



A Communication from Human Resources

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

April 2023

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Message from the CEO

Dear Fellow Employee,

I hope this email finds you safe and well! The strength of our programs and advocacy always comes back to you – our valuable staff. As we recognize and celebrate the passing of March as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we turn our attention to Spring and all the good things that come with a renewal of the earth, temperatures gradually rising, planting and growing new crops, and exploring new opportunities and destinations.

The New York State legislature has approved an 8.5% COLA in their one-house budget proposals. All we need now is for the Governor to support this increase to make it a part of the 2024 Budget. The one-house recommendations represent a significant increase from the 2.5% COLA proposed by Governor Hochul in her Executive Budget. This is a huge victory, and it could not have been accomplished without your hard work and diligent advocacy. Thank you!!!

We are disappointed that neither house included the [Direct Support Wage Enhancement](#) in their budget proposals, despite vocal support from advocates and lawmakers. However, we thank our dedicated advocates and legislative champions who positioned us to negotiate for the entire 8.5% COLA with the Governor and Division of Budget (DOB). The Assembly and Senate are expected to adopt their respective budget resolutions this week. The Conference Committee process will begin once the Senate and Assembly pass their individual One-House Budget Resolutions.

New Call to Action!

We are not yet over the finish line and need your help! Please reach out to legislators to thank them and tell them anything less than 8.5% is non-negotiable and send a message to Governor Hochul that she must adopt the 8.5% COLA in the Enacted Budget. **Participate in our [updated online campaign](#) to quickly send both these messages simultaneously with just one click!**

I continue to meet with our elected officials at the county, state, and federal level to advocate for funding and supports to enhance our programs and services. Your support by taking advantage of the one-click campaigns goes a long way in getting the attention of those who decide how services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are funded in NYS and the nation.

Call your elected officials to update them on your support of the 8.5% COLA. [Find their contact information here](#). Also, re-post our advocacy social media on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), tagging your elected officials.

Thanks for all you do to personify our Mission, Vision, and Values on a daily basis.

As always, your feedback and comments are welcome.

Best, Stanford

Executive Appreciation



- Thank you Colleen Tapia, Karen Hirschfeld, and Chris O'Connor for their hard work on putting together the COMPASS OPWDD PowerPoint presentation.
- Thank you to Barry Donowitz and Nicky Faranda for their hard work in engaging and building corporate partnership opportunities in NYSID.
- Thank you to Mary Gilleran, Posney Gilles, Jennifer Bonarrigo, and Justin Moskowitz, for their consistent effort in the staffing of the Medford house.
- Thank you to Dr. Hassan Abdulhaqq, Jim Stock, Denise Lamb, Narary Tulice, Laura Betancurt, Brandon Lyons, Rita Cruz, and Nanette Muzante for organizing and executing a successful Hero's Recognition Award Dinner.

As we recognize April as Autism Acceptance Month, we wanted to take this opportunity to share an important update regarding our advocacy efforts. We recently encouraged our employees to participate in "Blue Fridays" by wearing blue on all Fridays in April to show support for people on the autism spectrum. However, after careful consideration, we have decided to shift our focus and ask our employees to wear red instead.

This change reflects a growing movement within the autism community to shift the focus from awareness to acceptance. While awareness is undoubtedly essential, acceptance is the next step in promoting a more inclusive society. Acceptance means recognizing and celebrating the diversity of people with autism and embracing each person's unique strengths and abilities.

By wearing red instead of blue, we hope to draw attention to this shift in focus and encourage our staff to learn more about the autistic community's perspective on this issue. We also aim to promote a more inclusive and accepting workplace culture where everyone feels valued and supported.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in our advocacy efforts. Let's work together to create a more inclusive world for all.

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING
AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH
BY WEARING RED EVERY FRIDAY IN APRIL

IN APRIL WE WEAR RED



AUTISM ACCEPTANCE

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MERCH IS ALSO BEING SOLD @

ONE STOP *Gift Shop*

STOP BY AND GET YOUR AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MERCH TODAY!
PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO AUTISM ACCEPTANCE



Recognizing Heroes



Congratulations to Gretta N. Abraham-Imperial, Rob Busa, Adetomi Adetoye, Neil Capolongo, Moracia Ridge, Davelle Maurice Coleman, Cheryl A. Alicea, and Theresa Pandullo of [AHRC Nassau](#) and [Citizens Options Unlimited, Inc.](#) for their outstanding effort. They were honored by the leadership team at a hero recognition dinner catered by [WheatleyFarmsli](#). The honorees received a certificate of heroism, a gift bag courtesy of [WheatleyFarmsli](#), and a merit award that will show in their next paychecks. Thank you to each of the [#EverydayHeroes](#) that make up our team.

*A Huge Congratulations to the Outstanding
Employees chosen by their peers as*

“EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER”

Fourth Quarter 2022

Congratulations!



Victoria Hawley, Program Coordinator, Citizens

Rasahn Woon, Maintenance Supervisor, Administration

Hazel Duke , Executive Assistant, Advantage Care

Rachel Ryan, Speech Pathologist, BCCS – Marcus Ave

Alexander Amiruddin, Special Education Teacher III BCCS- Silver Building

Shaquasha Irby, DSP, Citizens Residential

Danielle Boben, Asst. House Manager, CLS

Evonne Bolanos, House Manager, CLS

Prince Porter, House Manager, CRP

Julie Giordano, RN, Day Hab

Jana Lichtenthal, Employment Training Specialist, Vocational Program

Connie Buckhannon, DSP, Helen Kaplan

Martha Masone, DSP, Shoreham

Nick Weber, BIS, Shoreham

*Please join us in congratulating these employees on their
exceptional and outstanding work every day!*



The Story Behind Our Shop

The One Stop Gift Shop values giving as a way to spread kindness throughout the world. That starts with how we're run. The One Stop Gift Shop gives people with developmental disabilities supported by AHRC Day Services an opportunity to participate fully in the running of the gift shop. People supported create and craft handmade items, answer the phone, take online orders, package and deliver merchandise, and keep track of inventory.

<https://one-stop-gift-shop.square.site/s/shop>

Use Code "ahrcn" at checkout to save an additional 15%





Xavier is caring, gentle, and kind. He loves what he does and cares very much for those he supports. He is the medical DSP for Ontario and my right hand. Xavier is committed, responsible, and reliable. When I am away, he steps right in and takes care of everything; the house never skips a beat. He truly is amazing.

– Tammy Vallancourt



I want to recognize Karyn Stevens and Ryan Sullivan for their unwavering support on 2/27. Gardenvue had a few call-ins due to the snow. We were able to maintain our minimum staffing because they volunteered to stay for the overnight shift. Their unselfish act is what we are about at Shoreham; the safety and the well-being of the people supported are paramount to all of us. – Posney Gilles



The BIS team is a great support to the people who live at Shoreham as well as to the staff. They are always willing to lend a helping hand, whether it's to help with bussing, meals, or to provide active treatment. They all have strong clinical knowledge and are wonderful advocates for the folks that live at Shoreham. – Lauren Jaquay

Chris Polistena is relied upon to bring up new ideas to better the lives of people who reside at Shoreham. He is someone who always strives to do better and provide the best services. – Lauren Jaquay

Nick Weber is constantly heard saying, "How can I help?" He works as a team player with staff, management, and nursing to ensure that safety and well-being are top priority. – Lauren Jaquay

Kamille Jenkins is frequently seen working with staff providing hands on modeling and training as well as frequent coverage. Those who know her have come to depend on her as a valuable team player. – Lauren Jaquay

Krysta Fabian seeks to improve her clinical knowledge and pass that information on to others through the development of trainings and as a mentor to newer clinicians as well as to staff. – Lauren Jaquay



I just wanted to take a moment to recognize Amanda, Scheudise, and all of the staff at Kirkland. There have been some major improvements over the last couple of months and Amanda has handled everything amazingly. Scheudise has also really stepped up in her new role as Assistant Manager providing Amanda with much needed support and back up. Kirkland had a major accomplishment last night when ALL 6 of the guys went out bowling, and all went smoothly. – Justin Moskowitz

The QIDP department is always willing to jump in and help including covering each other's caseloads, covering caseload of a vacant spot and assist with training new staff.

The QIDPs are also always willing to assist with the individuals on the floor anytime needed. They are a true asset to the Shoreham team! – Annemarie A. Pollard



ShyAnn has been with the agency since 2020, she worked through the pandemic and offered to pick-up extra shifts during that trying time. The people that we support can be challenging at times. However, she stays calm, focused, and get tasks done. She does an excellent job at promoting independence with the residents. She stays busy and has a good work ethic. She genuinely cares for the people she supports and make sure each one of them has the best day possible. Each and every time she's on shift she works very hard to make sure all her documentations are completed, as well as reminding her coworkers to complete theirs. She always offers to help other staff when needed and is always willing to do what's asked of her. It's comforting to know that we have a staff like ShyAnn who's willing to go above and beyond for the people we support. – Shauna Thomas

Lavern possess' all the skills and characteristics of a good employee. She's recognized among her peers as someone who's reliable, a team-player, and always working hard to keep the residence clean and organized. The people that she supports loves her unconditionally. They get excited as she walks through the door. Lavern is a kind and thoughtful person who puts the people she supports first and goes above and beyond for them. She worked very hard to earn the trust and respect of both residents and her coworkers. She's a great team-player. All in all, Lavern is a natural. She has brought many smiles and a strong sense of security to Manhasset. We thank you for all of your positive energy and compassion that you bring to this residence. – Shauna Thomas



Congratulations Nick Weber on your recent engagement! – Lauren Jaquay

Congratulations to Justin Moskowitz on his upcoming nuptials! Wishing you a lifetime of happiness together and a love that grows stronger with each passing day. -Citizens Team



Happenings !

Ontario Avenue



Ontario residents went to Michaels to buy some crafts for days that the weather is bad, or days they just want to stay in, they have things to do. They really love to do crafts and are very good and meticulous. They painted wooden dinosaurs, which are now displayed in their rooms.



Kevin out in the community paying for his purchase at Target.



Paul holding Ontario's new puppy addition.

915 Rainbow Commons Court



Michael at the Barclays for the Brooklyn NETS vs. New York Knicks. He is a huge basketball fan!

The Lion King - Northport IRA



On February 26, 2023, Citizens residents of Northport's IRA went to see The Lion King. This was their very first time ever seeing a Broadway show. Following so much fun at the show they then went to eat at Juniors Cheesecake to finish the day. They will be going to more Broadway shows in the future.

Kirkland Drive



On March 2, 2023 the residents at the Kirkland Drive IRA went out bowling to celebrate the promotion of DSP Scheudise Paul to Kirkland's Assistant Manager! Congratulations Scheudise, on your well-deserved promotion!

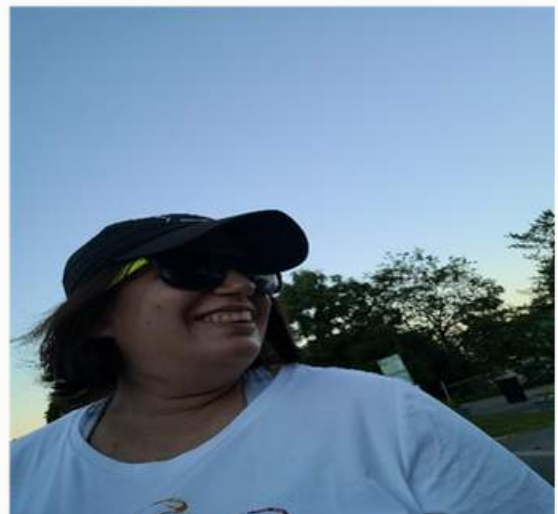
Manor Road



Manor Road residents enjoy partaking in competitive activities, so they chose to try laser tag for the very first time at Laser Bounce; this activity was a hit! They definitely want to do this again. The residents also went to Bowlero for a bowling/arcade trip and had tons of fun.

150 Port Washington





SPIRIT WEEK at Shoreham



Perfect day for Pajama Day!



Sporting leg warmers, neon, and scrunchies for 80's Day



Favorite Sweatshirt Day because we love being comfortable!

Recreation



Elon Tuckman, Community Relations Coordinator for the New York Riptides a professional lacrosse team who plays out of the Nassau Coliseum, was gracious enough to give complimentary tickets as a thank you for everything we as an organization do. Noah Probert, who participates in the FSS Recreation and Virtual Program is one of many who attended the New York Riptide Game and had a great time!



Always barrels of laughs when these two get together.



The fellas were pleasantly surprised with souvenirs bought for them by Activities Leader, Pete Torres, from a recent trip to Puerto Rico.



Shout out to Citizen's Self-Advocate Matthew Hofele for attending the Staffing Crisis Impact Forum and Rally at the Albany Capitol.





Congratulations to the students who have earned respected levels in the NADSP program!



The National Alliance of Direct Support Professional (NADSP) Program tests the ability to provide services in line with NADSP Code of Ethics; giving you the chance to earn recognition for all work you do in supporting our individuals and nationwide certification.

Agata Wlodarczyk

Paula Reinertsen

Pat Andreaci

Amanda Darbouze

Sophia Blackett

Frances Gotterbarn

Francois Saint Cyr

Sonia Montenegro

Debbie Perez Escalante

Dexter Gill



Internal Mobility Job Announcement



House Manager

Job Req: #2022-4727

Schedule: Sunday 11am- 7pm Mon-Thurs Flex 40 hrs.

Location: Syosset, NY

Program: Citizens Options Unlimited

Salary Range: \$58,500

Job Profile:

Citizens Options Unlimited (Citizens) Citizens believes that when people come together and work as a team great things happen. Citizens works closely with personal outcome trainers to assist people with I/DD in defining their personal goals and dreams, while developing a life plan that includes natural supports, community supports, and choice of service provision options.

- Supervises Direct Support staff by assigning responsibilities and specific activities to provide and encourage each resident to strive for autonomy.
- In conjunction with Program Coordinator, hires new employees by conducting interviews and completing all required personnel documentation to ensure that the residence is adequately staffed with qualified candidates
- Maintains weekly work schedules for all staff by assigning shifts based on availability and the particular requirements of each resident to ensure that appropriate care is administered at all times
- Maintains resident's bank accounts and expenditures by depositing and withdrawing all monies and reviewing monthly bank statements to ensure accuracy and adherence to individual budget.
- Maintains appropriate records of staff by observing and documenting issues relating to time, attendance, and level of performance, specific deficiencies, supervisory sessions and training needs to ensure the ongoing and effective supervision of each employee.

Requirements:

- High School diploma or equivalent required
- Minimum of 2 years' experience working with the MR/DD population
- Qualified NYS Driver's License.
- Supervisory experience required. Good oral communications skills
- Good organizational and administrative skills
- AMAP certified
- Prior domestic household experience required

To be considered for a transfer, orientation must have been completed and you must be in good performance standing.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer, Proud of Workforce Diversity

Submit your application by going to:
citizens-inc.org/careers/
Click the link for CURRENT EMPLOYEES



**Citizens Options
Unlimited**

Internal Mobility Job Announcement



Assistant House Manager

Job Req # 2022-4560

Schedule: Full Time Tue-Sat 2p-10p

Program: Shoreham ICF

Location: Arbor B

Salary: \$18-\$19/hr

Job Profile:

- Supervises direct support professional in implementation of resident's treatment plan, through observation and review of progress and setbacks, and recommends courses of action to assure direct support professional meets residents' daily living needs.
- Provides direct support for residents by assisting with daily living skills (i.e. toileting, showering, dressing, feeding, etc.) to ensure residents personal needs are met. Ensures safety of residents by insuring safety precautionary measures are followed according to individual plans.
- Provides in-service training by teaching new employees work rules and procedures from training manual, shadowing, and offering feedback to insure proper performance of duties.
- Attends semiannual and annual meetings for all residents, in order to evaluate current programs' effectiveness and discuss possibility of changing programs where needed.
- Ensures all agency policy and procedures are implemented and enforced.
- Performs additional related duties as requested by supervisor.

Ensures that work-related safety procedures are in place and are being adhered to by staff. Observance of an unsafe act or a potentially hazardous work environment must be immediately reported to supervisor and/or safety committee.

Requirements:

- High school diploma plus six months related experience with I/DD population or a college degree in a health services related field.
- Must submit and maintain valid and qualified NYS driver's license throughout employment.

To be considered for a transfer, orientation must have been completed and you must be in good performance standing.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer, Proud of Workforce Diversity

Submit your application by going to:

ahrc.org/careers

Click the link for CURRENT EMPLOYEES



**Citizens Options
Unlimited**

HR'S RELIAS COURSE OF THE MONTH

Below is information you will need to login to the RLMS and the Relias Mobile App.

When using a desktop or laptop computer. Please log into Relias following the directions below:

Log onto Ulti Pro at <https://e13.ultipro.com/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

Click on “Menu” which can be found in the top left corner

Click on “Myself”

Once on Myself, click on “Relias Learning”

If you are unsuccessful logging in through Ulti Pro or for those accessing training on a mobile device, please download the Relias App. The name of the app is Relias, not Relias Learning.

URL: <https://www.relias.com/clients>

Click on [Relias Learning](#)

Username: your current Ulti Pro Username

Password if this is your first time logging in: welcome

When prompted please enter the Organization ID for the company you are working for.

Organization ID

14023

14022

14024

14020

Organization

Advantage Care

Brookville Center for Children’s Services

Citizen’s Options Unlimited

AHRC Nassau

You will then be prompted to update this upon your first log in. Your password is private and unique to you! Please follow the directions on the login screen to reset your password.

POP UP BLOCKERS MUST BE DISABLED IN ORDER TO ACCESS YOUR TRAINING

Once Logged into Relias, please follow the steps below to access: **“Employee Wellness -Importance of Physical Fitness”**

- Click on “assignments” on the left side of your screen
- Click on “Browse Course Library”
- Type “Conflict Resolution” in the search bar.
- Click “Enroll”
- Click “Back to My Learning”
- Scroll down to electives – Click **“Employee Wellness - Importance of Physical Fitness”**



CONGRATULATIONS!!!

VALENTINA YANCHAK

**"BURNING IT UP"
2023 CHALLENGE WINNER!!!**

On behalf of the Employee Health & Wellness Team, we want to thank everyone who has participated in the IncentFit challenges thus far. For those who haven't had a chance to participate, there will be plenty more wellness contests to join. Please check your IncentFit account regularly for your progress and challenge updates.

Great job to the team members below for completing the IncentFit "Simple Steps Challenge"

Valentina Yanchak	Pamela Sessoms
Michael Lisse	Joanne Cush
Janet Stack	Danielle Persichilli
Karla Koukiotis	Inna Mozil
Deanna Allen	Sandrina Francis
Nancy Bourne	Jill Rubenfeld
Sukhwinder Kaur	Deborah Francis-Ojo,
Ellen Koreff	Judith Bresler
Jennifer O'Brien	Althea Mowatt

Thank you for your participation!

Employee Assistance Program



**LIFE HAPPENS.
WE UNDERSTAND.
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

Even when we have our day planned out, life can sometimes take us by surprise. No matter what, it's always good to know you have support to help you move forward.

YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

24/7/365 access to EAP counseling services and online resources for you and your immediate family members.

- ✓ Mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ Child care, elder care, and family support
- ✓ Work and career growth
- ✓ Grief and addiction
- ✓ Legal and financial needs
- ✓ Pre-qualified referrals to providers, specialists, and resources



U: AHRC
PW: AHRC
www.nationaleap.com

Need Help?
TOLL-FREE: 1-800-624-2593
Just call or log on to get started