

JOHNSTOWN

Fulmont Community Action Agency honors community partners

Every year in May, the more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies across the country celebrate Community Action Month, where they are able to showcase work they do in their communities, as well as recognize community partners, donors, and Board members. Fulmont Community Action Agency, Inc. held its annual Community Action Month Celebration on May 6 at the Holiday Inn in Johnstown.

Robin Wentworth, Vice Chairperson of the Fulmont Board of Directors welcomed everyone in attendance, and thanked them for their partnership with Fulmont. Denis E. Wilson, Sr., Executive Director/CEO of Fulmont, led the program by recognizing sponsors as well as Board members, public officials, honored guests, and members of Fulmont's staff.

Denis E. Wilson, Sr., spoke about Fulmont's programs, noting that the Weatherization Program completed 76 Weatherization units. The Weatherization Program also completed 29 NYSERDA/Empower units and 17 cooling air conditioning unit installs for the local Departments of Social Services. Also, the Weatherization Program completed the American Rescue Plan Act contract by fully weatherizing two homes, targeting fossil fuel reduction with the addition of heat pump technology.

Wilson also stated that the Community Services Department's VITA Program completed 222 tax returns for a total of \$263,541 in federal and state refunds. Our Outreach Centers served a total of 3,553 families and individuals to provide food pantries, assistance with nutrition-based referrals, such as SNAP and WIC, clothing, personal care and household supplies, HEAP applications, and Holiday Baskets, which consisted of food and toys for children.

The Early Childhood Services Program has been awarded another 5-year Head Start Grant, opened a classroom

in the Mayfield School District and will open a new Head Start classroom in Johnstown in September 2024.

The WIC Program continues to work remotely via phone or email due to the U.S. Health and Human Services extending the public health emergency for WIC, and is currently serving 1,680 WIC participants.

The Fulton County Senior Transportation Program provided 2,798 trips, transporting hundreds of seniors to medical appointments, shopping trips and social events. The Fulton County Senior Transportation Program also received a donated car from the former Access Transportation, to be used for transporting individuals or small groups.

The guest speaker for the event was Manuel Rosa, Director, Department of State, Division of Community Services, who congratulated Fulmont for the work it does in Fulton and Montgomery Counties, their strong leadership and success of its programs run by good people since 1965 in helping the hurting, hungry and homeless.

Rosa also spoke about the importance of community service, accountability and compassion. Rosa, who will be retiring this year, was also presented with awards in the form of Certificates and Letters of Appreciation from Fulmont and local legislators for the many years he has dedicated to the field of Community Services.

These awards included the Fulton County Board of Supervisors, presented by Greg Young, Gloversville 5th Ward Supervisor, the Montgomery County Legislature and Montgomery County Executive, both presented by Robert A. Purtell, Legislator for District 9, and from Fulmont Community Action Agency, Inc. and NYS Assemblyman Robert Smullen, both presented by Wilson

Gregory Young, Gloversville 5th Ward Supervisor, and also a Fulmont Board member, presented a proclamation from the Fulton County Board of

Supervisors designating May 2024 as "Community Action Month in Fulton County".

Robert A. Purtell, Montgomery County Legislator for District 9, and also a Fulmont Board member, presented a proclamation to Fulmont on behalf of the Montgomery County Legislature also naming May 2024 as "Community Action Month in Montgomery County."

Purtell was also presented with a certificate of appreciation for the Montgomery County Legislature from Fulmont Community Action Agency.

Premier Corporate Sponsor First Choice Financial Federal Credit Union, Primary Corporate Sponsors Roemer, Wallens, Gold and Mineaux, LLP, and Information Systems Division, and Corporate Sponsors Brown's Ford, C. Gerard Marketing, Kasson & Keller Inc., River Ridge Living Center and Superior Insulation Co. all received certificates of appreciation for their support of the agency.

Recipients of certificates of appreciation for community partners included John and Sunday Blackmon, Chad Majewski and Joe Szjkowski, Amsterdam Rotary Club, MVP Health Care, The Amen Place Food Pantry, Children's Aid Society and Jean Nicholas.

The following supporters of Fulmont, who were not present at the event, also received recognition for their contributions:

Amsterdam Masonic Lodge #84, Mohawk Valley Nurses Association, Mohawk Valley Women's Club, Ladies of Charity of Montgomery County, New Process Cleaners, Leatherstocking Region Federal Credit Union, Adirondack Harley-Davidson, Hoffman's Car Wash of Amsterdam, Hoffman's Car Wash of Gloversville, Market 32 #139 of Amsterdam, Price Chopper #164 of Palatine Bridge, Hannaford Supermarket, J. Paul Kolodziej, Attorney & Counselor at Law, Greg Gottung Family, Manly & Karen Shults, Joseph & Irene Mellow and Frank Bauer.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Manuel Rosa, Director, Division of Community Services, NYS Dept. of State, speaks at Fulmont's Annual Community Action Month Celebration.

Liberty ARC unification official, bringing together services in Schenectady and Montgomery counties

The Montgomery and Schenectady Chapters of The Arc New York have officially unified under the name of Liberty ARC.

"We are so pleased to announce that Liberty ARC is now a unified agency, covering both Montgomery and Schenectady Counties, and providing excellent person-centered services to people with disabilities in our communities," said Jennifer Saunders, CEO of Liberty ARC, in a news release.

The agency now provides services to more than 720 people with disabilities and employs more than 1,100 full and part-time staff members.

For the past nine months, the agencies in both counties have been working hard on the unification, making sure that all of the details are covered. As sister chapters of the Arc New York, the unification helps strengthen programs and services by working together to benefit the people we support.

Chapters of The Arc New York have been pursuing op-

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portunities to unify in recent years, and the time was right for Montgomery and Schenectady to look at the benefits of working as one agency.

"We're leveraging the experience and expertise of our staff members to provide the very best for the people in our programs today and in the decades ahead," Saunders said in the release. "We know that the heart of this unification is a mutual respect for people with disabilities and a desire to support each person's hopes, dreams, and ambi-

tions so that everyone can live a quality of life that each person values."

Plans for unification were first announced last summer, and the agency worked with families and people supported to answer questions and ensure a seamless transition.

Services to the people we support transitioned smoothly through the unification, and the agency will continue to maintain a footprint in both counties.

The unification became effective May 1, 2024.

ABOUT LIBERTY ARC

Liberty ARC, the Montgomery County Chapter of The Arc New York, is a not-for-profit agency that provides top-quality supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Schenectady and Montgomery Counties. We are proud of our six decades of bringing these innovative and valuable programs to those most vulnerable in our community. While staying committed to our framework the agency has grown our employment, residential, day supports, family support and health-related programming throughout the years. Our mission — Together we support people with disabilities to achieve a quality of life each person values — together with our Values make up the foundation on which our culture is framed. We are extremely proud to be a pioneering agency, which coupled with a dynamic workforce and our person-centered mission makes Liberty ARC a stand-out in our field.

GLOVERSVILLE

Business networking event set for May 29

Jennifer Donovan, the Gloversville Downtown Development Specialist (GDDS) at Fulton County Center for Regional Growth (CRG) recently announced that the next free business networking event, "Gloversville Business Break," will be held on Wednesday, May 29, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at The Glove Theatre, 42 N. Main St., Gloversville. Coffee will be available, and the concession stand will be open to purchase snacks.

Immediately following the professional activity, the theater will show the movie "Matilda: The Musical," which is free thanks to underwriting by the Perrott, Peck, and Blackmon families.

"As the networking event is being rotated through Downtown Gloversville venues, so are the times it is being held so all businesses can have an opportunity to connect with other professionals," Donovan said in a news release.

44 Lakes Customized Gifts & Décor hosted the first one in

February and Mohawk Harvest Cooperative Market championed the March event, both held first thing in the morning, Donovan explained. "EmpowHERing Designs took April's event and held it in the late afternoon. This one at The Glove Theatre is at night and right before a free movie, showcasing the historic theater. What better way to meet other business owners than to enjoy an evening out and learning more about the Downtown Gloversville community?" Donovan said.

While this event is geared towards Downtown Gloversville businesses and organizations, any business is welcome to attend and network.

"The idea is to have a monthly coffee break for businesspeople to meet other members of the business community, network, and visit a business that they may not have been in yet," said Donovan in the release. "Thank you to the staff and board of directors at The Glove Theatre for hosting May's location."

GLOVERSVILLE

Stewart's Shops Holiday Match Team donates to Nathan Littauer Birthing Center

Nathan Littauer Hospital recently announced a generous donation of \$3,000 from Stewart's Shops and the Stewart's Shops Holiday Match Team.

This donation was used to purchase a CuddleCot™ for the hospital's Birthing Center, enhancing the quality of care provided to families experiencing infant loss. According to the CuddleCot website, A CuddleCot is a specialized cooling device which allows families more time to grieve and bond with their baby after their demise. The CuddleCot is a compassionate way to provide grieving time for families experiencing loss, and preserves their baby's appearance, condition, and their dignity.

"We are incredibly grateful to Stewart's Shops and the Holiday Match Team for their generous donation," said Nathan Littauer Hospital and Nursing Home Vice President of Business Development Geoffrey Peck in a news release. "This contribution will make a meaningful difference in the lives of families during a difficult time, and we are honored to have the support of a community-minded organization such as Stewart's."

The Stewart's Shops Holiday Match program, a longstanding tradition, involves collecting and matching donations made by customers. Half of the donations come from Stewart's Shops customers, and Stewart's doubles every donation, allowing for a significant impact on local communities.



PHOTO PROVIDED

From left: Nathan Littauer Vice President Geoffrey Peck, Stewart's Shops Store Manager Oshanda Pollard, Birthing Center Nurse Manager Maureen Mosher, Birthing Center Assistant Nurse Manager Gina Lachmayer, and Birthing Center Ward Clerk Melissa Walker.

Stewart's Shops Store 180 Manager, Oshanda Pollard presented Nathan Littauer with a check of \$3,000 on April 24.

"The Holiday Match program is phenomenal," said Pollard in the release. "I hope and pray that people always have just a little to give to such a great cause,

because it's giving back to our community in such a big way. I've had all of my six children with Nathan Littauer. With the donation from Stewart's Shops to purchase the CuddleCot, Nathan Littauer can provide a gentle way for grieving parents to mourn the loss of their child."

"We are incredibly grateful to Stewart's Shops and the Holiday Match Team for their generous donation," said Maureen Mosher, Manager of the Birthing Center at Nathan Littauer Hospital, in the release. "This contribution will have a profound impact on the families

we serve, providing some comfort and support."

The CuddleCot offers families the time to create precious memories, keep their loved ones close, enable family and friends to meet their baby, and the time to make necessary arrangements.