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## On the Cutting Edge of Employment Supports for People with Disabilities

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*Reader Submitted*

New Jersey Labor Commissioner David Socolow recently delivered a keynote at Community Options, Inc. 20th Year Anniversary Gala. The Gala was held at the Historic Governor's Mansion in Princeton where over 300 people attended this most memorable event.

Community Options, Inc. was founded in 1989 around the kitchen table of Robert Stack, President and CEO. At that time, Community Options was supporting a few people in their own homes that the organization had developed. Today, the organization has grown from small development in Mercer County to national supports in thirty offices across nine different states.

Community Options develops the most innovative employment supports and opportunities for people with disabilities. They operate 3 Daily Plan Its in New Jersey, which are complete conference and copy centers that offer small business owners executive office space at significantly reduced costs while providing a full concierge service for everything a business owner may need. This has been particularly helpful for business owners who have had to downsize due to the current business climate. One of the Daily Plan Its is located in Moorestown, NJ.

Community Options also owns and operates Vaseful Flowers and Gifts, the country's only nonprofit flower shop that has nationwide delivering capabilities. Presents of Mind is our latest business in Mount Olive, NJ and is a complete gift store with online shopping capability made possible by Volusion.

The best thing about all of our businesses is that they allow people with disabilities to build a general, relevant and portable skill set to take with them onto more competitive employment when they are ready to make that move.

"The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has the privilege of helping individuals with disabilities achieve equal opportunity to enter today's workforce," said New Jersey Labor Commissioner David J. Socolow. "Economic independence is achievable through participation in the workforce and is made possible by the public-private partnerships we have made with cutting-edge service agencies like Community Options, Inc." "We've seen great progress for workers with disabilities in the 90 years of the public Vocational Rehabilitation program", said New

Jersey Labor Commissioner David J. Socolow. "We are now on the leading edge of self employment and entrepreneurial ventures thanks to our public-private partnership with agencies like Community Options, Inc."

Christopher Dixon, the Executive Director of Community Options Enterprises who oversees all of the employment programs in New Jersey says, " The days of the sheltered workshop are over and Community Options has been the pioneer of developing the most innovative, practical and relative employment supports for people with disabilities for decades."

For more information about Community Options please visit them at [www.comop.org](http://www.comop.org). To speak to someone about our employment opportunities and ways to get involved please contact 609-951-9900.

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