



# CHS Community News

Fall, 2014

Volume 2, Issue

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## Also see...



CHS Summer BBQ's ~ A Huge Success  
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CHS Achieves Highest Level  
of State Certification

## Message from CHS Executive Director



Dear Friends,

In our last newsletter, we described our plans for CHS over the next several years. I am pleased to report that Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. has made significant progress over the past months in meeting these objectives. Our experienced and committed leadership team has been augmented and strengthened with new responsibilities for some of our directors and the addition of two professionals. We are moving ahead at a rapid pace in expanding and improving our services.

### ♦ *Expansion of services and supports to current and new individuals and families.*

CHS Director of Clinical Support Services, Janice Ellis-Ballerini, LMHC, now oversees a department focused on expanding quality clinical and behavioral supports for our growing population. She welcomed Carolyn Mueller, MA our new Clinical Coordinator. Janice and Carolyn are both trained in Applied Behavioral Analysis and they are currently implementing a new positive behavioral supports systems for CHS, expanding counseling services and training our staff.

CHS is creating new housing options, transitional supports and family services, to meet the needs of our current and future population. For example, we are now providing support services in family homes and expanding support services for adult siblings.

Continued on page 2

## CHS LAUNCHES 2014-2015 ANNUAL APPEAL: A Message on Behalf of Individuals Served

Thanks to your generous donations and support, the past year has been a highly successful one for the 320 individuals with intellectual, developmental and related disabilities served by Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. As we begin our new 2014-2015 Annual Appeal campaign, we want our family members, volunteers and supporters to know that everyone at CHS is very appreciative of your generosity and goodwill.

**Your gift is very empowering** to the men and women supported each year in Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. programs and services. Each dollar allows individuals with very limited incomes to enjoy community events, recreational activities and social gatherings with family members and friends that otherwise would not be possible. ***Especially during the Holiday Season, your dollars help CHS to provide festive events with gifts, special dinners and small favors - everything needed to make a joyous and memorable year.***

**Please be generous - each donation brings the joy and spirit of the holiday season** to our individuals - a priceless gift that assures another year of growth, celebrations and community inclusion for all individuals served by CHS.

**All donations are acknowledged and are fully tax deductible as an IRS charitable contribution.** Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. thanks everyone who donated last year (see page 4). Please help us to surpass our goal this year!

**On behalf of everyone at CHS, thank you for your support.**

**We all wish you a truly wonderful Holiday Season.**

### Editor:

Carole Tagg

### Photography:

Julie McGuire

### Layout, Design & Production:

Barbara Mague

## Message from the Executive Director ~ continued from page 1

Continued from page 1

Starting in September, 2014, Felicia Smith assumed the central leadership position in our Individual Supports Program. Her title is Director of Individual and Family Support. This senior management position reflects the expanded role and responsibilities she is charged with fulfilling for those we currently serve and for those we will serve in the future through new and expanded service models. Felicia's commitment, education, training and experience working with individuals, families, community organizations and school systems make her a great match for this important position.

In addition, Michelle MacEachern joined our senior leadership team as Director of Support Services. A critically important role for the organization, Michelle is responsible for working with all CHS programs to enhance, as well as, expand support services. Initially she is focused on further development of CHS individual supports, family services, shared living and other creative living service options. Michelle's extensive background in quality service delivery, shared living supports and system improvement will add greater depth to our already strong workforce team.

### ♦ *Enhanced coordination and benefit services.*

After more than thirty years of dedication serving as Director of our Individual Supports Program, Diane Barbee has moved to a new and important role within our organization. In her new position, Director of Program Support, Diane is responsible for working on behalf of all CHS individuals overseeing their government benefits and researching new benefits and entitlements to guarantee high quality services for everyone. She is also centralizing CHS case management services for all individuals served, assuring that everyone is receiving the supports and services needed including coordination of guardianship, health care, training and community activities. By moving into this much needed role within CHS, Diane will continue to make significant contributions to the quality of life of the people served by our organization.

### ♦ *Development of new community based recreation, social and self-advocacy activities.*

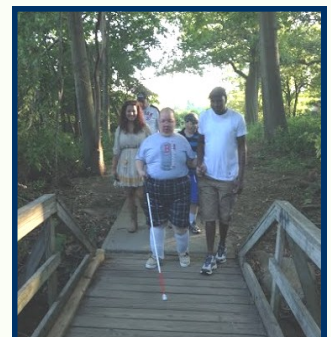
This spring, CHS welcomed Julie McGuire as our new Program Support Manager. Julie's responsibilities focus on providing recreation, social, community and self-advocacy services for all CHS individuals receiving residential services. She researches low cost and free local community activities and events to support our direct service staff with planning community and social outings. Julie also oversees a weekly and monthly schedule of group activities including the Walking Group, Sports Night, Cooking Class and seasonal/holiday events.

### ♦ *New and expanded partnerships with statewide advocacy and family support organizations.*

CHS managers and staff have been developing new and exciting partnerships with many state and local advocacy and family support organizations. We have joined family housing and transition provider planning groups, as well as co-sponsored MASS Families Organizing for Change's bi-annual "Building A Home" statewide conference for families (see story on page 7).

Please join all of us at CHS in welcoming our new team members. We know that CHS individuals and families will greatly benefit from their efforts, expertise and support as we all move forward to accomplish our future goals.

Sincerely,  
Kevin J. Leahy  
Executive Director  
kleahy@cooperativeforhs.org



CHS Walking Group

## CHS Cited for Best Practices in Human Services

In April, Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. was awarded a Two-Year License by the MA Department of Developmental Services, Quality Enhancement Team, extending our extraordinary record of earning the highest level of certification for well over a decade. CHS met 100% of the quality indicators reviewed by the certification team - an outstanding score and measure of our sustained commitment to quality services.

A DDS Quality Enhancement Team, led by Steve Goldberg, conducted the week-long survey, visiting a sampling of eight CHS homes, receiving both twenty-four hour supports and less than twenty-four hour supports. The surveyors also interviewed four individuals who receive individual home supports from CHS. All critical licensing indicators reviewed were completely met.



As part of the survey process, CHS was required to prepare and present to the Survey Team a comprehensive Self Assessment Report. This report not only described the organization's mission, strategic planning process, clinical, management and workforce

systems, but also explained their inter-connectivity, design and outcomes that have made CHS an outstanding provider of quality service, with excellent practices, high satisfaction rates from individuals served and a well qualified, dedicated workforce.

Of particular note, the Survey Report commended CHS for having best practices in the field of human services by using technology to enable effective staff communications, match staff skills with each individual's specific needs and to efficiently and accurately manage staff schedules. The report praises CHS systems as benefiting all staff and individuals served.

"Managers can access information remotely from any location on everything from restrictive practices, to fire drill information, safety protocols, and behavior plans, and can access a computer grid providing information on staff training in twenty-one different areas, including mandated training as well as individual specific protocols from dietary plans to the use of supportive devices."

Executive Director, Kevin J. Leahy commended all individuals, staff, managers and volunteers for their hard work, active participation and dedicated service that led to this 100% positive outcome. "This achievement is the result of outstanding teamwork from all CHS constituents."

## CHS HOLIDAY VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

The spirit of the Holiday Season is upon us. Already at CHS nearly two hundred individuals served in our residential programs have met, in small, groups to plan an array of Holiday volunteer projects designed to "Give Back to our Community."

In November, individuals are focusing on making gift items, baking goodies and assembling care packages that they will deliver during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. Projects include:

**Treats for Pets:** CHS individuals are baking animal treats that they will deliver to MSPCA's Animal Care and Adoption Center in Boston.



### **Help for the Homeless:**

Our individuals plan to bake and deliver tasty goodies to patients at the Veteran's Hospital in Bedford, MA. They will also assist local shelters and soup kitchens with preparing and serving traditional Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners for homeless individuals.



### **Thank you Local Firefighters and Police:**

Firefighters and Police work hard every day throughout the year, assuring the safety and well being of our citizens. CHS individuals are preparing and delivering baked goodies to our fire and safety officers to convey how much their dedicated work is appreciated.



### **Children with Cancer:**

CHS will collect and deliver toys, books and games for the kids at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.



### **Care Packages for Emerson Hospital:**

CHS individuals are creating personal items to include in care packages they will deliver to patients at Emerson Hospital in Concord. They are knitting scarves, creating packaged dried soup mixes, baking goodies and collecting books to create unique Holiday Baskets.



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### ATTENTION STATE & FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

CHS is an approved non-profit organization for both Federal and State employees who contribute to their respective Combined Charities Programs. If you, your friends or other family members are employed by a State or Federal agency, your contribution can be directed to Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. by indicating our provider number on your pledge card.

Our MA Combined Employee Campaign Number is 700417.

Our Combined Federal Campaign of Eastern MA number is 42522.

## Thank You to All of Our Donors!

CHS thanks all of our Annual Appeal donors that helped us raise a total of \$14,365 last year. Each donation helps CHS greatly enhance services to the 320 men and women with intellectual and developmental disabilities served. Funds are used for additional recreation, leisure and community activities that otherwise would not be available to the individuals we serve. We are all very grateful for each gift and extend sincere appreciation to each one of you. **Thank you so very much!**

### Sponsors: (\$1000-\$5000)

Sally & Michael Schnitzer

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### Benefactors: (\$500-\$999)

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### Patrons: (\$200-\$499)

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### Friends: (\$5 — \$199)

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## TD CHARITABLE FOUNDATION AWARDS CHS A \$5,000

TD Charitable Foundation recently awarded a \$5000 grant to Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. to help fund our new project, "A New Start for Living." This project is designed to respond to a growing increase in the number of homeless adults/families who have special needs but are not eligible for residential services offered under Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (individuals who 'fall through the cracks'). With this grant, CHS will be able to expand our housing and support services to these individuals/families who currently reside in emergency shelters and motels in our service area.

The project will provide individualized home development and transitional services and supports that eventually fade out as each individual/family served assimilates into their new home and establishes solid relationships with appropriate local health, welfare and social service providers. CHS has already served two individuals and families as part of this project and thanks to the \$5,000 grant from TD Charitable Foundation we will be able to continue to provide this critically important service to additional people within our service area.



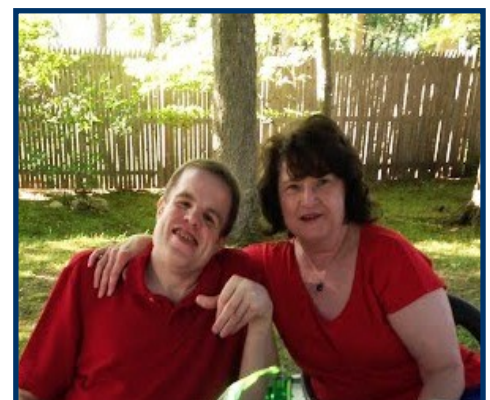
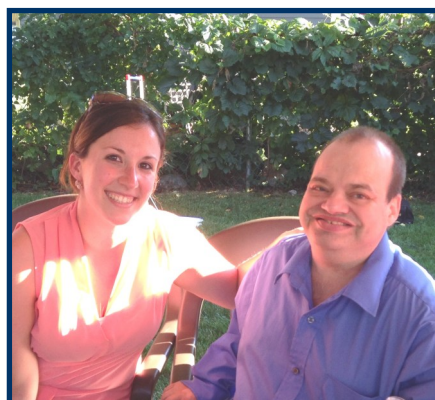
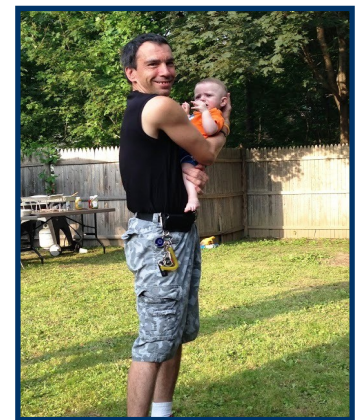
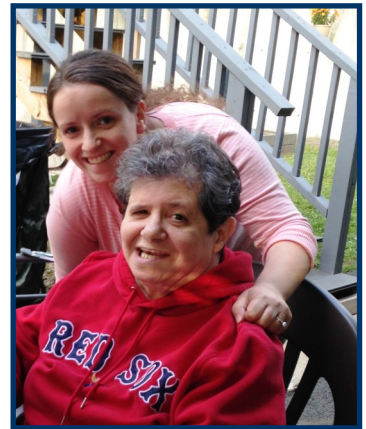
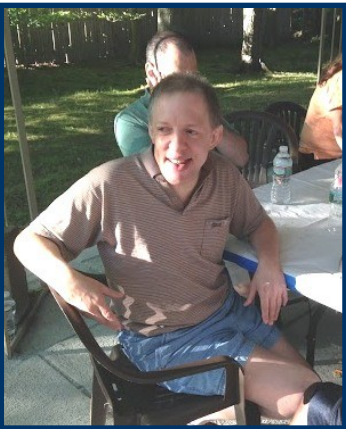
## CHS HAPPENINGS ~ SUMMER BBQ'S



The summer of 2014, Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. held seven of its famous BBQ's for the individuals served, their friends, family members, volunteers and staff.

Thomas Lane, Director of Residential Services hosted with Glen Charney, Chief Financial Officer serving as Grill Master at each of the gatherings held at our homes this summer season.

Everyone had a fabulous time with great food, company and conversation..





## CHS HAPPENINGS ~ EVENTS FOR ALL SEASONS



**Apple Picking**



**Farmer's Market**



**Arts & Crafts**



### CHS HEALTHY CHOICES BAKING GROUPS

In October the women and men in our Residential Services programs participated in a Healthy Choices Baking Groups designed to teach independent living skills while promoting and developing social skills. The overall objectives included:

- ✪ Promote cooking and baking skills including purchasing the correct ingredients, following picture recipes, using kitchen equipment safely and cleaning up afterwards - all skills necessary to achieve more independent lives.
- ✪ Provide small group opportunities for CHS individuals to network and socialize with new people in their daily lives.
- ✪ Encourage healthy and nutritional choices, promoting overall wellness.

The Baking Groups were a phenomenal success. Each participant baked 4 muffins, either pumpkin or apple cinnamon. Several individuals decided to give some of the muffins they had made to their favorite staff person at their day programs. Some new friendships were forged too!

## CHS works with Family Advocacy Group ~ Building a Home



Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. was one of the principal sponsors of the **Massachusetts Families Organizing For Change - Building A Home** conference held on Saturday, September 27, 2014 at the DCU Center in Worcester. MFOFC, a statewide, grassroots advocacy coalition of families with a disabled loved one, welcomed over two hundred attendees to their bi-annual event. The theme for the conference, "Creative Community Living," focused on providing information to help families build a person-centered home and community life for their family member with special needs.

Three CHS senior managers, Janice Ellis Ballerini, Director of Clinical Services, Felicia Smith, Director of Individual and Family Support and Michelle MacEachern, Director of Support Services, attended the conference, staffing CHS's highly trafficked information booth. The CHS information booth was enormously popular. Janice, Felicia and Michelle spoke with most of the two hundred attendees, answering questions about adult services and providing literature describing CHS programs including our Creative Housing Options, Family Support and Transition Planning services.

According to MFOFC President, Susan Nadworny, "this conference is held every two years to introduce families to the gamut of resources, supports and options available for planning a home and life for their family member." Designed as a forum for family members to network and meet other families who are making community housing a reality for their family member, conference speakers and workshops provided valuable information about planning steps and tools; budget development and available government financial resources; and successful creative housing options.

The keynote speaker was Michael Kendrick, PhD., of Kendrick Consulting International, an expert in the field of disabilities, inclusion and community living. He addressed families with a moving, inspiring and informative presentation "Engaging the Community: One Person At A Time," a presentation that included powerful stories, insights and personal achievements of individuals with disabilities and their families.

According to Susan Nadworny, a vitally important aspect of the conference is to provide a forum for dialoguing between families and Massachusetts government disability leaders regarding service needs, desires and problem solving. Some of the key areas mentioned:

- Families want to be able to cross funding area boundaries (Department of Developmental Services) when choosing providers.
- Families have serious questions about the new DDS eligibility requirements for age (will be changed to 20 years from 18).
- Families would like new, more affordable housing options.

For more information about the conference, including the keynote address and written materials from workshops, visit MFOFC's website at [www.mfofc.org](http://www.mfofc.org). For more information about CHS Creative Housing models visit [www.cooperativeforhs.org](http://www.cooperativeforhs.org) and click on Residential Services.



## FAMILY SUPPORT RESOURCES

Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. has published three Special Edition newsletters designed specially to provide information, resources and suggestions to family members and friends. All of these publications are available on our website [www.cooperativeforhs.org](http://www.cooperativeforhs.org), click NEWS & EVENTS:

- ✧ Tips and Strategies: Assisting your Family Member with Special Needs, September 2014
- ✧ Siblings: Supporting Brothers and Sisters Without Disabilities, June 2014
- ✧ Turning 22: Transitions and Service Options, October 2013

**Want to join our e-news list and receive family support updates, CHS newsletters and resources?**

**Call Barbara Mague at 781-538-4626 x 200 to enroll now.**

# Please Contribute



\_\_\_\_ YES, I/we want to help the Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. continue its mission to provide quality residential, independent living, guardianship and other support services to individuals with developmental disabilities. Please accept my/our tax deductible contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_. (You can also contribute on-line at [www.cooperativeforhs.org](http://www.cooperativeforhs.org))

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Gifts can also be made in memory, in honor, or in celebration of a special person or occasion.

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make check payable to Cooperative for Human Services, Inc. and mail to:

Cooperative for Human Services, Inc., 420 Bedford Street, Suite 100, Lexington, MA 02420

Telephone: (781) 538-4626 On-line donations: [www.cooperativeforhs.org](http://www.cooperativeforhs.org) THANK YOU!

Cooperative for Human Services, Inc.  
420 Bedford Street, Suite 100  
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