

Hard Work and Diligence Pays Off for One New Jersey Man

Published on 05/09/2012

May 9, 2012- (Princeton, New Jersey) – When the E.R. Johnstone Training and Research Center closed in 1992; it was the first large institution in the State of New Jersey to be shut down by the state. At that time, 225 residents of that institution were expected to go into community-based programs, but Bernard Krakowsky was not one of them. Krakowsky was deemed “too disabled” by the staff at the institution.

Officials that visited the institution would often ask “Why?” Why couldn’t Krakowsky move from the institution? One of the people that continued to ask the question was Robert Stack, President and CEO of Community Options, Inc. Community Options is a national nonprofit organization with the mission to develop homes and employment for people with disabilities. Stack was able to work with the institution to move Krakowsky out.

Initially, Krakowsky resided in a group home in Mercer County and then a supervised apartment, which ultimately became the place that Krakowsky now owns. That’s right. Bernard Krakowsky owns his own home. The same person that was deemed “too disabled” to leave the institution.

In 1994, Krakowsky landed a job as a receptionist in the central office of The Division of Developmental Disabilities within the Department of Human Services. Since Krakowsky began his job in 1994, he has gained a valuable skill set, has become self-supporting and more importantly, Krakowsky has built and sustained long-term friendships.

“Something I always say is that there is a direct relationship between your level of loneliness and the severity of your disability,” says, Robert Stack, President and CEO of Community Options. “Work is a great place to make friends and I could not be any happier for Bernard and all that he has accomplished.”

Due to Krakowsky’s hard work and diligence as it relates to his employment, he was recently promoted to work in the office of Commissioner Jennifer Velez of the Department of Human Services. Krakowsky will be celebrating with his colleagues later this week at a going away party.

"The Department values Bernard's enthusiastic work ethic," said Commissioner Velez. "He's proven himself as a hard worker and really contributes to a positive work environment. We're pleased to have him join us at Central Office."

To learn more about Community Options, please visit www.comop.org. You can also visit the organization on Facebook at www.facebook.com/communityoptions.

About Community Options: Community Options is a national nonprofit organization with the mission to develop homes and employment for people with disabilities. Community Options operates in 37 cities across 10 states supporting thousands of people with disabilities and their families with the help of over 2,500 employees.



L to R - Bernard Krakowsky, Robert Stack, and Senator Joseph Kyrillos