



Hope's Notes

SOUTHERN WORCESTER COUNTY ARC, INC.

Volume 6
Issue 1
January/February
Bi-Monthly
Newsletter

COMING SOON TO A COMPUTER NEAR YOU!

The Center of Hope is close to unveiling it's newly designed website. This website was designed to be user friendly and to provide program members, families and the community with a comprehensive understanding of the agency.

Check us out in February at www.thecenterofhope.org.

We want to know what you think. Email info@thecenterofhope.org with your comments.

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SWCARC, Inc. Announces Strategic Plan Positioning the Center of Hope's Legacy into the Future

Southern Worcester County ARC, Inc. is proud to announce the agency's Strategic Plan, Positioning the Center of Hope's Legacy into the Future. Please take a few minutes to read all about our goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan was completed with assistance from our employees, the Board of Directors and

program members input. If you have any questions regarding any goal, please feel free to contact the Center of Hope and speak with the Executive Director or Director of Programs.

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 2

Howard to Receive The Arc of Massachusetts' Distinguished Citizen Award

On Wednesday, January 30th, Cindy Howard will receive one of The Arc of Massachusetts' Distinguished Citizen Awards. This award recognizes individuals, groups or organizations that have made a significant contribution or demonstrated long-term commitment to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Cindy Howard has been a strong supporter and advocate for the equal rights and opportunities of adults with cognitive and developmental disabilities for over 20 years.

She has dedicated much of her life to educating families, staff, self-advocates, and others about what power we all have within us to change the way our Government perceives individuals with disabilities. Her Legislative action, which has reached not just the State House but also to the House of

Representatives in Washington, D.C., has brought more attention to the financial obligations required to properly support adults with disabilities in an effort to increase funding to support our programs and others. She also stands strong to support private agencies rather than the institutional setting that the State is considering.

Cindy started a majority of the fundraising and community events at the Center of Hope that still exist today. It was Cindy's vision, motivation, dedication, and commitment that provided the foundation for events such as the Talents & Treasures Annual

Auction and Legislative Breakfast.

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 3



Cindy Howard
Village Photo, 2007

SWCARC, Inc. Announces Strategic Plan

Strategic Goal No. 1:

The Center of Hope will provide exemplary services to our stakeholders both internal and external.

The agency will strive to meet this goal by ensuring quality services are provided to all program members and families that are served. This will be measured by the performance of external agency audits as well as a new Quality Assurance performance indicator being implemented.

Strategic Goal No. 2:

The Center of Hope will implement policies, structure and an agency culture that will maximize our ability to attract, recruit and retain a competent workforce.

In an effort to continuously educate our staff, the Center of Hope plans to offer an Agency Benefits Fair to help people understand what benefits are available. The Center of Hope has already begun to make structural changes to enhance the professionalism that we are striving towards.

Strategic Goal No. 3:

The Center of Hope will meet the information and communication needs of our stakeholders, both internal and external.

Good communication is such a large part of any organization's success that it is no surprise the Center of Hope has numerous strategies to meet this goal.

External Communication Goals: The agency will develop

a comprehensive marketing plan, focusing on the recruitment of new program members, business opportunities and overall agency awareness. The Center of Hope plans to host several community outreach events to increase community awareness. In addition, the agency will hold informational sessions to improve employee and community awareness. *Hope's Notes*, the agency bi-monthly newsletter is working very hard to increase its email distribution list to assist with the high cost of printing.

Internal Communication Goals: The agency has plans to purchase a central computer for each program that is designated for staff. This will be available for online trainings, announcement postings, staff surveys and receiving agency email. Through staff surveys, we will continuously seek information to improve communication within the organization.

Strategic Goal No. 4:

The Center of Hope's financial viability will be strengthened.

The Center of Hope will aggressively seek new business ventures and grants to provide the necessary income to run the Day Habilitation Programs, Children's Programs, Employment Services and other unfunded programs that the agency offers. The Administrative Team is looking into other areas that the agency may be able to reduce expenses, therefore making it possible to improve upon our current programming.

You Can Help Center of Hope Meet It's Strategic Goals

There are several ways in which you can help the Center of Hope accomplish portions of its Strategic Goals.

New Business Ideas: If you have ideas about potential business ventures, we would love to hear them.

Hope's Notes: If you have an email address and would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please let us know. This will help with the expense of printing and mailing while helping the environment. Two great benefits.

Informational Sessions: If you have thoughts about what type of informational sessions you would be interested in attending, we want to know.

Community Input: The Center of Hope depends on your input. One of the ways that we receive this information is through agency satisfaction surveys. The information gathered through this method guides us towards improvements in programming and steers the future growth of the agency. Please take five minutes to fill out the survey when it arrives in your mailbox.

Artistic Expressions Schedule

February 13 - Valentine Heart Pillow February 20 - Creative T-shirt February 27 - Make a Jewelry box

All classes are \$5 and held from 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. at Books & Beans. Please make checks payable to Center of Hope. Payments received prior to class start are appreciated. If you have questions, contact Jazsmin Trifone at (508) 764-6774.

Howard to Receive Distinguished Citizen Award

COVER STORY continued

Cindy has a warm place in her heart for all children. She spends days shopping for and organizing gifts for the Christmas Giving Program that she coordinates. This program was initiated with the support of a good friend to the Center of Hope, who saw a need within the disabled community when many families were going without gifts under the tree because there wasn't enough money. Although she could simplify the process by buying generic gifts for everyone on the list, instead Cindy does all she can to buy *exactly* what each person has specifically asked for. Last year 500 families benefited from her efforts. That is one more reason why Cindy is so admired by the staff, because she *always* thinks of people as individuals, and does all she can to make each person feel appreciated.

Cindy's voice can be heard wherever there is an ear to listen, her words speak of action waiting to be taken, and she will inspire you to make a difference because her passion and dedication is contagious. There is no sales pitch, but if you read the Mission Statement of the Center of Hope you will know that it must also be Cindy's personal modus operandi: "...to provide people with disabilities and their families with the resources, services and opportunities to be contributing members of their communities and to achieve the most fulfilling and meaningful lives possible." This is why we are nominating Cindy Howard for the Distinguished Citizens Award in 2007.

The Center of Hope is proud to have Cindy as a member of the agency and grateful for all the dedication that she shows towards all the people at the Center of Hope.

Center of Hope 2008 Event Schedule

Date	Event	Location	Time
January 27	Sno-Ball Semi-Formal Dance	Knights of Columbus, Southbridge	3-7 p.m.
February 9	Country for A Cause	COH Day Habilitation, Southbridge	6-10 p.m.
March 14	St. Patrick's Dinner Dance	COH Day Habilitation, Southbridge	6:30-9:30
April 18	Spring Dinner Dance	VFW, Southbridge	6:30-9:30
May 18	Teen Prom	Knights of Columbus, Southbridge	3-7 p.m.
June 8	Family Festival	Hyland Orchard, Sturbridge	12-6 p.m.
July 20	3rd Annual Poker Run	Center of Hope/ Knights of Columbus	9:00 a.m.
August 20	Hope's Swing Golf Tournament	Cohasse Country Club, Southbridge	8:00 a.m.
September 19	Fall Dinner Dance	Knights of Columbus, Southbridge	6:30-9:30
October 24	Halloween Dinner Dance	VFW, Southbridge	6:30-9:30
November 14	8th Annual Talents and Treasures Auction	Periwinkles, Oxford	5:00 p.m.
November 21	Thanksgiving Dinner Dance	VFW, Southbridge	6:30-9:30
November 22	Running for Hope	Southbridge Commons	9:00 a.m.
December 19	Holiday Party Dinner Dance	COH Day Habilitation, Southbridge	6:30-9:30

Southern Worcester County ARC, Inc., Center of Hope
 Hope's Notes
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7 Teen Group	8 Youth Bowling	9	10	11
14 Teen Group	15 Youth Bowling	16	17	18
21 Teen Group	22 Youth Bowling	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

F e b r u a r y 2 0 0 7

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4 Teen Group	5 Youth Bowling	6	7	8
11 Teen Group	12 Youth Bowling	13	14	15
18 Teen Group	19 Youth Bowling	20	21	22
25 Teen Group	26 Youth Bowling	27	28	29