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## **Community Options' Youngest Executive Director Taking Philadelphia Region to New Heights**

PRINCETON, NJ (November 17, 2015) -- Community Options' Executive Director, Nick High, is working hard at increasing Community Options' housing and day program services to individuals with disabilities in the Philadelphia region. Nick began working with Community Options as a direct support professional immediately after graduating from Temple University in 2011. He worked in the supported living department, which entailed providing supports to individuals living in their own apartments and assisting them to maximize their independence. In less than a year, Nick was promoted to Program Specialist over the supported living and supported employment departments. He spearheaded quality assurance initiatives, which strengthened Community Options' relationship with the counties throughout the region. Additionally, in December of 2011, Nick oversaw the development of the community based day program, which was launched as an alternative to center-based day programs as many of the individuals in the region's homes were deemed "too challenging" for other agency's day programs. In 2012, Nick was promoted to Quality Assurance Coordinator where he became responsible for ensuring quality programming via auditing and conducting staff trainings. In this role, he worked to ensure all records and systems were up to par. Nick also contributed to the opening of the Lehigh and York offices in Pennsylvania. In 2013, Nick was promoted to Assistant Executive Director over the southeastern PA region, where operations had doubled in size.

In 2014, the Southeastern PA region opened their new office in Northeast Philadelphia in order to support the tremendous growth happening in the area. By late 2014, one new home was being opened per month and the region was admitting one new supported living individual per month. While much of the focus often falls on the growth of the residential program in Southeastern PA, the supported living program tripled in size since 2011.

In April of 2015, Nick was officially promoted to Executive Director over the Southeastern PA region. The region's 20th home and 40th residential site overall including supported living, was opened in August. This past September the Southeastern PA region opened a second satellite office in King of Prussia, with the first being in Langhorne, to better support homes in Montgomery County. According to Nick, "Our growth is really due to two factors: successful audits and a willingness to take challenging individuals. Many of our new admissions are people who other agencies declined to support and we have welcomed these individuals in with open arms. Our whole region is proud to be the open-minded provider that gives people with disabilities a chance regardless of their history. We are able to support these individuals because we have such great staff and managers that buy into this philosophy of giving everyone a chance".

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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 \$107 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).