working together to find a solution when an apartment became available close to the family's home. As he made the move, Connor knew that he could count on daily visits from his Community Integration Specialist. Their activities included exercise classes and time playing chess with other enthusiasts.

Five years later, Connor is still happily living independently. He has modified and decreased the types of support he gets from Community Habilitation as he becomes more and more confident in his ability to accomplish tasks or activities on his own. He has also kept up his many social activities.



Participating in the Community

THE POWER OF WORDS

ARISE is committed to supporting literacy.

We are part of the Literacy Coalition in Oswego County.

We partner with the Syracuse City School District in the Literacy Zone Initiative.

Chaz knew that his weak literacy skills were holding him back. Understanding signs, forms, and written directions can remove barriers, but improving literacy requires a lot of hard work.

His ARISE Service Coordinator connected Chaz with the Literacy Volunteers of Oswego in November of 2009. For over six months, Chaz worked with a literacy volunteer while he continued to receive ongoing support from his ARISE Integration Specialist. She helped reinforce the lessons and made sure he had transportation to the classes. Chaz has already improved his reading skills by one grade level!

In August of 2010, ARISE hosted a reception to honor Chaz, who earned the “Most Improved Learner” award from Literacy Volunteers. This recognition is given to a basic adult learner who has accomplished more than anticipated in the area of reading, writing, or technology skills in his or her first year of involvement with Literacy Volunteers.

Chaz knows first-hand what happens when individuals are successful in becoming more literate. His self-confidence has grown as his skills have improved. His hard work and determination made it happen.



“She has shown me what true *success* is through *hard work* and a *willingness to learn*.”

COMING OUT OF HER SHELL

Everyone thought Danielle, a woman with multiple disabilities, was very shy. Living with her family in a rural part of Madison County, she spent the last twenty years venturing only as far as the sheltered workshop in which she participated and then back home. Danielle could not read or write.

In June 2006, Danielle’s sister called ARISE to ask about home and community based services for Danielle. When connected with both a Service Coordinator and a Community Integration Specialist, the caring woman inside Danielle began to emerge. With some guidance in strengthening her life skills, she developed the confidence to get involved in social and recreational activities.

Danielle formed a close and trusting relationship with Jennifer, her ARISE Integration Specialist. With Jennifer’s encouragement, Danielle has lost over thirty pounds, a significant step in managing her diabetes. Danielle has also worked hard to improve her literacy skills. She can now recognize letters and write her own name. When she attended a wedding and an old friend asked to have her contact information, Danielle beamed as she wrote her name and address with confidence and ease.

She has also become something of a social butterfly, attending dances and parties. Danielle has blossomed over the past four years, and is still determined to continue to grow her skills and spread her wings.

ARISE can help connect individuals with disabilities to social activities, including:

- **Social Groups**
- **Barn Dances at the Farm**
- **Dances in Oswego**
- **Trips to special events**



Our History

1980

1985

1990

1995

1979: ARISE is founded as one of the 8 original Centers for Independent Living in New York

1986: Advocates block a CENTRO bus to protest the lack of accessible public transportation

1986: Supports creation of a wheelchair-accessible fitness course at Onondaga Lake Park

1989: Helps establish the Sheriff's Handicapped Ambulatory Parking Enforcement (SHAPE) program

1994: Launch of the Employment Program, increasing job opportunities for people of all abilities

1996: Oswego office opens

1996: ARISE & Ski launches inclusive winter recreation

1998: ARISE at the Farm offers year-round recreation for all

1999: ARISE merges with Child and Family Service (1878 - 1999) and begins to offer Mental Health Services



2000

2005

2010

2001: ARISE advocates urge the passage of legislation that ensures people will not lose Medicaid benefits if they choose to work or marry

2002: Pulaski office opens

2003: Oneida office opens

2003: School-Based Mental Health Program Begins

2004: Designated the Regional Resource Development Center (RRDC) for persons with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) for 8 Counties across Central and Northern New York

2009: Named "Agency of the Year" by the New York State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers

2010: Broadens Regional Resource Development Center (RRDC) to include persons seeking to transition from or avoid entering nursing homes.

2010: Mental Health Services expand into Oswego County

2011: Center for Independent Living in Madison County opens



Learning While Young

INDEPENDENCE MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR ALL

As a young child, Sasha received care after school from her grandparents while her single mother finished work. This arrangement worked well until Sasha became too heavy for her grandparents to transfer into and out of her wheelchair. Sasha's grandparents also spoiled her, which led to challenging behavior as she got older. Sasha's mother heard about the ARISE Respite Center in Chittenango, and wondered whether it might provide a much needed change in Sasha's after school arrangements.

When Sasha first started coming to the Respite Program, she wanted program staff to do everything for her. When Sasha threw a ball, she expected staff to retrieve it so she could throw the ball again. It was important for Sasha to learn to do things for herself. The Respite Workers started showing Sasha that she could wheel herself to the table to have a snack with the other kids, instead of getting a push or having the snack brought to her. Now when Sasha wants to throw a ball, she has a special one with a string attached. She delights in her ability to throw the ball, pull it in herself, and throw it again.

The Respite Program has given Sasha a chance to develop her own physical abilities, as well as her social skills with kids her own age. It has also provided her mother a way to finish her work each day. Sasha's grandparents can spend time with her in a different way without being direct caregivers. The improvement in Sasha's behavior is now evident in school and at home.

ARISE has offered After-School Respite in Madison County since 2006.

After-School Respite in Onondaga County started in 2009.

In-Home Respite in Oswego County began in 2010.

Our new and expanded respite programs were funded through a grant from OPWDD.

PLAYING WITH HIS PEERS

Zachary always wanted to tag along with his cousin to an area recreation center, but problems occurred whenever he did. Zachary is in his early teens, has developmental delays, and is Deaf. He had trouble communicating with the other children and with the program staff. His frustrations as a result of not understanding the rules of the center, or of the games being played, led to outbursts and sometimes even altercations. The recreation center informed Zachary's parents that unless he could control his outbursts, he would not be able to come back.

His parents wanted to help their son with his behavior problems, and recognized that Zachary needed one-on-one support after school. Arranging for that care so they could finish the work day was proving difficult. When the family found the new ARISE After-School Respite Program in Onondaga County, the pieces began to fall into place.

Zachary was paired with a Respite staff member who is fluent in American Sign Language. With someone there to help him communicate and to intervene during times of frustration, Zachary is learning socially appropriate behavior and is now able to play with his cousin and other children. Having this kind of support has helped Zachary improve his behavior to the extent that he is now able to participate in activities at the recreation center on the weekends without the Respite staff member at his side. Eventually, Zachary may also be ready to handle after school time without support as well.

Respite programs allow parents and caregivers to take a break and relax, finish work, run errands, or enjoy an evening out.



JOINING IN THE FUN

Timothy is an active and energetic middle school student. This past year, he received a Cochlear Implant, hearing the family bird for the very first time. With the help of a Service Coordinator, he attended four weeks of summer camp. Two of the weeks, he attended with kids who did not have disabilities. He educated the staff and his fellow campers about hearing limitations.

Timothy then decided to try out for his school's basketball team, and was thrilled when he found out he made it. The school stepped up and provides an interpreter for all of the practices. Timothy is so excited about playing on the team that he gets disappointed when snow days cancel school (and practice).

Education is important for all young people. ARISE Education Advocates work with families and area schools to create Individualized Education Plans that are right for each child. We also help young adults with disabilities transition from high school to either higher education or employment. Service Coordinators can help young adults get into college programs geared towards individuals who have disabilities.

At the start of the decade, 6 ARISE Medicaid Service Coordinators (MSCs) worked with 100 people. There are now 24 MSCs who assist almost 500 people!

ARISE provides Service Coordination in Onondaga, Oswego and Madison Counties.

“I want to reiterate how *grateful* and *fortunate* we are having an ARISE MSC supporting our son.”

FRIENDSHIPS MADE THROUGH COMMON GROUND

Being the victim of bullying is difficult to experience, and can also be harder to talk about. Fortunately, the group of kids who shared their experiences and their feelings in late 2010 felt safe doing just that. They talked about how mean some eighth-grade girls can be, and how to deal with the girls and the older boys who bully. They described how it felt to have their siblings teased and bullied, and how it felt to be bullied because of their siblings.

The group of 'tweens are members of the ARISE Sibshops in Oswego County. Each of the kids, ages 8 to 12, has a brother or sister with some kind of disability. They have been coming together every other month for the past four years. Even though they come from school districts across Oswego County, the Sibs have built strong friendships. They look forward to the Sibshops meetings and know that the friends that they make there can understand both the joys and frustrations of having a sibling with a disability.

Recent news stories about the perils of bullying and a visit with the Oswego County Teen Group to see “A Christmas Story” at Syracuse Stage opened the door for the discussion about bullying. With three trusted adults to facilitate and guide them, the Sibs opened up with each other and learned coping skills to deal with bullies and how to stand up for themselves and their siblings.

Sibshops were created by Donald Meyer and Patricia Vadasy for brothers and sisters of children with special health and developmental needs to obtain peer support in a recreational context.

ARISE began its Sibshops program in 2007. Youth come from across Oswego County.

Providing support to families helps to ensure a stable home life for individuals who have disabilities.



Sustaining Mental Health

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

Sometimes when life gets hard, people make choices that make life more difficult. For Ellen, a single mother with four children, turning to marijuana was a choice that had made her life spiral downward. When the Onondaga County Department of Social Services became concerned about the well-being of her children, Ellen had the most important choice of all: begin working with a Mental Health Therapist at ARISE to get help in conquering her drug habit, or risk having her children taken away.

The drugs may have made some things less than clear in her mind, but the reality of the situation was crystal clear. Ellen loved her kids and was going to devote all of her energy to making things right. Soon after starting her treatment, she was diagnosed with a form of cancer. With support from her therapist, and using the coping skills she was learning, she remained sober throughout the ordeal of surgery, radiation treatment, and chemotherapy.

Ellen's kids also did well during this time, and demonstrated the positive impact of mom's changes. The oldest took mom's advice to get treatment for drug abuse, and the three younger kids started to show significant improvement in school. The entire family has support, they are together, and they have love.

Our licensed clinicians use a team approach with our psychiatrists to provide both therapy and medication when needed. Our clinicians work with individuals to help them identify and strengthen their own natural support system in the community, including family, friends, neighbors, clergy and others. With that support system in place, there is a much greater chance of long term health, wellness and success.

Mental health issues in children are often driven by their environment. Our holistic approach identifies suggested changes that can lead to a more positive outlook and better school performance.

Our Mental Health Services focus on building skills and putting into place natural supports and ancillary services that sustain wellness after therapy goals are achieved.

ARISE Mental Health Services are provided at our Clinic in Syracuse and at school and community locations in Oswego and Onondaga Counties, thanks in part to support from the United Way of Central New York.

Our person-centered approach means meeting people where they are and working together to help them develop and achieve goals.

TRUST AND TEAMWORK LEAD THE WAY

Michelle never imagined that she would be raising seven of her sister's kids. She couldn't change the harsh realities of their mother's life, but she was determined to do everything she could to give them all the chance for a brighter future.

When Steven, the oldest, started getting into trouble in classes, the ARISE therapist based in his school became involved. Michelle had heard about people's experiences in the past where professionals dictated instructions and then criticized when things didn't improve. Michelle wanted to help Steven figure out how to be successful, but she was cautious as she went into the first meeting.

To her surprise, the approach used by the ARISE therapist was anything but authoritative. Michelle, Steven, and the therapist worked together to identify issues, determine strengths, and set goals. As Steven made progress, Michelle developed enough trust to talk with the therapist about the other children. She felt so relieved to realize that the therapist was her partner. Rather than a cookie cutter approach, the therapist used an approach that treats every person as a unique individual.

There is no question that Michelle and the children have a long road ahead. But all feel more confident in their ability to make it in the world, and they know that there are supports available when they need them.

UNIQUE is an annual art and literary magazine featuring the creative voices of Central New York artists who have disabilities.

UNIQUE celebrated its 10th anniversary publication in 2010 with exhibits at:

- The Szozda Gallery
- SUNY Upstate Medical University Health Sciences Library
- King & King Architects
- ARISE Oswego Office

Steven Kern and Sean Kirst sat on the UNIQUE 2010 Editorial Board, joining three other members of the community to select the creative work featured in the magazine.

GROWING UP ARTISTIC

When he was fourteen, Derek attended a beginning art class and made something. The resulting “First Attempt” was selected for and published in the 2004 edition of UNIQUE Magazine. The next six editions of the magazine contained seven more of Derek’s pieces. He moved from sketching to painting, and finally, to digital photography and collage. His tremendous evolution as an artist has been chronicled in UNIQUE.

Now twenty, Derek works with an art teacher to continue to improve his artistic abilities. Though he may use art as a form of therapy to help him get out feelings and frustrations, Derek’s expression now reflects that of an experienced and talented artist.

Derek feels that his Autism Spectrum Disorder allows him to work in multi-fragmented forms, creating collages that can simultaneously be both abstract and representational. In thinking about his work, he says, “My brain is wired differently, with synapses firing in all directions at one time, so the pieces eventually come to form a unique arrangement.”

Derek is just one of the more than 200 Central New York artists who have disabilities that have been featured in UNIQUE over the past decade. His creative growth as an artist has paralleled the evolution of UNIQUE as an important art and literary publication. In 2010, the 10th Anniversary of UNIQUE included the annual Unveiling Event followed for the first time by several exhibits throughout the community.



“Art is something I can do that is *completely free* from any label or stereotype.”



Artwork from top: “First Attempt” (2004), “Winter Spirit” (2005), “Cross Churches of Oswego” (2006), “Birds of Flight” (2007), “The Many Facets of Oswego” (2007), “Mad Hatter at the Fort” (2008), “Hall of Fame” (2009), and “9-12” (2010, left).

Having Fun

THE THRILL OF IT ALL



Natalie is an accomplished young woman. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, and has been designing websites for more than a decade. She also has Cerebral Palsy and uses both a wheelchair and an assistive speaking device. Natalie has always sought out ways to have fun, and was one of the first participants in ARISE & Ski.

With more than a decade of practice under her belt, Natalie is an accomplished skier and a bit of an adrenaline junkie when it comes to winter sports.

She uses one of the program's many bi-skis and heads up to the main slope as soon as the season starts every year. Her only limitation in terms of the trails she can choose is the ability of the volunteer who skis with her!

Until she was too old to be eligible, Natalie competed in the Winter Empire State Games. She used the opportunity to ski the peak at Whiteface Mountain. Natalie's fearlessness is an inspiration to many of the other ARISE & Ski volunteers and skiers.

Skiers with all types of disabilities are welcome to try out skiing or snowboarding with ARISE & Ski. We have a variety of adaptive and assistive devices to help anyone learn to ski or snowboard. Our instructors are certified with Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) in adaptive skiing and our volunteers are trained to work with people of all abilities.

ARISE & Ski is the only all-inclusive adaptive winter sports program in Central New York.

In most recent season, we received support from area Walmart stores, a new mono-ski and action camera from the Lockheed Martin Employees Federated Fund, and the ongoing generosity of Jim Hickey and Toggenburg.



“There are so many great *role models* in ARISE & Ski, and I'm not just talking about the *volunteers!*”

OPENING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Under the guidance of Founder and Technical Director, Christopher Weiss, ARISE & Ski has enjoyed exponential growth from a handful of skiers and volunteers to over 80 skiers and 180 volunteers.

Ian is getting his Masters Degree at Syracuse University, but heads home during school breaks. He makes sure to be back in the area before the Spring semester starts in mid-January so he can volunteer with ARISE & Ski. Ian shares his knowledge and skills as a snowboarder with ARISE & Ski participants who want to learn. His expertise on the snowboard means that he can also help skiers who use bi-skis to travel down the slope, which typically can only be done by skiers. Ian is so skilled on the snowboard that he is able to help skiers learn to turn the bi-ski, and he can function as the brakes when needed.

Adaptive snowboarding is still a relatively small part of adaptive winter sports, but it is becoming more popular. Ian is training for PSIA certification in adaptive snowboarding. The exam has only been held once in the Eastern Division, and Ian is looking forward to taking the exam when it is next offered. In fact, the number of snowboarding volunteers with ARISE & Ski who want to take the exam may prompt PSIA to offer it again.

Ian has so thoroughly enjoyed ARISE & Ski that he has told his family and friends that after he graduates, he wants to find work in the area so he can continue to be a part of ARISE & Ski.



ARISE at the Farm also offers:

- **Horsemanship Camps & Farm Camps**
- **Accessible Fishing**
- **High and Low Ropes Courses**
- **Adaptive Horse Cart Driving**
- **Adaptive Cycling & More!**

New cycle cars add to the fun thanks to the Lockheed Martin Employees Federated Fund.

People with disabilities can enjoy the Farm with support from Family Support Services through the CNY Developmental Disabilities Services Office and OPWDD.

FORGING LASTING FRIENDSHIPS

If you saw Bethany, Kari, Rebecca, and Julie together, you'd never imagine that they were strangers until just a matter of months ago. These young adults and close friends are residents of Madison County. Each of them lives with her parents and has a disability of some sort. Completing high school meant being without social connections and regular social activities away from their families. It can be very difficult for young adults with disabilities to establish outside connections.



For Bethany, Kari, Rebecca, and Julie, that all changed when they came together as the core of the new ARISE at the Farm Madison County Young Women's Program. They developed relationships with each other as they got to know the horses at the Farm.

During the summer they learned how to ride and care for the horses. These shared experiences also offered the opportunity for the young women to become friends. Those friendships deepened as they enjoyed many activities together, including learning how to weave baskets, going on hay rides, sharing a sleep over, and of course, riding horses.

When many people hear about ARISE at the Farm, they think about the programming that is available for children and teens. While many of the Farm Camps and School Break Recreation opportunities are geared towards youth, the Farm offers programming and activities for people of all ages and abilities.

MAKING HUGE STRIDES

When Lucas was only two years old, his parents could see that he would have mobility impairments. Lucas already had his first walker to help him move around. After hearing that horseback riding could help build strength and increase mobility, his parents brought Lucas to ARISE at the Farm. When his parents first took him to the Therapeutic Riding Program, Lucas wanted nothing to do with the horses. He cried frequently, and would refuse to even touch a horse.

The riding sessions were difficult at the beginning, but the ARISE team and his parents didn't give up. Eventually Lucas opened up to the animals, and everyone started seeing results. Lucas now gets excited when he sees the Farm, and smiles through his riding sessions. The boy who was reluctant at first now loves to pet the horses. More importantly, Lucas is learning to use forearm crutches to assist him in walking, and he's even taking a few unassisted steps on his own.

Children and adults with disabilities who participate in the Therapeutic Riding Program at ARISE at the Farm are able to increase strength and fine motor skills, and build other physical and cognitive abilities. Sessions take place on horseback, so riders enjoy themselves without realizing that what they are doing is hard work. The staff members have seen Lucas and the other riders in the Therapeutic Riding Program accomplish great things.



Sharing Our Stories

SO MUCH MORE TO TELL

It is not possible to tell the story of every one of the thousands of people whose lives have connected with ARISE over the past decade. Wonderful people like:

Amanda, who wanted to attend college after she graduated from high school, but her family and guidance counselors thought it would be too difficult for her. With support from the ARISE Day Habilitation Program, Amanda is now a straight A student at a local community college.



Will, who attended Disability Mentoring Day and shadowed a worker at an area big-box store. He put in an application and was interviewed two days later. He works stocking shelves, and the managers informed his ARISE Job Coach that he is a great worker and valued member of their team.



Miriam, who is still living at home thanks to the Regional Resource Development Center for Nursing Home Transition and Diversion. When it was discovered her son was not using her funds appropriately, Miriam and the RRDC staff worked together to designate her sister as her payee so she could remain in the program and continue living at home.

Eric, a young man with Autism, who communicated more through playing guitar than through speech. After working closely with ARISE Community Habilitation, he has gone from saying a few words at a time only to his closest family members to now talking to his extended family.

Missy and her son *Devon*, who has a serious illness and must be supervised all the time. It was a big step for her to trust an ARISE In-Home Respite Worker to provide care for Devon for short periods of time so that she could take the time to take care of personal business or take a relaxing bath.

Michael, who was able to have grab bars installed in critical places in his home thanks to the services available through the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program's Extended In-Home Services for the Elderly. He also was able to obtain a chair that will lift him from sitting to standing.

Lisa, who started riding in the Therapeutic Riding program this past summer after she had a stroke. Initially, it was difficult for her to extend her left arm. After participating for only half of the season, she was able to move much more freely. Lisa, as well as her family and her teachers, have all commented on the increased strength in her entire body.

Joshua, a young man who skis and who has Attention Deficit Disorder and a slight intellectual disability. He spent years on the beginner slope at Toggenburg until, with the right encouragement, he made the big move and tried one of the big slopes. He still celebrates that feeling of accomplishment every time he takes the lift up to the top. Although he still has many fears, he also knows what it's like to succeed.



Our Community Partners

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

ARISE partners with many organizations and individuals throughout the community:

Alliance Bank	National Grid	Rothwell Family
Allyn Foundation	NYS Department of Health	Say Yes to Education
Alpha Printing	NYS Department of Education, Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (formerly VESID)	Sparky Town Restaurant and Catering
Bond, Schoeneck & King	NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council	SUNY Oswego Office of Business and Community Relations
The Bonadio Group	NYS Office of Children and Family Services	SUNY Upstate Medical University Designated AIDS Center
Bosco & Geers Market Ltd.	NYS Office of Mental Health	SUNY Upstate Medical University Pediatric Clinic
Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University	NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, Central New York Developmental Services Office	Syracuse City School District
Ted Carley	NewsChannel 9 WSYR	Syracuse Community Health Center
Central New York Affiliate Susan G. Komen for the Cure	Daisy & Paul Nojaim	Toggenburg Mountain Winter Sports Center
Central New York Community Foundation	Northern Region Center for Independent Living	United Way of Central New York
Central New York Regional Transportation Authority	Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth	United Way of Greater Oswego County
Central Square Community Church	Onondaga County Community Development Department	United Community Chest of the Towns of Cazenovia, Fenner and Nelson
Central Square Central School District	Onondaga County Department of Long Term Care	U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration
Chittenango Rotary	Onondaga County Department of Mental Health	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
City of Syracuse Department of Community Development	Onondaga County Department of Social Services	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Constellation Energy Group	Oswego City School District	Upstate Paving
Delavan Center	Oswego County Department of Social Services	Vera House
ElectroBraid Fence Limited	Oswego County Opportunities	V.I.P. Structures, Inc.
Entergy	P. Drescher Co., Inc	Visual Technologies, Inc.
The Folkus Project	Parsons-McKenna Construction Co.	Walmart Stores
First Methodist Church in Oswego	P.E.A.C.E.	
Green & Seifter, Attorneys, PLLC	George & Mary Pelrah	
Haylor, Freyer & Coon, Inc.	Mike Pozefski	
Huntington Family Centers	PurEnergy, L.L.C.	
INFICON	Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL)	
Integrated Marketing	Rich & Gardner Construction Company	
J.W. Burns & Company Investment Counsel		
Kinsella Quarries		
LaFayette Central School District		
Logo Incentives Inc.		
Lowe's of Oswego		
May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society		
Carol & Sam Nappi		



Looking Ahead

From all of us...



A DECADE OF GROWTH AND SUCCESS

It is an honor to share with you the ARISE story over the past decade. In many cases it is the story of individuals and families connecting with ARISE in their search for information, assistance, and support in meeting their goals. The strong advocacy efforts of consumers and staff members to make communities more inclusive for people who have disabilities are also an important part of the ARISE story.

This organization is able to do so much because of the combined efforts of many caring people and partners. We are grateful to those who have made it possible for us to respond to emerging needs by expanding existing programs or by adding new ones.

Many things have changed since 2000. ARISE has grown from an organization with 155 staff members to a team of 550 dedicated professionals. A track record of success in delivering high quality programs is reflected in the growth of the annual budget from \$3 million in 2000 to over \$13 million in 2010.

The real measure of success, of course, is not in the number of employees, programs, or the size of the budget. It is in the achievements of individuals who reach or exceed their goals. It is in strong partnerships that improve service delivery, and in increased access to education, employment, accessible public places, visitable housing, and integrated recreation. It is in fostering a greater community awareness of the capabilities of people with disabilities. It is in lives changed because ARISE was involved and provided assistance.

One of our ARISE & Ski volunteers, Carol Nuzzo, describes the tremendous determination of the ski participants. From them, she has learned about never giving up, and continuing to try no matter how difficult the challenge.

While we cannot know what the future may hold, it seems clear that maintaining vital services will be challenging during uncertain economic times. One thing that is sure to remain constant, however, is our mission of working to create a fair and just community in which everyone can fully participate.

We are so grateful to the people who were part of the ARISE journey during the past decade, and we invite you to join us as we set our course for the next.

Thanks for sharing the dream of *access and independence for all!*

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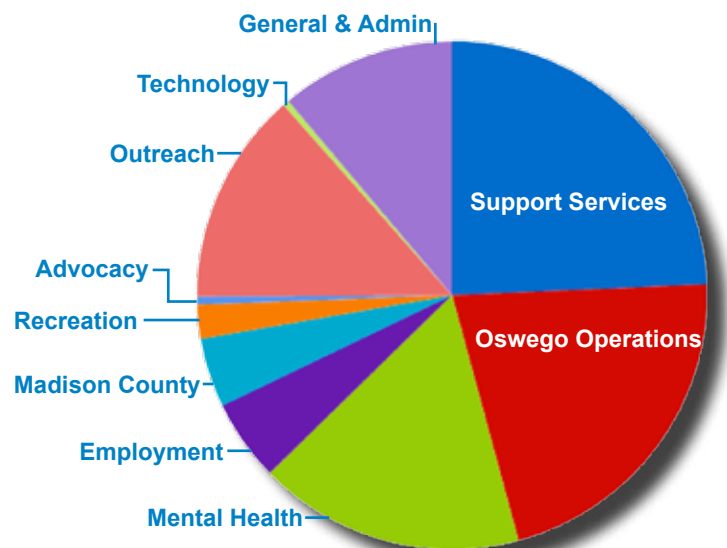
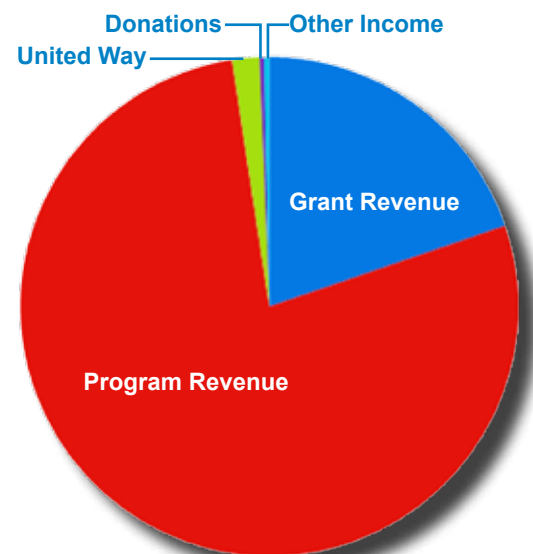
Fiscal Year 2010 (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)¹

Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	
Current Assets	2,878,000
Property & Equipment	2,163,000
Total Assets	5,041,000
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	1,471,000
Long-Term Debt	1,191,000
Net Assets	2,379,000
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	5,041,000

Statement of Activities

SUPPORT & REVENUE	
Grant Revenue	2,251,000
Program Revenue	8,884,000
United Way of Central New York	202,000
Donations	32,000
Other Income	40,000
Total Support and Revenue	11,409,000
EXPENSES	
Support Services	2,738,000
Oswego Operations	2,420,000
Mental Health Services	1,903,000
Outreach Services	1,527,000
Employment Services	584,000
Madison County Services	495,000
Integrated Recreation Services	241,000
Advocacy Services	59,000
Technology Services	42,000
General and Administrative Services	1,255,000
Total Expenses	11,264,000
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	145,000



¹ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

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