



## 2025 BIOGRAPHIES OF NOMINEES

### Board Members

**John Barrett:** John Barrett is a commercial real estate broker and serves as a senior vice president at RM Friedland. He has served as a member of The Arc Westchester Board of Directors for six years, is a member of the board of directors of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, and president of the Commercial Investment Division. He serves as a member of the board of directors of The Building & Realty Institute of Westchester & The Mid-Hudson Valley. John has also served on the board of directors of his local Little League for 10 years. He has been married for over 36 years and has four adult children.

John Barrett is nominated for a three-year term for the position of: **Board Member**

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**Austin Harris:** Austin Harris is an architect, registered in the State of New York with almost 30 years of experience in the field of architecture. Austin has worked at several internationally known architectural firms including Adjaye Associates (AA), Foster + Partners (F+P), and Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM). His focus on architecture has been mostly on civic and public projects. These include a new subway station at 72nd Street in New York City, new libraries for Washington DC Public Libraries, the Smithsonian's National Museum for African American History and Culture, New York City's first Net Zero Public School, and Princeton's University Lake Campus Expansion.

Austin, originally from Brooklyn, NY, has been a longtime Westchester County resident with his wife and two daughters. Austin earned his Bachelor of Architecture from City College of New York. He is an avid cyclist and has served on The Arc Westchester Board of Directors for the past three years.

Austin Harris is nominated for a three-year term for the position of: **Board Member**

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**Carolyn Holodak:** Carolyn Holodak was first elected to The Arc Westchester Board of Directors in 1999 and served on the board for more than 20 years. She has been an active member of numerous Arc Westchester committees over the years and served as vice president and advocate on the Customer Service Committee in the past, and currently serves as Sergeant-of-Arms of the Advocacy Committee, and is also a member of the Strategic Development Committee, and the Communication and Membership Committee. She is a passionate and active advocate who lends her voice and support for disability rights.

Carolyn has worked for the City of Yonkers for over 20 years where she is an office services clerk. She is an active member of her local church and likes to travel with her family.

Carolyn Holodak is nominated for a three-year term for the position of: **Board Member**

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**Michael Spencer:** Michael Spencer is a commercial lender with over 30 years of experience assisting both businesses and individuals achieve their goals through a "Trusted Advisor" approach to commercial banking. Michael first began his career working for Beneficial Financial in 1998 and has held positions from loan officer to regional manager. Michael's career reflects a demonstrated track record in helping mom-and-pop businesses acquire financing to grow their company, through repositioning debt for larger organizations. His expertise ranges from P&L management to cash optimization. Michael serves as a board member for both the Field Library in Peekskill, and The Building & Realty Institute of Westchester & The Mid-Hudson Valley. He has a bachelor's in economics from CUNY Lehman and an MBA from Mercy University. Michael is a lifelong resident of Westchester County where he resides with his wife and two children. Michael enjoys spending his spare time with his family as well as hiking the Hudson Highlands.

Michael Spencer is nominated for a three-year term for the position of: **Board Member**

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## **Board Officers**

**Austin Harris:** Austin Harris is an architect, registered in the State of New York with almost 30 years of experience in the field of architecture. Austin has worked at several internationally known architectural firms including Adjaye Associates (AA), Foster + Partners (F+P), and Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM). His focus on architecture has been mostly on civic and public projects. These include a new subway station at 72nd Street in New York City, new libraries for Washington DC Public Libraries, the Smithsonian's National Museum for African American History and Culture, New York City's first Net Zero Public School, and Princeton's University Lake Campus Expansion.

Austin, originally from Brooklyn, NY, has been a longtime Westchester County resident with his wife and two daughters. Austin earned his Bachelor of Architecture from City College of New York. He is an avid cyclist and has served on The Arc Westchester Board of Directors for the past three years.

Austin Harris is nominated for a one-year term for the position of: **Secretary of the Board**

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**Robert Nuccio:** Robert Nuccio is a father of three, the youngest has Down Syndrome. Robert is a Certified Public Accountant, licensed in the State of New York, and is a partner in the 12-person CPA firm, Sperduto, Spector and Company CPA's P.C., located in Westchester County. He has extensive experience auditing not-for-profit organizations and presenting financial statements to The Arc Westchester Board of Directors. He is currently a member of both the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants. Robert is currently a member of The Arc Westchester's Board of Directors and has served on the board for seven years and as board treasurer for the past four years.

Robert Nuccio is nominated for a one-year term for the position of: **Treasurer of the Board**

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## **Nominating Committee Members**

**Mary Costello-Lazare:** Mary Costello-Lazare grew up in Burlington, Vermont where she attended the University of Vermont. After college she went to Albany Law School of Union University, graduating in 1985 with a Juris Doctor degree. She was admitted to the bar in New York and Connecticut in 1986, and was an associate in several law firms in Westchester County before joining the Westchester County District Attorney's Office as an assistant district attorney in the Appeals and Special Prosecutions Division, eventually becoming a deputy bureau chief in the Appeals Bureau. After 11 years with the District Attorney's Office, Mary left to deal with the educational issues of her children.

Mary lives in Westchester County with her husband where she raised her three children. One of her children has Down Syndrome and received Early Intervention services through The Arc Westchester's Children's School of Early Development. She has been involved in fundraising for the Down Syndrome Research and Treatment Foundation (known as the Lumind Foundation,) and has served on the board of her local Special Education Parent Teachers Association. Mary has served for many years on The Arc Westchester's Guardianship Committee and is a current member of The Arc Westchester's Board of Directors.

Mary Costello-Lazare is nominated for a two-year term for the position of: **Nominating Committee Member**

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**John McAndrew:** John McAndrew is a long-time marketing professional, currently in the role of senior sponsorship relations manager at the James Beard Foundation in New York City. In 2018, he transitioned into the nonprofit sector, serving as a program manager with Wholesome Wave, a nonprofit with a mission to enable greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables for underserved communities through programs and advocacy. Prior to Wholesome Wave, John founded Skillman Marketing LLC, working with small businesses and nonprofits including Gift of Life, and the Break the Hold Foundation, where his work centered on helping those organizations articulate their mission and create content including website design and marketing support.

John has a deep foundation in marketing, sponsorship, and brand activation roles with consumer package goods companies including Pepsico, Snapple and Kraft Foods. He has built and executed sponsorship activations with MLB, NFL, NHL, NBA, MLS, Live Nation, and many others. John is very committed to volunteerism. He has led homeless outreach through the Midnight Run organization for 13 years, serves on the Steering Committee for Break the Hold, a youth mental wellness and suicide prevention organization, and is an active member of his local Episcopal Church. John and his wife have been residents of their small Westchester County town for over 20 years, where they raised their two sons. John is currently a member of The Arc Westchester's Board of Directors.

John McAndrew is nominated for a two-year term for the position of: **Nominating Committee Member**

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**Danusia Pawska:** Danusia Pawska, now retired, was a founding partner and co-director of Achieve Fluency, LLC, a learning center, and consulting service which served individuals with learning challenges. As a Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst, she provided consultation and direct services to school districts and families for more than 20 years. She has also presented at national and regional conferences on ABA and reading instruction. Danusia is the parent of a child with autism and has served on The Arc Westchester's Board of Directors for nine years and as secretary of the board for five years.

Danusia Pawska is nominated for a two-year term for the position of: **Nominating Committee Member**

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