

WHO WE SERVE

SPARC was created for the 1% of the adult population with severe disabilities to have a day program that is fulfilling. Our participants require 1:1 support for all daily living activities. Other programs that are funded by Medicaid have a mandated ratio of 1:4. or more.



SPARC By the Numbers

SPARC operates in five locations

SPARC serves adults from Fairfax, Arlington, Loudoun and Warren counties

SPARC welcomed 56 new donors to our community. You can help us reach our goals by donating on line by scanning here!



SCAN HERE



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Specially Adapted Resource Clubs

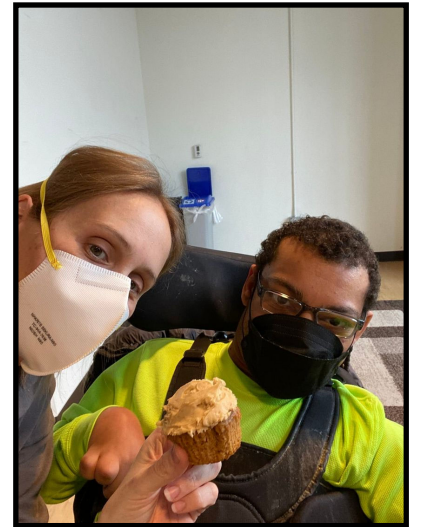
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SPARC Celebrates 15 Years of Service

On November 13, 2021 SPARC celebrated fifteen years of service with a Bowl-A-Thon! Supervisor John Foust, Dranesville District, presented our founder, Donna Goldbranson, with a proclamation from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors honoring SPARC for its role in providing essential services as part of the social safety net.



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Your Dollar At Work!

95 cents of every dollar donated goes directly to program!





"I enjoy everything about SPARC. The staff and my friends are part of my family." - Maureen



A Note from Debi's Desk

Dear Friends,

When Nancy Mercer reached out to me last November, she told me that there is a remarkable non-profit looking for an Executive Director.

Truer words could not be spoken. SPARC is an extraordinary organization thanks to the imagination of our founder, Donna, that visionary "Sparc plug" who knew she could change the world for our population.

Young adults across the nation who do not fit into other day programs, deserve to live the same life we all want to live; to be self-directed and in the community enjoying art, music, dance, cooking, games, books, films and extended learning.

As you read through these pages you will share in my joy at all we were able to accomplish despite the pandemic.

The participants bring the energy and enthusiasm, our staff brings the exper-

tise and commitment, and our friends and family bring the support.

Most of our participants have limited resources. Therefore, we only charge a fraction of our actual costs. We must raise close to \$200,000 to meet our minimal costs.

There are lots of ways to support SPARC:

- **Shop Amazon Smile and designate SPARC!**
- **Join our Speakers Bureau—we enjoy learning about vocations in our virtual club**
- **Share a talent (such as a craft or cooking) at club**
- **Volunteer for an event**
- **Donate!**
- **Host an office party or other event to support SPARC**

Thank you for choosing SPARC as your non-profit. We are deeply grateful that you are part of this loving family.

Ribbon Cutting at The Church of the Good Shepherd

On October 15, 2021, SPARC hosted a Ribbon Cutting at our new site at The Church of the Good Shepherd in Vienna, Virginia.

Executive Director, Debi Alexander addressed a room filled with attendees from the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, families and friends.

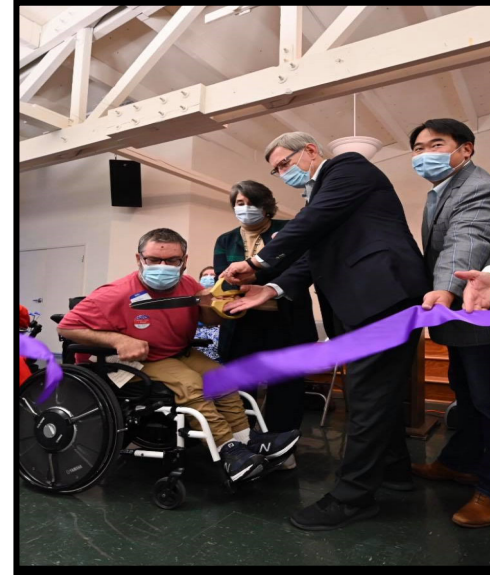
Alexander shared:

“We are proud of our footprint in Northern Virginia which is made possible by our public - private partnership with the jurisdictions that provide access to the community centers where we operate. Supervisor Foust, we are truly grateful for your support and strong commitment to our population.

Since 2006, SPARC has operated in a way that changed the blueprint of long-term care. Our approach and service delivery are unmatched. SPARC is a club where young adults with disabilities work and learn together. Our young adults have many different stories, but what they have in common is the desire to simply be a visible part of the larger community, to continue learning and to contribute.”

The Chair of the Advocates Advisory Council, Justin Dolan, joined Debi Alexander, Supervisor John Foust and Pastor Eric Song in cutting the Ribbon.

After the event, attendees enjoyed a boxed lunch sponsored by The Law Offices of Michael E. Toobin. Club participants were entertained with a talent show and a special video and musical tribute to Donna Goldbranson.



Thank You to Our Donors!

Airbnb	Caitlin Dunsmoore	Charles Lang	Bina Sayed
Al Alborn	Ellen Dyke	Nancy LeVant	Will Schermerhorn
Debi Alexander	Alan Edwards	Xiaoxi Lin	Cathi Schultz
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Corporate Risk Strategies	Heidi Howland	Caroline Polhemus	Kevin Young
Crescent Cities Charities	Hannah Irsfeld Goldstein	Mike Policicchio	
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Mary Ellen Duke	Pam Keene	Patricia Ramsey	
Tom Dulaney	Priscilla Knight	Theresa Rebhorn	
Dulin United Methodist Church	KOVAR	Dawn Rodney	
	Brian Krieb	Ernie Rogers	



Donor Spotlight: Linda Wilder-Curtis

Linda Wilder-Curtis is known at SPARC as Ryan’s Aunt Linda. Ryan Cotnoir is one of our earliest participants and his parents Marylou and Marc have contributed their time, treasure and talent over the years.



Linda, a lifelong Cotnoir family friend, had lunch with Executive Director Debi Alexander and shared her thoughts about SPARC.

“SPARC has created a place where members can make new friends, explore their creative talents, and learn a sense of worth and place in the community. When you look at all the SPARCles you wonder where they would be without SPARC,” Linda shared.

While the shutdown has been difficult for everyone, SPARC’s immediate pivot to virtual club meetings added a new dimension to Ryan’s relationship with his Aunt Linda. Ryan began sending her emails about each day’s session. He would discuss the word of the day, games that were played, and often found ways to make a learning experience personal. For example, when SPARC studied vegetables, he reminisced about visiting his Uncle Sid’s garden.

As an organization totally supported by donors and a few grants, “Aunt” Linda is an example of the importance of SPARC members extended families. Thank you, Linda!

“Before SPARC, I had nothing to do literally. SPARC has opened a whole world for me.” - Ryan

Building A Community of Caring Hearts

On February 15, 2021 SPARC launched their 1st Annual campaign to raise \$100,000 to close the gap between fees charged and actual program costs. As part of the campaign we hosted a Stay at Home Tea, Cocktails & Clues, Zumbathon, Chocolate Basket Raffle, Bowl-a-Thon and Annual Appeal.

Thanks to the generosity of individuals, businesses, and foundations we raised \$168,000, surpassing our goal!

We are deeply grateful to the individuals and businesses who made our 1st Annual Bowl-a-Thon a success! We raised \$18,000!

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 2nd ANNUAL BOWL-A-THON:

November 5, 2022

Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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Friends from Leadership Fairfax (Class of 2017 – Best Class Ever!)

Debi Alexander

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The Goldbranson Family

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Law Offices of Michael Toobin

Inclusion Consultants

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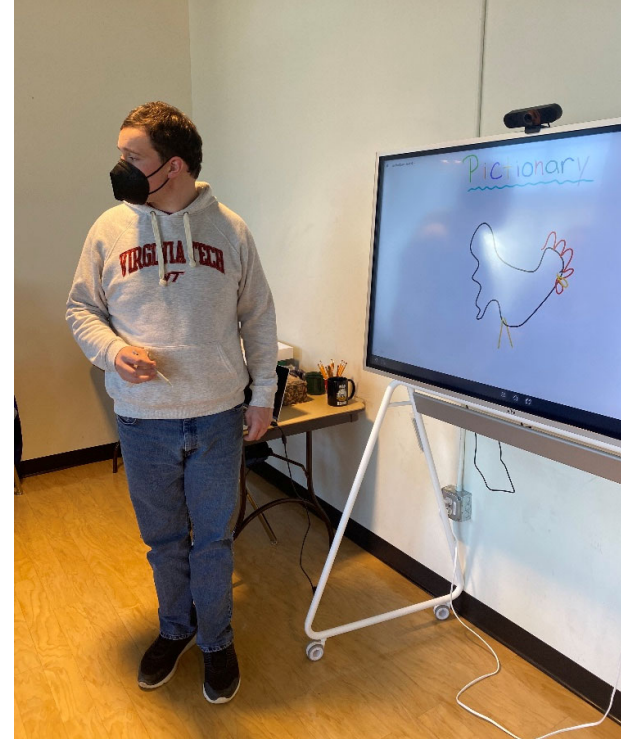
The Gafni Family

Linda Wilder-Curtis

KOVAR Equipment Grant

An unexpected outcome of the pandemic was the enormous benefits of adding a virtual component to our club offerings. The biggest program enhancement after returning to in-person clubs, is that we can offer a virtual experience to participants when they are ill or unable to get to our locations.

KOVAR has greatly improved the virtual experience with a grant that has augmented our assistive and communications capabilities.



We added a VIBE to our Arlington location. A VIBE is an interactive whiteboard that is easily adapted to be an assistive technology that creates a more inclusive learning environment. Using the VIBE helps participants with autism improve communication skills through group collaboration. For those who cannot hold a pen or pencil, the touch-sensitive surface enables them to write and interact with content using the finger touch capability.

We also purchased the Nintendo Switch, an excellent tool for special education to play games that teach communication skills, gross and fine motor skills, writing, organization and social skills.

Additional equipment purchased through the grant included a laptop, wireless voice amplifiers, webcam, and various communications devices! We are very grateful to KOVAR for their support.

"I would just sit in my room all day if it were not for SPARC."

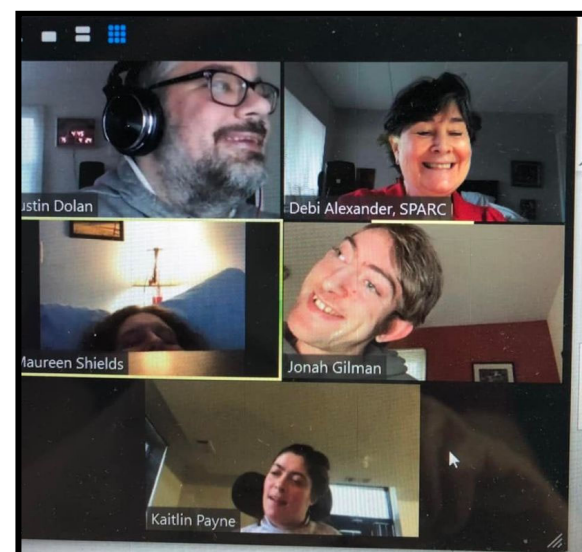
Advocates Advisory Council

In 2021, SPARC launched the Advocates Advisory Council (AAC). Four participants, Justin Dolan, Jonah Gilman, Maureen Shields and Kaitlin Payne, meet weekly with Debi Alexander to discuss topics of interest to participants and plan events.

The AAC chose transportation as their primary issue for 2021. Transportation is a huge barrier for our participants to attend events and go on outings. Both our social group outings and our fundraising events are selected based on accessibility.

The AAC also helped plan the Bowl-A-Thon, a Halloween Party, a Holiday Party, and a Virtual Scavenger Hunt during Spring Break! Members of the AAC represented their organization by speaking at the ribbon cutting and also made a presentation to the Board of Directors.

"Before SPARC, I felt like I had aged out of life when I turned 22."



Meet the SPARC Staff

Jodie Wyckoff is the Director, Community Services. A Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Ms. Wyckoff oversees all aspects of daily direct services and program development. She leads the team in the design and delivery of individualized person-centered program services.

Stephanie Sher is Director of Programs. In this role she receives club members at the community center, has activities set up for the day's club meeting, assists the art and music therapists in specific lessons, directs volunteers in facilitating activities, take attendance, assists in personal care needs of club members, and coordinates transportation drop off and pick up. Stephanie received her Masters in Special Education and Teaching at George Mason University and her BS in Psychology from University of Mary Washington.

Paul Whitney has been working as a Program Specialist with SPARC since the Fall of 2018. He received his Bachelor of Arts in International Studies from the College of Charleston in 2017. Prior to arriving to SPARC, Paul served in a

supportive role as a roommate for a young adult participating in the SRAP housing program. He has also worked as a community builder for the DC-based nonprofit, Integrated Living Opportunities (ILO). Interested in helping young adults make the transition to live more independently, Paul carries out this work, not only with SPARC, but through a mentorship role with the non-profit, Inclusion Consultants.

Sarah Brennan is a Program Specialist with SPARC. She plans and leads a variety of fun and educational activities for our SPARC club participants. She originally started as an intern with SPARC in May of 2017, and then joined us as a full-time staff in May 2018. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Bridgewater College.

Leeann Soyka joined SPARC this year. She runs the Virtual Club and writes the Weekly Bulletin. Leeann received her BS in Psychology from William and Mary and is in the MSCW program at George Washington.