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Valley National Bank Donates \$10,000 to Nonprofit Community Options

PRINCETON, NJ (December 29, 2015) – On Tuesday, representatives of Valley National Bank presented Community Options, Inc. with a donation of \$10,000. The money will go directly towards building a new Red Ribbon Academy in Hillsborough, NJ. Community Options President and CEO, Robert Stack, graciously accepted the gift from Steve Vitale, First VP and Team Leader of Commercial Banking, and Steve Bearse, VP and Territory Sales Manager, at the nonprofit's headquarters in Princeton, NJ. Vitale and Bearse recently took a tour of the first Red Ribbon Academy, located in Wayne, NJ.

“As a community bank with long-standing ties to the neighborhoods we serve, we feel it is our responsibility to help organizations like Community Options in their mission to provide housing, support services and advocacy assistance to help empower people with disabilities,” remarked Bearse.

Community Options opened the Red Ribbon Academy in March of 2013. It is the first organization in New Jersey that aids adult individuals who have the most severe, medically fragile disabilities in a way that fosters growth and progress. The building is tailored specifically for people with special medical needs. It is completely accessible, containing therapy rooms with special sensory environments for persons with profound intellectual disabilities and medical needs. A wide array of therapeutic and recreational activities is available to maintain and increase mental acuity and maximize their physical ability. These activities nurture friendships, stimulate interest in life, and provide opportunities for creativity.

"During this holiday season, we are very grateful for Valley National Bank's generous donation to help start up our new Red Ribbon Academy in Hillsborough," said Stack. "They have been great supporters of ours over the last few years and we look forward to continuing our relationship with them well into the future."

Valley National Bank has generously donated to Community Options in the past; helping fund the nonprofit's largest fundraiser, Cupid's Chase 5K. Their donation will aid the startup costs of the new Red Ribbon Academy as well as provide equipment for the sensory room.

Community Options is targeting a Spring 2016 opening for the Hillsborough location. Red Ribbon Academy is open to anyone who qualifies for services under the NJ Division for Developmental Disabilities with transportation provided to and from the Academy.

Based out of Princeton, NJ, Community Options is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to providing housing and employment support to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Valley National Bancorp is a regional bank holding company headquartered in Wayne, New Jersey with over \$20 billion in assets. Its principal subsidiary, Valley National Bank, currently operates 227 branch locations serving 30 counties throughout northern and central New Jersey, the New York City boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island, and Florida.

About Community Options

For over 25 years, Community Options has developed housing and employment programs for people with disabilities. Community Options operates with a budget over \$112 million and serves thousands of people with disabilities through 38 offices across 10

states. Providing advocacy assistance to empower people with disabilities, Community Options believes that all people –regardless of disability level – should live and work in the community with dignity, choice, and self-determination. A registered PVO with USAID, Community Options is also the pioneer of innovative programs for people with disabilities in the Middle East, Russia, and South America. Please visit our website at www.comop.org.