

Citizens Options Unlimited COMPASS Semi-Annual Report

DEI Conference

Beyond the Comfort Zone:

Understanding and Eradicating Injustice, Racism and
Inequality in the Field of Developmental Disabilities

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

May 18, 2022

ahrc.org/deiconference
#ahrcdei

Citizens proudly joins AHRC Nassau, in conjunction with leaders in the private and public sector, for the first Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Virtual Conference, “Beyond the Comfort Zone: Understanding and Eradicating Injustice, Racism and Inequality in the Field of Developmental Disabilities” on Wednesday, May 18, 2022.

Our Executive Director, Stanford Perry, shared the following call to action both within Citizens and to the outside community.....

“As neighbors, fellow citizens and people of different backgrounds and experiences, we can choose a better future. It will require work as individuals. It will require new ways of operating within organizations and government. It will require constructive conflict, opportunities and new ideas. It will be a process, but one well worth the effort. We are committed to this future as individuals and as an agency dedicated to advancing dignity and respect for all.”

It is with great pleasure we invite our fellow citizens to join us on May 18, 2022. We thank our Diversity Committee for all their efforts and look forward to supporting this exciting, culture changing event. Sign up to receive updates at ahrc.org/deiconference



Mission Statement & Management Plan Annual Review

Each year, Citizens reviews the agency's Mission Statement and Management Plan. It began with the Council and Compass committee reviews in the fall. There were no changes recommended to the mission statement. Below are the changes recommended to the Compass management plan.

Vision Statement
A world where all people
are valued.



PART 1 – MISSION STATEMENT REVIEW:

Council Review:

1. Council Review: No changes are recommended. The council feels the mission statement is good. They feel it is clear, concise and speaks to the Agency goals and values.
2. COMPASS Committee Review: No changes are recommended. The committee agrees with the council.

PART II - MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW:

Criterion #1 - Board and Management Commitment:

1. Add: Additional person supported to the Board of Directors.
2. Continue: Board of Directors physical plant inspections to be conducted remotely, if needed, to not compromise health and safety due to the pandemic.

Criterion #2 - Mission Statement and Commitment to the ISE:

1. Add: Strengthen systems related to Personal Outcome Measures to promote a Person Centered Plan for each person.

Criterion #3 – Empowerment:

1. Add to Diversity Initiative: Person supported to serve as a member of the DEI Committee.
2. Add Respectful Interactions to monthly rights training series.
3. Add “Empowering You” during virtual Friday Day Services to management plan and change Empowerment Training to as needed.

Criterion #5 – Self-Survey:

1. Pending: Assess possible changes to self-survey process. OPWDD Risk Stratified Survey Process is pending implementation. Upon receipt of system and protocols, RA will assess and obtain all stakeholders' input regarding possible changes to the self-survey process.

Criterion #6 – Valued Outcomes:

1. Assess and possibly revise Personal Outcome Measures Quality Reviews to strengthen support of each person's desired personal outcomes.

Criterion #7 – Quality Improvement: No recommended changes



Mission Statement in Action

Jerri Walker By Michelle Rudoff

Jerri Walker is a lady that is always there when you need a friend to talk to going above and beyond each and every day by not only making a better life for herself by going to school, but she is also the head of the volunteer program called music in action who fights food insecurity which is made up of the campers from Camp Loyaltown meeting over Zoom and running the Camp Loyaltown site based respite program out of Brookville. While she is managing a volunteer program and camp program and going to school, she also does everything and anything that is asked of her working in Plainview and Brookville. The individuals of the Camp Loyaltown virtual and site-based programs love seeing Jerri and always leave her programs with a smile and a few good laughs. We all love you Jerri.



Karen Jose written by Janine Guzzo (QIDP for 919 Rainbow Commons Court).

Karen came to us with an unhappy past and a diagnosis of deafness. She had moved to the US from the Philippines leaving behind most of her closest family members. She did not have any friendships or family relationships and despite attempts, she was hesitant to build rapport with most staff.

Seeing this, the team at 919 wanted to help Karen have a better quality of life and be surrounded by people who cared for her. It took each of us weeks and even months before she began trusting us but once she did we were able to catch glimpses of the real Karen, a happy, goofy Karen. Due to the communication barrier, we sought interpreter services and with the help of an amazing interpreter, the team was able to learn what Karen's wants and needs were, both short and long term. Karen had expressed her desire to return home to her sisters and family and expressed that she has wanted to return for years. She expressed wanting to reunite with her friends and her sisters; she expressed how she wanted to go home and engage in her old hobbies and even get a job again.



After months of dedicated work, we were able to send Karen home to the Philippines on New Year's Eve so that she could celebrate bringing in the New Year with those that love her the most. They all celebrated a new year and the start of a new life together. Since her return she has begun resuming the life she missed the most. She has been thriving and has done a complete 180. Her family reports she is laughing, joking around, eating and having fun! The team is truly happy to have been able to have supported Karen in obtaining the life she deserved and desired. While we miss her, we are so thrilled to continue getting updates on how well she is doing!

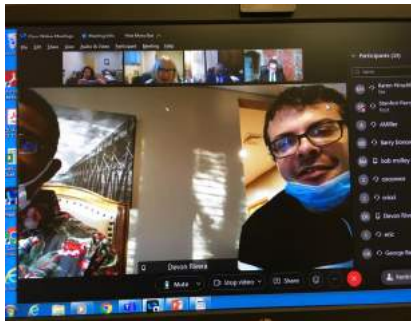
Mission Statement in Action

Rows of hand-made scarves, hats, and plush teddy bears placed on display by Matthew Hofele offer a window into the skill, time and dedication that goes into each piece he creates. Matt, who is supported by Citizens Options Unlimited, Inc., has been crocheting and knitting pieces over the years to raise money for juvenile diabetes research, sharing that each piece can take 1-2 hours to create and sometimes longer if made to order.

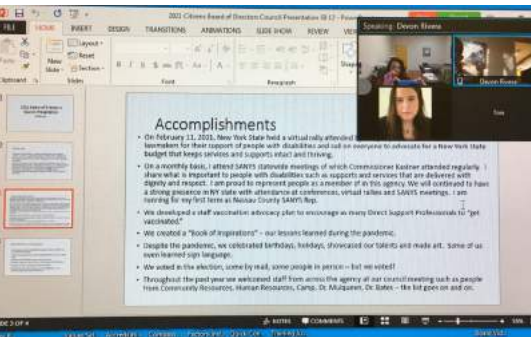
Like Matt, you can show your generosity in a variety of ways this giving season—whether it's helping a neighbor, advocating for people with IDD, sharing a skill, or becoming an Angel. Everyone has something to give and every act of generosity counts.



November 10, 2021 Council Annual Presentation to the Board of Directors



Citizens Board of Directors has continued to meet virtually over the past few months due to COVID-19. On November 10, 2021, Matt Hofele, a member of the Citizens and Executive Councils, joined the meeting virtually to share the Councils' accomplishments with the Citizens Board of Directors. The accomplishments were highlighted in a video which showed pictures of advocates carrying out these accomplishments.



The annual presentation being virtual this year was different but great. Seeing all the events since the beginning of the pandemic reminded us of all we have accomplished during these challenging times and of how strong the Council and Board connection remains. The annual presentation continues to provide a vital link between the Board of Directors and the Councils, enabling the Board of Directors to learn of the Councils' endeavors and share in their goals.



Thank you Matt!

Board Physical Plant Inspections by Colleen Tapia

The annual Board of Directors physical plant inspections meeting was held virtually on February 9, 2022. A special welcome was extended to new Board inspector Joe Bosnack.

The Board of Directors physical plant inspections continued virtually this past year and have been very successful. The virtual inspections initiated in May of 2021 remain a successful way to conduct Board follow-up inspections, assisting in addressing maintenance items in need of attention. It has also been an invaluable connection, support, and form of recognition for staff during these challenging times.

It was noted that self-surveys completed in 2021 identified an increase in general maintenance citations as well as housekeeping issues; it is expected that this trend will improve as the COVID-19 restrictions are lessened and more maintenance/administrative oversight can be provided.

A hybrid approach will be implemented going forward with an on-site inspection preferred. On-site inspections will resume if a small amount of people are present (no more than 10 people) and all COVID protocols are followed (health screening, masks worn, social distancing maintained, etc.). A virtual inspection may be completed when an on-site inspection is not possible.

Thank you to Sue Dowling who coordinates this process.



Members of the Board of Directors and Citizens management staff at the annual Physical Plant Inspection meeting.

Annual Board of Directors COMPASS Training

Do you know what Social Capital is? Well, Citizens Board of Directors knows. The Annual COMPASS Board training was given on March 16, 2022 by Susan Gill Orange, Certified POM Trainer, and Bridget Cariello, Program Administrator/Day Services, who discussed the value of Social Capital in people's lives and development of such throughout the organization. Thank you to both for this thoughtful and educational program. It included information on the importance of digital equity for all people supported, as well as connections formed through Community Partners. We hope a strong commitment for continuous growth and adaption as a COMPASS agency that has made us strong through the adversity of this past year continues.



Staff Recruitment and Retention: Kathleen Graham

The annual COMPASS recertification validation visit was held the week of May 18, 2021. There was a recommendation made to enhance our communication regarding recruitment and retention of DSPs across stakeholders. The following are the initiatives implemented over the last quarter. The Diversity Committee was very busy this past month, hosting a 2-part lunch & learn series entitled "Women in the Workplace: Breaking the Glass Ceiling and Facing Gender Bias at work". The first session included 2 successful businesswomen sharing their experiences; the second was a presentation given by our agency HR department on the status of women in our agency's workforce. The agency celebrated National Women Physician's Day by recognizing the women doctors at Advantage Care and Citizen's own Dr. Dorit Ben Moha, Medical Director of the Helen Kaplan, ICF. Thanks to Susan Limiti & Carol Meyerson, Day Hab & Pre Voc participants sang songs of praise and created thank you cards. To view the videos, click below. [National Women Physicians Day - ahrc \(wistia.com\)](#) [Thank you video for the women doctors - ahrc \(wistia.com\)](#)

If a conflict with another staff member is stressing you out, handling it in the right manner can lead to a better work environment. Click below for some valuable information on Conflict Resolution:

[NEWSLETTER February -Relias Access -Conflict Resolution .pdf \(convio.net\)](#)

In addition, the training department hosted a presentation on 2/16/22 for DSP staff and supervisors focusing on Emotional Intelligence in everyday work situations, as well as Cultural Sensitivity training, and the awareness of different types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, etc.).

The Sibling Group Stays Connected

In response to the pandemic, the Sibling Group continued to meet virtually over the past six months. The meetings have been held approximately every two months. Most recently Partners Health Plan joined the group to share information and answer questions on Care Coordination as well as other services/opportunities available for their members. It was informative and helpful information.



2022 SIBLING GROUP

Please join us for virtual meetings!

Sibling Group Virtual Meetings at 5:00pm.

Contact Colleen Tapia at ctapia@ahrc.org for details on how to connect.

For more information, please call 516-293-2016 extension 5492 or email ctapia@ahrc.org

The Artistic Vibe Lives at Shoreham ICF

By Susan Gill Orange

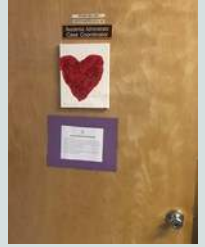
Although the ICF in Shoreham is fairly new to Citizens, a lot of good things happen in the houses that the people supported there would love to share. During my recent conversation with Esther Shea, QIDP for the Magnolia house, we talked about hobbies and interests that people have in common. Esther mentioned that the Arts seem to have a prominent place of importance in the work several people at Magnolia do.



Drawing and using art materials creates an atmosphere not only of productivity but of peace and aesthetic engagement. In order to promote this, recently a "Paint and Sip" event took place at Shoreham where several of the residents - Patty, Sandra, Eric and Lori - enthusiastically painted Valentine images while gathering together to paint and sip on their favorite soft drink, which in this case was Hawaiian Punch! Music played softly in the background and the results were lovely examples of artistic imagery. The artwork was hung in the common area of Magnolia house and is currently on display there.



The pursuit of artistic expression has many benefits. It allows people to express their deepest emotions and gives them an outlet to interpret and reveal the things in the world that touch them on a daily basis. It also allows for social interaction and a community connection where a common interest binds people together and allows for a better quality of life. It was a wonderful experience for the artists of Shoreham and we look forward to more instances of creative expression from them very soon!



People and POMs in Action By Kate Zimmerman

Last year, we learned about Matt Hofele and his passion for horticulture and gardening. In the article by POM interviewer and trainer Susan Gill Orange, we learn about Matt's love of gardening starting at a young age growing flowers in his yard. As an adult, Matt utilized his POM interview to advocate for the ability to explore gardening and horticulture, which led to the creation of a garden at his residence where Matt has successfully grown tomatoes, cucumbers and pumpkins. Matt continues exploring his journey by researching the formal science of horticulture online and through YouTube videos.



Matt tending his garden



Eric, "Show Us Your POMs" presenter

In spring of 2022 we'll be introducing Eric Ross during the premier episode of the new initiative "Show Us Your POMs". Eric used his POM interview as an opportunity to advocate for the goals he'd like to achieve, and to increase his circle of support to help him achieve his dreams. Within weeks of his POM interview and Life Plan Meeting, Eric had already reached a major milestone in achieving his first goal. Eric, with the support of the POM Department, will be sharing his story and how each member of his personally selected team supported his success.

"Show Us Your POMs" is the newest initiative from the AHRC Nassau/Citizens POM department designed to celebrate all of the amazing accomplishments, both big and small, of the people we support as well as recognize the dedicated staff whose support makes it all possible. Quarterly, it gives us all a moment to take a step back and celebrate EVERYONE!

What are you working on? Who's supporting you? Do you want to celebrate with us during "Show Us Your POMs"? That's great! We'd love to hear all about it and celebrate with you! Share your stories and pictures with any member of the POM department! We want to hear all about it, from the beginning with your POM interview and life plan meeting, to the steps you took and the people who helped you! We'll send out awards and special gifts to those who participate.

Send stories and photos to:

Kate Zimmerman KZimmerman@ahrc.org

Helene Ramer HRamer@ahrc.org

Susan Gill Orange SGill@ahrc.org

To address comments and concerns, contact Department Supervisor BCariello@ahrc.org

Meet Stephanie by Helene Ramer

I had the pleasure of interviewing Stephanie in early January. She lives in Manhasset and takes great pride in her home.

Stephanie is very observant about her environment and enjoys decorating. She is enthusiastic about having a beautifully set table each day and has assumed this responsibility as she likes each step in the process and is diligent in her efforts. Stephanie places gloves on and washes each table. Each day, Stephanie picks out different colored tablecloths and changes the tablecloths that are on the table. Stephanie loves different colored tablecloths and especially enjoys going to Target and purchasing new tablecloths to create different looks in her house.



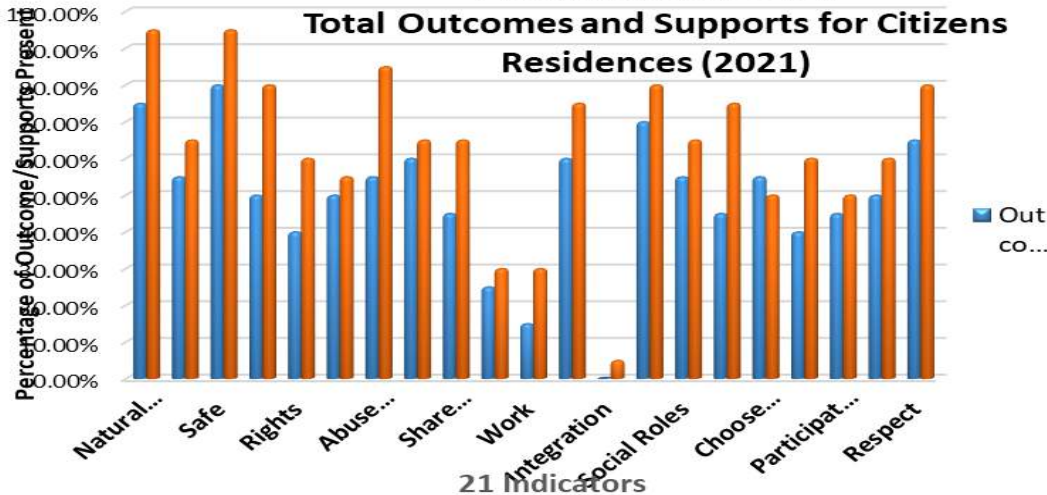
Stephanie's decorating sense extends to her bedroom. She makes her bed every day and arranges her stuffed animals in a very thoughtful display, just the way she likes them. Stephanie is also very fashion conscious and takes great joy in picking out nice outfits.

Stephanie's Personal Outcome is to be supported in her desire to buy new tablecloths and decorate her home. Stephanie may also enjoy looking at decorating magazines and on-line decorating sites for inspiration as well as pursuing school or work in this area. Her housemates are truly fortunate for Stephanie's decorating passion making things look so nice. Thank you, Stephanie!

Personal Outcome Measures Update

POM Interview Data:

Total Outcomes and Supports for Citizens Residences (2021)



In 2021, the department continues to be staffed with one CQL Certified Interviewer-Helene Ramer, one CQL Certified Trainer/Interviewer, Susan Gil-Orange, and one Agency CQL Trained Interviewer Kate Zimmerman. Each year the POMS Department interviews a different set of people supported by Citizens through various services.

For 2021, 277 interviews were conducted vs. 260 people interviewed in 2020. POMs are typically conducted every two years or as requested, with the exception that people with formal *rights restrictions* are interviewed annually. Therefore, while it is useful to

compare data for 2021 with 2020 to reflect larger trends within the agency (as well as trends influenced by OPWDD), each year's data represents a different group of people with different wants and needs that can change over time. In 2021, 17 more people receiving services were interviewed using CQL POMS methodology than in 2020. It is noteworthy to mention that the POMS Department continued to interview the people we support even during the pandemic via phone or virtual interview and face to face only when safe to do so.

People who have been identified as having a *rights restriction* will continue to be interviewed on a yearly basis. It is our goal to use The CQL Online Database to track the data obtained from interviews. Within our family of organizations, Quality enhancement efforts continue to focus on personal outcome measures (POM). Based on CQL guidance, the strongest POM indicators of people leading quality lives are: Rights, people choose where to live/work, and people choose services and realize personal goals. Upon analysis of the 2021 POMS data we have found that:

- In 2021, the outcomes met for people's rights remained stable; there was a noted 4% increase to supports within this area. This increase is likely due to continued efforts of Compass and our Executive Council, and program teams in reaching out to the people we support to ensure they understand their rights and opportunities, especially during such challenging times. Within the domain of continuity/security the outcomes numbers remained low but stable with an increase of 5% for supports within this area.
- In 2021, there were overall increases in outcomes for people experiencing safety (3.73%) utilizing natural supports (2.2%) and being free from abuse and neglect (2.14%).
- In 2021, there was a significant decrease in outcomes and supports within the areas of interaction (-13.6%) social roles (-16.23) and community participation (31.21%). The data indicates a significant decrease in outcomes and supports within the areas of choosing where they live (-22.76 outcomes and -28.61 supports) and work (outcomes 22.74 and supports -23.96) in both outcomes and supports.

Candidate Speeches for SANYS Office

Hats off to Steven Barsh and Matt Hofele on their run for SANYS office. They didn't win but their hard work and dedication to self-advocacy was and is outstanding. As shown in their speeches below, they are an inspiration for all. We commend their efforts!

Steve Barsh : Hello, my name is Steven Barsh I am running for the Nassau County rep for SANYS I am the current secretary for the Citizens council, and I also have been the president of the Citizens council for 3 years. I am also an advisor for the Executive council. I am the first one to volunteer to help others and sit on a committee. I would be an excellent rep because I am hard working and always put my best forward no matter what is going on I always make time to advocate for my peers and DSPs. I am very passionate when it comes to my advocating . I would focus on any issues or concerns you have no matter how challenging it may be. I have been a poll inspector for the board of elections for the past 5 years. I help my peers get the information to register . I am a part of many different advocacy groups and committees. I also volunteer in my community for my temple and for SANYS for the Rights to Ride committee. I use different transportation vehicles and companies to travel to gets myself to different places and conferences. I have been to many different advocacy conferences . I have been spoken to different legislators on different advocacy issues. Thank you for taking time to hear my speech and please vote for me Steven

Matt Hofele: Hi all....I am Matthew Hofele...your current Suffolk county representative for SANYS. I love helping the community by volunteering at a food pantry. I love gardening and I make hats and scarfs and then sell them and I donate to a diabetes foundation to find a cure. I also am running to be the Suffolk County representative again!. I have been through a lot in my past and it's been an honor advocating and supporting you through these tough times. I enjoy helping you and advocating for you all because I want the best for US . To be treated as equal and with the same rites and respect that EVERYONE deserves. While being on the board. These past 3 years I was also elected to be the statewide secretary for two terms as well as being on the board. I want to continue to serve as the Suffolk County representative for the 2nd term. If I am elected I will be able to continue to advocate for all of NY! I will continue to talk to state officials to make life easier and. Improve the life you already have.

We All Want To Know - Citizens Services Update

Michelle Rudoff, Executive Council member, welcomed Savita Sharma, Director of Camp Loyaltown to the Executive Council Meeting on February 2, 2022. Everyone is excited and thrilled to hear that Camp will resume this summer, but have many questions. It was also great to meet the new Assistant Directors for Camp and Recreation.



Rights Rally



The annual Rights Rally was held virtually on October 20, 2021. It was a fun, festive, educational and motivational event. Steve Holmes, previously from SANYS, provided opening remarks and Stanford Perry, Executive Director, commended the advocates for their continued advocacy during the pandemic. The POM Department presented a fun game called “Rights or Responsibilities”



Then awards were presented. The award for Self-Advocate of the Year was given to Noah Probert and it was presented by Director, Savita Sharma.



The rally ended with songs by Coleen Mackin and Michelle Rudoff. It was wonderful to all be together, celebrating people’s rights and the strength that we all gain from each other and our community.



Welcome Anthony!



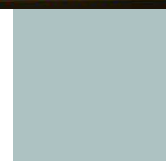
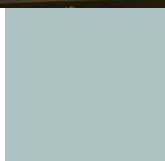
We are so pleased to welcome Anthony Rossi to the Executive Council. Anthony has been a member of Virtual Connections for the past year and was invited to attend the Executive Council following his attendance at a Council meeting where Savita Sharma came to update people on the status of Camp Loyaltown as well as other services offered by Citizens. Anthony enjoyed attending this meeting and has been present at all meetings since that time. It is a true pleasure to watch his advocacy begin to take hold and the positive way in which he views his services, supports and future. Anthony has enjoyed learning about his rights and hearing from various administrators and special guests that attend the Council meeting. Welcome Anthony!

Executive Council—DEI Consultant



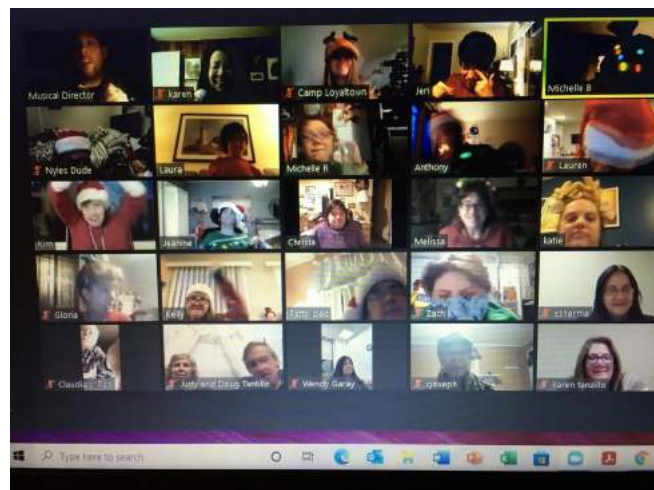
On October 13, 2021 the Executive Council enjoyed meeting with Dawn Cooper, DEI Consultant, to learn about and share their DEI thoughts, experiences and desires.

It was so nice to have Dawn join and share her thoughts and visions and to learn more about diversity, equity and inclusion.



Virtual Connections Holiday Concert By Michelle Rudoff

The Virtual Connections program has been working really hard practicing in the months leading up to their holiday concert. This concert is different than all the other concerts they have done in the past. Because this concert isn't being run by the musical director Nyle Mohan like in the past but this concert is being co-hosted by Kelly Kildare, Michelle Rudoff and Eric Byrnes. All the performers picked the holiday songs that they would like to sing for the concert. It was super fun!



Citizens Council by Tessa Guillaume-Lewis

The Citizens Council has had sporadic participation in the last few months. Therefore the election of a new Board has been placed on hold until April when more robust participation is expected. The members are working to campaign for their spot. One campaign to get others to attend the meetings has been spearheaded by Steven Barsh, where he will be calling each house the day before or the morning of the meeting to promote attendance. The group discussed other ideas to enhance participation by the houses that miss the meetings monthly. One recommendation was to consider having the meetings in-person again in Plainview and having a hybrid meeting. Steven suggested to have the meeting in the parking lot when the weather becomes warmer. Another suggestion is to have a bowling party for the Council to start to promote attendance by all. For the Council revalidation visit in May the Council discussed hosting a bowling event or a virtual bingo game.

The members also continue to review their rights monthly and learn how best to exercise those rights, taking the outcome and consequences into consideration. The members would like to invite a fire marshal and one of the behavior intervention specialists to speak at their July and August meeting. The members on the whole are looking to life getting back to normal where they can venture in public places without the fear of getting sick and able to meet up in person without the extra precautions that at times can be a hindrance to having a good visit with friends and family.

Please don't stop the music!

Put on your dancing shoes to join in
on dance night at Respite Connections

every Friday from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. in Brookville!

Visit www.citizens-inc.org/respitconnections



Check this out! The [#RespiteConnections](https://www.citizens-inc.org/respitconnections) crew celebrated the holiday season in style, dressed in their favorite festive attire! We hope you had a peaceful and healthy holiday season and we look forward to all that 2022 brings!



What Do You Love to Do? We Want to Hear From You!



Ryan Mack Assistant Director
Camp Loyaltown

Please join in welcoming Ryan Mack as the Assistant Director of Camp Loyaltown. Ryan wants to hear your ideas for Camp. He is looking forward to translating *your camp visions into experiences and opportunities year round* at Camp Loyaltown. Please share your ideas for camp with Ryan by e-mailing him at rmack@citizens-inc.org.

Please also join in welcoming Paul MacMillan, the Assistant Director of Respite/ Recreation. Paul is excited to start developing recreation and respite opportunities. Paul will be meeting with people who live at home, AHRC and Citizens for your suggestions to direct these opportunities. *If you have any suggestions for Respite/ Recreational programs, please feel free to contact Paul at pmacmillan@citizens-inc.org.*



Paul MacMillan the Assistant
Director of Respite/ Recreation



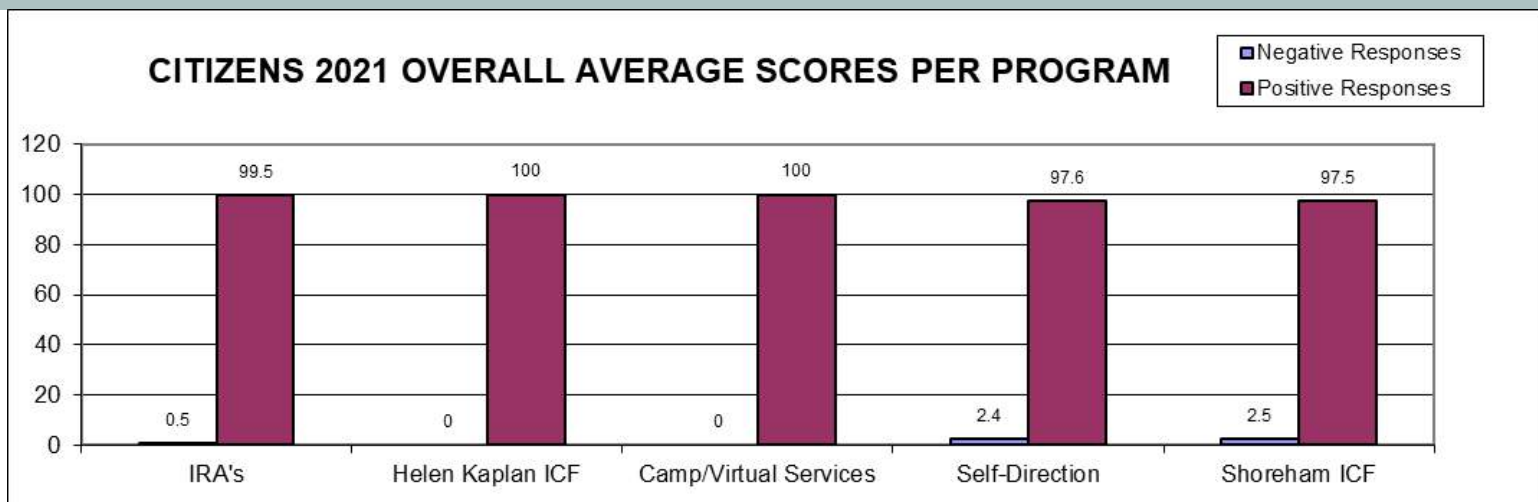
Thank You to a Great Team! Kate Graham

The following were the initiatives implemented over the last quarter to show our staff how important they are to the organization:

- * The Diversity Committee was very busy this past month, hosting a 2-part lunch & learn series entitled “Women in the Workplace: Breaking the Glass Ceiling and Facing Gender Bias at work” The first session included 2 successful businesswomen sharing their experiences, the second was a presentation given by our agency HR department on the status of women in our agency’s workforce. In case you missed it, here is the link for the 1st session: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/bdva24pOF7VfI4q9CAkNmE2UWBJTutD6xUQv8zhT_ysJpqYsdLntLPAbWq21ROPK.f7zMtCrHEChW_wOL
- * The Diversity committee also invited everyone to test their knowledge of Black History, by providing a Black History Trivia quiz. The winners were treated to a complimentary lunch from Wheatley Farms Catering.
- * The Agency celebrated National Women Physician’s Day by recognizing the women doctors at Advantage Care and Citizens own Dr. Dorit Ben Moha, Medical Director of the Helen Kaplan, ICF. Thanks to Susan Limiti & Carol Meyerson, Day Hab & Pre Voc participants sang songs of praise and created thank you cards. To view the videos, click below.
[National Women Physicians Day - ahrc \(wistia.com\)](#) [Thank you video for the women doctors - ahrc \(wistia.com\)](#)
- * If a conflict with another staff member is stressing you out, handling it in the right manner can lead to a better work environment. Click below for some valuable information on Conflict Resolution:
[NEWSLETTER February -Relias Access -Conflict Resolution .pdf \(convio.net\)](#)
- * In addition, the training department hosted a presentation on 2/16/22 for DSP staff and supervisors focusing on Emotional Intelligence in everyday work situations, as well as Cultural Sensitivity training, and the awareness of different types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, etc.)
- * Citizens Administration has a renewed commitment to ensuring all managers complete the Nassau Community College Leadership Training Cohort.
- * We will be celebrating our Employees of the 4th Quarter Event on Friday, March 11. While this event will be held virtually, we are looking forward to the day that we can enjoy the celebration in person. Please be on the lookout for our “Winners Flyer” and give a great big pat on the back to your hard-working colleagues.

Appreciation is a wonderful thing: it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well” -Voltaire

Individual Questionnaire Results 2021



Citizens provided people who receive services with a questionnaire to obtain their individual feedback regarding program services. An agency-wide trend is noted if more than ten percent of those surveyed identified a concern to a particular question. Individual advocates assisted people who requested or required help completing the questionnaire. Please refer to individual program reports for more specific information.

No agency-wide trends were identified. The results across programs were excellent, with each program scoring above 97.5 percent overall. This is consistent with previous years. A trend is noted when a score is 89% or less. Individual programs assess and address any program trends. Corrective action is required for any area scoring below 90%. Additionally, comments/concerns identified in the questionnaire are also addressed via corrective action.



Valued Outcomes

13

EMPOWERMENT TRAININGS

For information or registration:

Call: 516-293-2016, ext. 5362

Join us for “Empowering You”!

A weekly virtual day services opportunity.

Watch for additional empowerment trainings that are scheduled upon request.

For information, registration or to request a topic:

Please visit our website at Citizens.org or email ctapia@ahrc.org or call 516 293-2016 ext. 5492

FAMILY SEMINAR SERIES

Join us for future webinars via WebEx right from your own home!

Open to members of the community, family members and advocates.

For information or registration,

please visit our website at AHRC.org or email ctapia@ahrc.org or call 516-293-2016, ext. 5492

University of Personal Growth by Helene Ramer

2022 Schedule presented by the POM Department to increase: *Education*Experience*Exposure*

Join Us Every Tuesday 10:30-11:30 via Microsoft Teams

March 1- Popular Love Songs
March 8 - Highlights of the Hudson Valley
March 15- Fall Prevention - Part 1
March 22 – Native American Cooking
March 29 - Fall Prevention - Part 2
April 5- DJ Justin from Levittown Hubsite
April 12- Bicycle and Walking Safety
April 19- Birds in Your Backyard Spring Edition
April 26- Yoga with Pru

May 3- Overcoming Stress and Anxiety through Meditation
May 10- Music of George Gershwin- Broadway
May 17- Shipwrecks of Long Island
May 24- Paul Engleman Concert
May 31- Life Plan Meeting/ Advocacy with Michelle

For more information or suggestions please contact Helene Ramer hramer@ahrc.org 516-293-2016 x5483



Citizens Respite

For more information please contact Respite@citizens-inc.org



Empowering You! By Bridget Cariello

The Personal Outcome Measures (POM) Department has developed and launched virtual “Empowering You,” Training Modules (about 22 training modules) to educate people and their staff on the 21 personal outcome measures and how to support people to live their own best lives. The sessions have been running two times a week virtually on Wednesday and Friday since April 2021. The Department will begin recording the modules for Relias (the agency’s training platform), archiving them for the agency’s new Remote Learning and Resource Center, and for training purposes to be used at Citizens .

For more information on how to join, please contact Susan Gill Orange at sgill@ahrc.org



The COMPASS Committee & The Quality Enhancement Process

AHRC Nassau and Citizens: 2021 QUALITY ENHANCEMENTS

In 2021 the pandemic continued to create challenges for the systematic measurement of quality improvement goals. This included reduced data collection due to OPWDD regulatory pauses in 2021 and the continued need to attend to higher priority health/safety items.

It is clear that Citizens culture of on-going improvement, made it possible to develop and adopt improvements effectively and on a large scale during the pandemic. This culture certainly supported the wealth of new improvements developed, as well as the extensive collaboration across all stakeholders, along with the rapid deployment of new supports/services in response to the pandemic. This is commendable and a tribute to all stakeholders.

The pandemic has forced us to reassess and think creatively about quality in a post-COVID-19 world. Stakeholders' well-being and emotional support continue to be at the center of all quality efforts. It is evident that many people are now experiencing pandemic burnout and that a sense of exhaustion is on the rise. Thus, as we continue with the pandemic, it appears important to take a moment to reflect back on all that has been accomplished. It is wonderful to see the extraordinary enhancements in people's lives during these difficult times.

Throughout the pandemic, considerable changes to supports and services have been made. The need to consider which changes have been helpful and should continue, and which routine services/supports do not need to be reinstated, would be beneficial. We look forward to exploring these items during CQL accreditation in 2022.

ALL FACTORS

- Everyone rallied to advocate for the right to receive the COVID vaccine. And we did it! Beginning in January 2021, members of the Agencies began to receive the vaccines at the Advantage Care Health Center, and community health organizations, as part of the phase 1A COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan.
- Extensive Diversity Equity Inclusion initiatives were initiated this year and included the hosting of a lunch and learn series. Sharing, enlightenment and growth are evident!
- Exciting changes are underway at AHRC's Freeport work center this year. The workshop has begun the transition to a fully integrated business center. The Wheatley Farms and Arts Center corporate banner includes culinary services, commercial cleaning, landscaping and snow removal, greenhouse and nursery, embroidery services, as well as packaging and shipping.
- The Board of Directors physical plant inspection process was changed to virtual visits in March 2021 to enhance connections and supports during the pandemic.

RIGHTS

- Four people signed a Supported Decision Making agreement this year. Congratulations!
- New rights training, including decision making and COVID safety, were added to the monthly trainings.
- A Book of Inspirations was developed that highlights lessons learned from the pandemic that can be used every day.

DIGNITY & RESPECT

- A Respectful Interactions training was hosted for people and families to support and educate all on the basic human right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- AHRC hosted the annual rights rally virtually. It was a wonderful opportunity to share and celebrate rights.
- Virtual Family Seminars were offered on various topics.
- A Lifetime Achievement was awarded to people achieving a high level of advocacy for ten plus years.
- Regular "live" updates on DSP recruitment and retention was provided to people directly from the Agency talent and support team.

NATURAL SUPPORTS

- Although in-person gatherings were sporadic in 2021, we are grateful that we had more opportunities to be together in person in 2021 and to return to some normal routines to celebrate together and see old friends.
- Alternate ways of being together also continued, to support people to maintain relationships with their family and friends. This has included, as needed during the pandemic, virtual visits, parties/celebrations, telephone calls, etc.
- Personal outcome measures data (outcome and supports) remained high for people's connection to natural supports (family, friends, etc.), a wonderful reflection of people's satisfaction. The data reflects what the entire nation was feeling during NYS pause; however, the Agencies efforts are notable in maintaining and promoting natural supports. In spite of these efforts, there were slight decreases noted in the data related to people feeling connected to natural supports. Now that the restrictions related to the pandemic have been lifted, efforts will continue in this area to educate and provide supports for people to achieve their desired outcomes.
- In response to the pandemic, a virtual Sibling Group, as well as virtual Family Meetings, continued to be held this year to promote connections and provide support as well as information for all.
- Family and individual satisfaction scores that relate to natural supports demonstrate extremely high levels of satisfaction (90-99% satisfaction). The lowest satisfaction score was 90% with other satisfaction scores 98th percentile.

BEST POSSIBLE HEALTH

- An overall decrease in emergency room visits was noted due to the emergence of new telehealth capabilities and the ability to do COVID testing on site during the pandemic.
- Systems continued to be modified and implemented to promote the best possible health for people during the pandemic.

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

- Physical Plant Board of Directors Inspections resumed in 2021 via phone/virtual visits to support maintenance of sites.

CONTINUITY AND SECURITY

- In 2021, data from a cross program interest survey continued to be gathered to capture people's interests, desires, and talents regarding how they wish to spend their time throughout the day to create services that are aligned with their interests.
- A staff matching survey was developed to match staff interest with the interests of people supported to share out in 2022.
- The Wheatley Farms and Arts center expanded its services to include hydroponics and gardening education as well as stackable trainings to aid people in learning grooming and animal husbandry as well as maintenance, care for stalls and the overall farm environment.
- A "grow to give" initiative is underway through our partnership with Island Harvest, and various church and local food pantries.
- Two houses were reopened in Melville for people moving from homes in Port Jefferson that another organization had to close.
- A new house located in West Islip opened on 10/26/21. It is home for six young people who recently left school.
- Major construction was completed in one house/IRA to accommodate senior people remaining in their home.
- Significant renovations were completed in one house to create a separate living area for enhanced personal space.
- Four additional homes are in various phases of development. Three of the homes are for people aging out of residential schools, and one is for people who require enhanced behavioral supports.
- During the pandemic, tablets were given to all homes to ensure that people were able to maintain video contact with family and friends.

STAFF RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

- We expressed our deepest thanks during Direct Support Professional week. This year, DSP week was celebrated with breakfasts, brunches, food trucks, gift cards, raffles, etc. It also included personal moments of sincere thanks from people supported, families, colleagues and community members.
- An annual Employee Appreciation Day was held as a drive through event in October 2021 with over 500 employees in attendance. There was a Halloween theme, with music, dance performances, and gifts for all. It was a festive and fun day.
- The agency was thrilled to resume the Employee of the Quarter and Length of Service recognition awards as well as various recognition events such as DSP of the Year, DSP Appreciation Week, Hero's Luncheon, and Caught in the Act events.
- Enhanced communication continued to be promoted through increased use of text messaging and robo calls, as well as DSP Focus Groups, semi-annual open forums, enhanced email communication (Constant Contact), HR/EMT program site visits to be scheduled. Resumption of monthly employee newsletter.
- Continued enhanced recruitment and retention efforts.
- This year a relationship was formed with Minority Millennials. Minority Millennials is a resource specifically dedicated to recruiting people of color for all positions.
- This year 81 employees to date have completed the Leadership Training with Nassau Community College.
- The on-site Master's Program offerings through Stony Brook University continued this year with expected completion in 2022.
- A new HR Business Partner position for Citizens was created and filled.
- An Employee Health Manager position was created and filled. This person oversees all Covid-19 related issues as well as employee health and wellness.

PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES

- A Personal Outcome Measures (POM) Rally, titled "When Your Dreams Take Flight" was held in May 2021 to celebrate and support people's dreams. The POM Department was also thrilled to return to in-person interviews, as desired, in August.

Regulatory Affairs by Eric Rosen

Between October 2021 and March 2022, site surveys were completed for seven (7) Citizens IRAs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a surge in infections, surveys were again suspended in January and February. Routine surveys resumed once again in March 2022.

Best practices identified through surveys completed during this reporting period include positive & respectful interactions, the promotion of independence & choice and overall satisfaction with supports and services.



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