

Our featured moment(s) this year reflects on the courage and actions of our Self Advocates Becoming Empowered -Rutland (SABE-R) members. These members trained and presented their stories at local Rutland County agencies to educate and enlighten the non-disabled community about what it is like living with a developmental disability in Rutland County.

One story stands out this year as evidence about the perseverance of individuals with developmental disabilities and their success. J.F. persevered to become a self-employed carpenter with a driver's license despite being personally admonished in his high school's driver's ed program and many others telling him it wasn't possible. It took many years, and the patience of one family member, to assist J.F. in his quest to become independent and mostly self-sufficient.

Thanks to our volunteer Photographer, Dmitri Beliakov, the Rutland Herald picked up some of our event photos this year giving us broader exposure!

We can boast another successful year with our free events to our members. In particular, 121 members and their families RSVP'd to the Holiday Dance this year held on December 15th and 114 attended. That is the largest turnout of a single event in over 5 years! In total, we served 727 members at our dances and outdoor events.

We maintained over 40 clients receiving Representative Payee services this year, keeping them secure in their finances, despite the loss of an employee filling that role. Ensuring that people with developmental disabilities can be secure in their finances is a critical component to their livelihoods.

We maintained our monthly SABE-R and AKtion Club meetings, as well as their fundraising activities to give back to the community. We sent out 1,780 newsletters to 445 households this year.

Our big organizational achievement this year was to be invited to apply and then becoming a recipient of a Bowse Health Trust

Foundation grant so that we can begin expanding programs to include life skills courses and reaching out to the next generation of transitioning high school students.

Upcoming in the Spring of 2025, ARC will be offering four (4) life skills courses with professional instructors and certificates of completion following 5 weeks of instruction to its members. Another group of life skills courses will be offered in the fall of 2025!

We are supported by 19 towns and cities in Rutland County, whose voters understand the need to consistently provide socialization, education, and physical activities to the developmentally disabled community. We have wonderful lasting partnerships of services, donors and sponsors with the Rutland Elks Lodge #345, American Legion Castleton and Rutland, Brown's Auto Salvage, Hannaford's, Catamount Solar, GE Employee Community Concerns Fund, Green Mountain GE Retirees, Green Mountain Power, Marble Valley Regional Transit (The BUS), Poultney Rotary Club, United Way of Rutland County, Vermont Community Foundation, Come Alive Outside, the Sunshine Fund, Town Fair Tire Foundation, Domino's Pizza, Mission City Church, Kiwanis Club of Rutland, Becker Associates, Green Mountain Self Advocates, Disability Rights Vermont, VT Developmental Disabilities Council, Bowse Health Trust Foundation, Paypal foundation, local families and friends.

This year proved what's possible when we combine vision with action. We pushed limits, exceeded expectations, and laid the foundation for what's next. But the story doesn't stop here. Next year, we're setting our sights even higher. Will you join us in making it our most impactful year yet?

Here's to building a legacy of change, one step at a time. Let's make it happen.

With gratitude and determination,

Diane Drake,  
Executive Director

P.S. What's one moment from this year that stood out to you?  
We'd love to hear what resonated most to you.