

CHOICES

Winter 2010

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 **Community
Options, Inc.**
www.comop.org

Mary Pat Christie, First Lady of New Jersey Helping to Spread the Love for People with Disabilities through the Cupid's Chase 5K

The Cupid's Chase 5K Run is the largest simultaneous national run held by any nonprofit in the country. Held in 24 cities across 10 states on the same day and same time, Community Options will gain the support of over 14,000 people across the country on February 12, 2011 when the run is set to take place. Each city has a local chairperson and this year, Community Options has the honor of having the First Lady of New Jersey, Mary Pat Christie as the Honorary National Chair of all 24 5K's taking place across the country.

"We are both honored and humbled that the First Lady of New Jersey, Mary Pat Christie, has agreed to Chair the Community Options' Cupid's Chase," said Robert Stack, President and CEO of Community Options. "We hope to promote greater corporate social responsibility among businesses across the country while raising awareness of our cause and contributing to an overall greater sense of self-worth," he added.

The First Lady will work with Community Options to ensure a successful 5K and that awareness is raised about the excellent work the organization is doing to improve the lives of people with disabilities across the country.

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*Mary Pat Christie, First Lady of
New Jersey, National Honorary
Chair of the Cupid's Chase 5K Run*

U.S. Department of Justice and Office on Violence Against Women Funds Grant to Community Options, Inc.

Community Options of Cookeville, Tennessee recently became funded by the United States Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women to educate and advocate for women with disabilities who are survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse. *Continued on page 2*

Conference on Advocacy Yields Great Success

In September of 2010, Community Options held its 5th Annual Conference on Advocacy in Dallas, Texas. This year's conference was the culmination of work completed by parent advocates assembled across the country to increase resources for children with disabilities through Family Web 2.0.

The conference opened with a keynote from Judy Woodruff, Broadcast Journalist with the PBS Newshour with Jim Lehrer. Woodruff's keynote was refreshing and laid a great foundation for the remainder of the conference. The remainder of the conference was filled with inspiring speakers including:

Laura Shumaker – Author of “A Regular Guy” and Advocate
Sean Stephenson – Motivational Speaker and Author
Samuel Bagenstos – United States Department of Justice – Civil Rights Division
Chai Feldblum – Commissioner of the EEOC
Fran Harris – WNBA Champion and HGTV Show Host
Dr. David Mank – Director, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

The 2011 conference will focus on Families and will be held at the Sheraton Station Square Hotel in Pittsburgh, PA.



Courtney Eidel, Senior Director of Human Resources with Chai Feldblum (right) Commissioner of the EEOC

Robert Stack with Sean Stephenson (right) Motivational Speaker



Support Staff with Al Valdez (center) enjoying time in Dallas

Mary Pat Christie, First Lady of New Jersey Helping to Spread the Love for People with Disabilities through the Cupid's Chase 5K

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The Cupid's Chase 5K Run will take place in Manhattan, Syracuse, Binghamton, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Princeton, Glen Rock, Stone Harbor, Columbia, Bowling Green, Paducah, Nashville, Chattanooga, Cookeville, Hartford, El Paso, Amarillo, Dallas, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Chicago, Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Las Cruces.

“I encourage corporations across the United States to become involved with the Cupid's Chase 5K Run that supports an important cause – community housing and employment for people with disabilities,” says First Lady Christie. “Community Options has been developing homes and employment for people with disabilities since 1989, and they are a fantastic cause to align with to increase your corporate social responsibility efforts,” she added.

U.S. Department of Justice and Office on Violence Against Women Funds Grant

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In partnership with The Genesis House, a local Cookeville nonprofit, Community Options will also work to reexamine policies and procedures that will benefit women with disabilities, provide appropriate services and referrals and collaborate and create risk-reduction training and educational outreach to women with disabilities.

As many as 83% of women with disabilities are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault according to the National Crime Victimization Survey. People with disabilities were victims of 47,000 rapes in 2006 and the rate of violent crime against people with disabilities was 1.5 times higher than for those without disabilities. People with disabilities are more than two times more likely to be sexually assaulted and women with a cognitive disability were more likely to be victimized than women with other types of disabilities.

“Being awarded this grant to assist women with disabilities who are victims of domestic violence or sexual assault is vital to our work as we continue to emancipate women with disabilities from institutions,” says Robert Stack, President and CEO of Community Options. “The alarming rates that violence occurs against women with disabilities only proves how the work of this grant will transform the lives of so many women.”

For more information please contact Robin Gray, Executive Director of Community Options of Cookeville at 931-372-0955 or robin.gray@comop.org.

Cupid's Chase 5K Expands to 24 cities across 10 States

In 2010, Community Options hosted 2,700 runners across the country that participated in the Cupid's Chase 5K Run. The 5K run in 2010 was a great success. For 2011, we are expecting over 14,000 people to participate in the 5K as we have expanded our reach to 24 cities across 10 states! To learn more about the Cupid's Chase 5K Run, please visit our newly designed website at www.comop.org/cupidschase. **Spread the love and register today!**

Thank you to
Gunlocke Furniture,
Haldeman Ford,
Dani Leather and Withum
Smith and Brown for being
our national corporate
sponsors of the Cupid's
Chase 5K Run!

All four corporate sponsors
are great partners to
Community Options and
we are truly grateful for
their support!



In the press.....

This quarter, Community Options gained a lot of new press through various outlets that allowed us to share our expertise related to employee morale, staff retention, service delivery for people with disabilities and business expansion. The following are the outlets we were featured in this quarter:

Forbes
The Wall Street Journal
Smart CEO Magazine
New Jersey Business Journal
Incentive Magazine
Chronicle of Philanthropy
Disabilities at Work Radio
Associated Content
Press & Sun Bulletin
Asbury Park Press
The Times of Trenton
The Daily Record

Mary Pat Christie, First Lady of New Jersey Tours the Morristown Daily Plan It

On Friday, September 17, 2010, The Daily Plan It welcomed the First Lady of New Jersey, Mary Pat Christie, to tour the social enterprise located in Morristown, New Jersey. The Daily Plan It is a complete conference and copy center where space is made available to small business owners and people with disabilities provide the entire infrastructure and concierge of the business.

The Daily Plan It is only one of the ways that Community Options combats a sheltered workshop setting for people with disabilities. The organization owns and operates five other social enterprises across New Jersey that allow people with disabilities to gain a relevant and portable skill set to move on to more competitive employment.

First Lady Christie joined leaders of the organization for a tour of the Morristown Daily Plan It as well as facilitated a round table discussion about replicable models of employment for people with disabilities and decreasing the wait list for employment and day services in New Jersey.

"I feel very fortunate that we were able to have First Lady Christie to our Morristown Daily Plan It," says Stack. "The Daily Plan It is at the essence of what we do - social inclusion - where a person's disability does not define who they are or what they are capable of doing," added Stack.



From left to right (front row) Susan Kyrillos, Svetlana Repic-Qira, First Lady Mary Pat Christie, Kathryn Oram, Jessica Guberman (back row) Robert Stack, Delia Donahue and Steve Verba



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