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## Community Options Receives \$10,000 Donation from Valley National Bank for Acclaimed Red Ribbon Academy



PRINCETON, N.J., Feb. 9, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Community Options, Inc., one of New Jersey's largest non-profit corporations that provides community housing, job training, employment, and life-skills training for adults with developmental disabilities, recently accepted a \$10,000 donation from Valley National Bank of New Jersey for a new Red Ribbon Academy in Hillsborough.

"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 its mission to provide housing, support services and advocacy assistance that empower people living with disabilities," said Valley National Bank Vice President Steve Bearse.

The donation will be used to help outfit Community Options' new Red Ribbon Academy in Hillsborough, a day program designed to provide a multitude of services to adults with significant medical disabilities. Originally launched in 2013, the first Red Ribbon Academy in Wayne, NJ quickly became a model day-program that garnered significant media attention and numerous awards for its barrier-free design and advanced therapy rooms with special sensory environments for people with profound intellectual disabilities and medical needs. A wide array of therapeutic experts and advanced recreational programs also are available to maintain and increase the participants' mental acuity and maximize their physical ability.

"We are very grateful for Valley National Bank's generous donation," said Robert Stack, CEO of Community Options. "The people of Valley National have been great supporters of the programs and services offered by Community Options and we look forward to continuing our relationship with them."

"It has been the dream of parents and caregivers across the state that their medically fragile adult children with developmental disabilities will have a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment in which to happily spend their days after aging out of high school," said Linda Zani Thomas, one of the founders of The Parents Group of advocates that helped create the mission for Red Ribbon Academy. "A big thank you to Valley National Bank for helping make this new Academy a reality."

Community Options is targeting a Spring 2016 opening for the Hillsborough location. The 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.

SOURCE Community Options, Inc.