

# Staff News

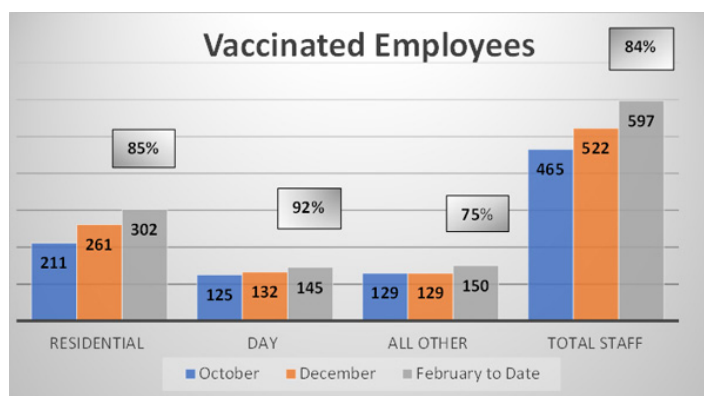
## February 2022



Dear Staff,

February is coming to a rapid end as we look forward to spring, warmer weather and enjoying the outdoors. This month is not only a time to spread love on Valentine's Day, it is also Black History Month where we recognize and celebrate the achievements of Black Americans across our nation. We believe an inclusive workforce and workplace culture contribute to our overall mission and values and I encourage you to take the time to learn about, and reflect on, the many African Americans who have inspired us and have made significant marks on history with their artistry, professional achievements, and community activism. Please [visit our website](#) to learn about two inspiring people we support who continue to rise above many challenges.

Another source of inspiration for me this month is the overwhelming number of our staff who are fully vaccinated. I am extremely grateful of so many of you who took this important step that allows us to safely provide services to our residents and program participants. If you have not yet been vaccinated, I hope you will do so soon and meet the March 23rd vaccination deadline for all staff. As you can see in this chart, 85% of our residential staff, 92% of our Day Services, and 83% of our total workforce are currently vaccinated and based on recent reports we believe it will continue to trend upward. I am not surprised we have one of the highest vaccination rates among other service providers. We are part of a unified workforce and are true to our core values of promoting health and ensuring safety.



Last month I mentioned information about OPWDD's DSP Incentive and Vaccine Bonus funds. We have been informed there is a delay in the distribution of these funds and are hopeful they will be released closer to the end of Spring 2022. We thank you for your patience and are committed to providing you with accurate information once we receive additional details.

We are getting ready for March, which is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Take pride in being part of the frontline ensuring that human rights and opportunities are met so people with developmental disabilities can lead productive lives and achieve their full potential.

Stay well,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tibi Guzmán'.

Tibi Guzmán  
Executive Director/CEO



# Staff In The Spotlight



*This month we highlight two staff members who work at opposite ends of the county.*



**Paul Allwood** has been working at The Arc Westchester for over 20 years! He currently is a Habilitation Instructor at Port Chester Day Services.

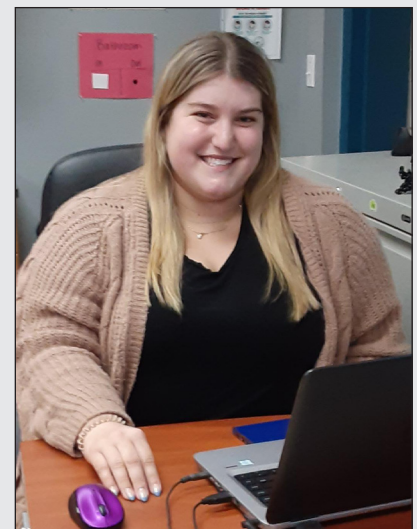
He is one of those special people who has the capacity to work with numerous individuals at the same time and recognize each person's unique abilities and needs. His calming presence and warm personality are so important in a group setting. He has developed wonderful relationships with so many people over the years, some who are no longer with us. The individuals he supports are a mixed group of ages and personalities. He makes sure everyone can express their feelings and he encourages group conversations on a regular basis.

Mr. Allwood also has a love for music and art. He plays classic oldies and jazz tunes for one of the groups and has introduced visual arts to another. He believes there are so many ways our individuals can express themselves. Everyone just loves him. He has even arranged for some of the art created by his group to be on display at a local business. We are fortunate to have such a special person on our team.

**Nicole Bernard** joined our staff in 2019 as Community Habilitation Specialist at The Ann Manzi Center. She has been a welcomed addition to our very busy Youth Connection program. When her supervisor took a leave of absence in November 2021, Nicole assumed a leadership role and used her teaching background to introduce some significant changes to the Youth Connection group. She has introduced a rotating list of daily tasks for each group. The rotating schedule keeps things interesting and addresses the development of many different skills. The individuals' response to this initiative has been overwhelmingly positive.

In addition to introducing new activities for the group, Nicole also developed lessons and supports to meet individual needs. She utilized the use of a "restroom pass board" visual support that assists a young woman to notify staff when she leaves the classroom. Now, she enjoys the independence of leaving the area without asking for permission.

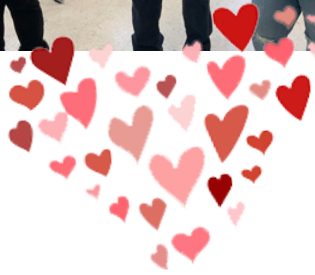
Nicole has also been instrumental in assisting another individual to communicate effectively with the *Proloquo to Go* program that he uses on his personal iPad. Nicole adds pictures of staff and peers on the iPad so he can now greet and address them by name and has created specific folders in the iPad program such as safety, nutrition, and community. Thank you, Nicole, for using your skills and creativity to promote the values of independence and self-esteem with the people you support.





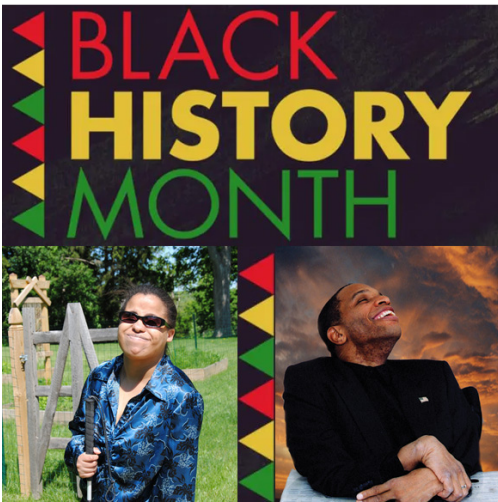
## All You Need is LOVE!

Love was everywhere this Valentine's Day. Our Choices Group participated in a Valentine Paint & Sip Art Project and had a Valentine's Day Bake Off. Choices DSP, Daysha Seda (shown far right) came up with this new activity.



Our Yonkers Center held a Pop-Up Valentine store to raise funds for their activities. Program Director Robin Burnett is shown purchasing a treat. This was an opportunity to learn how to use a cash register, provide change and wrap items to look festive.

[Click here to view highlights >](#)



The Arc Westchester recognizes the achievements of the Black community across our nation, state and here in Westchester. We applaud the people who receive services and our colleagues who contribute to supporting people with developmental disabilities.

In recognition of this month, we highlighted stories of two people we support. Crystal Hudson, a woman who loves her job, exhibits an admirable work ethic and continues to overcome many obstacles. Also, Bob Smith, our well-known poet who continues to inspire all of us. [Click here to read their stories >](#)

Our CHOICES group will end the month by creating an art display. They will choose one historic person in African American History and create a collage or project about their life. Stay tuned for photos!

## Our Voice Matters

Under the mentoring of Teresa Lombardi, CHOICES Neighborhood Activity Specialist, four of our Core Advocate Representatives participated in an interactive Power Point presentation that focused on advocacy, inclusion, kindness, gratitude, and courage to students and faculty from Manhattanville College. They were part of the college's weekly Social Justice Speakers Series. The presentation was well received and they have been asked to participate in the future. Thanks to everyone who made this happen! [Click here to read more >](#)



*This beautiful poem was read by one of our advocates during their presentation.*



**Sunflowers follow the sun...**

**But did you know**

**When it is cloudy and gray, they face each other and share their ENERGY.**

**Imagine if PEOPLE would do this too.**





## The Health Corner

WORRIED YOU MIGHT HAVE COVID-19?

Below is some helpful information:

NYS DOH COVID-19 TESTING available for HEALTH CARE WORKERS in NYS through the NYS DOH. You can make an appointment to be tested at one of several drive through or walk in testing sites by calling the COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-364-3065 or online at: <https://covid19screening.health.ny.gov/>

## HR CONNECTION

It's your 24-hour Human Resources center! This portal is devoted to providing you with up-to-date information about our company and your insurance benefits. It's here when you need it, any time of day or night. Click on the image for instructions on use. You can also access HR CONNECTION at the bottom of our website.



password: arcwestchester

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact: Jessica Arnemann in Human Resources at (914) 495-4553 or email [jarnemann@arcwestchester.org](mailto:jarnemann@arcwestchester.org)



**We have an opportunity for YOU to earn up to \$1,000 when referring a friend or family member hired as a DSP.**

**[Click here](#) to view all of our job openings. Share the link!**

**Let Others Discover the Rewards of Working at The Arc Westchester**

Contact Human Resources for Details

## Employee Discount Programs:

We want to remind you of the Employee Discount Programs available to you & your family.

**EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT**

**BUYER'S EDGE INC.**

BUYERS EDGE - <https://buyersedgeinc.com/>

Username: 1204 (your group #) Password: ARC

"Low Price Guaranteed" offers on many major purchases such as Appliances, TV's, Cars (new & used), Furniture and 20 other categories. It is FREE and convenient! Please log on using the information above.

**LifeMart** LifeMart: [ADP Login](#)

LifeMart offers discounts on food delivery, electronics & so much more. It is **FREE** and convenient!

*Please log on to ADP using the information below:*

Once logged in to the ADP Portal, click on "Myself" and then "Benefits." You will find LifeMart in the "Your Employee Discounts" section. On the first visit you will be asked to provide your email address, create a password and choose a secret question. On future visits the system will recognize your account and log you in automatically.

## Strengthening Our Digital Infrastructure

We already have a heightened awareness of our need to be prepared for the constant threat of Cyber Security Risks.

The recent Eastern European events, along with strong recommendations from our insurance company, have prompted us to begin implementing Multi-Factor Authentication (a.k.a MFA) for our E-Mail and Office 365 systems.



### What is Multi Factor Authentication?

Multi factor authentication is a method that increases the security of user logins above and beyond just a password. Users will have to approve sign-ins to their account via text message to their cell phone. This method ensures that even if a hacker managed to get hold of your password, they will still be unable to access your email!

### How does it work?

MFA works somewhat similar to how you typically reset your password for other services in your everyday life. A code is sent to your cell phone, and that code authenticates your identity. The only difference is that instead of recovering a password, the purpose is to have a second login for identity verification. You must have your cell phone on hand to go through this process.

### What are your next steps?

This implementation will be done in 2-phases. The first will be setting up your onsite desktop, and the second will be setting up your remote desktop. Your supervisor will be contacting you soon to ensure that your cell phone and email information is up to date. We will keep you posted regarding the timing of this implementation.

In the meantime, please be sure to continue safe cyber practices when using Email and Microsoft office. Always be on the lookout for Phishing E-mails, Ransomware, and Fake Website/Internet Links. If you ever have any questions about suspicious emails, please contact TCI immediately.