

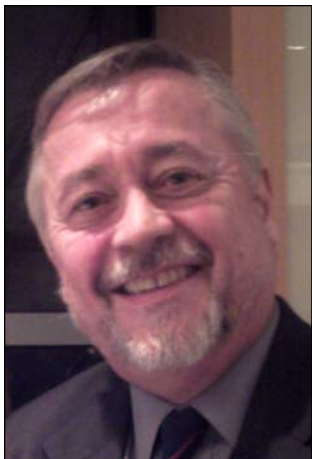
The Independent Citizen



Fall 2012

Community Access Unlimited Honors Unlimited Efforts of Community Advocates

Jim Conroy, Ph.D.: Humanitarian of the Year



Dr. Jim Conroy is the 2012 recipient of Community Access Unlimited's Humanitarian of the Year award, which lauds a person who has provided ongoing support for and has had continued influence throughout New Jersey on behalf of people with disabilities and at-risk youth.

Jim is president and chief executive officer of the nonprofit Center for Outcome Analysis, Inc., which is devoted to the study and implementation of support models that produce the best outcomes. He began his career doing research on the impacts of the Developmental Disabilities Act of 1970 and served as director of research and program evaluation at Temple University's Institute on Disabilities from its beginning until 1992. Jim then founded, and continues to di-

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Walter Kalman: Public Leadership Award



Each year Community Access Unlimited presents the Public Leadership Award to a person or organization for outstanding support and advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities and youth aging out of foster care. Walter Kalman, the executive director of the National Association of Social Workers-New Jersey Chapter, is the 2012 winner of this award.

Walter has been executive director of the National Association of Social Workers, NJ Chapter (NASW-NJ), since 2001. He was honored as Social Worker of the Year by NASW-NJ in 1994 and as Social Worker of the Year by the Society for Social Work Leadership in 2009.

Prior to joining NASW-NJ Walter served as assistant to the deputy commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, founding president of the NJ Association of Community Providers, Inc., and on the executive staff of two local chapters of The ARC. Walter also is an honorary member of the Community

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Irwin Sablosky: Geller Award

The Geller Award each year is presented to a person or group of people who have made a significant commitment to their relationship with CAU, including through volunteerism; have notably impacted the agency through their association with CAU and its members; have shown initiative; and best reflect the universal concept of volunteerism in its truest meaning to serve as an inspiration to others. Irwin Sablosky encompasses all that and more.

Irwin is president of Wm. S. Rich & Son Inc.



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rect, the Center for Outcome Analysis.

He has directed more than a dozen longitudinal studies of the impacts of human service programs, including moving from institutional and nursing home situations to community living, and headed the national impact evaluation on the individual outcomes of self-determination for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He has studied the nature of quality of life, particularly among citizens with disabilities, for several decades and has been particularly interested in the size of homes and residential options.

In recent years, Jim has concentrated on applying what he has learned in the United States to assist emerging democracies to include all citizens, with or without disabilities, in the mainstream of public life. He considers his work on the outcomes of deinstitutionalization in America to be his definitive contribution toward better lives for people with disabilities. However, his current work on the outcomes of self-determination initiatives for people with developmental disabilities has the potential to eclipse those earlier research efforts.

Jim earned his bachelor of arts degree in psychology from Yale University and his master's in sociology/program evaluation and doctorate in medical sociology from Temple University. His work has been publicized on "60 Minutes"; the "ABC Evening News" with Peter Jennings; "NightLine"; Public Television; the *Philadelphia Inquirer*; the *New York Times*; the *Chicago Tribune*; and other media.

Kalman... continued from page 1

Access's Board of Trustees since January of 2002 and was a past president. He currently sits on the boards of numerous community service organizations.

Founded in 1955, NASW is the largest organization of professional social workers in the world, with more than 145,000 members in 55 chapters. The New Jersey chapter has more than 7,600 members and is the primary professional social work organization in the state. NASW is committed to advancing professional social work practice and the profession and to promoting human rights, social and economic justice and unimpeded access to services for everyone. Its members work in a broad range of settings, including hospitals and other health care facilities, community agencies, government, academia, business, nursing homes, schools and private practice.

The New Jersey chapter responds to member inquiries regarding social work practice, legislative and social policy issues, continuing education, licensing issues and other informational requests. The chapter has many committees that involve members throughout the state and serve the social work community, working on professional, social policy and legislative issues, sponsoring conferences and providing a source of networking for members.

Sablosky... continued from page 1

and a two-time president and vice president of the Springfield board of education, on which he has served for 12 years. In that capacity Irwin frequently is able to assist CAU with our needs in the Springfield school system. Irwin also has directly supported CAU for more than a decade, participating in and contributing to several events each year.

Through his business Irwin improves the lives of those who are in need of short-term financing but do not have access to standard credit. Wm. S. Rich & Son Inc. each year makes more than 50,000 short-term loans averaging \$225 based on personal collateral. Many clients are regular borrowers who rely on these funds to make it through the week or a difficult period. Wm. S. Rich & Son Inc. was founded in 1890 and Irwin's father worked there for more than 50 years. The Sablosky family purchased the business 27 years ago and since then has grown it from one location to seven.

Irwin was honored to discover he had been named the 2012 recipient of the Geller Award, as he knew Ira Geller and remembers him as someone always helping in the community.

"It kind of hit home," Irwin said. "It added a personal note to it. You don't get paid for the volunteer things you do but you get rewarded in many other ways. The satisfaction is amazing. To help someone or give them that extra nudge when they need it is truly special."

Board Member : Myrta Rosa

Myrta Rosa is CAU's newest board member but brings plenty of experience to the table. While she has been with CAU for about two years Myrta has been active in serving on and leading advocacy organizations for many years.

Myrta lived in the Woodbridge Developmental Center for 11 years. She was elected president of the Woodbridge Self-Advocacy Group and then became an active advocate for people with disabilities outside the center, serving on the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, a state-appointed position; as president of the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Group; and on the Monday Morning Middlesex County Network.

When she came to CAU Myrta did not miss a step in leadership. She joined Helping Hands and became Sergeant at Arms. More recently she has become part of CAU's New American Movement for People with Disabilities. "I show people just because we have a disability doesn't mean we can't achieve things," Myrta said. "I don't let my disability hold me back. Why worry about your disability? Just try to make the best of it."

Myrta now will bring that positive attitude and commitment to the CAU board to be part of the solution. "The main step to becoming a leader and a board member is to make each meeting," she said. "The more meetings you attend the more you learn. Keep moving because that's how you're going to get things done – by trying your best."





From the Desk of the Executive Director

Fall is a time of celebration of nature's beauty and preparation for the winter. At Community Access Unlimited we have many accomplishments to celebrate yet face much preparation for coming challenges.

In this issue of *Independent Citizen* you will read about the achievements and performances of our members, community initiatives we have taken and your support of our efforts. And there is much to celebrate outside these pages, as well.

More than 350 members and 800 staff and their families voted in the June elections and are preparing to take part in November's elections. By voting, our members, staff and families help elect officeholders who will best represent their interests.

Jump Start, MAC Attack and Helping Hands advocacy groups all have been very active and earlier this year our member's launched the New American Movement for People with Disabilities, a remarkable effort with equally remarkable goals. Visit their web site at www.nampwd.org.

More people are taking greater control of their resources and personal care through our Personal Preference Program, for which CAU serves at the fiscal intermediary. This program is expanding by about 75 people per month, leading an increase in staff and move to a new office for the program.

Yet new challenges lie ahead. There remain about 2,500 people with developmental disabilities in New Jersey still living in developmental centers. In addition, more than **8000** people are on the waiting list for state services. The good news is that the state has committed to close two developmental centers, North Jersey and Woodbridge. However, this means New Jersey must find community-based housing to meet the needs of the nearly 700 residents of these two facilities. As always, CAU will lead that effort.

So while we have much to celebrate this fall will still need the continued support of partners like you to meet these coming challenges. Together I know we will.

Best Wishes,

Sid Blanchard



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President

You Can Make a Difference

You can make life extra special for a youth or adult with disabilities. If you can donate one or more of the following items, our members would appreciate it.

**Prepaid cell phones at \$80 per phone **Tupperware at \$25 per set **Silverware at \$10 per set **Crochet and Knitting materials—\$50 worth of materials **Bedding at \$60 per "Bed in a Bag" **Alarm Clocks at \$10 each **Lamps at \$20 each **DVD Players at \$45 per unit
**Pots and Pans at \$75 per set **IPODS at \$125 each **I Tune cards at \$25 each

Donate online at www.caunj.org or
make checks payable to **Community Access Unlimited** and send to **80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202**
or drop off your donations at our main office.

All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent provided by law.

Thank you for your support!



The Envelope, Please...

Each year CAU honors individuals and organizations that help us fulfill our mission of enabling people to live fulfilled and independent lives in the community. Our winners at the 28th Annual Awards Night Celebration represent our vital link to the community.

"These individuals and organizations help us build community support systems and they stand out from the rest," said Paul LaMaine, assistant executive director of developmental disabilities services at CAU.

Community Partners honored this year included:

- Alfonsina Savino of the Gateway School in Carteret as *Educator of the Year Award*.
- Play It Smart Program of the New Brunswick High School for *Community Service*
- James R. Guerra, Architects of Elizabeth, with the *Supportive Housing Service Award*
- New Providence Police Department as *Citizen of the Year*
- Kenneth Widgeon of the Division of Youth and Family Services as *Youth Advocate of the Year*
- Dr. Romeo Caballes Jr. of Somerville as *Health Care Professional of the Year*
- Rachel Reed of the Division of Developmental Disabilities with the *Distinguished Social Service Award*
- Charlene Bathelus of Prevention Links with the *Community Partnership Award*

In addition, Union County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi, chair of the Ann Baran Scholarship Fund, awarded \$2,000 scholarships to six recipients. CAU also honored the accomplishments of our members, including independent living, recreation, education and employment, and staff members from our various areas, as well.



Kenneth Widgeon (center left) of the Division of Youth and Family Services is honored as Youth Advocate of the Year by Union County Freeholder Betty Jane Kowalski (left); Sid Blanchard, executive director of Community Access Unlimited (CAU); and Union County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi.



Alfonsina Savino (center) receiving the Educator of the Year Award flanked by Tracy Honig (left) and Kerin Monaco, behaviorists at CAU.



Remember a Loved One or Special Occasion
by Purchasing a Leaf on CAU's Tree of Life

You can personalize your message for
years to come on the Tree of Life located
at CAU's main office in Elizabeth.

Cost of a Leaf: \$50

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Tributes Can Be Purchased For:

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will take care of the rest, or we can send you the supplies
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For more information, please call 908.354.3040 x272.



Charlene Bathelus (right) of Prevention Links with CAU's Maureen Malangone.



Frank Lawrence (right) of James R. Guerra Architects, and Morris Frasier (left), CAU Housing Director.



Dr. Romeo Caballes Jr. of Somerville (second from left) receiving his award as Health Care Professional of the Year.



Marion Simmons goes to Washington

CAU member Marion Simmons recently traveled to Washington, D.C., to take part in the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Technical Assistance Meeting. NYTD collects and tracks data about the services that states provide to foster youth, as well as the characteristics of the youth receiving those services, to assess each state's performance. NYTD also provides information about the outcomes of young people aging out of foster care. The data is analyzed at the technical assistance meetings.



Marion was asked to join the New Jersey team attending the meeting by Jessica Trombetta, director of adolescent services for New Jersey. This is Marion's second time attending, a reflection of the status she has attained as an advocate for youth in and aging out of foster care. She is a former officer of CAU's Member Action Committee and Youth Advisory Board and remains a MAC Attack consultant.

"It's a privilege," she said. "It all started last year when I was introduced to (Trombetta) at an event. She was so impressed with what I was saying, she said, 'There's something I think you can help us with.' I'm honored."

Among the data Marion and others are reviewing are survey responses to see how many youths are successfully transitioning out of foster care. That's something about which the junior at Lincoln University of Pennsylvania majoring in sociology and human services knows plenty.

Meet Paul LaMaine

Assistant Executive Director, DD Services

Paul LaMaine has been in human services 22 years but a desire to help others has been in his blood much longer.

Paul graduated from Montclair State University 1992 with a degree in psychology. Once a week while in college he served as a companion to a person living in what was then the Essex County Mental Hospital, visiting and keeping a journal. Next Paul did his cooperative education at Keystone Community Residence in South Plainfield.

"The cooperative education program really motivated me," he said. "I wanted to know that people with developmental disabilities can have normal, integrated lives in the community."

Paul found his greatest opportunity to achieve that goal when he came to CAU in 2008. "CAU is so progressive and innovative in supporting individuals," he said. "We are living the mission of integrating members into the community. After a couple of decades in this field I've seen how we here at CAU have progressively matured. I feel very effective here."

"The members acknowledge me as a person who will help them obtain their life goals. When they come to me they feel safe, that I've always validated and guided their concerns and issues. They've had 500 or 600 caretakers in their life. At the end of the day, I always want to be the most meaningful one."



Community Access Unlimited

14th Annual Walk-a-Thon



DATE: Sept 22, 2012

TIME:

Registration: 11:00 am

Official Start: 12:00 pm

Location:

Rahway River Park

Rahway, NJ

Put a walk team together for a day of fun at the same time helping to raise money for people with disabilities and at-risk youth!

For more information or to register call:
Cara Pavia, Event Coordinator
(908) 354-3040 ext 376 cpavia@caunj.org





Seussical the Musical

"Seussical Jr." is a story of journey, discovery and acceptance – of Horton's journey through challenge and his discovery of love; of Jojo first being rejected but later celebrated for his creative thinking; of the struggle of the residents of the planet Who to be accepted despite their tiny size; and of the bird Gertrude McFuzz to be loved despite her tail of just one feather.

That journey made a local stop this summer when CAU staged a three-night production of the musical, which is based on the works and characters of Dr. Seuss. Members of CAU were joined by amateur actors from seven communities and three counties to form the CAU Community Players and stage "Seussical Jr." at Jonathan Dayton High School in Springfield, the first such joint production in Union County.

Just as "Seussical Jr." is a journey, so too was the CAU production, according to Marguerite Modero, a performing arts and theatre arts teacher in the Garwood School District who directed the play, assisted by choreographer Alyson Monaco, Community Integration Coordinator for Community Access Unlimited and accomplished dancer.

"The concept was to give everyone the opportunity to audition on an even playing field along with actors from the community and to be given the part they deserve according to their talent, ability and interest," said Modero, who is parent of CAU member Megan Modero. "Seussical was the perfect musical for this venture because the plot is a reflection of real life and how sometimes it takes someone like Horton to champion the cause of those who have difficulty being heard. This was a self-actualizing experience for many members of the cast because they were able to see themselves in these characters and infuse their feelings and thoughts to make the portrayals ring true."

That was especially true for Megan, who played Jojo after being around plays and musicals her entire life.

"I've been waiting for this my whole life," she said. "I finally have a real part after all the shows I've been in and it's all because of CAU. They believe in us and gave us our chance. I'm so excited, I love everything about it."

John Bitetto of West Caldwell, a sophomore at American University in Washington, D.C., was one of the amateur community actors who joined the CAU members and played the Mayor of the planet Who.

"This was probably the closest cast I have ever worked with," he said. "Everybody came together to work as a team and became really close. The message of the show – that how a person looks or how they appear doesn't really matter – transferred well to the cast. It wasn't about CAU members and non-CAU members. It was about everyone being a family."

The journey of the CAU production of "Seussical Jr." had a smooth landing, as well. About \$7,500 was raised through the sale of more than 800 tickets, T-shirts and candygrams to cast members.



The Cast of Seussical Jr. - members of CAU and the community



Board Member, Myrta Rosa (left), playing the role of a 'Who', and Tina Witowsky (right), playing the roles of the Nurse, Mrs. Macklewho & a Who



Megan Modero (far left) who played Jojo, posing with Assistant Director of the Rosewood program, Jennifer Souza, Gabriella Arragona who played "Leader of the Wicks, and Kim Barry who starred as leading lady, "Gertrude"



Annie Paloff (left) with Support Coordinator, Jetaya Clayborne

James Maccia (right) who played a Wick in Seussical



Joycel Cagle and Willie White (featured above) ready to perform in their costumes.

Rosalyn Naylor (left) as a Who



Growing Deeper Community Roots

Furthering our mission of enabling people with disabilities to live more fully within the community, this summer CAU launched a Youth Garden project at one of our single family homes in Roselle to help members build self-esteem and social skills and interact with people from the neighborhood and the greater community.

Since adding activities involving nature and science to our recreation and education programs, CAU's behavioral health team has noticed significant positive behavioral changes and improved interaction with others among younger members, a group that has been difficult to involve in activities in the past, according to Joseph Calabrese, an assistant director at CAU who is overseeing the project. "We determined that a community garden project like this would be an ideal way to allow our members, especially our younger members, to join forces with the community," he said.

The garden entails two raised garden beds for vegetables and herbs that sit in the front yard of the home of two 17-year-old members. The placement encourages interaction and participation in tending the garden by other members as well as youth and adults from the neighborhood.

Members and staff were joined at the garden's initial planting by representatives of several community outreach groups involved in and helping to fund the project, including the Union County District Rotary; the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Gardening Project; and Groundwork Elizabeth, a community-based organization that promotes environmental, economic and social well-being.

Rutgers and Rotary have teamed to create the Growing Lives One Seed At A Time project that will have sites in Union, Middlesex, Somerset, Morris and Hunterdon counties targeting youth, seniors or people with disabilities. CAU was selected to be the pilot program for Union County. Funding for the project also was supplied by Home Depot through the Youth Gardens Grants program of the National Gardening Association and kidsgardening.org.



CAU's Fundraising & Marketing Coordinator, Cara Pavia helps member Clenston plant greenery outside the Roselle residence while Support Leader Vernee Brooks assists resident Ashley Forges plant basil in the house's learning laboratory.

Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez Helps Members Go Home



Jennifer Velez, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services spent time helping John Ruch (below) and roommate Michael Brookswere (above) move into CAU's 200th residential property in Union County.

Joth Ruch was anxious for the visit to his new home by Jennifer Velez, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS). "I've been waiting for you to help me unpack," Ruch told Velez upon her arrival.

The visit June 13 by the commissioner to this newly refurbished residence in Scotch Plains that is home to four CAU members reinforced the philosophies of Velez and the Christie administration that people with disabilities are better served living within the community. Gov. Christie often speaks of the state's moral obligation to recognize the individuality and unique needs of New Jerseyans with developmental disabilities.

"Moving to a new home is an exciting experience," Velez said. "A new home also brings new opportunities in the surrounding community, utilizing community resources, meeting new people and gaining the day-to-day experiences that enrich all of our lives."

Joth and roommate Michael Brookswere were quick to agree with the commissioner. "I look forward to going to recreational activities and going out to eat," Joth said. "I also like the backyard." "I'm going to go the stores and see friends," said Michael. "And I'm closer to my family's home (in Plainfield)."

Velez brought a house-warming gift on her visit and helped Joth and Michael unpack their belongings, hang pictures and generally settle in at their home. She also helped Joth set up his stereo, though cringing a bit when the heavy metal band Metallica music began roaring from the speakers.

"In homes like these our members can live within the community yet also receive whatever support and attention they require," said Mercedes Witowsky, CAU associate executive director. "This is consistent with the philosophies of the Christie administration and Commissioner Velez's visit reinforces this model as best serving the needs and desires of our members."





In Performance...

Believing that every accomplishment should be celebrated, the members and staff of CAU each year honor the award winners at the agency's Performance Recognition Night for those members with disabilities and Youth Achievement Night for CAU's youth members.

This year Performance Recognition Night recognized 11 members who made progress toward goals and performed in ways that strengthened their ability to live independently.

Dante Chrystal, a CAU member since 2008, was recognized for his remarkable determination in both setting and achieving goals. Dante told his counselor he wanted to find a job, get his license and buy a car. After one day he was working at UPS, saving his wages for driving lessons. On May 26 he passed his driver's test to earn his license and began a new job at a staffing firm.

"I have a great staff behind me, great support from my counselor," Dante said. "I have great thoughts. I only keep the positive and let the negative go. Whenever I get down I count my blessings. I may not have everything but I have more than others. If you believe and work hard, your dreams will come true."

Dante's third dream came true the night of the awards events when CAU executive director Sid Blanchard told him the agency was giving him a car in recognition of his hard work.



(Top row from left to right) Annie Johnson, Dante Chrystal, Shanice Bacote, Yvette Duvall, Joshua Sharlow and Della Scott

(Bottom Row from left to right) Tyesha Offiong, Ralph Pederson, Latasha Perry-Sek, Rasheeta Milton, Lawson Gilder, Nick Robertson and Willie White



2012 Award Winners:

Supervised Apartment Program Awards

Willie White
Yvette Duval
Joshua Sharlow
Dante Chrystal

Supportive Living Apartment Program Awards

George Simester
Lawson Gilder
Annie Johnson
Ralph Pederson

CPEP Program Award

Tahira Williams

CSP

Ronald Vigiliano

Recreation

Kamil Douglas



Sid Blanchard Named to New Jersey Interagency Council on Homelessness

Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director, has been named by Gov. Chris Christie to serve on the New Jersey Interagency Council on Homelessness. The council was created in April to develop a 10-year plan to reduce or end homelessness in New Jersey, including evaluating the effectiveness of services being provided to the homeless, impediments to those services and recommendations for improvement. Sid is one of 15 non-government appointees to the 26-member council, which operates within the Department of Human Services.

"Every individual has the right to live a fulfilling life in the community and that starts with safe and secure housing," Sid said after the appointment. "That has been the primary driver for CAU since our inception and we have proven very effective at providing affordable housing for thousands of people."

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Youth Achievement

Thirty-three youths were honored at Youth Achievement Night, recognizing achievement in a number of categories. Brittany Coleman, one of the Valedictorian Award winners, recently graduated from Drew University with honors. While Brittany has applied for law school and may return to that path later, for now she plans to focus on entering graduate school and earning a master's degree in social work. She wants to work for the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services.

"I was in foster care and I want to give back," she said. "I want to inspire them and tell them they can do anything they want to do regardless of their circumstances."

Yawina Cirene was one of the recipients of the Most Likely to Achieve Award. The 18-year-old junior at Abraham Clark High School in Roselle maintains a 3.6 grade point average, recently began a part-time job, opened checking and savings accounts, participates in CAU's leadership program and is a youth mentor in school.

"I will be a CEO at a major corporation one day, bigger than Apple," Cirene said. "I want to own my own large corporation. I could just start now with a lemonade stand and it would be the best lemonade in the world and it would grow into a large corporation."

The 2011 Winners

Wall Street Award for financial responsibility – Joelis Hurtado and Roberto Chaj-Ordenez

Butterfly Award for improvement – Nusheen Richardson

Creativity Award – Marquis McNeil, Karribe Wynn, Tanta-Nasha and Fernando Osorio

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for advocacy – Shawanna Hicks and Jasmine Houseman

Best Foot Forward Award for a fresh start – Javon Sellow, Keyairra Clark and Christian Thomas

Apprentice Award for employment – Marissa Scott and Anthony Carter

Most Likely to Achieve Award – John Maldonado, Fernando Osorio, April Cooper and Yawina Cirene

Class President Award – Gloria Robles

Solitarian Award for excellence – Janee Robinson

Valedictorian Award for academics & leadership – Brittany Coleman, Gabriella Lopez and Eris Tyler



The 2011 honorees at the Youth Achievement Night



Supported Housing Support Counselor Nijimia Coleman with member Marissa Scott

TOP Senior Assistant Executive Director, Tanya Johnson with member Roberto Chaj-Ordenez



..Continued from page 8

"While I am honored to have been chosen to serve on the Interagency Council on Homelessness by the governor, I am equally excited to share some of the experiences and success we have had at Community Access as the council collectively works to end homelessness in New Jersey."

There are nearly 13,000 homeless in New Jersey, while up to 29,000 people may experience homelessness at some point during the year. Nearly 2,300 families and more than 4,300 children were homeless in 2011. In Union County, 887 people were homeless. After mental health issues the top reported reason for homelessness was economics and evictions.

"Those numbers are unacceptable," Blanchard said. "We are too wealthy a nation and state to allow families and children to go one night without a home. I look forward to working with the council to end this tragedy."



Sid Blanchard & Community Access Unlimited have learned a thing or two about housing as CAU opened their 199th property on Jerusalem Rd in Scotch Plains in June of 2012.



Shooting Low, Scores High

While higher is not better on golf score cards the numbers turned in by the friends, supporters and community partners of CAU at the 18th Annual Golf Classic were well above par. The May 10 event at Suburban Golf Club raised \$40,000 for CAU programs.

At the top of the leader board of support for the event was Innovative Benefit Planning, an employee benefit planning and financial services company located in Cinnaminson, New Jersey, which was the outing's reception sponsor. SGA Group, PC, of Clark was the event's breakfast sponsor. SGA is a CPA and consulting firm specializing in serving a large number of tax-exempt organizations, many located in Union County.

"CAU cannot function without the support of our community partners," said Robert Griffin of the law firm Griffin Griffin & Alexander and a member of the CAU board of trustees. "We and the members we serve are very grateful they support such a wonderful cause."



(from right to left) Executive Director of CAU, Sid Blanchard, Tom Angelo of SGA Group, PC, and board member, Harold Poltrock, Esq.



Mimi McDonough of TD Bank golfing with colleagues Richard Kuskin, Rob Barnacle, and Paul Gregory

2012 GOLF SPONSORS

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New York Giants
New York Jets
NJ Coalition for Autism
Parker Remsen & Sullivan
Phoenix Specialties
Prince Auto Collision
Progressive Distributors
Roselle Savings Bank
Roselle Tire
SarahCare Adult Day Health Center
SGA Group, P.C.
Sopher Financial Group
Sovereign Bank
Staples
Suburban Golf Club
Superior Office Systems
TD Bank
Trinitas Regional Medical Center
Union Avenue Pharmacy
Universal Improvement Association
WB Mason
Woodruff Developers
YMCA of Eastern Union County



Golfers Jack Quinn, Bob Griffin, and Tom Grant enjoying the nice weather on the course.

Thinking about a new car? Not happy with the trade in value?

Donate your car to Community Access Unlimited!!!

Why donate to CAU?

- You'll be helping youth expand their opportunities in employment, education and socialization.
- 100% of your donation goes to our members transportation needs
- You can claim 100% of the fair market value of the donated vehicle for tax purposes, as allowed by law

For more information or to make a donation please contact:

Cara Pavia, Fundraising Coordinator
908.354.3040x376 or cpavia@caunj.org
www.caunj.org/donations



Love was in the Air



Michael Roemisch & Cassandra Smith



James Williams and Debbie Jenkins peering mysteriously from behind their masks



Associate Executive Director, Mercedes Witowsky dancing with daughter Tina

Earlier this year 22 couples who are members of CAU dressed to the nines and celebrated their love at the annual Couples Night, joined by guests, family and staff members. The evening had a New Orleans theme, lively music and dancing.

"At CAU we are committed to enabling people with disabilities to live full and happy lives within the community," said Sid Blanchard, executive director of CAU. "That entails living in their own homes, learning life skills, recreating, working if they choose and being active in the community."

"Perhaps nothing contributes to a fulfilled life more than love and having someone with whom to share your life. That is why each year we celebrate those couples among our members who have found love with one another."



Wesley and Amanda Strond



James Emann singing to his date, Rose Veale



*Luigi Giannini and Rosalie Piccolo
Enjoying their evening*

Gary Rubin Honored for Advocacy



Gary Rubin this spring was named the 2012 winner of the Jane Miller Award for advocacy by the New Jersey Self Advocacy Project, an arm of The Arc of New Jersey. Gary was honored at the organization's Spring into Action Self Advocacy Luncheon.

Gary has been a leader of advocacy for many years. He is a founding member of CAU's Jump Start program and is active in the agency's Helping Hands member advocacy program, training fellow members and others with disabilities how to advocate for their rights and speak to groups about the rights and needs of people with disabilities. Gary also is a cofounder of the New American Movement for People with Disabilities.

Gary develops many relationships with people who make a difference, in turn giving CAU and its members political capital in advocacy. He considers state Senators Steve Sweeney, Loretta Weinberg and Richard Codey among those with whom he has established a solid relationship.

"I'm very heartfelt with them," Gary said. "I don't sugar-coat it. I grew up with an intellectual disability and abuse all around me. I can tell people about living with intellectual disabilities because I lived it."

Gary views his fellow CAU members and other people with developmental disabilities as his audience, as well. "My job is to let people know there are choices out there and there are people who will give you a helping hand so no one is alone," he said.

Wish Granted Will Lead to a Career

Shawanna Hicks, CAU member, recently had her wish for driving lessons filled as one of 30 recipients of wishes granted through the "30 Wishes. 30 Cities. 30 Days." program One Simple Wish held in May in coordination with National Foster Care Awareness Month. The non-profit grants wishes for foster children and foster families in an attempt to bring greater focus to the foster care system and connect givers to recipients. The 30.30.30 campaign took the One Simple Wish team on a 4,000-mile trip granting wishes to foster children or those who have aged out of foster care in 30 cities in over 30 days.



Shawanna Hicks and Danielle Gletow, executive director of One Simple Wish



Shawanna wished for driving lessons through CAU's Wish Program. CAU in turn passed along her wish to One Simple Wish, which selected Shawanna for the 30.30.30. program. She wanted to get her driver's license so she can become a full-time employee at CAU as an assistant support counselor working with her fellow members with developmental disabilities. A license also would allow her to enroll at Kean University and work toward a degree in social work.

Not long after her wish was granted for lessons Shawanna (shown above) passed her driving test. Congratulations!!



80 West Grand Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Phone: 908-354-3040 TTY/TTD: 908-354-4629
Fax: 908-354-2665 www.caunj.org

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