

THE OPEN DOOR

PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE THROUGH COMMUNITY LIVING

CLC LAUNCHES RECREATION COMMITTEE!



CLC has created a Recreation Committee comprising staff from our Residential Team. Its purpose is to host monthly social gatherings where CLC residents can relax, hang out with peers, eat and have fun.

Our first event, a Pizza Party Social, was held February 7th at the 135 Radio Circle Drive main offices. Over 80 individuals attended and enjoyed pizza, salad, fruit salad and best of all.... MOCKTAILS! Partygoers played board games, basketball and had a blast. Be on the alert for future events!

D. Urciuoli



Celebrating Mousy: A Journey of Empowerment and Community Living

Annette Maksoud



March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM) in the United States, and we are excited to share the inspiring journey of "Mousy" (Marilyn L.) a cherished resident at Community Living Corporation (CLC).

Mousy began her incredible journey at Mezzoff Associates in 1979 and has since flourished in her vibrant communi-

ty at Barker Street. She actively contributes to her surroundings by working in the Foundation and the Café at 135 Radio Circle, showcasing her dedication and passion. Mousy is not only a hard worker but also a person of many interests. Her hobbies include bowling and enjoying the latest movies, and she is eagerly preparing for an upcoming cruise, ready to embrace new adventures.

At CLC, Mousy has formed meaningful connections, including her best friend, Mary Ellen, and numerous acquaintances, which enrich her life. She has a warm rapport with the staff,

who she appreciates for their support and companionship.

Mousy loves to cook, delighting in her favorite dishes like barbeque ribs, chicken, and sweet potato pie. When it comes to entertainment, she enjoys watching her favorite TV show, "The Resident," and has a long list of beloved movies, such as "Gladiator 2," "Too Close to Home," "Speed Racer," and "Captain Marvel." Mousy expresses her love for being a part of CLC, stating, "It's very interesting because I can do different things like going bowling, out to dinner, and out to lunch with a staff member."

With aspirations of traveling to Alaska and dreams of becoming a real Barista in a coffee shop, Mousy embodies the spirit of empowerment that CLC fosters in all its residents. Her journey reflects the values of community integration and personalized support that CLC provides, allowing individuals like Mousy to thrive and pursue their passions. Join us in celebrating "Mousy" Marilyn and the impactful work of Community Living Corporation. Together, we can support individuals with disabilities in achieving their dreams and living fulfilling lives.

Cookin' Good with Jenny



We are pleased to present another cooking column by our own Jenny M.



Winter Favorite Meatloaf Serves 5

Ingredients:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Two eggs | One each of: |
| 1/2 cup breadcrumbs | Carrot |
| 1/2 cup ketchup | Celery |
| One pound ground beef | Onion |
| | Scallion |
| | Salt & pepper to taste |

Instructions:

Heat oven to 350F
Coat a 9" x 12" casserole dish with cooking oil spray.
Chop up all the vegetables in very small dice.
In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients together.
Place in casserole dish and form into loaf shape.
Bake at 350F until lightly brown or until internal temperature reaches 165F. This will take 45 minutes to an hour.
Enjoy!

A Mural Grows at CLC

Muralist and native New Yorker Joe Pimental will be coming to 135 Radio Circle Drive on April 14-18. He will create a large mural in the garage space at the site. CLC residents and participants are welcome to assist with creation of the mural, and already budding artists are excited to join the event.

The big reveal will take place on Wednesday, April 23rd! We invite CLC families and friend to join us for this first of its kind at CLC event. Special thanks to Valley Bank for their generous grant. Your ongoing support is vital to our mission in caring for individuals with disabilities.

CLC Foundation, Inc. & Community Living Corporation

Invite you to attend our MURAL REVEAL

April 23, 2025 | 4 - 5 pm

Join us at the upcoming Mural Reveal! Featuring a mural collaboration with Community Living Corporation artists and muralist Joe Pimental.

135 Radio Circle Drive, Mt. Kisco 914-241-2076

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Dear Family Members,

At Community Living Corporation (CLC), we are more than just an OPWDD service provider – we are an agency dedicated to fostering growth, independence, and empowerment for dual-diagnosed individuals. As we begin this journey together, I want to take a moment to reflect on the strength and resilience of the staff who are truly the backbone of this vital organization.

In 2024, we said goodbye to two of our long-standing leaders, John Porcella, our former CEO, and Roger Cooper, our former Chairman. Their contributions have shaped CLC into what it is today, and we are incredibly grateful for their dedication.

As we transition into 2025 under new leadership, I want to assure you that the core values and culture at CLC remain steadfast. Our commitment to providing personalized care and support continues to guide everything we do.

Our diverse programs, including individual therapy in collaboration with the Epilepsy Foundation of Metro NY, social activities with Hidden Treasures, day habilitation with CCLife and Winslow, and our 39 residential program sites through-

out Westchester County, are all designed to uplift those we serve and make a meaningful difference in each participant's life.

Celebrating Milestones and Growth

It's important to remember that every step forward, no matter how small it may seem, is a victory. CLC continues to celebrate milestones achieved by the individuals in our care, as well as the extraordinary efforts of our team. In an industry where direct support staff are in short supply, our dedicated team of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), Managers, and Program Support Staff remain committed to ensuring that each participant receives the care and attention they deserve.

As your Interim CEO, I am humbled and excited to work alongside such a passionate and skilled team. I have immense faith in the staff at CLC, and I am confident that, together, we will continue to provide an exceptional environment where individuals with developmental disabilities can thrive.

Partnering for a Brighter Future

Looking ahead, we are committed to expanding our offerings, enhancing our

programs, and creating an environment where individuals with disabilities can truly flourish. Your feedback is vital to this process, and we encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with us as we work together to continuously improve.

The return of the Friends and Family of CLC group is an exciting opportunity for us to deepen our partnership with you all. Through this collaboration, we'll be able to make direct changes, promote our programs, and increase fundraising efforts, ensuring the continued growth and success of CLC.

Together, we will continue to build a community of inclusion, respect, and opportunity for all. Thank you for your trust, your support, and your unwavering dedication to this important work. I am honored to be part of this journey, and I look forward to the future we will create together.

Warm regards,

Denyele Urciuoli

Interim CEO, CLC Group Services



20th Annual

CLC Foundation Gala

Sunday, November 16th

This year's theme will be "A Legacy of Honor: Celebrating 20 years of Impact" and we will be highlighting past honorees and other milestones of CLCF/CLC over the last 20 years. If you have a photo, memory or achievement to share at this year's gala, please email Denyele@clcfoundation.org.

Spring Clean-Up Volunteer Event! May 3rd



We are thrilled to invite you to our Spring Clean-Up Volunteer event on May 3rd at one of our Community Living Corporation group home sites! This special day is all about coming together as a community, where staff, volunteers and residents will unite in a collaborative effort to spruce up our homes.

After a day of hard work, we'll celebrate our achievements with a delightful dinner, fostering connections and camaraderie among all participants. We are also graciously accepting donations of essential supplies such as rakes, shovels, flowers, mulch, and food items to help make this event a success. If you have your own leaf blower, rakes, or hedge trimmers, please feel free to bring them along! Your support is invaluable in empowering individuals with developmental disabilities and showcasing the spirit of inclusion that defines our community.

If you would like to make a cash donation, go to the Community Living website at <https://communitylivingcorp.org/> Click on the **Donate** tab and you can select which house you would like to donate to, and you have the option to donate by **Venmo, PayPal or Credit Card** for any amount. See you there!

CLC Friends & Family



(Please note that the CLCF&F is organized and run by the families and loved ones of CLC residents.)

Our friends and family group has been growing in numbers and momentum since our inaugural meeting in November of 2024. We encourage and invite all family members, friends and loved ones of CLC residents and participants to join us!

Our goal is to bring families and loved ones of CLC residents together to support one another, build a more collabora-

tive relationship with CLC leaders, engage in positive advocacy and to help identify resources and pathways to create robust and inclusive living and recreational opportunities for our loved ones.

During our monthly meetings, we have had the opportunity to meet and get to know other families/loved ones, as well as members of the CLC team! We have so far addressed many topics including living conditions in the residences, health and safety protocols and staffing challenges. We have also stated our desire to strengthen communication between CLC and families, and to better understand the agency's organizational structure along with the services they provide.

Interim CEO Denyele Urciuoli, Executive Director Amy Berman, and other managers have welcomed our participation, giving informative presentations about the structure and function of their departments. This knowledge is extremely helpful for families in understanding how to navigate and access information and help when needed.

We have also expressed the desire to support the agency in areas such as organizing an annual family picnic, fundraising and identifying resources to help bridge the gap in providing meaningful community and recreational activities for all residents. The upcoming Spring Cleanup and Barbeque is a good example of how, together with the CLC team, we are already finding ways to improve our loved one's homes and happiness.

Join Us!

We warmly invite you to join us at our next meeting (typically held on the 2nd Sunday of each month), as we continue our efforts to help create a vibrant CLC community for our loved ones, staff and families.

To learn more about CLCF&F and to join our mailing list, please contact:

Yan Ni, nigyan@gmail.com, or Deb Fischer, Debfisc2006@gmail.com

Or visit our website at <https://sites.google.com/view/clcfriendsfamily>

Deb Fischer

Trusts 101

CLC Foundation continues to evolve and align itself with great partnerships. Recently, teaming up with True Link Financial, CLC Foundation now has access to a trust account software that is creating efficiency in our workload, as well as adding more transparency and client support of our beneficiaries.

True Link offers our clients a debit card program, investment management and a beneficiary portal to access detailed account information. Visit Truelinkfinancial.com or call CLC Foundation staff at (914) 241-2076 to learn more.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

This feature profiles a staff member who has been selected by his or her peers to be "in the spotlight." The nominee will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card.

Leslie White was hired at CLC in February 2016 and is currently a Direct Support Professional working in Peekskill at the Edinburgh apartments. "I work with the *girls* and I love it!", says Leslie. "We support



these individuals in everyday life such as food shopping, going to medical appointments, day trips to Woodbury Commons and just about everything they do. We have a lot

of fun together." Leslie says they have a strong bond, like a family. "They know they can talk to me about anything, and I'll always be there."

In her personal life, Leslie enjoys spending time with her own family including mom Janie, Aunt Ann, Cousin Nicky and Auntie Monte. "I have two families; how lucky I am!" The newest member of Leslie's family is her Black Labrador puppy, Jax, who is just four months old and "a darling."

When asked about being chosen for the *Employee Spotlight*, Leslie commented, "I felt great! Very honored."

Here's what her coworkers say:

"Leslie White is dedicated and shows great empathy when supporting our individuals." – Joanna Peart-Raynor

"Leslie is such a kind soul. She is always gentle with the individuals and never complains." – Michele Pirre

"Leslie is truly a special DSP and gives 100% of herself every single day she works. You never have to ask Leslie to help, she always steps up and is available."

– Joan Varricchio

Accurate Contact Information Supporting Families — Please Read!

At CLC, we deeply value the relationships we have built with our clients and their families. To ensure that we can provide the best possible support and advocacy, it is essential for us to have the most current contact information on file.

We kindly ask you to take a moment to verify your name, phone number(s), email, and mailing address with **Annette Maksoud**. Please send an email to her at **amaksoud@clcgroup.org**.

Your prompt response helps us maintain personalized connections, enabling us to serve you and your loved ones better.

We invite you to become an integral part of the CLC community by opting in to receive text messages that keep you informed about our latest updates and events. Staying connected is essential, and we want to ensure that you never miss an opportunity to engage with our initiatives.

Additionally, your permission to share your contact information with the CLC Friends and Family Support Group will allow you to connect with others who understand and support the journey of disabled adults and their families.

Together, we can empower one another and foster a sense of belonging within our community. Your voice matters, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

GOODIES AND GOODBYES

Coworkers, staff, individuals and friends gathered at the main offices on December 20, 2024, to say a heartfelt farewell to John Porcella, and to celebrate his legacy of service and dedication.



JP, as he was known around the office, retired at the close of 2024 after 35 years with the organization. His most recent position was CEO of CLC Group Services.

During the holiday weeks leading up to his departure, JP visited individuals and staff at their residences, delivering cookies, handshakes and hugs.



IN MEMORIAM — ELLEN C. & JANET C.

Marcia Williams and The Edinburgh Family (as they call themselves) shared their thoughts after friend and roommate Ellen C. passed away.

Ellen and her brother Tommy



Ellen C. was a long-time member of Community Living Corp. She passed away on January 4th, 2025. Ellen was a determined and resilient person. Although born with

physical challenges, she lived a full life. Ellen didn't let her disability define what the quality of her life would be. She, along with her brother Tommy, went on yearly vacations, attended church faithfully and enjoyed weekly movie outings. Ellen's favorite response, when concerns arise relating her physical capability was, "I am getting stronger."

When faced with a serious illness, Ellen would always tell herself and others "I am not giving up." She continued her daily routine with a positive attitude, participating in program activities while undergoing treatment and reminded staff of HIPPA, to ensure her privacy was not violated.

Ellen cooked several times per week for her housemates. She was proud of her culinary skills and basked in the praises from staff and peers. She would ensure her housemates adhere to the chore schedule and give support when needed. Ellen has left a void that cannot be filled. We miss her presence, but she will forever be in our hearts.

Jodian Ennis, Resident Manager, Todd Road expressed her memories of Janet C.



From On behalf of myself, the staff, and all the residents of the Prader-Willi Program, I want to extend our deepest gratitude for the kind words and support during this time.

Losing Janet has been a profound tragedy. She was one of the most loving and kindest souls I have ever known. I

will always cherish her daily hugs—at least two every day—and the way she would joyfully exclaim, "Wonderful!" when I asked how her day at the program had been.

Janet lived her life with such cheerfulness. Her singing and her dancing brought happiness to all of us. Her presence lit up every room she entered. Though I find comfort in knowing she is now at peace, I can't help but wish we had more time with her.

Janet, we love and miss you dearly. You will forever hold a special place in our hearts.

GETTING REEL WITH STEPHEN



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

Dogman **PG-13 Thriller/Action**

Dogman is a cartoon. He is part dog, part man and all hero. It was so good. The movie had a lot of action and I like action.

It was a very funny movie. Everyone should see it. I give it five stars.



Welcome to Old Lyme Coastal Farmhouse J. Mungovan

CCLife has created an opportunity for its DayHab that puts the INN in innovative. It's our Coastal Farmhouse in Old Lyme, CT. Extended daytrips, overnights, business trips, camps and retreats we plan are to provide a rich environment with opportunities to grow, thrive, and experience the joy of community, connections, and life.



Our historic farmhouse and land are where we plan to sow berries for pies and vegetables for pickling. It provides the perfect setting for a transformative journey of skill-building, creativity, inclusion, and fun, just a mile from pristine Connecticut beaches.

The mixed-use property offers a unique blend of agricultural, culinary, and market experiences. Transform fresh produce into delicious jams and pies or stand proudly behind the counter of our market stand, selling the creations you've made with your own hands. We also plan to offer our handmade creations and further expand our community ties in Pound Ridge, at the Pelham Markets, our Mount Kisco training site, and Connecticut.

With the ocean down the street, charming seaside towns to explore, and 16 acres of untouched woods behind the house, our playground becomes a tapestry of education, new experience and adventure. Join us in community, fostering connections, and living life, at the Old Lyme Coastal Farmhouse.

HAIR STYLIST MAKES WAVES AT KITCHAWAN

DEVIKA LALLMAN

Every month, Sandra, owner of Sandra's Beauty Shop in Mount Kisco, travels to CLC's Kitchawan residence to give our guys a haircut. She has been working in the town for over 25 years and has been cutting hair for three decades.

We were introduced to Sandra by our staff member Diana Robinson, who has known her for years and has worked with her while at another agency. Sandra does a great job for our individuals. She is very caring and makes sure they feel safe and comfortable while receiving their haircuts. Says Sandra, "I love seeing their faces after they get their haircuts. Everyone is so happy, and it makes me very proud of the job I do."

Sandra explains that she cuts all types of hair, for both men and women. "I also have barbers that work in my salon who specialize in men's cuts."



You can find Sandra's shop at 356 Lexington Avenue Mount Kisco, NY 10549. (914) 242-1742



"A little more off the sides!" Sandra always snips to please.

DOWN ON THE FARM AT WINSLOW Vicki Wolfe

Individuals in the DayHab program at Winslow have kept busy during the cold weather. When they aren't in the barn with the horses, they make their own winter fun including: slip on snowshoes and walk the property, paint, create crafts, make up their own music, and tend to the goats and chickens.



Winslow Therapeutic Center is an agency of CLC Group. Healing with Horses since 1974.

Help Us Help the Folks We Feel So Lucky to Serve

Volunteer!

Volunteer your time or expertise.

Call **Annette Maksoud** at (914) 239-4700 x264 to learn about our volunteer opportunities such as the Spring Clean-Up on May 3rd (see page 3) .

Donate!

Donate Now! Please make your check out to **Community Living Corporation** and mail to:

CLC Group
135 Radio Circle Drive
Mount Kisco, NY 10549
Attn: Annette Maksoud

Or donate online at:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=Z4PZWW8XCUXBE&source=url&ssrt=1740062565610

CLC GROUP
135 RADIO CIRCLE DRIVE
MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549
(914) 239-4700

CLC GROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Brody, Chair; Matthew Persanis, Esq., Vice Chair
Jennifer Winslow, Secretary; Priscilla Orr, Treasurer
Pam Conford, Sandra Dammann RN, Christine Johnston
Mina Sallis, Yan Ni, PhD, Linda Sampson, Esq., Blanca Vazquez, M.D.
Roger Cooper PhD, Chair Emeritus, John Signorelli, Vice Chair Emeritus

Denyele Urciuoli, Interim CEO, CLC Group Services
John Porcella, PhD, CEO Emeritus

THE OPEN DOOR

Published Quarterly

Editor: Deb Descloux swissx@optonline.net

**Editorial Assistant/Reporter: Annette Maksoud
amaksoud@clcgroup.org**

Columnist: Jack Mungovan

Special thanks & photo credit:

**Denyele Urciuoli, Amy Berman, Vicki Wolf, Devika Lallman,
Patti Hurley, Marlena Romanowska**

Got News? ***Share It!***

We welcome your CLC news!

**Story suggestions,
events and especially the name
of someone you think would be
a good interview candidate.**

**Email Deb or Annette
(emails at left)**