



Charity Bib Runner

Aida Mariani



Aida Mariani, the director of communications and development for The Arc, Oneida-Lewis Chapter, is running the 2014 Boilermaker in honor of Evan Gassner of Whitesboro, who was diagnosed with Autism at the age of two.

Evan’s parents, Kelly and Steve, and his siblings, Kaylee, Steven, and Connor, encourage and stand proudly beside him. Through the family’s voyage over the past 13 years, they have learned just how important it is to have friends, family, services and programs that support people living with an intellectual or developmental disability.

When Evan was first diagnosed he had very little language ability and difficulty adjusting to day-to-day routines. It was a difficult time for the family. As parents, the Gassners felt alone and unsure of where to go for help. They were fortunate in that they were encouraged to seek Early Intervention and experienced the benefits of services available throughout

the Mohawk Valley, including those at The Arc, Oneida-Lewis Chapter. Through The Arc’s Saturday Friends, Teen Time, After-School-Connections and tutoring programs, Evan has not been alone. These programs have allowed him to progress and succeed. The award-winning Saturday Friends program provided support for Evan and for his support network – his siblings and parents. At Saturday Friends they found other people to lean on for support and encouragement. The program also helped Evan’s brothers and sister realize they are not alone in having a family member with a developmental disability.

Kaylee, Steven and Connor have had wonderful opportunities to meet and become friends with other children in the same situation. They have been a huge support for Evan and advocate for him and others with disabilities. They are growing up to become kind and empathetic people because they have experienced life with someone who may be just a little different than everyone else.

Evan has been an inspiration to all of us at The Arc, as too have his parents and siblings. They are strong, kind and dedicated people that live out the core values of the agency each and every day.

Thank you to our sponsors!



Visit www.thearcolc.org and click on “Charity Bib Program” to make a donation to support Aida Mariani today, or call 315.272.1529.