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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Liberty ARC Welcomes New Board Members**

**Amsterdam** – Liberty ARC is pleased to appoint seven new members to their Board of Directors. Six of the board members previously served on the Schenectady ARC Board of Directors and one on Liberty ARC's Family Support Services Committee.

Joining the board are: Karen Bona, Arthur Breault, John Bresonis, Holly J. Gray, Tammy Krisher, Brandon Waylett, and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow.

"We are excited to welcome our new members to Liberty ARC's Board of Directors," said Liberty ARC CEO Jennifer Saunders. "They're bringing a wonderful experience in the fields of intellectual and developmental disabilities, supported care, health care, finances, and business ownership. We look forward to their contributions to the agency as we provide quality supports and services to people with disabilities in Montgomery and Schenectady Counties."

Karen Bona joins the board with a history of work in caring for older adults with Alzheimer's or dementia, Medicaid Managed Care, foster care, and more recently in accessible holistic health and wellness services as a Senior Health Care Program Associate with Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding in New York, NY. Bona has a strong history in the field of direct support care for persons with developmental and intellectual disabilities having worked at Schenectady ARC at Princetown, a former day habilitation program, and as a Medicaid Service Coordinator. She also served as an advocate for a person with disabilities.

"I became a board member for Schenectady ARC in 2014, as the mission of The Arc New York is to support people in living their best and most independent lives aligns beautifully with my own values and priorities," Bona said. "I believe that the staff who work for Liberty ARC are to be celebrated,

commended, and supported fully by leadership, and I intend to continue being a voice for the incredible work they do on the Board of Directors.”

Art Breault is a registered nurse (RN) and a certified emergency nurse and brings a vast knowledge in the medical field, including experience in emergency medicine. Currently, Breault works at Albany Med Emergency Department as a RN EMS Outreach Coordinator. He received his Associate’s Degree in Nursing and is currently pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing at SUNY Delhi. Breault is also a certified paramedic.

“My son attends Maple Ridge Day Habilitation Program in Schenectady,” Breault said. “I wanted to be involved with him and the organization that is helping him grow, as well as encourage his strengths, celebrate his quirks, and improve his weaknesses, the way you would with any individual.”

John Bresonis is a native of Amsterdam and has been employed by Trustco Bank since 2003, where he serves as the Assistant Vice President of Wealth Management. Bresonis is also a Certified Trust & Financial Advisor. He graduated from Providence College with a Bachelor’s Degree in Finance and holds a New York State Life and Health Insurance License.

“While growing up in Amsterdam it was evident to see the impact that Liberty ARC had on the community and the people they serve,” Bresonis said. “Upon joining the Schenectady ARC Board of Directors nearly 15 years ago, I was amazed by the passion and enthusiasm of the leadership and staff in pursuing their mission to provide support and services to people with disabilities. I believe the unification of these two great chapters will only strengthen the mission of the agency and provide an essential service to an even larger community.”

Holly J. Gray joins the board with many years of experience in the corporate and non-for-profit business worlds, and is lifelong resident of Schenectady and Montgomery Counties. For the past 27 years, Gray has worked for Special Olympics New York, Inc., where she currently serves as the Executive Assistant to the President, Leadership Team, and Board of Directors. Gray is also a guardian of a person with disabilities who receives supported services. She holds an Associate’s Degree in Business Administration from SUNY Schenectady County Community College and volunteers with community organizations.

“It is my honor and privilege to serve as a member of the Board of Directors for Liberty ARC.” Gray said. “The Arc New York is of great importance to the people we serve. My cousin, Kathleen has benefitted from such services and programs for many years. I feel that the unification of Liberty ARC and Schenectady ARC will be beneficial to both individuals that we employ and serve. It is a wonderful opportunity to be able to collaborate both personally and professionally for the betterment, purpose, and value of people with disabilities.”

Tammy Krisher is retired and previously served as the President and owner of Pattersonville Telephone Company, which she sold in 2021. She was also a principal of A Calculated Solution, a Quickbooks consulting and bookkeeping firm. Prior to serving on the Liberty ARC Board of Directors, Krisher served

as a vice president and president of the Schenectady ARC Board of Directors. She is also a board member of the Wild Ones Capital Region Chapter, and previously served on the boards of Schenectady Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc. and the New York State Telecommunications Association.

"I am proud to serve on the Liberty ARC Board of Directors. The agency's mission and values are close to my heart, as my daughter receives services in Schenectady County," Krisher said. "I look forward to continue advocating not only for her, but for all those who receives supports in Montgomery and Schenectady Counties."

Brandon Waylett brings his knowledge and experience to the Liberty ARC's Board of Directors from previously serving as the Chair for Liberty ARC's Family Support Services (FSS) Committee for three years. He is employed by the New York State Education Department as a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor since 2021 for the Adult Career and Continuing Educational Services. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Arts, Psychology, and Music from SUNY Fredonia and graduated from Salve Regina University with a Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling. Waylett also studied Behavior Analysis at Fitchburg State College and Emporia State University.

"It has been an extreme pleasure to serve as the Committee Chair," Waylett said. "I believe our quarterly meetings have become a venue for a creative exchange of ideas that will have a positive effect on services for families and youth in Montgomery and Schenectady Counties. My favorite part of being part of the FSS Committee has been meeting staff and participants and interacting with them at our annual FSS summer gathering. Involving community members, staff, and program participants on our committee illustrates the commitment Liberty ARC has to its mission. I look forward to our continued work as a committee and excited to learn in what ways I can contribute to the success of the agency as a board member."

Sarah Wilson-Sparrow serves as Vice President of Workforce Development and Community Education at SUNY Schenectady County Community College and sits on the college's President's Council. Aside from her new role on the Liberty ARC Board of Directors, Wilson-Sparrow is an active board member for the Capital Region Workforce Development Board's Executive Committee and the Continuing Education Association of New York (CEANY). She received her Associate's Degree with a concentration in English from Fulton-Montgomery Community College, her Bachelor's Degree in English Literature with a minor in History from Skidmore College, and received her Master's Degree in Adult Learning from Empire State College.

"It is an honor to be associated with the Schenectady ARC and now Liberty ARC," Wilson-Sparrow said. "Their mission is to support people with disabilities to achieve a quality of life each person values. This resonates with me as a parent of a differently abled child who is now a thriving and independent adult. Liberty ARC is well known for their investment in people with disabilities and their families to ensure the most expansive, safe, and supported life possible. I am proud to be associated with this organization and honored to be part of a board with so much heart."

### **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 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Montgomery and Schenectady 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.

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