

AHRC Nassau

AHRC Nassau was founded in the early 1950's to provide services to children and adults with developmental disabilities outside of an institutional setting. AHRC was (and continues to be) a parent driven organization, dedicated to providing a wide range of services to better the lives of people with special needs. AHRC's mission is to teach, support and advocate for people with disabilities to help them fulfill their goals, exercise independence and become contributing members of our society.

The organization is guided by committed volunteer boards of directors, a dedicated professional staff, community volunteers, and people with special needs and their families. AHRC offers a full range of community-based programs and serves more than 4,000 men, women, young adults and children. Programs range from in home to community based to center-based programs, including day programs, vocational training, supported and full employment, volunteer experience, recreation, respite, and community living (residential) services.

Of particular note when it comes to economic contributions, are three of its programs- residential, job coaching (supported employment), and community habilitation. The supportive living (residential) program of AHRC enables disabled adults to live in the community, at varying levels of independence. This clearly promotes a better quality of life than institutional living, is more cost effective, and ensures continued community residence irrespective of family members' resources. Supported employment teaches vocational training skills that enable these men and women to be productive members of the workforce. In addition to the financial aspect, the supported employment program allows for a valuable service to be provided to the businesses & nonprofits in the community, often fulfilling jobs which would go unfulfilled. The community habilitation program provides services to help disabled individuals remain in their own home by providing companions and other services, thereby helping individuals to maintain independence, keeping costs of care lower, and promoting quality of life.

The goal of all these programs is to help people be independent, contribute to society and maintain self worth. The outcome of these programs is an economy containing people who are productive, pay taxes, participate in their communities and in other ways contribute to the overall viability of LI's economic health. A new example of AHRC Nassau's contributions to LI relates to its "E Works" venture- a business model whereby people with disabilities across Long Island are employed recycling used computers and other electronic devices. Not only is this a self supporting business venture, assisting in supporting other services- but it is a major contributor to the environmental health of LI- taking waste out of our waste stream and converting it to productive uses. AHRC's increasing commitment to providing services for the autistic population is another way AHRC is helping LI citizens to be productive.