

The Independent Citizen



Spring 2013

Beauty & the Beast Jr. to Take the Stage

It will not be a cast of thousands but the staging of Community Access Unlimited's second annual musical this summer will be quite a spectacle. The CAU Community Players will put on Disney's "Beauty and the Beast Jr.," following the group's premiere production of "Seussical Jr." last year.

"We try to pick shows that have a really good message, that have something to do with our mission here at Community Access," said Alyson Monaco, community integration coordinator at CAU. "This one would be, 'Don't judge a book by its cover.'"

"Beauty and the Beast" is a beloved fairy tale about very different people finding strength in one another and learning how to love. After her father is taken prisoner in the castle by a beast, Belle must give up her freedom to save him. The story of Belle and the Beast falling in love and the Beast's eventual transformation into a handsome prince lies at the heart of the message of accepting those who are different.

This year thirty-seven CAU members and seven staff members will be joined by forty-five members of the community, all coming together to light up the stage together.

"We put so many different types of people together in the same room," Alyson said. "Last year some of the non-member community players said they never had been part of a show where it really doesn't make any difference who you are."

The turnout to open auditions held in January was overwhelming, according to Alyson.

"People were still talking about last year's show up until auditions for this year's show," she said. "Last year everyone was a little hesitant about trying out, but afterward people talked about it so much that we had members coming out of the woodworks to try out and work behind the stage. The staff has seen what an impact it has on their members, in terms of really wanting to be involved, developing self-confidence, and displaying their creative talents."

This year's show will again be directed by Marguerite Modero, a performing arts and theatre arts teacher in the Garwood School District and mother of CAU member Megan. She will be assisted by Alyson Monaco as choreographer. Show dates are June 28, 29 and 30 at Jonathon Dayton High School in Springfield.



CAU Member James Maccia gives the show a big thumbs up!



Ernst Holmes and Selina Siri will perform the role of Lefou and a silly girl in the upcoming show.



(top row from left to right) Amanda Heitz and Benjamin Gainous Jr. (bottom row) Kate Garcia, Courtney Curci, and Jessie Gaeta working together to learn music at rehearsal



All 89 cast members gathered in January at 88 West Grand St. where they shared their excitement for starting rehearsals!



(From left to right) Milagros, Chris McMahon, Beverly Williams, Jose Travera, Joyce Cargle, Annie Williams and Sara Law rehearse the song, "Belle" for the upcoming performance

Inside this Issue

TD Charitable Foundation Funds Affordable Housing	Page 2
Board Member Bob Griffin	Page 2
From the Desk of the Executive Director	Page 3
Meet William Busch	Page 3
Gala 2012	Page 4
Walk-a-Thon 2012	Page 5
CAU Members Vote – More than their Neighbors	Page 6
Happy 70 th Birthday, Sidney	Page 7
When Sandy Hit, CAU Hit Back	Page 8
Christmas Came Early for Youth Shelter	Page 9
CAU Members Go Far in Donated Cars	Page 10
Path to Progress	Page 10

You still have time to get involved in all the magic of this show! For more information contact Alyson Monaco, 908-354-3040 x216. Tickets will become available in May.



TD Charitable Foundation to Fund Affordable Housing at CAU

Community Access Unlimited (CAU) recently was awarded a \$100,000 affordable housing grant through the TD Charitable Foundation's Housing for Everyone grant competition. The grant will be used to help fund the development of multiple CAU affordable housing projects in 2013 for people with disabilities and at-risk youth.

CAU's housing programs for both members with disabilities and youth members include emergency housing; children's placement; supervised, semi-independent and supportive housing; and the Union County HomeShare Program, which matches people who have a home and who are experiencing financial hardship with people who are or at risk of homelessness.

"We are overwhelmed by the generosity of the TD Charitable Foundation," said Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director. "Affordable housing is a core component of being able to live independently within the community and the right of every citizen. This has always been at the heart of our mission at CAU and TD has long supported our efforts. With this latest support we will be able to bring affordable living to many of our members."

This year's "Housing for Everyone" theme was *Transitional Housing and Homeless Shelters*, focusing on projects that will expand the availability of and/or access to transitional housing and/or homeless shelters.

The Housing for Everyone grant competition is one of the TD Charitable Foundation's most widely known signature programs. The competition invites local nonprofit organizations from Maine to Florida to submit proposals outlining their plans and initiatives to support and provide affordable housing initiatives in their communities. Twenty-five organizations throughout TD Bank's footprint from Maine to Florida were awarded a \$100,000 grant for a total grant donation of \$2.5 million in 2012.



CAU Executive Director, Sid Blanchard (left) is presented with the TD Housing for Everyone Award by Nicholas Miceli, market president at TD Bank. This generous grant will help CAU fund numerous affordable housing projects in 2013

The TD Charitable Foundation is the charitable giving arm of TD Bank N.A. The foundation's mission is to serve the individuals, families and businesses in all the communities where TD Bank operates, having made \$98.2 million in charitable donations since its inception in 2002. The foundation's areas of focus are affordable housing, financial literacy and education and the environment. More information on the TD Charitable Foundation, including an online grant application, is available at www.TDBank.com.

Board Member Profile: Bob Griffin

Bob Griffin began his love affair with CAU in 1989 when the agency needed legal assistance with a condominium association. He quickly became a member of the board of trustees and served as president from 2008 to 2010.

It was a natural fit from the start. As a partner at the law firm Griffin Alexander P.C., Bob's areas of practice include fair housing, discrimination issues and the rights of people with disabilities and he represents community associations.

Bob has had such a positive impact on CAU he was named the recipient of the 2010 Ira Geller Award, which is presented to a person who has made a significant commitment to their relationship with CAU and has notably impacted the agency through his or her association with CAU and its members.

Bob is keenly proud of his association with CAU.

"We have the finest executive director I've ever seen," he said. "I'm also very proud of the level of commitment of those on the board. Everyone on that board believes what they're doing is the most important thing in their lives. That atmosphere of commitment is infectious."

A litigator throughout his career, Bob is admitted to practice in New Jersey and before the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey and the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. He is a graduate of Seton Hall University School of Law, where he earned a J.D., and Marist College, where he earned a bachelor of science degree.





From the Desk of the Executive Director

The first newsletter of a new year is always a good time to pause and reflect on the journey just concluded and the road that lies ahead. We look back with pleasure on our 2012 community inclusion success stories. You will find some of them featured in this issue:

- We've expanded the amount of affordable housing in 2012 and will continue to grow our housing options in 2013.
- People with disabilities listened to candidates seeking election in 2012 and 84% of people we support cast their vote on election day;
- More people we support participated in regional and national self-advocacy through Jump Start, MAC Attack, and Helping Hands;
- More people with disabilities benefited from CAU's Fiscal Intermediary Services through the Personal Preference Program and other self-directed service options;
- More people previously unable to live in the community due to a lack of supports for their physical and behavioral health challenges are living in the community now because of CAU's ability to provide the level of support they need.



We've recently made great strides in equality thanks to the support of state government. On February 26, 2013, Governor Christie committed to adding millions of dollars to the FY 2014 Budget for community programs for both current residents of NJ in developmental centers and for the 8,000 people with disabilities who are on the waiting list for services. It has been promised that as the developmental centers in New Jersey close (North Jersey and Woodbridge are to be the first two) are closing, more money will be allotted to expand community supports. Governor Christie specifically will designate \$42 million for community services that will be available to adults over 21 who have aged out of special education programs, and \$40 million in additional funding to pay for homes and services to developmental center residents who are moved into the community.

With the support of state government and supports like you, we can provide the many residents moving out of the developmental centers with the tools to make a smooth transition into the community, and the supports to help them live independently in our community.

With deepest gratitude,

Audrey Vasey

CAU Board of Trustees

President
Audrey Vasey

Secretary/Treasurer -
President Elect
Harold J. Poltrock, Esq.

Sidney Blanchard

Adelaide Daskam

Dr. Karen Ensle, R.D.

Lisa Geider

Robert C. Griffin, Esq.

Tendai Ndoro, PhD

Martin Poltrock

Myrta Rosa

Kathy Weiner



Audrey Vasey
President

Meet: CAU Staff Member William Busch

Billy Busch began his vocation in direct care while still in college at Eastern Connecticut State University, helping assist five individuals in wheel chairs with everyday living. Even though he graduated with a degree in leisure management and a minor in physical education, Billy was hooked and went to work full-time for the company providing the support.

Billy came to CAU four years ago as a quality supports specialist but today serves as director of transition to community living. His role has become immeasurably important as New Jersey prepares to close two of its seven development centers. CAU expects to welcome between 25 and 40 new members directly into their homes relating to the closures.

"I've been spending a lot of time traveling between the development centers and opening the eyes of some families about what community living is all about," he said. "Some of the families whose child has been in institutional living for 20 years, don't know what's available to them and they are delighted about the possibilities."

Billy shows these families CAU properties and programs. "When they see our new homes they really like it," he said. "They're surprised by how nice the homes are and how well our staff takes care of our members." It is what Billy likes most about his job these days.

"Meeting families," he said. "Talking to them and explaining what we offer. Seeing their eyes light up and seeing that immediately their loved ones have a connection with us, those are the days I love."

See page 10 for a related story.





Celebrating Achievement and Promise at Annual Gala

CAU's 32nd Annual Gala Dinner Dance was a celebration of achievement over the past year and the leadership, humanitarianism and community support that has helped improve the lives of countless people and will drive continued improvement in the future. The gala was attended by more than 650 members and staff of CAU, as well as family, friends and community supporters.

CAU honored three award winners who ideally represent the different faces of its mission – the effort to enable people with disabilities and at-risk youth to live independently in the community, the social service professionals who sustain that effort and the community partners who support the agency and its members.

Dr. James Conroy was honored as Humanitarian of the Year. James is president and chief executive officer of the Center for Outcome Analysis, Inc.

Walter Kalman, executive director of the National Association of Social Workers-New Jersey Chapter, was the recipient of the Public Leadership Award.

And Irwin Sablosky received the Ira Geller Award, which is presented to someone with a significant commitment to CAU, including its members, and best reflects the concept of volunteerism. Irwin is president of Wm. S. Rich & Sons, Inc.

Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director, noted that collectively the people of CAU and its supporters achieved much in the past year, including an increase in affordable housing units and various self-advocacy efforts of the agency's members, and how he expected many members to vote in the 2012 presidential elections.

"We are very lucky to have such an organization in Union County," said Union County Freeholder Alexander Mirabella who attended the event.



Walter Kalman, executive director of the New Jersey Association of Social Workers, NJ Chapter, is presented the Public Leadership Award by DHS Deputy Commissioner, Dawn Apgar

For more pictures from the Gala, see page 11

Make a Difference

With the assistance of a Hope Chest, our youth are able to live independently and setup their own households.

Hope Chest Items Needed:

Kitchen Essentials

- Plates
- Silverware
- Knives
- Glassware
- Pots & Pans
- Cooking Utensils
- Kitchen Towels



Bath/Shower Essentials

- Assorted Toiletry Items
- Towels
- Bath Mats
- Shower Curtain
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste



(Above from left to right) Sid Blanchard, executive director of CAU with James Crawford, Colleen Fraser Award Winner with Assistant Executive Director, Paul LaMaine



(Above from left to right) Sid Blanchard, Irwin Sablosky, Ira Geller Award recipient (middle) and Senator Jon Bramnick who presented the award.



(left to right) Associate Executive Director of CAU Mercedes Witowsky, Dr. Jim Conroy, Humanitarian of the Year award recipient, Freeholder Alexander Mirabella, Ira Geller award recipient Irwin Sablosky, and Sid Blanchard.



(left) Shawanna Hicks, Colleen Fraser award recipient, along side mentor and CAU Senior Assistant Executive Director, Tanya Johnson (right)



Collective Steps to a Brighter Tomorrow

Members, staff, family and friends of Community Access Unlimited (CAU) once again made great strides toward delivering a brighter future to people with disabilities and at-risk youth at the 14th Annual Ira Geller Memorial Walk-A-Thon this past fall.

The event drew more than 450 walkers and raised \$33,000 for CAU programs and services.

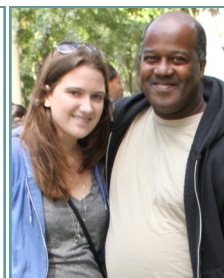
Joyce Cargle, a member of CAU with developmental disabilities, has benefited from those programs and services for 18 years. She lives with supports in an apartment with a roommate.

"We learn how to be independent and live on our own," she said. "We learn how to do budgeting and go shopping. We learn how to get a job. They help us become integrated as part of the community and meet a lot of new people."

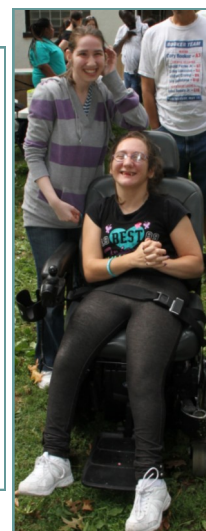
Major sponsors of the walk included Dr. Baljit Sappal of Elizabeth; Woodruff Developers of Hillside; Innovative Benefit Planning of Cinnaminson; Griffin Alexander, P.C. of Randolph; H&J Security Systems of Avenel; Union Avenue Pharmacy of Bound Brook; American Business Communications Services, Inc., of Hackensack; B&B Press of Lebanon; SarahCare Adult Day of Watchung Square of North Plainfield; and Kaufman, Borgeest, & Ryan of Parsippany.

CAU also enjoyed the support of student athletes and cheerleaders from New Brunswick High School, who attend the event each year as part of their community service efforts under the Play It Smart program. The student athletes helped set up the balloon arc that served as the start and finish for the walk, handed out goody bags and sold t-shirts and wrist bands.

Behaviorist Tracy Honig (left) with Harold Harris (right) enjoying the beautiful weather at Rahway River Park!



CAU members Dianna Sims (left) and Dannielle DeCurtis (right) at the Walk-a-thon. Both ladies will be performing in Beauty & the Beast Jr. in June 2013



In the Life of Youth!

By donating, you will give people just starting out an important first step on the road to self-sufficient living in the community!!



Miscellaneous Essentials

- Luggage
- Laundry Basket
- Microwave
- Iron
- Ironing Board
- Toaster Oven
- Trash Can

Bedroom Essentials

- Bedding (single, 2 sets)
- Pillows
- Curtains
- Alarm Clock



For more information or to make a donation, please contact:

Cara Pavia, Coordinator of Marketing & Fundraising
908-354-3040 x376 or at
cpavia@caunj.org



(left) Mercedes Witowsky, CAU Associate Executive Director with Willie White, a member living in Roselle.

15th Annual Walk-a-thon!

- Learn more about the event
- Start your own or join a fundraising team
- Keep up to date on our fundraising efforts
- Check out more pictures from the 2012 Walk-a-thon

All at www.caunj.org



CAU Members Vote – More than their Neighbors

CAU members participated in the 2012 presidential election at a level that far exceeded the overall national level of voting.

More than 84 percent of our members cast a vote in the Nov. 6 election, according to a survey conducted by CAU staff and members following the November elections. That compares with about 57.5 percent of registered Americans who voted in the 2012 national elections.

People with disabilities historically have voted at a level that lags that of voters without disabilities. In the 2008 presidential election, 64 percent of eligible people without disabilities voted while just 57 percent of people with disabilities cast ballots.

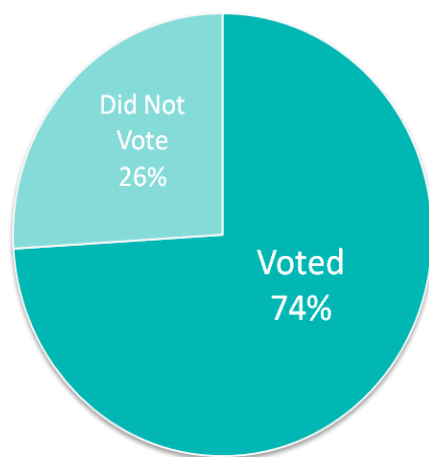
“That makes the turnout of our members for this election even more impressive,” said Gillian Speiser, community organizer at CAU. “People with disabilities are a significant voting constituency and it is important that they make sure their concerns are heard. Our members do that.”

The Election Day turnout by CAU members followed a get-out-the-vote campaign held at the agency. The campaign was spearheaded by the New American Movement for People with Disabilities (NAMPWD), CAU’s advocacy group that promotes social, political and economic equality for all citizens.

CAU held information meetings and invited representatives from the Union County Board of Elections to speak about registering and voting. NAMPWD created a voting booklet for members covering such topics as how to register, poll locations, challenges members might encounter voting and the importance of voting.

TOP Voter Participation

Of eligible voters



On the up side, survey results showed that 8.6 percent of CAU members with disabilities voted for the first time this past election. Denise DeRoy cast her first ballot Nov. 6, spurred on by the get-out-the-vote campaign, she said.

“It felt good,” she said. “I never voted before. I wanted to try it for the first time.”

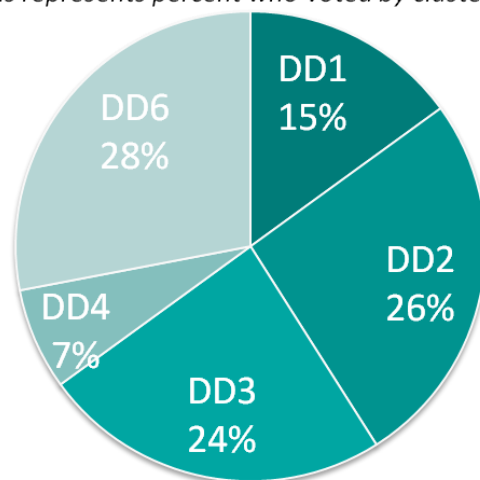
Now Denise is hooked and plans to vote in many elections going forward, including those for governor and local offices.

NAMPWD hosted a party on Election Day to gather voting experiences and allow members to watch the results of the election. Many CAU members also paid close attention to last month’s inauguration, knowing they played a role in the election, according to Gillian.

DD Voter Turnout

Of those who voted...

This represents percent who voted by cluster



7% of DD members voted for the first time in the 2012 Election

Members received email alerts about the registration deadline and members called fellow members to remind them to vote on Election Day.

Sid Katz is one of the leaders of NAMPWD. He voted for the first time in 1968 at the age of 18. Sid paid close attention to the presidential campaign in 1964 and noted that neither candidate talked about issues of concern to people with disabilities.

Since then he has advocated for people with disabilities to become politically aware and active, often driving fellow members to the polls on Election Day.

“We have a voice and we have a right to choose who we want to represent us,” Sid said. “It’s important we get friendly with the politicians. It’s our life. We have to educate people about people with disabilities and our issues.”

Among those issues are difficulties people with disabilities continue to face in casting their vote. Challenges CAU members faced Nov. 6 included a lack of wheel chair-accessible entrances, having their eligibility questioned or being treated harshly by poll workers, CAU staff assisting members in voting having to fill out forms and general disorganization, Gillian said.



Visiting Where Young Lives Change

Union County Freeholders Bruce Bergen and Vernell Wright and Union County Family Division Judge Robert Kirsch recently visited the Union County Youth Shelter operated by CAU to see first-hand how the facility and its programs and staff are positively impacting the lives of the youth that spend time there.

The shelter cares for youths aged 13-17, who arrive at the facility either referred by the county's Youth Services Bureau, ordered there by the juvenile justice system as an alternative to detention or simply on their own, often estranged from their families. The shelter serves as transitional housing for up to 30 days for up to 10 youths at a time. A staff of 14 provide independent living skills, counseling, on-site schooling by a state-certified teacher or at the youth's home school, family counseling and, if necessary, intervention.

"We work with them to figure out their next steps," said Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director. "Our counselors try to get them to see how the decisions they made got them here and how they have to make better decisions. The hope is they will go home and implement the skills they have learned here."

In 2012 the shelter housed 41 youths for some period. Of those, 21 reunited with their families, 11 were placed in non-emergency housing and seven simply departed, requiring no additional action. Only two returned to detention.

"Having this available as an alternative to incarceration is a great advantage," Bergen said. "If you have the right kid it's absolutely better than having the kid locked up."

Kirsch, who sends many of the shelter's youths to the facility, agrees. "I really value this place and (their) work," he said. "Even if I only have a couple kids here, those are two I know will be in a clean, safe, humane and educational environment. That's invaluable."



Union County Freeholders Vernell Wright and Bruce Bergen listen to Sid Blanchard, executive director of Community Access Unlimited talk about programs of the Union County Youth Shelter which CAU operates.

Happy 70th Birthday, Sidney

As Written by Mrs. Edith Stiller

Sidney J. Stiller of Linden and his mother, Edith Stiller of Springfield, have been loyal members of CAU for the past 30 years. His late father, Aaron G. Stiller, was treasurer of the board of trustees for five years until his death on January 19, 1985.

Sidney celebrated his 70th birthday on November 26, 2012, at the JFK Adult Medical Day Care Program in Edison. Among those present at the happy reception were Sidney Blanchard, executive director; Mercedes Witowsky, associate executive director; and Mercedes daughter, Tina.

Sidney is a graduate of the Avalon Boarding School in Great Barrington, MA, and worked as a mail handler in the main post office in Newark for 15 years. Sidney has resided in the Linden Supervised Apartment Program for the past 28 years, as he is severely diabetic.

His mother, Edith, was a volunteer secretary at the CAU office for 10 years and served as secretary of the Parents Group for 10 years. She received the CAU Humanitarian Award in 2009. Upon her husband's passing, she established the Aaron G. Stiller Memorial Fund, which provides interest-free loans to help CAU members pay for services or things they need but cannot afford without financial assistance.

Sidney's late sister, Dr. Judith L. Stiller, was a school psychologist for the City of Englewood for 15 years but passed away in 2010. Edith Stiller still recalls vividly the day in June 1990 when she accompanied Judy to the offices of Pace University in New York City, where Judy delivered her oral dissertation on "Special Needs People." It was very well received and later served as a guide for other students preparing for a doctorate on such a subject.



CAU Executive Director, Sid Blanchard (back left) joins Mercedes Witowsky, associate executive director (back right), Sidney Stiller (lower left) and his mother, Edith Stiller, in celebration of Sidney's birthday

29th Annual Awards Night Celebration

★★★

Wednesday, April 17, 2013
6:00 PM - 9:30 PM

★★★

L'Affaire Fine Catering
Mountainside, NJ

Tickets

\$45 per person
\$400 per table of 10

The Awards Night Celebration is an event to recognize and honor staff, members, and community leaders who have made a valuable impact on the lives of teens and adults with special needs.

You can purchase tickets at www.caunj.org

For more information, contact
Cara Pavia, Event Coordinator
908-354-3040 x376



When Hurricane Sandy Hit, CAU Hit Back

Hurricane Sandy met her match when she ran into the members and staff of CAU, who pulled together to not only weather the storm but triumph over it.

As soon as Sandy passed CAU's staff kicked into overdrive to ensure that the members were safe, fed, comfortable and even entertained in the days following the storm, according to Aisha Arroyo, assistant executive director of developmental disabilities residential services.

"Everybody pulled together," she said. "It was a teamwork process. Everyone understood the members came first. We knew we had to get together and make sure everything worked smoothly."

Ensuring member safety took top priority and by the day after the storm every one of CAU's housing members with disabilities and youth had received a personal visit from a staff member.

"We had no trouble getting staff to make it into work," Aisha said. "They were texting each other and picking up each other up to save gas."



CAU home in New Providence hit by Hurricane Sandy.



A large tree fell into the backyard of this CAU home, destroying what was once the site for the Community Access Unlimited Community Garden. Plans to rebuild the garden are currently in progress.

Next came feeding everyone. Power was restored to the CAU main building quickly and that became the command center for Sandy relief. Hot meals were made in the building's kitchen for those members who could travel and were delivered to CAU properties throughout the county for those who could not.

Staff next turned to addressing the emotional health of the members. They held a number of entertainment events at the main building, including a dance party, karaoke and movie days. One of the best received films was "Beauty and the Beast," as that will be the play CAU members stage this summer.

In short, everyone had a great attitude.

Board of Trustee member Myrta Rosa lives in a CAU property in Plainfield and she and her housemates were relocated to another property for about a week following the storm. Myrta did not mind at all.

"Our power went out Monday night and we didn't move until Wednesday," she said. "We had to bear with it until we got rescued. After that it was

great because I had the entire upstairs to myself (at the new residence). I grabbed my laptop and that kept me busy for a while"

Peggy Knouse lives in a CAU property in New Providence. "Our power was out for about a week but we made out okay," she said. "I came to the office for a movie one day."

Even the volunteer spirit flourished despite hardship. Three youth members and their mentor volunteered to help feed those in need at the Chestnut Street Community Church in Roselle shortly after the storm. Jair Bodnar, Zahir Muhammad and Felix Panique were joined by their mentor, Osner Charles, as they spent several hours at the church two days after the storm serving meals to the poor, senior citizens, people with disabilities and others impacted by the storm.

"I was very affected by their story," Zahir said. "I was thinking about my mom and how I would want someone to help my family in that situation, too. I helped out by serving their needs."

Added Osner, "It's one thing to see things on the television. It's another thing to drive through the neighborhood and see the devastation that happened here. For that reason I knew it was going to be a great experience for them."



Jair Bodnar (center) and Zahir Muhammad (right), members of Community Access Unlimited, pose with their counselor, Osner Charles, at the Chestnut Street Community Church in Roselle, where they volunteered after Hurricane Sandy to help feed those in need.



Christmas Comes Early for Youth Shelter

A chilly round of golf the day after Thanksgiving led to a warm, early Christmas present for the Union County Youth Shelter which CAU operates. Organizers of the annual Al Dill Memorial Invitational golf outing held each November at the Suburban Golf Club this year chose the shelter as the recipient of their annual charitable contribution, donating \$4,700 so the facility could purchase a natural gas generator for future power outages.

The shelter lost power for four days when Hurricane Sandy hit, leaving the six youth aged 13 to 17 and their staff in the cold and dark. Staff members were forced to relocate the youth to other CAU properties.

The Al Dill Memorial Invitation is held each year in memory of Al Dill, a longtime member of Suburban Golf Club who was loved for his generosity, according to the outing's co-founder, Dan McCarthy, a partner in the law firm Rogut McCarthy LLC in Cranford.

"Al was an incredibly nice man who died suddenly," Dan said. "Three friends and I went out the first Friday after Thanksgiving and played in his memory and we each kicked in money for a charity."

The tradition stuck and this year 74 golfers played in the outing. The money raised each year nearly always goes to a charity that helps children.

"Al had seven kids, all adopted, and he dedicated his life to making the world a better place for kids," Dan said. "It seemed like a perfect fit to take care of kids in Elizabeth. It was extremely gratifying for all of us involved."

Tanya Johnson, senior assistant executive director of youth services at CAU, was elated with the donation.

"The Union County Youth Shelter plays a vital support role for young people at very vulnerable stages in their lives," she said. "Being able to weather the next Hurricane Sandy will be a huge help to us."



Attending a donation ceremony of \$4,700 to Community Access Unlimited (CAU) are (left to right) Michael O'Shea, manager of Suburban Golf Club; Michael McCormick, PGA professional; Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director; Tanya Johnson, senior assistant executive director; the co-founders of the Al Dill Memorial Invitational, Dan McCarthy of the law firm Rogut McCarthy LLC, Harold Poltrock, attorney and secretary/treasurer of the agency's board of trustees; and Barry Goldenberg, owner of Four by Four Photography in Cranford and Bohemian Raspberry yogurt shop in Westfield. The money will be used to purchase a generator for the Union County Youth Shelter, which CAU operates.

Community Access Unlimited is updating our mailing list!

Would you prefer to get our publications emailed to you?

Has your contact information changed?

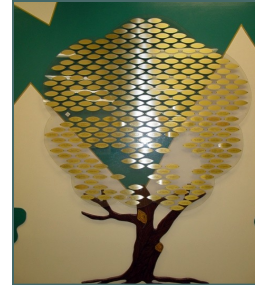
Do you have friends who would be interested in hearing about our supporters and services?

If so, please take a few minutes to update your information on our website at:

www.caunj.org/forms/subscribe.php

For any questions, please contact:
Cara Pavia, Marketing & Fundraising Coordinator
at cpavia@caunj.org

Remember a Loved One or Special Occasion by purchasing a leaf on CAU's Tree of Life



You can personalize your message on the Tree of Life located at CAU's Main Office in Elizabeth.

Cost of a Leaf: \$50

Tell Someone You're Thinking of Them...

Consider sending a Tribute Card from CAU!

**Cards can be purchased:
1 card for \$1, 3 cards for \$10**

Cards can be purchased and personalized and we will take care of the rest, or we can send you the supplies if you'd like to attach your own message!

For more information on either CAU's Tree of Life or Tribute Cards, please call 908-354-3040 x272.





CAU Members Go Far in Donated Cars

In December 2011 (DD) member Dante Chrystal announced to his counselor that he was going to get a job, pay for driving lessons and get his license. In April 2012 Dante fulfilled those goals.

But the real goal was freedom – freedom to improve his life and future.

“I realized the restrictions of looking for a job where I lived, in Linden,” he said. “There aren’t a lot of good jobs in Linden. All the jobs were in Newark or Edison. When you apply for a job the first thing they ask you is if you have reliable transportation.

“When I didn’t have a car I had a lot of restrictions where and when I could work. It was just something I had to do. It made a difference. I got two jobs because of it that I was able to work.”

As a reward for his hard work and perseverance, CAU presented Dante with a car donated to the agency through our Vehicle Donation Program. It is one of the ways members of the community can make real differences in the lives of our members.

Tax-deductible donations of used cars in good condition help an individual with special needs get to a job or school and live more self-sufficiently. Unlike other car donation programs, CAU does not take cars and sell them, receiving only a percentage of their value. By donating to CAU, 100 percent of these donations go to a person with transportation needs.

“I felt good,” Dante said of receiving his donated car. “It was the best moment in my life. I wasn’t expecting it.”



How to Donate

To donate a vehicle to CAU and open up many new opportunities for someone with special needs, please contact the coordinator of information and referrals at 908.354.3040, ext. 272, or send an email to info@caunj.org.

Your potential donation will then be checked out by our certified mechanic and a decision is made whether or not to accept your donation based on condition and the current needs of our membership.

All vehicles must be in good working condition and have limited cosmetic damage. The owner of the vehicle must possess the title of the vehicle being donated. Once you are ready to donate the vehicle, arrangements are made to transport the vehicle to the agency. The owner will then receive a donation letter which can serve as a charitable donation, which is tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

Your vehicle donation can truly make a difference in the life of our members!

Path to Progress

When the North Jersey and Woodbridge Developmental Centers finally close their doors within the next five years, more than 650 people with disabilities will finally have moved from institutional living to community living. Some of those people will become CAU members and the agency is working hard to prepare to welcome between 25 and 40 new members directly related to the closures.

The process of relocating those in institutions to the community has been called the “Path to Progress” by the state Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). Two CAU members who came to the agency in 2012 were among the first to follow the path.

Virginia Jeffer came to CAU from the North Jersey Developmental Center in March 2012 while Lillian Coleman relocated from Vineland in June. To ensure a smooth transition each was visited several times by CAU staff and made three visits each to CAU properties.

Today staff members report that both Virginia and Lillian are much happier than they had been at the centers. Virginia is more verbal and receives more therapy than she used to receive. She enjoys arts and crafts and cooking classes. Lillian enjoys community outings and getting her hair and nails done.

Community Access Unlimited offers individual access to accessible housing; healthcare; nursing services; mental health services; physical, speech and occupational therapies; social and recreational activities; and opportunities for employment. These services will ease the transition between developmental center living to community living and give the members all that they need to assimilate into the community seamlessly.

CAU has been a trailblazer in creating affordable housing and community living opportunities for people with disabilities for more



Gala Dinner Dance October 24, 2012



(Continued from page 10)

than three decades.

"It is important that the members moving feel welcome and comfortable getting to know our staff, our facilities, and the other members we currently serve," noted Cara Pavia, coordinator of fundraising and marketing for Community Access Unlimited.

"We will come out to the developmental centers to visit a potential member, and encourage day and overnight visits to familiarize our new members with staff and the programs we offer. We gladly invite any families and caretakers to come in and see our programs and visit with our staff as well."

More information about community living and the benefits our programs can be found on the CAU website at www.caunj.org. If you'd like to receive more information about our services or have any questions, please contact us at info@caunj.org



Virginia Jeffer (standing) and Lillian Coleman are among the recent CAU members to have relocated from state developmental centers.

Save the Date! 33rd Annual Gala Dinner Dance

October 23, 2013
6:00 PM - 10:30 PM

L'Affaire Fine Catering
Mountainside, NJ

*Join us for a night filled with dinner,
dancing, awards and prizes!*

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 225
Elizabeth, NJ

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

Community Access Unlimited's Mission: *To provide community access through effective and comprehensive support services for people with disabilities and at-risk youth, giving them the opportunity to live independently and to lead normal and productive lives in the community.*

19th Annual Golf Classic

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Suburban Golf Club

**Sponsorship & Playership
Opportunities Available**

**Not a golfer?
Join us for the Cocktail Reception
& Live Auction!**

Visit www.caunj.org to join us at the event!



For more information contact Cara Pavia, Fundraising & Marketing Coordinator
908-354-3040 x376 or at events@caunj.org