
BARRY GLASSMAN
HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



BILLY BONIFACE
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 28, 2016

For more information, contact:

Cindy Mumby

Director of Governmental & Community Relations

410-340-5376

camumby@harfordcountymd.gov

Harford County Awards Celebrate Employment of Citizens with Disabilities

BEL AIR, Md., (Oct. 28, 2016) - Harford County Executive Barry Glassman, the Department of Community Services, and the Commission on Disabilities celebrated the achievements and employment of citizens with disabilities at the annual Disabilities Employment Awards Luncheon on October 25 at the Maryland Golf and Country Clubs in Bel Air. More than 120 guests attended the event, which recognizes people of all abilities for their contributions to the county's workforce, and employers' dedication to the success of their employees with disabilities. This year's theme was *#InclusionWorks*.

"Thank you to the local employers who practice fair hiring and who recognize that people with disabilities have a lot to offer their businesses," said County Executive Glassman during opening remarks. "People with disabilities *can* work, they *want* to work, and we need them to help sustain a strong economy in Harford County."

The keynote speaker was Neill Christopher, vice president of manufacturing for Acadia Windows & Doors. Christopher gave an inspirational account of how his company was transformed by accepting people of all abilities into their workforce. When The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region first contacted Acadia seeking employment for its clients with disabilities, the company had doubts. As it turned out, the focus and dedication of these employees was just what the company needed.

"We've succeeded in areas we never thought we could," Christopher said.

He added that in the process, Acadia formed a partnership with Maryland Occupational Safety and Health, making the environment safer not only for their employees with disabilities, but for

their entire workforce. The result: Acadia has operated for more than 3,100 days without incident or injury.

Awards and certificates were given to the following individuals and organizations for 2016:

- *Medium-sized Employer of the Year*, Noah Wiseman, employed by The Clorox Company
- *Small Employer of the Year*, Ron Costa, employed by Harford County Public Schools
- *Employee of the Year*, Tia Timpson, employed by Harford Mutual Insurance Company
- *Student Worker of the Year Award*, Sharmar Robinson, employed by John Archer School
- *Volunteer of the Year Award*, Victoria Sudano for her volunteer efforts with The Harford Center and Mason-Dixon Community Services
- *Making A Difference Award*, Asa Cromwell for the positive difference he makes in his workplace
- *The Ruth Helen Thompson Community Service Award*, Kathy Halliday, for her lifelong dedication to improving the lives of people with differing abilities in Harford County

Employer Awards of Merit were also given to Jack Rhodes in the Medium Employer category and Pat's Pizzeria of Edgewood for the Small Employer category. Employee Awards of Merit were given to Jeffrey Harkins, employed by Fallston Supply; Garon Hidey, employed by Delta-Peach Bottom Elementary School; Shaun O'Brien, employed by the State of Maryland Recruitment and Examination Unit; and Kasia Oledzka, employed by Royal Farms. A Student Worker Award of Merit was given to Holly Glorioso, employed at Jo-Ann Fabrics and a Ruth Helen Thompson Memorial Award of Merit was presented to Mason-Dixon Community Services for their support of the employment of people of all abilities.

The Harford County Department of Community Services and its partners offer programs to connect businesses with motivated, dependable staff, and to connect employees with disabilities to on-the-job training, modification and technology assistance. For more information on employment opportunities, tax credits or other available incentives for businesses that hire individuals with disabilities, please contact Rachel Harbin, director of the Harford County Commission on Disabilities at disability@harfordcountymd.gov or call 410-638-3373.



Photo caption: Award recipients and VIP guests at the Oct 25 Harford County Disability Employment Luncheon, from left, front row: Byron Wainright, Victoria Sudano, Jeffrey Harkins, Kasia Oledzka, Holly Glorioso, Asa Cromwell, Shawn Leilich; second row: Mike Hatzinikolas, Amber Shrodes, County Executive Barry Glassman, MD Dept. of Disabilities Secretary Carol Beatty, Tia Timpson, Garon Hidey, Carol Burkindine; third row: Noah Wiseman, Kathy Halliday, Shaun O'Brien, Jane Skrzypiec, Ron Costa, Sharmar Robinson, Torri Dietrich, Jack Rhodes, Rachel Harbin

###