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Recognizing Our Every Day Heros

Direct Support Professionals Week presents an additional opportunity for recognizing and expressing our appreciation for the vital role of Direct Support Professionals in providing caring service and significant contributions in people daily lives.

This week of acknowledgement has been recognized annually in the United States since 2008 and this year, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution officially recognizing Direct Support Professionals Week.

We at CHS are proud to highlight the dedicated, innovative workforce that is the heart and soul of our services. We will remember how our Direct Support Professionals stepped up to the challenge during the pandemic, caring for the individuals we serve, while facing personal health risks as essential frontline workers.

This DSP Week along with communications of thanks from CHS's Senior Leadership team, a wide variety of creative celebrations to show appreciation were held in our homes.

We hope the recognition and appreciation offered to our employees during DSP week will reinforce the dedication and commitment they have to this critical work.

The demand for our services continues to increase while the shortage of caring men and women who choose this profession grows. Our organization will continue to advocate for investment in this important workforce and look forward to a time when salaries and benefits become proportional to the value our workforce brings to individuals and families who depend us.



Would you like to join our email list? Contact info@cooperativeforhs.org

Seasons at the Farm

Currently, we are busy at our Farm closing out the harvest, planning for next year and planning fun, nature-based activities for individuals to enjoy before the snow flies.

This season we grew kale, all kinds of squash, green beans, beets, carrots, radish, corn, tomatoes and many other types of vegetables. We shared lots of creative recipes to encourage everyone to try something new.

Despite months of drought, our stream and pond remained a consistent source of fresh, quality water allowing to care for the plants properly.

The summer was full of family BBQs

including live music, great company, good food and when it was time to leave individuals, their guests and staff took home farm fresh vegetables harvested from our own organic gardens.

Also, the animals are in excellent health and are always pleased to have visitors.

While we prepare for a change in temperature, activities at the farm continue with biking, walking, soccer and other activities and events for individuals, their friends and families.

In the tradition of those before us, we give thanks for the bountiful harvest, for good health and joyful gatherings.



Introducing Our New Vice President of Programs and Services

During the darkest moments of the pandemic our organization was still finding unique ways to meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families, expanding and developing supports, services and programs.

With the continually increasing demand for support services and for expansion, to strengthen and to position the organization for future growth and to meet the challenges ahead, it was determined by the CHS Executive leadership team together with the CHS Board of Directors, that a new leadership position was necessary and would be added.

That decision led to a national search, led by a third-party recruitment agency. The search presented several strong candidates giving the leadership team a solid assortment of leaders to select from. We are excited to introduce Amy Miner-Fletcher, from Massachusetts.

experience as an operational and clinically trained executive. Amy holds a BA in Psychology, a MA in Counseling Psychology, and is a licensed mental health counselor. She has a background in growing, managing, mentoring, and motivating teams to support employees in achieving their highest potential.

In prior positions, Amy focused on serving families, children, and vulnerable individuals, with an emphasis in early childhood and autism services in Massachusetts and Connecticut. She has a proven track record of collaborating cross-functionally, developing new leaders, and spearheading multi-million-dollar service lines and mission and value driven programs by identifying and implementing industry trends and best practices.

Amy's extensive experience working with families and enhancing service delivery will be an asset in her role as VP of Programs and Services. She will continue the expansion of CHS's vision, strategy and structure, strengthening staff capacity, while further developing organization culture and system improvements.

Amy is responsible for strengthening our Residential, Individual Support, Shared Living, and Acquired Brain Injury Services, while developing a strong team in Human Resources.

We are very happy to have Amy join us and are excited about the many contributions she will make to our work.

Amy joined CHS as Vice President of Programs and Services in July.

Initially responding to CHS, Amy said "The prospect of this role calls to my drive to continue to serve vulnerable individuals and their families in a mission-driven culture."

Amy is a career long leader in the service of others with over twenty years of leadership



Lifelong Learners ~ Make Strong Employees



Congratulations to Immaculate, who just graduated from Regis College with a degree to become a registered nurse.

CHS strongly believes in the power of education, what's why we are supportive of employees who are studying to build new skills or progress and grow in their careers.

We encourage education are ready to support lifelong learners in their pursuit of reaching their careers goals.



Breast Cancer Awareness Month ~ Celebrating Courage & Spirit ~



Breast cancer strikes people from every facet of life, and we celebrate the courage and fighting spirit of the individuals we serve who have been, or are currently, affected by this disease.

Our staff provide daily health and wellness monitoring of people served and also ensure that everyone receives an annual physical examination. These regular checkups lead to early detection of disease and collaboration with the healthcare team produces a customized treatment plan for those diagnosed with breast cancer.

Ongoing support, both physical and clinical, is important in the recovery process and is provided by staff as well as peers, who are sometimes themselves survivors. Together people help each other navigate toward complete and lasting recovery

New Housing Model ~ ABI Shared Living

Late in 2016 Cooperative for Human Services Inc. opened our first Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) program. Since then, we have continued expanding our capacity to serve another group of people in need.

Through the Commonwealth's ABI program, qualified individuals living in nursing homes or long-stay hospitals have the opportunity to successfully return to their community with the support services provided by CHS. ABI can be the result of an accident, illness, stroke, violence, or other traumatic events. These traumas can affect any of the six major lobes of the brain resulting in temporary or permanent deficit in cognitive function, mood, behavior, or overall functionality.

We have also been highly successful in growing our Shared Living model of service over the past several years. This service model matches compatible Shared Living Providers (SLP) and individuals that together lease a home supported by CHS. Combining these services, we have recently opened an ABI Program using a Shared Living model.

The newly created CHS, ABI Shared Living model began by giving an individual in our services the opportunity to return to his home community where, prior to a significant health event, he had been a cab driver, he enjoyed connecting with people and making new friends. Then, working with the Shared Living Provider and the person served, CHS's clinical team completed a matching process that led to the addition of second young man with an ABI diagnosis.

The men enjoy similar activities and are very compatible. Together with the SLP, they are creating a full home life that is a balance of experiences, learning and integration into their community.

Soon, Cooperative for Human Services will open its first ABI Program in an urban setting. The home is located in an apartment building close to the heart of the downtown area with access to all that the city has to offer.

The two-person apartment is handicapped accessible and close in proximity to additional support services in the community for those with greater medical needs.

Our organization continues searching for opportunities to create new housing models and is committed to serving the unique needs of individuals with Acquired Brain Injury throughout their lives, partnering with their supportive and caring families.

Sibling Resources ~ Future Planning

David and his older sister, Emily, were raised as a close knit family by their parents. When their father passed away, David's care became their mother's responsibility. But, when their mother passed away unexpectedly, one afternoon shortly before the holidays of 2019, David and Emily's loss was compounded by the realization that there were no plans set in place for David's future care.

David went to live temporarily with Emily until arrangements could be made for his transition into residential services provided by Cooperative for Human Services. In the beginning, it was extremely difficult for David to adjust to all of the life changes.

Weeks later in February 2020, the pandemic struck and Massachusetts went into a lockdown. Emily was not permitted to physically visit David, nor could he attend his day program, making the situation all the more challenging for them. In Emily's estimation, the first year was horrific.

Looking ahead, Emily's only concern is that David is happy and healthy. David spends time with Emily at her home at least one weekend a month. Each Sunday, in between visits, they stay connected using technology like Facetime.

What advice would Emily offer to siblings that have brother or sister with special needs? Read the full transcript of this interview on our website: www.cooperativeforhs.org

If you have a story you'd like to share or a suggestion for an article contact us ~ info@cooperativeforhs.org.

Flowers from the Farm



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Human Services Inc.**
A passion for what's possible

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THANK YOU!

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