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Inspired by Parents, Texas Native to Lead Community Options' Austin Office

PRINCETON, NJ (July 5, 2017) -- Growing up in Georgetown, TX with parents that helped people for a living, Lindsey Halligan wanted to follow in their footsteps since she was seven years old.

With her dad working at a state supported living center and her mom for a rape crisis center, Halligan walked down a similar path.

"I knew I wanted to do the same as them. After starting as direct care staff, which I loved, as years passed I began to learn how to navigate the complicated systems developed to support people who have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities."

"I am delighted to appoint Ms. Halligan as the executive director of Austin," said Robert Stack, President & CEO of Community Options. "She has a plethora of experience and knowledge and is a respected leader in our field."

Halligan attended Texas State in San Marcos, TX, earning her bachelor's degree in sociology and history in 2006. While still in college, Halligan began working as direct care staff for an agency in Texas until 2007. For nearly a decade, Halligan worked at the Texas Department of Health and Human Services first as a Qualified Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Professional and then a Surveyor. There, she provided services to individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD), communicated with their families, oversaw small group homes and made sure the organization followed regulations.

In 2013, Halligan obtained her master's degree in applied sociology from Texas State. During that time, she also worked as a Program Specialist for the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services for those with traumatic brain or spinal injuries. Halligan oversaw a budget of \$26 million and was the contact person for staff across the state. In addition, Halligan spent four years heading up the Informal Dispute Resolution department

Halligan most recently worked at Integral Care as the Associate Director of Local Authority, where she managed budgets, developed programs, and oversaw all Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority functions. Those functions included general revenue services, intake and enrollment, and service coordination for Home and Community Supports, Texas Home Living and Community First Choice, which she did from 2015 until the present.

"I arrived at the decision to shift my career from helping people navigate the system, to going back to directly supporting people at Community Options because I realized I was at my happiest when I could directly help people," said Halligan. "Community Options' mission aligns with mine, as I yearn to support and uphold the dignity of every person, help people attain meaningful jobs, and support people to live in the community. "

"I am very excited to have Lindsey join our team as the Executive Director in Austin," said Catherine Carroll, Regional VP of Community Options' Texas offices. "Lindsey's experience and knowledge of the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities system -- from serving as a Direct Support Professional working in group homes to working for the Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority as Team Lead, to her time at Health and Human Services -- brings a wealth of resources and supports to individuals seeking Home and Community Supports and Texas Home Living supports in the Austin area."

About Community Options, Inc.:

For 28 years, Community Options has developed housing and employment programs for people with disabilities – serving thousands of people through over 40 offices across 11 states. Community Options provides advocacy assistance to empower people with disabilities because all people – regardless of ability level – should live and work in the community with dignity, choice and self-determination. For more information please visit our website: www.comop.org and to follow along with the ComOpCares campaign, search #ComOpCares on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.