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## EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES

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Annual Report  
**2024**





## A Message from the President and CEO

Dear Friends of Community Options,

Our nonprofit has consistently remained the provider of choice for persons with disabilities. Throughout challenges and victories Community Options has improved the quality of life for those we support. We develop housing and bolster employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. We firmly believe that anyone with disabilities can live and work in the community. Our nonprofit allocates resources to empower persons with disabilities to believe in themselves and harness their abilities to enjoy life.

People with disabilities were the last United States minority group to have their civil rights codified. Understanding the history of deinstitutionalization and the human rights movement that gathered momentum in the 1960s is crucial not only to contextualize Community Options' history, philosophies and importance, but for background as we simultaneously recognize how far the community has come, and acknowledge the ways in which disinvestment in inclusionary practice persists.

History has proved that the systems that favor the isolation and neglect of people with disabilities are not predetermined or implacable; we know that people with disabilities belong in the community, and they are capable of thriving there with the right support. Attitudes and perceptions can also shift. What will remain are the ideals upon which Community Options was founded in 1989; that inclusion, self-determination, dignity and access are rights for everyone, including those with the most severe and profound disabilities.

We remain optimistic as we continue to facilitate and create new and long-lasting relationships with family members and government leaders. Our board and leadership remain determined to continue growing our footprint around the country while advocating for institutional closure.

We will continue to educate the public on what many of these extraordinary individuals are capable of when treated as equals in their community. Community Options has made great strides in the fight for the rights of people with disabilities.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

Robert Stack  
Founder, President and CEO



# An Extraordinary Year

This year, we have so many accomplishments. We expanded into New Hampshire, our twelfth state. We are developing more entrepreneurial businesses across the country so people with significant disabilities can take pride in receiving a paycheck. Most importantly, over 5,000 people with disabilities and their families received support from our organization. None of this is possible without the support from our 5,500 employees, donors volunteers, and Board members.



“The quality of life is determined by its activities.”

*Aristotle*

# Mission

To develop housing and employment supports for persons with disabilities.



“In the end, it’s not the years in your life that count, it is the life in your years.”  
*Abraham Lincoln*



# Homes

What does home mean to you? For most of us it is the place where we feel safe and loved. Some people want a quiet neighborhood; others prefer a more urban environment where they can walk to a coffee shop. Many of us prefer to live close to family and friends. Choosing where to live is a right.

We take extraordinary measures to make this happen for Community Options' residents. People choose environments that feel comfortable. Families are welcome to visit often and share meals. The residents make plans to attend family celebrations and other events. Families have a unique role in our services; we recognize and respect the importance of life-long connections.

Community Options launched its housing initiative by partnering with states engaged in deinstitutionalization and providing alternatives to placements into large segregated settings. Our ability to meet the needs of families and state officials quickly and decisively enabled us to remain the provider of choice. Success led to invitations from additional states. We now manage more than 650 homes for 1,800 people in 12 states: Arizona, Iowa, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah.

Today, we support many people who have grown up in the community. We continue to champion civil rights for all people with disabilities.











# Employment

A founding principle of Community Options is that anyone who wants to work can and should work. Our job is to develop compensatory supports for successful employment. Job Coaches support people to identify their goals, network, and retain jobs. We guide more than 1,800 individuals into competitive and integrated employment.

Some people need a little more time and help to land that first job. Our Option Quest program provides opportunities for people to explore different jobs and hone basic skills like following directions and being on time. They build networks and confidence by volunteering or joining self-advocacy and recreational groups.





# Community Options Enterprises

Community Options Enterprises was developed to accelerate workforce entry for people with disabilities. People with and without disabilities work side by side, driving revenue from our entrepreneurial businesses into real paychecks for people with disabilities. As people with disabilities earn a paycheck, they learn social and technical skills.

Vaseful Flowers and Gifts are charming shops with high quality local services and world -wide delivery. Employees learn customer service, credit card, phone and website order processing, distribution, inventory management and floral arranging.

Presents of Mind sells trendy, classic, and humorous gifts, gourmet foods, local art, and exotic teas. Associates gain experience in retail management, point of sale software, and customer relations.

The Daily Plan It is a complete office, conference and copy center offering beautifully furnished rental office space. The menu of tenant services includes reception, mail, internet, clerical support, high-speed color copying, graphic design, and janitorial support. Many of our employees have been hired by tenants who see their drive and skills. Others find new jobs with references provided by satisfied tenants.





# Optionality

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## Positive Options

Community Options believes that positive approaches are the only way that people with complex behaviors can succeed. Many have experienced trauma and abuse in their lives. We begin with building trusting relationships with direct caregivers so that those we support feel safe and loved in their homes and in their workplaces. Once those relationships are in place, people learn to replace challenging behaviors with healthy coping strategies.

Community Options does not use any form of aversive conditioning. We lead the nation in demonstrating supportive strategies for community-based programs. Staff work with those they support to define what they want and what they need. Programmatic supports are then designed to meet their specific needs.

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## Transitional Services School to Employment Program (STEP)

Educational funding for students with disabilities ends at age 21 or upon graduation. Transition is often challenging. Young adults and their families need support to learn to use new systems to meet their needs. STEP prepares students to seamlessly transition from high school to the workforce or postsecondary education.

STEP begins by working with teachers, students, families, and child study teams to identify interests. Students rotate through various jobs for exposure to potential career paths. Classroom instruction and on-the-job training give students who are near matriculation the tools they need to get a job or succeed in college or at technical school.

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## Red Ribbon Academy

Parents raising a child with disabilities need all the help they can get. Community Options partnered with a parent group in New Jersey to open a day program that supports adults with significant medical fragility. Program applicants are individuals who have graduated from school and need appropriate socialization and structure during the day. This unique program offers innovative medical, therapeutic, and recreational supports. We provide a therapeutic model of support that includes nurses and physical, occupational, and recreational therapists. The person centered environment includes state of the art technology, music, and sensory rooms. Stimulating activities improve engagement. We encourage individual progress by harnessing the power of strong social relationships.

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## Children with Disabilities

Many families have difficulties caring for their younger loved one with disabilities. The only alternative to address this need in many communities are institutional placements. We recruit foster parents who provide ample support and oversight in a safe and loving environment. Greater challenged youths are offered additional supports with a rich array of caregiving staff managed by our local executive directors.





# Training/Leadership Development

Community Options' greatest asset is its staff. We could not fulfill our mission without executive leadership and dedicated direct support staff at all levels. Providing professional development for employees is a priority. Many of our long-term staff have risen through the ranks to assume leadership roles.

Basic staff training begins with the topics and credentials required by contracts. However, we offer more training and development courses through face-to-face classes, webinars, and on the Community Options YouTube Channel.

Our succession planning program includes a Leadership Academy that identifies promising employees. In partnership with Corporate Education Group and Duke University, select employees are provided with an individualized career development plan and a mentor to assist them through the process.

We partner with the University of Arizona Global Campus (UAGC), an accredited online university, to offer all eligible employees savings on tuition and other educational costs. UAGC Tuition Benefits provide employees and immediate family members the opportunity to earn a college degree while working full-time.

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# Technology

More than 90% of all funds are allocated to direct support staff and program sites. We do this efficiently through the application of a nationally based centralized infrastructure with unified values tailored to local culture. We maximize independence for those we support through "Smart Home" applied technology for physical plant oversight and safety.

This includes national training, quality assurance oversight and deployment as well as the management of a robust variety of technological platforms such as UKG, Therap, WebExpenses, Tableau, Kofax, OnBase, MillinPro, Fresh Desk, Proofpoint, Meraki and Smart Homes. We implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning system through Oracle's NetSuite.

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# The Betty Pender Award

Named after one of the original board members of Community Options, Betty Pender was a parent of a person with developmental disabilities who was a noted advocate always telling parents "to let go." Her philosophy to allow people dignity of risk and freedom proved inspirational to so many.

In 2023, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie was selected as the recipient of the Betty Pender Award for his exceptional leadership in advancing opportunities for people with disabilities. Governor Christie personally advocated to Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds that Community Options should facilitate the closure of the Glenwood Resource Center, a state-run institution in Southwest Iowa that housed 150 people with disabilities.

Additionally, Governor Christie promoted Community Options' innovative employment program to government leaders across the country. Through his advocacy, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey awarded Community Options a grant to purchase and develop a Daily Plan It in Phoenix.





# The Foundation

The York Foundation applies endowment funds to support the mission of Community Options. Support is provided to augment staff training, direct care award programs and develop housing and employment initiatives in new areas.

The Foundation Board consists of:

- Robert Stack
- Phil Lian
- Domenico Maiuri
- Svetlana Repic-Qira
- James Buckley, ex officio

*The Foundation's assets are managed by UBS Financial Services.*



Featured from Left to Right: James Buckley, Phil Lian, Geraldo Rivera, Governor Chris Christie, and Robert Stack.







# Our Heroes

## Direct Support Professionals

Community Options' Direct Support Professionals have taken extraordinary measures to provide care for people with disabilities.

Direct Support Professionals are essential workers who do not have the luxury of working from home. They truly inspire all of us with their dedication and bravery in caring for our most vulnerable citizens.

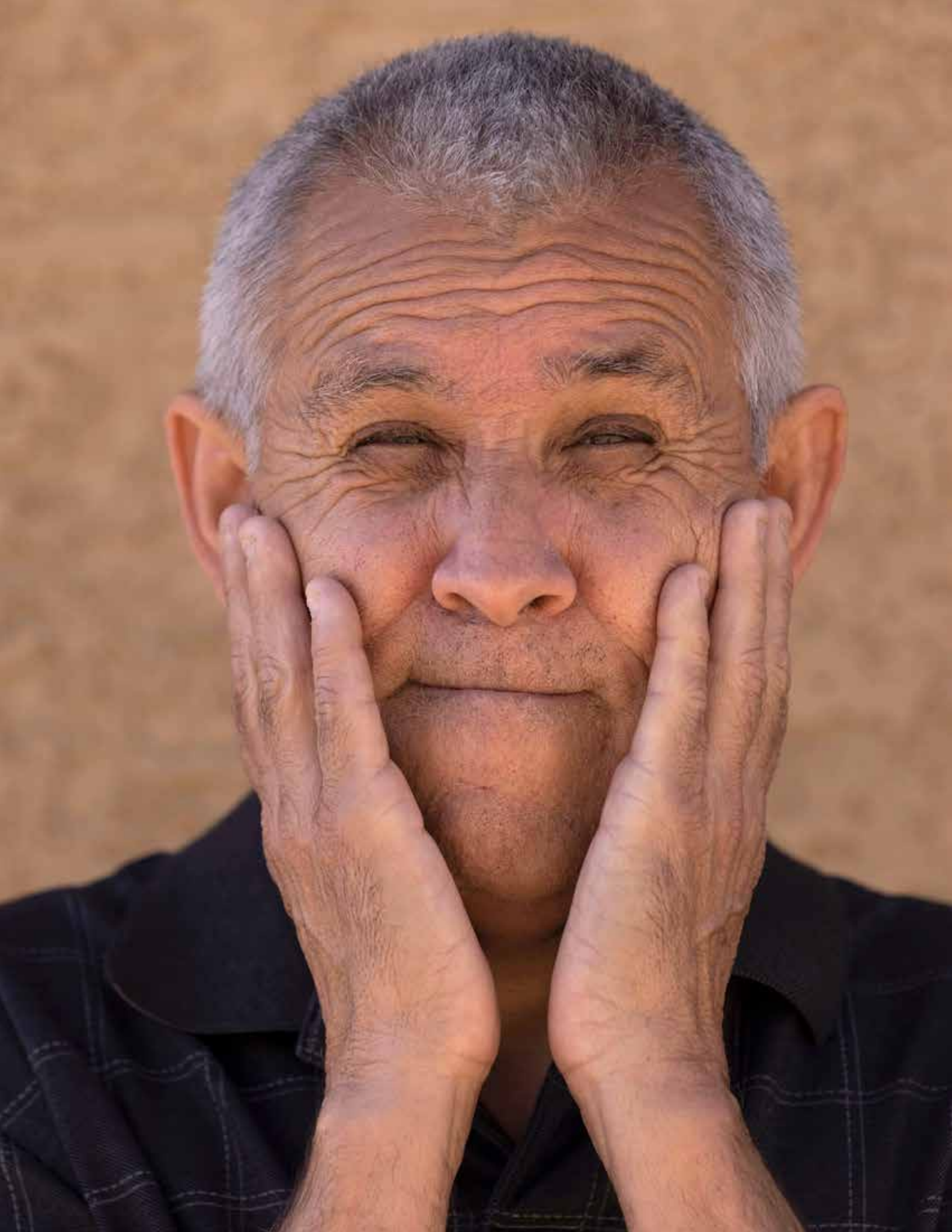
We are forever grateful for the extraordinary measures they take each day by continuing to work in the toughest of times. Direct support professionals are our heroes yesterday, today, and every day!













# Volunteer Officers



Dorothy Goodwin



James Buckley



Philip Lian



Domenico Maiuri

# Executive



Robert Stack



Svetlana Repic-Qira



David Sweeney



Courtney Eidel



# Management



Caitlin DiBarba



Greg Thoennes



Lacie Parker



Dina Casalapro



Wei-Han Zhou

# Leadership



Tigest Alemu



Kerry Brady



Lindsey Daniel



Hector Johnson



Margaret Mann



Meika McClendon



Ayesha Patrick



Lisa Smith



Kathryn Valles-Wallace



# Directors

## Arizona

**Phoenix:** Robyn Ratcliff, *Executive Director*

## Iowa

**Council Bluffs:** Kristin Schneckloth, *Executive Director*

## Maryland

**Greater Baltimore:** Monique DuBois, *Executive Director*

**Prince Georges County:** Tigest Alemu, *State Director*

**Rockville:** Stacey Briggs, *Executive Director*

## New Hampshire

**Nashua:** Ayesha Patrick, *Executive State Director*

## New Jersey

**Ayesha Patrick,** *Regional Director (Central)*

**Diane D'Orazio,** *Regional Director (Southern)*

**Tracy Mendola,** *Regional Director (Northern)*

**Atlantic, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester:**

**Laura Winchester,** *Executive Director*

**Bergen, Passaic:** Barbara Frimpong, *Executive Director*

**Burlington:** Darlene Pratt, *Executive Director*

**Mercer:** Ida Bormentar, *Executive Director*

**Middlesex, Monmouth:** Kathryn Bryant, *Executive Director*

**Morris, Essex, Sussex:** Bernard Abuto, *Assistant Executive Director*

**Ocean:** Paul Ney, *Assistant Executive Director*

**Somerset:** Maria Bowles, *Executive Director*

**Union:** Karima Boyd, *Executive Director*

## New Mexico

**Albuquerque & Santa Fe:** Kayla Flowers, *Regional Director*

**Las Cruces:** Noemi Olivas, *Executive Director*

## New York

**Binghamton:** Ashley Gamba, *Executive Director*

**Brooklyn:** Tiffany Bennett, *Executive Director*

**Manhattan:** Frank Matheny, *Executive Director*

**Queens:** Fatimat Adekoya, *Executive Director*

**Syracuse:** Zachary Petrie, *Executive Director*

## Pennsylvania

**Lourdes Ortiz,** *Regional Director (Central)*

**Bridget Haney,** *Regional Director (Southeast)*

**Stephen Hall,** *Regional Director (Western)*

**Sheilann Weicker,** *Regional Director (Northeast)*

**Allegheny:** Tara Peele, *Executive Director*

**Bucks:** Ariele Tucker, *Executive Director*

**Butler:** Timothy Hawk, *Executive Director*

**Columbia:** Jaime Lyons, *Executive Director*

**Cumberland:** Sharon Schwab, *Executive Director*

**Delaware:** Preston Roach, *Executive Director*

**Indiana:** Tabitha Buchinsky, *Executive Director*

**Lancaster:** Lourdes Ortiz, *Regional Director*

**Lehigh:** Allyson Pors-Boitz, *Executive Director*

**Montgomery:** Petrick Sanders, *Executive Director*

**Northumberland:** Jaime Lyons, *Executive Director*

**Philadelphia:** Khyel Dicks, *Executive Director*

**Pocono:** Carron Bartholomew, *Executive Director*

**Schuylkill:** Nicole Fertig, *Acting Executive Director*

**Washington:** Brooke Smith, *Associate Executive Director*

**Westmoreland:** Stephen Hall, *Executive Director*

**York:** Kharrin Sadler, *Executive Director*

## South Carolina

**Charleston:** Alan Rose, *Executive Director*

**Columbia:** Craig Scott, *Executive Director*

**Greenville:** Malia Davis, *Executive Director*

## Tennessee

**Chattanooga:** Mercedes Owens, *Executive Director*

**Cookeville:** Kristine Shirley, *Executive Director*

**Nashville:** Jessica Redfern Vincent, *Executive Director*

**Maryville:** Marie Roush, *Executive Director*

## Texas

**Samantha Cutler,** *Regional Director (Central)*

**Amarillo:** Louise Blackmore, *Executive Director*

**Austin:** Sharon McCarver, *Assistant Executive Director*

**Corpus Christi:** Cathy Bennett, *Executive Director*

**Dallas:** Detra Thompson, *Executive Director*

**El Paso:** Miguel Martinez, *Executive Director*

**Lubbock:** Jennifer Maine, *Executive Director*

**San Antonio:** Samuel Ortega, *Associate Executive Director*

## Utah

**Ogden:** Margaret Mann, *State Director*

**West Valley City:** Shannon Wilkins, *Director of Employment Services and Development*





## Community Options, Inc. Board of Directors

Dorothy Goodwin, Chair  
James Buckley, Treasurer  
Svetlana Repic-Qira, Secretary  
Adolfo Alvarado, Trustee  
Ian Bogaty, Esq., Trustee  
Peter Dulligan, Trustee

Courtney Eidel, Trustee  
Amy Frank, Trustee  
Baber Ghauri, MD, Trustee  
Bryan McDonald, CPA, Trustee  
Robert Stack, President

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## Community Options Enterprises, Inc. Board of Directors

Philip Lian, Chair  
Courtney Eidel, Secretary  
Cindi Gassar, Trustee  
Gail Balph Gordon, Esq., Trustee  
Reginald Jenkins, Jr., Esq., Trustee  
John Passalaris, MD, Trustee

Svetlana Repic-Qira, Trustee  
Craig Rothenberg, Esq., Trustee  
James Spano, Trustee  
Robert Stack, President  
Daniel Surtz, Trustee  
Alec Taylor, Trustee

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## Community Options New York, Inc. Board of Directors

Robert Stack, Chair  
Caitlin DiBarba, Secretary  
Erik Alberti, Trustee  
Cynthia Barnaby, Trustee

Ian Bogaty, Esq., Trustee  
Laura Dulligan, Trustee  
Dawit Gessese, Trustee  
Dana Roper, Esq., Trustee  
Madeleine Will, Trustee





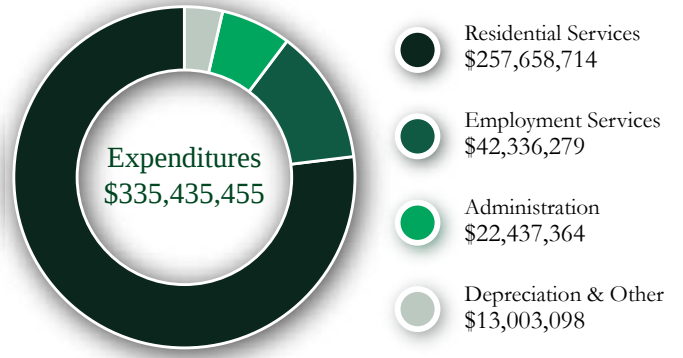
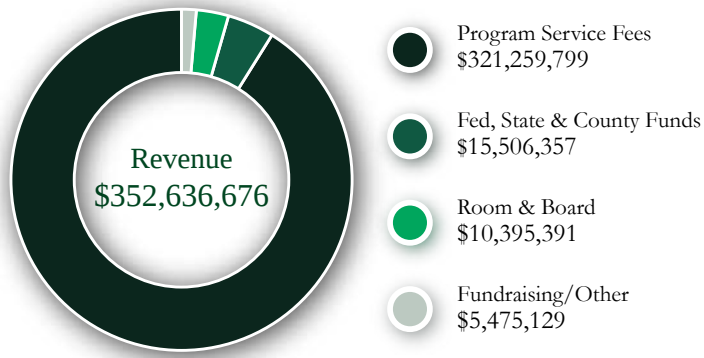




# FINANCIAL SUMMARY - 2023

## COMMUNITY OPTIONS, INC. & AFFILIATES COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

Grants and Contracts	\$ 15,506,357
Program Service fees	321,259,799
Room and Board	10,395,391
Fundraising/Other	5,475,129
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>352,636,676</b>
Expenses	
Program Services	299,994,993
Management and General	35,440,462
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>335,435,455</b>
Change in Net Assets	17,201,221
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	65,761,190
Net Assets, End of Year	\$82,962,411



\*For audited financial statements contact Withum, Smith + Brown

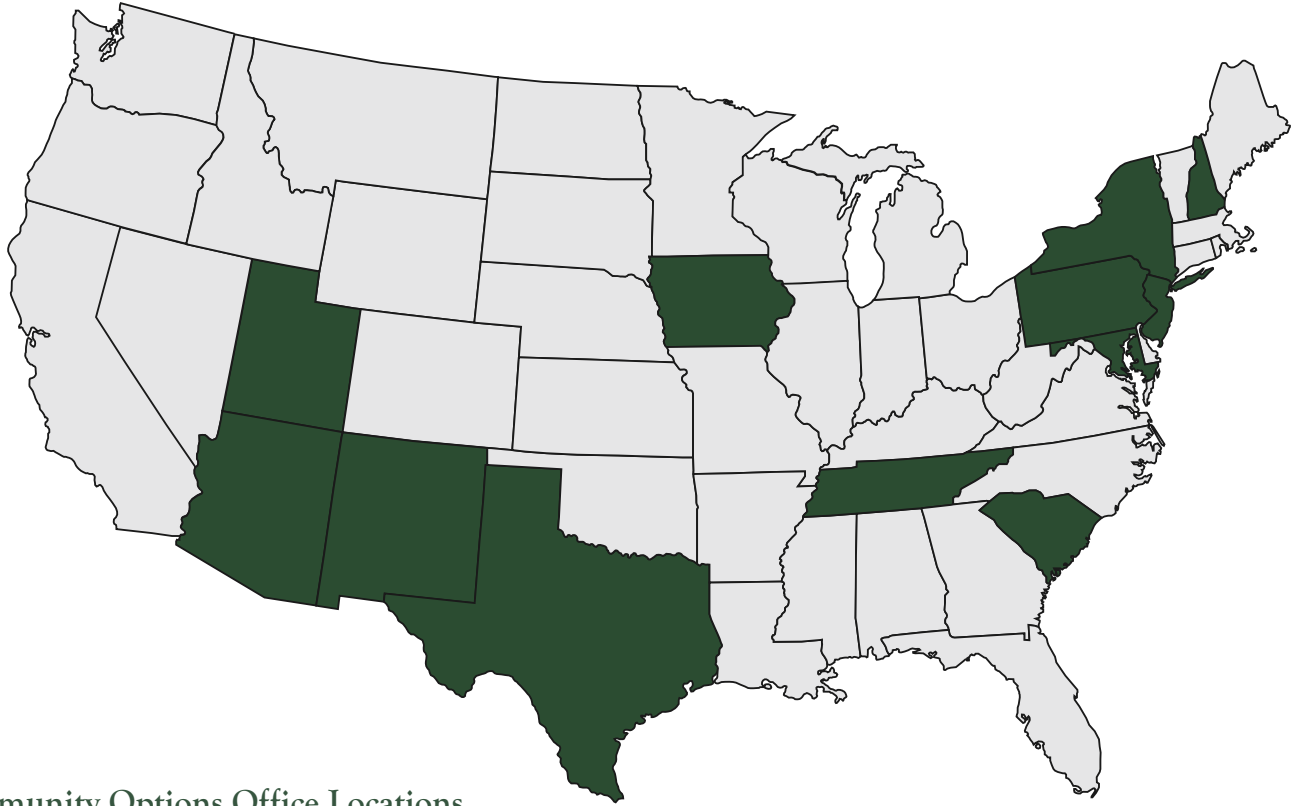




ALLIED







**Community Options Office Locations**

**Arizona**

Phoenix  
Tucson

**New Mexico**

Albuquerque  
Las Cruces  
Santa Fe

Poconos  
Washington  
Williamsport  
York

**Iowa**

Council Bluffs

**New York**

Binghamton  
Brooklyn  
Manhattan  
Syracuse  
Queens  
Waverly  
Vestal

**South Carolina**

Charleston  
Columbia  
Greenville

**Maryland**

Baltimore  
Columbia  
Frederick  
Rockville

**Pennsylvania**

Allentown  
Bloomsburg  
Butler  
Feasterville-Treose  
Greensburg  
Harrisburg  
Havertown  
Indiana  
King of Prussia  
Lancaster  
Mechanicsburg  
Newtown  
Northumberland  
Orwigsburg  
Philadelphia  
Pittsburgh

**Tennessee**

Chattanooga  
Cookeville  
Knoxville  
Maryville  
Nashville

**New Hampshire**

Nashua

**New Jersey**

Denville  
Edison  
Flanders  
Forked River  
Hillsborough  
Lawrence Township  
Moorestown  
Morristown  
Princeton  
Wayne  
Westfield  
Woodbury

**Texas**

Amarillo  
Austin  
Corpus Christi  
Dallas  
El Paso  
Lubbock  
Pflugerville  
San Antonio

**Utah**

Ogden  
Salt Lake City  
West Valley







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**609-951-9900**  
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*Creative Services, a subsidiary of Community Options Enterprises, designed and produced this annual report employing persons with and without disabilities.*

*Creative Services T: 609.514.9494*

Photography © Victoria Will

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