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CONTACT: Kathryn Sampson, Community Options Inc.  
(609) 352.5280 | [Kathryn.Sampson@comop.org](mailto:Kathryn.Sampson@comop.org)

## **New Jersey Man with Disability Rings Opening Bell at New York Stock Exchange**

PRINCETON, NJ – (January 15, 2015) The New York Stock Exchange, noted for its Opening Bell, has hosted celebrities, politicians and foreign diplomats. On January 14, 2015, Robert McCarthy, a man with significant intellectual and other disabilities, rang the Bell.



Born in the Philippines, McCarthy grew up in Hawaii. He then moved to New Jersey to live with his grandfather and then his Aunt and Uncle in Elmwood Park for twenty years. On March 18, 1997, McCarthy became a part of the Community Options family, as he moved into a group home in Pompton Lakes, NJ; a place where he still lives today. After getting settled in at his new home, his cousin Gary hired him to work in the family's landscaping business. Robert has worked there for the past 16 years.

Community Options, Inc. is a national nonprofit organization that provides housing and employment supports to people with disabilities.

"Robert is one of our inspirational individuals who has lived with us for 18 years! With his contagious laugh and kind heart, he cherishes every moment in his life," said Community Options Executive Director of Passaic and Sussex counties, Tracy Mendola. "To represent Community Options with this experience has given him memories for a lifetime! We are so proud of him!"

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For over 25 years, Community Options has developed housing and employment programs for people with disabilities. Currently the 5<sup>th</sup> largest non-profit in New Jersey, Community Options operates with a budget over \$96 million and serves thousands of people with disabilities through 38 offices across 9 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](http://www.comop.org).

CEO available for comment. If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview, please call (609) 352-5280 or e-mail Kathryn at [Kathryn.Sampson@comop.org](mailto:Kathryn.Sampson@comop.org)