

THANK YOU!!

The record setting cold and snowfall during the month of January had all of us scrambling to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to all of our Providers, Managers and Direct Care staff who went above and beyond in making sure people supported by CLS were properly cared for during the recent horrible weather conditions. We recognize the difficulty you endured in making sure your *own* families were safe and at the same time working longer hours without normal time off to make sure personal support to people we serve was maintained. Your extraordinary efforts did not go unnoticed. Community Living Services is so very fortunate to have such an incredible and supportive Provider network in which dignity and respect remain at the forefront of everything you do.

Thank you so very much,
Jim Dehem

CLS Board Member Adds "Author" to List of Accomplishments



Gino Byrd has so much drive and determination, if he could bottle it, he could sell his own energy drink! He spends six nights a week working as a telemarketer. Affectionately known as the "Sales Lieutenant" by his co-workers, he sells household goods over the phone. "I love going to work," said Gino. "I enjoy what I do and I've made friends who are like family."

Gino's energy and ambition seems limitless. Late last year he was appointed to the CLS Board of Directors. "I would like to see improvements in the system," said Gino. "I hope that I will be able to share my experiences with the Board to help make positive changes for people with disabilities."

Even though Gino loves his current place of employment, his first love is broadcasting and he wants to get back into the business. "I had my own radio talk show called "Street Smarts" for a year back in high school in Detroit. "Then I carried that show over to WHPR Radio in Highland Park for 10 more years. I love being on the air."

And if that isn't enough, Gino can now add 'author' to his list of accomplishments. He is currently writing his life story! The biography chronicles his life and the difficulties he had to overcome as a young man with a disability. The working title of his book is The Life and Legend of Gino Byrd and will be available for purchase later this year.

The President Needs Your Help!

President Obama wants to hear from you! The White House Office of Disability Policy is asking people with disabilities and their family, allies and direct care staff to share their stories about their experience when it comes to enrolling in the Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Marketplace.

CLS Board member Angela Martin will assist you with sharing your story. Please e-mail her and she will help you get the story to the White House, angela.martin@wayne.edu. If you still need to enroll, visit the website <https://www.healthcare.gov>.

Rhode Island Segregates Perfectly Capable Adults into Sheltered Workshops

The state of Rhode Island has much work to do when it comes to including people with disabilities into the fabric of their communities. Just this month, a U.S Department of Justice investigation discovered that thousands of people with disabilities have been "unnecessarily segregated" in state-licensed day programs and sheltered workshops.

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National/State

CMS Ruling on Home and Community Based Services

In mid-January, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released an important ruling defining home and community-based supports (HCBS). The new rules will ensure people with disabilities and older adults "have full access to the benefits of community living and are able to receive services in the most integrated setting." This final ruling will help advance Self-Determination by defining HCBS that integrate services and assures that planning is facilitated through the person-centered planning process. This effort, as part of the Affordable Care Act, supports the Department of Health and Human Services' Community Living Initiative, which was established to develop and implement innovative strategies to increase opportunities for people with disabilities and older adults to enjoy meaningful community living.

According to a CMS Fact Sheet, the final rule requires that all home and community-based settings meet certain qualifications including:

- The setting is integrated in and supports full access to the greater community;
- Is selected by the individual from among setting options;
- Ensures individual rights of privacy, dignity, respect and freedom from coercion and restraint;
- Optimizes autonomy and independence in making life choices and;
- Facilitates choice regarding services and who provides them.

To read the CMS Fact Sheet, click below:

<http://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Long-Term-Services-and-Support/Home-and-Community-Based-Services/Downloads/HCBS-setting-fact-sheet.pdf>

Mental Health and Wellness Commission Recommendations

The Mental Health and Wellness Commission just released its recommendations on improving the quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and those with mental illness and substance use disorders.

The Commission was established several years ago by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder. The group, chaired by Lt. Governor Brian Calley and several state Representatives and Senators reviewed 10 specific areas of concern including: Assessment, Treatment and Care Coordination, Physical and Behavioral Healthcare, Addressing the Needs of Children, Recipient Rights and Perceptions, Education, Employment, Housing, Residential Care, Veterans and Safety.

State Rep. and Commission member Phil Cavanaugh says "The Mental Health Commission has worked very hard to identify and close the gaps in services and I believe once the recommendations are put in place, everyone will see an influx in greater services."

Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority President and CEO Tom Watkins, praises the recommendations in this report. "Leadership matters and we are pleased to partner with the Department of Community Health and the Mental Health and Wellness Commission to enhance and improve services for the people in Wayne County."

To read the entire report, click the link below.

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mentalhealth/CommissionReportFinal1212014_445161_7.pdf



Save the Date for the 30th Annual Developmental Disabilities Conference!

The focus of this year's AAIDD conference is Children's Healthcare and attendees can expect to learn a wealth of information on the subject including issues related to health care, social, community and educational services which are critical to the future of people with developmental disabilities. The conference will be held April 22-23, 2014 at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing. For more information please visit:

[http:// med.wmich.edu/education/cme/featured-conferences](http://med.wmich.edu/education/cme/featured-conferences)

"Communities that include everyone become stronger and everyone wins."

~Jane Imbody

Wayne County



U of M Grad Talks about Campus Adventures

My name is Rebecca Parten, and I've been supported by Community Living Services for about seven years. I'm thrilled to share my story within this issue of *Freedom Press* and look forward to contributing to future issues.

I received my bachelor's degree from The University of Michigan- Dearborn where I participated in the Honors Program and majored in Communications. When I was a sophomore, I started a student organization related to disability awareness.

After graduation I set off on another adventure- graduate school! It took nearly ten months to figure out the logistics of it all, but thanks to CLS, I was able to live on campus at The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor while pursuing my Master of Social Work degree. My provider agency, Enhance, Inc. provided me with staff that helped me with my daily living activities while I lived on campus.

For example, during my first year I had two young ladies working with me in addition to my parents. During my second year, only one female staff and my parents worked with me. They would come to Ann Arbor Sunday through Thursday nights to assist me with things like dressing and showering. They stayed overnight to monitor me since I use a ventilator and be around "just in case." In the mornings, they would help me get up, dress, and make a lunch for me to take to class. After they left around 8 or 8:30am, I was on my own for the day. I loved my newfound freedom- it was much easier to meet up with friends at the drop of a hat. Being able to grab a Chai latte from the coffee shop attached to my dorm was also pretty awesome!

In terms of utilizing on campus services, I used the paratransit service almost every day while on campus. I set up a standard schedule every semester so the bus could take me to and from classes. I also contacted the dining hall managers of the ones I'd likely visit to let them know I would need help. I lived in the same dorm building both years so the manager got to know me pretty well. At the beginning of the semester, I would send her a quick email with a basic outline of when I'd likely be eating meals. This way the staff would have an idea of when I'd be coming and could watch for me. A student employee would usually help me go through the lines and tell me what my options were. Then they would carry my food to a table and I was set to go. It worked out pretty well.

I'm currently serving as a social media intern with the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition. Additionally, I have been appointed to the Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council. This council works with numerous state agencies to create the State Plan for Independent Living which has to do with the independent living programs and services offered in Michigan. Finally, I'm looking for (paid) part-time employment where I can utilize my writing, social media, and advocacy skills to make a difference within the community.



EMPLOYMENT FAIR!

Tuesday, April 8th

1 pm – 4 pm

Dearborn Double Tree Hotel

5801 Southfield Expressway

Detroit, MI

(on the border of Detroit and Dearborn)



SAVE THE DATE!

The Walk a Mile in My Shoes Rally

10th Anniversary

Wednesday, May 14, 2014

1-3pm

Lansing State Capitol



CARF Reviewers Impressed with CLS

Community Living Services has once again received a three year accreditation from the Commission on the Rehabilitation Facilities or CARF. The organization received accreditation status for the three areas it applied for: Support Coordination, Self-Determination and Governance.

The mission of CARF is to promote the quality, value and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process and continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of people served. CLS has been accredited by CARF for 12 years.

Out of 850 standards, CLS received "recommendations" on only two of them. Neither was in the program or services area. The accreditation applies to both the Wayne and Oakland County divisions.

Oakland County

Oakland County Champions for Achievement Event

Friday, March 21, 2014

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Troy Community Center

Come and join us for an afternoon of food, fun and entertainment. If you have a microenterprise you would like to

promote, call

Shari Davidek at

734-467-7600 or e-mail:

sdavidek@comlivserv.com.

Check out these CLS videos!!!

- ◆ **“The Path to Freedom: The Road Home”** shares the struggles and triumphs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

http://www.comlivserv.com/The_Road_Home_Video.html

or on You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaHCvZeiPEg>

- ◆ **“Support at Home,”** focuses on seniors, veterans and people with disabilities finding creative ways to stay in their homes.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuUfnycRpik&feature=player_detailpage

Moving Forward Trainings

If you are looking for an opportunity to meet new people, help them set goals and share their successes, then this upcoming training may be for you! The “Moving Forward” Peer Support Specialist/Peer Mentor Training is an educational program for people receiving services who want to help others achieve their personal best. Topics include: Role of a Peer Support Specialist, Using Your Story as a Tool, Listening and Communication and Gentle Teaching. This is a 17-hour course and you must attend all trainings.

Spring Session

March 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7th

Fall Session

September 15, 22, 29 and October 6, 13

All sessions are held from 9-12:30 p.m. at MORC, 1270 Doris Road, Auburn Hills.

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The report focuses on the state’s Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) which is responsible for about 3,600 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The investigation revealed that people who were capable of working in their communities were steered more in the direction of a sheltered workshop where they performed menial tasks for a little over two dollars an hour.

Justice officials are recommending more appropriate alternatives to segregated day programs and warned of lawsuits if progress has not been made.

To read the entire story, click here:

<http://m.projo.com/projo/db /contentdetail.htm?contentguid=MZgpleSP&full=true#display>

Long Term Care/Friends of CLS

Long Term Care Division Offers Many Services for Loved Ones

The CLS Long Term Care Services Division staff are highly trained, credentialed and dedicated to the work they do for the people supported by CLS.

The LTC division offers a variety of services such as:

- In Home Care
- Nursing Facility Transition Services
- Caregiver Support Services
- Care Coordination
- Benefit and Resource Services
- Options Counseling
- Information and Assistance

**For more information,
please call 734-722-4697.**

Nominate Now and Nominate Often!

We are doing things a little differently this year for our biggest fundraiser of the year, *Evening with Friends*, which is **THURSDAY, SEPT. 18, 2014**.

We would like to start getting nominations for the video awards ceremony **MUCH** earlier this year. Therefore if you are interested in nominating a person supported by CLS or a community partner, please call or e-mail Tiffany Devon (734-722-7185 or tdevon@comlivserv.com) for the nomination form. You can certainly nominate someone **NOW!** Instead of waiting until July! We will have our first batch of winners (5) picked the first week in APRIL!!!!

CLS MISSION

To assist and advocate for each person to have supports they want and need:

- To control and exercise authority over their own lives.
- To live a life of freedom, opportunity and relationships, as family, friends and neighbors.
- To share in full community membership and citizenship.

CLS VISION

People will fully participate in their communities and have a quality of life, which comes from freedom and its responsibilities, the authority to make their own life decisions and the financial resources to implement them.

First Annual Valentine's Day Bazaar

February 14, 2014

10:00 A. M. to 2:00 P. M.

STEP-Detroit

4700 Beaufait, Detroit, Mi 48207

**A variety of items will be available,
designed to meet every budget .**

Refreshments will be sold.

**Register to be a Vendor
Contact Kisha Jones at
313- 267-9777 Ext. 230**

Looking for **FREE** Medical Equipment?



If you or someone you know needs medical equipment i.e wheelchairs, crutches, canes, transfer benches, etc. Below is a great resource and all of the equipment is FREE and you can use it, in some cases, for as long as needed.

Please see the link below then scroll down to the county the person lives in and you'll see all of the resources that are available.

<http://michiganloan closets.us/>

