

COMMUNITY LIVING CORP.

THE OPEN DOOR

*PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED
PEOPLE THROUGH COMMUNITY LIVING*

2018 CLC GALA—THE BIGGEST & THE BRIGHTEST!

CLC held its 15th annual Gala on Sunday, November 11 at The Greentree Country Club in New Rochelle, NY. A record 356 guests attended, including 130 clients and more than 50 first time attendees, making this the largest Gala to date.

Guests travelled from all over the Tristate area and beyond to support CLC agencies so they can continue to serve individuals with developmental disabilities and help them lead meaningful, productive and happy lives.

The event celebrated true heroes and champions for the disabled community. Receiving the award for Outstanding Service and Advocacy, Joan Lensky Robert, Esq., is a tireless



JOAN LENSKY ROBERT, ESQ.

advocate for individuals challenged by age and disability-related issues. She has dedicated over 25 years to the practice of elder law and disability law, and is recognized as among the top in her field.



DONALD & DORIS HARE

Donald and Doris Hare, honored for Influential Support and Leadership, are two exceptional people in our community. These CLC parents have made an enormous impact

on CLC and those we serve. CLC could not be sustained without the generosity and friendship of supporters like these.

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THE CLC CHORAL GROUP ENTERTAINS GUESTS AT THE 2018 GALA.

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**SAVE THE DATE!
SAVE THE DATE!
SAVE THE DATE!**

CLC GALA

NOVEMBER 3, 2019

Chrissy & Matt

An interview with Chrissy P. and big brother, Matthew.

"It's all about family," says Matt Persanis. "I learned that early on from my parents. It wasn't like a lesson in school. It was the way we lived our lives."

Matt was four years old when his younger sister Chrissy was born. She was *different*, the doctors said, and ultimately was diagnosed with Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS), a rare genetic disorder resulting in learning, behavior and health issues.



LUKE, CHRISSY & CALEB

The family made their home in Sunnyside, Queens and later moved to upstate New York. "As the older brother, I was instinctively protective of Chrissy," recalls Matt. "She was very shy, but gradually would warm up and show her sweet personality. We had wonderful times as children," continues Matt, "so wonderful that when it was time for Chrissy to live at a special needs residential school, Rhinebeck Country School (now Devereux), she refused to leave the house."

Matt was packed for college, and 13-year old Chrissy had her suitcases ready to go when she decided to take a bath—and wouldn't get out. "She absolutely refused," says Matt. "No amount of coaxing could sway her." Chrissy stayed in the bathtub for hours. The family finally had to drain the water. When she got cold enough, she emerged, prune-skin and all.

"After my parents and I moved her into school at Rhinebeck, we stopped to get lunch," says Matt. "The waitress came over and we were all crying. We laugh about it now, but there's nothing in any book that tells you how to get a girl out of a tub!"

Living with PWS means that Chrissy often feels hungry; it was the family's job to supervise her. However, Chrissy was a



CHRISSY



HARRY, MURIEL, MATTHEW & CHRISSY AT MATTHEW'S WEDDING.

clever girl. She recalls, "We had a gate at the kitchen doorway and it was locked every night. So I got a paper clip and figured out how to unlock it."

The family installed a bigger pad lock, but Chrissy got through by stacking chairs and climbing over the gate. "When we figured out that scheme," said Matt, we took away the chairs, but she would go out the front door, in through the side door where the kitchen was, and return back the same way. "Took us a while to figure that one out," said Matt.

After graduating from Rhinebeck Country School, Chrissy came to live at CLC, first at Todd Road and later Curry Street, where she currently resides. "Although," says Matt, "She is always at our place and truly part of the family. When I married Claire, Chrissy was a beaming bridesmaid at our wedding. When our first son Luke was born, we asked Chrissy to be godmother; she was over the moon."

"I feel very special to be Luke's godmother," says Chrissy. "I'm like his secret mom; we talk all the time." She is also close with his younger brother Caleb. "When Caleb hugs me, it feels like my dad used to hug me. It's really nice."

Like all of us, Chrissy has things she enjoys and others she doesn't. She's happy working at Matt's law office two days a week, doing office work. "I call Matt my *Boss Brother!*" she says smiling.

Chrissy attends workshops at Westchester ARC and loves *Hidden Treasures* classes at CLC. "I take Tap Dance, Arts and Crafts and I'm in the CLC Choral Group." Her love for music includes songs by Michael Jackson, Cyndi Lauper, Madonna and Janet Jackson. "I like to watch *NCIS* and *Law and Order* on TV. They are suspenseful," she adds, pronouncing the

word carefully. "I take speech therapy, so I say some words slowly so I get them right."

Chrissy doesn't like not being able to make her own choices all the time. She can't drive, so waiting for someone to take her to the Mall is *irritating*. Change is also very disruptive to Chrissy's life. "Our Dad died two years ago," says Matt. "Chrissy has had a hard time with it, but she's finally getting better."

"I feel fortunate that Chrissy and I are so close," he says. "My wife Claire has always been incredibly loving and welcoming, and that adds to our joy. My sons love seeing her; she's so funny! They love her very much."

"I credit our parents, Harry and Muriel, with setting the example. We were treated the same, and by this I mean we never thought of Chrissy as a burden, just their daughter, my little sister. We laughed and cried and rejoiced and grieved just like every other family. I see



FROM LEFT, KAREN, CHRISSY, LOUISE, RON & JILL

from Chrissy's relationship with our sons over the years that I've passed this on," says Matt. "For this I am truly grateful."

What aspirations does Chrissy have for the new year? "I want to learn more about Greece," she says. "My dad's parents were from there and I visited Greece and Turkey with my family. It was so beautiful. I also want to travel more. There's a lot to see."

D. Descloux

Matthew Persanis, Esq. is a CLC Foundation Board Member.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy New Year!

I hope that everyone had a joyous holiday season. As I look back at the year just past, I can see that it was a busy one for all.

The transition to managed care is well underway and with it comes a host of questions and uncertainties. The usual document flow within our organization has changed dramatically as case coordination merges with the Care Coordination Organization selected by the consumer. This part of the overall transition becomes fully effective this January.

The former "Medicaid Service Coordinator" now works for a completely independent entity and carries the job titled of Care Coordination Manager. All the paperwork and service plans are now entered into a laptop computer and uploaded to the Care Coordination Organization. "ISP's" are out – "Life Plans" are in.

The tremendous range of skills seen across the IDD group presents a unique challenge to all of us. Specifically, just how will we meet these needs and requirements of our consumers? How do we meet the most essential needs while continuing to strive for greater emphasis on independence and inclusion in the larger community? What about those

with co-occurring diagnoses, those with both a psychiatric and developmental disability? Finally, will there ever be sufficient employment and treatment opportunities to meet the need?

Someone recently said that all seems to be well despite the changes and, for the most part, it is. This is so because we have a core of people who truly care and who truly want to make things better, one person at a time.

This issue clearly shows the highlights of the CLC Group. We celebrated the holidays in real style. We held our Annual Gala and honored Mr. and Mrs. Hare for all their support and encouragement over more than twenty years! We honored Joan Roberts, Esq., an attorney who was instrumental in advocating for various types of trusts for the benefit of disabled individuals.

We recognized 6 people for their service to CLC for twenty five years and two for 20 years! I can't tell you where twenty five years went, but I can tell you that it went there very quickly. It is extremely gratifying to work with people who like their work. It just makes everything easier. And finally, I thank all of the parents, siblings and friends for their encouragement and support in the Holiday Appeal. This is



This past fall, John Porcella and Sarah Fiske presented a Safety First award to CLC staffer Lawrence Cherry for his excellent driving. It all began when an anonymous person called the 800 number on a CLC vehicle, driven by Lawrence, to report "professional and courteous driving." Congratulations, Lawrence!

a tangible vote of support for our staff and one that is greatly appreciated.

We're left then with a New Year in which to meet the challenges head on. Yes, it's going to be confusing at times, frustrating at others and even scary from time to time. There is, however, nothing stopping us from having a little fun with this and enjoying CLC's traditional events. We've already hit the ground running in 2019. Let's make this the best year ever.

John Porcella

DONATE TO CLC FOR FREE!

Go to [HTTPS://SMILE.AMAZON.COM/CH/13-1-3563609](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/13-1-3563609) AND DO YOUR SHOPPING AS USUAL.
SAME PRODUCTS, SAME PRICES. THE BENEFIT: 0.5% OF YOUR PURCHASES GOES TO CLC!

EMPLOYEE SERVICE MILESTONES



CLC employee service milestones were celebrated at a recognition luncheon on November 29 at La Camelia Restaurant in Mount Kisco.

Congratulations to:

15 Years
Carol Smith

20 Years:
Joseph Nyaware
Joan Varricchio

25 Years:
John Porcella, Christina Stile,
Christa Zago, Hong (Bobby) Ye,
Jane Huang & Norma Jones

BACK ROW FROM LEFT: BOBBY YE, JANE HUANG, CAROL SMITH, NORMA JONES & JOSEPH NYAWARE. FRONT ROW: JOHN PORCELLA & ROGER COOPER.

eNEWS UPDATES

WE SEARCH THE WEB TO
BRING YOU THE LATEST NEWS

MTV Documenting Disability Activist's Journey To Space

By Michelle Diamant



A 28-year-old with a disability is headed to space and MTV plans to chronicle the voyage. The cable network said this week that it will follow Eddie Ndopu as he works with an aerospace company to prepare for and make the flight.

Ndopu is from South Africa and has spinal muscular atrophy. He is expected to be the first person with a physical disability to travel into space, MTV said.

Diagnosed at birth, Ndopu was predicted to live just five years. Nearly three decades later, however, he has a master's degree in public policy from Oxford University and works to champion the rights of young people with disabilities around the globe. Ndopu intends to deliver a message to the U.N. General Assembly from space "on behalf of young people everywhere who have ever felt excluded by society," according to MTV. Production on the untitled project is slated to begin next year.

Nike Releases More Shoes for People With Disabilities

Nike has released more shoes with its FLYEASE entry system, designed for both kids and adults



with disabilities. FLYEASE is a type of zipper that goes around the heel of the shoe. This makes it easier for someone to easily pull the shoes on and off.

The first sneaker, *Zoom Soldier 8*, was made several years ago and was inspired by a boy named Matt Walzer, who has a disability. He wrote to Nike about his footwear concerns.

Said Matt, "My dream is to go to the college of my choice without having to worry about someone coming to tie my shoes every day."

The Joy of Fashion



A closetful of silk chiffon, shimmery satin and pure shopping joy arrived just in time for CLCers to make a fashionable splash at the annual Gala.

Dozens of gowns, dresses and cute little frocks were sent over to "135" from the Community Center of Northern Westchester. CLC individuals in search of a Gala ensemble could select their outfit of choice from dozens of dazzling numbers.

The agency has offered Gala attire for the past few years, and CLC again thanks CCNW for their thoughtfulness and generosity.



CLC Holiday Party

CLC staff and individuals look forward to the holiday party every year, and this one did not disappoint! Held at Villa Barone on December 6, we're not sure what the guests enjoyed more, the food, prize raffle, or the dancing!



Six Flags for the Holidays



JANET
POSES
WITH A
NEW
HOLIDAY
FRIEND

It was a festive day for the folks from Todd Road when they kicked off the holiday season with an early December trip to Six Flags Park. The merrymakers met characters of all kinds, delighted in the holiday light show, and went on as many rides as possible in one delightful day.



KRISTINA LOVED THE LIGHT SHOW

*Holiday Notes to
Our Staff
from CLC Family
& Friends*



THANKS FOR YOUR DEVOTED STAFF AND ALL THE GOOD WORK YOU DO.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS, COMPASSION AND CARING!

THANKS TO ALL THE DEDICATED PROFESSIONALS AT CLC; WE KNOW THAT OUR BROTHER IS WELL CARED FOR AND THRIVING.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF MY SISTER. GOD BLESS YOU AND MERRY CHRISTMAS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT OF YOU! I APPRECIATE YOU EVERY DAY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WONDERFUL & CARING SERVICE.

CLC IS A GREAT PLACE FOR MY DAUGHTER.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO. IT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

A Gastronomic Goodbye

By Irene Quill

Jane and Bobby officially retired after being employed by CLC for 25 years; Jane in the Day Hab Department and Bobby in the Maintenance Department. Both have been the familiar faces we have come to expect to see daily.

Jane, whose kind and loving nature made her the CLC "mom" to many of the individuals she worked with in the Day Program. Bobby spent his entire career in the Maintenance Department. Both will be missed by all at CLC.

To wish them well, the *Culinary Connections* team hosted a fabulous send off at 135. Going forward, this will become the party to top!

Guests were greeted by the host staff, dressed to impress in crisp, professional restaurant attire, who eagerly welcomed everyone with bright smiles. The brilliant holiday themed decorations were captivating; the sounds of music and merry laughter were everywhere.

Attention to the smallest detail was evident in every way – the mini quiches artfully displayed surrounded by platters of bagels and fresh fruit, and the mingled aromas of the coffee bar and iced pumpkin loaves. Not to be overshadowed, a magically scrumptious chocolate layer cake adorned with snowflakes was set aside a hot chocolate bar with yummy fixings beckoning to the chocolate lovers. All together, it was quite the culinary masterpiece.

"Great job" to the Culinary Connections greeters, prep staff, servers and the ever important clean- up crew. And kudos to those who quietly and tirelessly worked behind the scenes to make this day into such a memorable one for Jane and Bobby. We applaud you all.

As for Bobby and Jane, they intend to spend their new found leisure time traveling and relaxing—well-deserved indeed! We will miss them and wish them good health and happiness in the future."



BOBBY & JANE



CULINARY CONNECTIONS STAFF DAVID, JEN, TOM, JAMES, ANGELA, EMILY & CAROL



LES, DAVID, JANE & LAWRENCE



CLC MAINTENANCE STAFF JEAN, BOBBY, JOE & RALPH

WANTED! Full & Part-Time Staff

CLC has full & part-time openings in a variety of positions, including for direct care personnel. A positive attitude, compassion and prior experience preferred. Required: High School Diploma/GED, valid driver's license for past 3 years, own transportation, background check, drug testing.

Candidates please Fax resumes to (914) 241-0578 or email HR at resumes@communitylivingcorp.org. Incentives available for employee referrals. Please contact HR for details.

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Email us your CLC photos & news!

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MOUSY ON THE MOVE

A FIRST HAND REPORT BY MOUSY L.

HOWLING HALLOWEEN

CLC's Halloween party took place a little early at *Infusion Restaurant* on October 26. Thanks to the many CLCers who took part in the prep, cooking and clean up for the event.

Party goers came dressed as baseball players, ghouls, devils, superheroes and more! The menu included lasagna, salad, cakes and decorated pumpkin muffins. There was music and dancing, of course, which led to a howling good time for everyone!



PAUL



JOE & MARY



SUZANNE & JOYCE



NOREEN & ANNE MARIE



SANDY, BECKY, JULIE & DANNY

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2018 CLC Gala—The Biggest and the Brightest!

Highlights of the afternoon included the *Hidden Treasures* art show and an inspiring performance by the *CLC Choral Group*. The dance competition was just plain fun, fun, fun! (what CLC event would be complete without dancing?) In addition, we learned something new this year—you can never take too many turns in the photo booth!

Next year's event is already on our calendars - November 3, 2019. Be sure to mark yours today!

THE PHOTO BOOTH WAS A HUGE HIT!



CLC CORP. BOARD MEMBER
CHRISTINE JOHNSTON
& SON ANTHONY

COMMUNITY LIVING CORP.
135 RADIO CIRCLE DRIVE
MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549

**GETTING
REEL
WITH STEPHEN**



MOVIE AND PLAY
REVIEWS FROM CLC'S
IN-HOUSE EXPERT.

Movie: *A Star Is Born*

Romance/Drama R



THIS MOVIE IS AWESOME.

I saw the movie "A Star Is Born" with Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga. The movie was about a rock star band and it had a lot of singing with good songs. I think it is a great movie and that everyone should see it.

**Movie: *Fantastic Beasts:
The Crimes of Grindelwald***

Fantasy/Family PG-13



ALL AGES WOULD ENJOY IT.

This movie is action-packed and exciting. Johnny Depp was really good and the movie really grabs your attention at the end.

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