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Community Options Partners with AmeriCorps to Empower People with Disabilities

Pittsburgh, PA – Community Options, a leading national nonprofit supporting people with disabilities, launched a project to sponsor 22 AmeriCorps VISTA service members to empower people with disabilities by expanding housing and employment opportunities across the country.

In Pittsburgh, Katrina Goodlin will be the first VISTA hired to expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Following her graduation from West Virginia University in May 2022, Katrina was seeking to gain some experience before pursuing a master's degree. She came across Community Options' AmeriCorps program and quickly submitted her application.

“I have always wanted to work in a field that enables me to help people,” said Katrina. “The Community Options VISTA program looked like a perfect fit for someone like me who is looking for an introduction to the nonprofit world.”

As a VISTA, Katrina will work with Community Options staff to enhance employment supports for people with disabilities in Pittsburgh. She will receive pay and healthcare benefits directly through AmeriCorps, which is an independent federal agency developed for national and community service. Notable AmeriCorps alumni include Pennsylvania Lt. Governor John Fetterman, who served in Pittsburgh in 1995.

“We are excited to bring fresh perspectives and networks to our organization,” said Robert Stack, President and CEO of Community Options. “VISTA members will drive resources to programs that support people with significant disabilities, which will make a lasting impact on the people we support.”

Community Options supports more than 5,000 Americans with disabilities across eleven states. VISTAs will partner with Community Options' staff in New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania to enhance supported employment programming and provide self-advocacy and housing education. The project aims to improve economic success and stability for and alongside people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

For more information about Community Options and the AmeriCorps program, please contact Stefanie Rinaldi at Stefanie.Rinaldi@comop.org.

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About Community Options, Inc.:

For over 30 years, Community Options has developed housing and employment supports for people with disabilities – serving thousands of people from 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 #AllItTakes campaign, search #AllItTakes on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.