

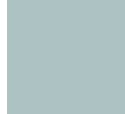
Citizens Re-Validated as a Compass Agency

Dear Families and Friends,

It is with immense pride and heartfelt gratitude that we share truly exceptional news—**AHRC Nassau and Citizens have achieved the highest level of accreditation offered by the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities: Compass Certification.** This is a rare and remarkable honor, one that only **four agencies across all of New York State** have earned—and we are proud to say **we are two of them.** Special thanks to Karen Hirschfeld, Colleen Tapia and Eric Rosen, along with all the executive management team, committee chairs, VPs, and Directors, for your hard work to achieve such outstanding results!

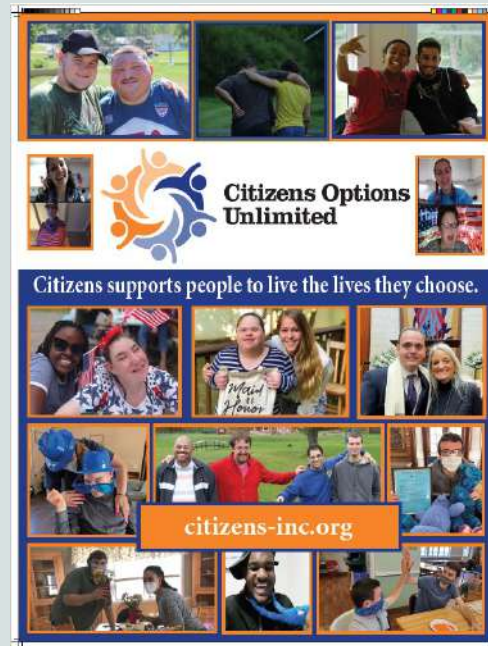
This achievement is not just a milestone—it is a resounding affirmation of who we are. It reflects the values we live every day: person-centered support, inclusion, respect, and a tireless commitment to excellence. It underscores what we have always known—that **our staff at every level, and our incredible self-advocates, are the heart and soul of our mission.** Whether you're providing direct support, advocating for yourself or others, managing operations, leading programs, or offering behind-the-scenes assistance, **you have each played a vital role in shaping the culture of dignity, empowerment, and innovation that sets us apart.** Compass certification doesn't just distinguish us from others—it defines us as **leaders, pioneers, and compassionate champions** in the field of developmental disabilities services. This honor belongs to all of us, and we hope you feel the full weight of what you've helped to accomplish.

Thank you for your dedication. Thank you for believing in the power of community and thank you for continuing to push us toward a brighter, more inclusive future. This year's COMPASS validation wasn't just a recertification — it was a celebration of inclusion, advocacy, and forward-thinking supports and services. Every interview, site visit, and activity reinforced our commitment to person-centered work and community engagement. Congratulations again to every single contributor who made this possible — you continue to set the standard for excellence in our field. **We are proud. We are grateful. We are Citizens Options Unlimited!** With heartfelt thanks and appreciation, Stanford Perry



Annual Review of the Mission Statement & Management Plan

The mission statement of **Citizens Options Unlimited** defines our purpose, core functions, and goals. In other words, it tells everyone who we are, what we do, why we do it — all in just a few words. The process for the annual review of the Mission Statement and Management Plan has started. The council reviews in September, the Compass committee in October/November and it will be forwarded for Board review in the New Year.



Citizens Options Unlimited
supports people to live the life they choose.

Vision Statement
A world where all people are valued.

Self-Direction

Every week, Justin Azanero, 24, looks forward to his favorite activities – art, music, and Zumba classes – all made possible through Self-Direction services. Citizens offers Self-Direction, a service that empowers people with developmental disabilities to take charge of their lives by choosing the supports and services that best match their needs, interests, and goals. While Self-Direction builds independence, it is by no means accomplished alone. With the help of his mother, Flora, and brothers, Irwin and Charley, Justin is building a more independent and fulfilling life focused on his interests of fitness and the arts. Because every person's goals and needs are different, Self-Direction allows for highly personalized planning – whether that means finding a job, taking a class or living more independently with the support of trusted family, friends, or staff. The Azanero family learned about Self-Direction through their Care Manager, who helped Justin find the right supports and services to build his circle of support team, including a broker who helps in developing his budget.

Justin also works with a Community Habilitation staff member. Together, they work on establishing a positive daily routine, which includes cleaning, cooking, laundry and playing Monopoly to work on counting money. Through Self-Direction, Justin funds a gym membership and attends yoga and Zumba classes. On weekends, he plays in a local soccer league, TopSoccer, where he competes, exercises, and socializes with fellow players.

Now that Justin has a busier schedule, his family has noticed that he is happier and more engaged. Empowered by Self-Direction and backed by a strong family, Justin is discovering new passions, building independence, and thriving on his own terms.



Mission Statement in Action

Steven Barsh, a self-advocate who wears many hats, is not only an employee of AHRC but is also a leader at the Onteora Boy Scout Reservation Camp in Livingston Manor, NY. During the summer, Steven is asked to spend some time there to train approximately 50 disabled boys in fire safety. The boys belong to a Long Island troop and spend the summer at this exciting integrated camp in the Catskill mountains.

I asked Steven about the training he conducts there. He shared that he demonstrates to the scouts how to be safe around fire and also how to light Coleman lanterns and handle campfires. Steven was a Scout himself for over 17 years and loves to share his knowledge with the Scouts, some of whom are camping for the first time.

Onteora Scout Reservation according to their description is a “place where scouts come to grow, explore and thrive.” Steven is very proud to serve on the staff there and explained that he travels over 3 1/2 hours to the camp by bus along with fellow staff members and campers. Since he does not stay the entire summer, he makes his way back to Long Island on his own by shuttle bus.

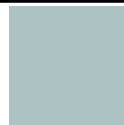
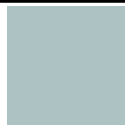
The role of trainer is one that Steven, as a former Scout, was thrilled to acquire and his presence at the camp is a necessary addition to the education of the children with disabilities who come together with non-disabled scouts to experience the essence of being Boy Scouts in America. This opportunity has given Steven a position in the world that can positively affect so many others.



An Unforgettable Vacation at Rocking Horse Ranch

Get on your cowboy boots and hats, because it's time to go on an adventure at the Rocking Horse Ranch Resort in Highland, New York. Recently, people supported at the Pickwick Drive residence in Syosset and the Pearl Street residence in Lawrence, took part in a memorable getaway to this all-inclusive resort. For each person, it was a chance to relax, try new things and enjoy time away – together. Rocking Horse Ranch has become a favorite getaway with something for everyone, from the swimming pool and arcade to the horses and evening activities like bingo and trivia. And of course, the food! Horse parades were also a favorite. While all enjoyed the parade, only Elizabeth, who resides at Pickwick, wanted to pet the horses marching by.

“Amanda, Jennifer, Jamie, and Elizabeth loved swimming in the pool, while Sarah preferred spending her afternoons at the Lucky Horseshoe Arcade. “We had so much fun seeing the ladies have a great time,” said Pamela, one of the three staff members who went on the trip. “They were smiling the whole time.” “I think they had a wonderful time, and it's a change of scenery too,” said Deanna Allen, Director of Residential Services. “I think it's an important part of everybody's everyday lives, taking trips and going places.”



Annual Board Compass Training



The Board of Directors annual Compass training was completed on August 13, 2025. Michelle Rudoff had the honor of presenting on Person-Centered Planning and the work we have done with the True Links grant of which Michelle was the recipient. Michelle is the newest member of Citizens Council. This training was informative and aligns with our PCE; CQL's Person Centered Excellence goal for Person Centered Planning. Person-Centered Planning is a collaborative planning practice which emphasizes self-determination and choice in helping people to achieve their unique vision of their preferred life. It is rooted in the belief that all people have the right to

live, love, work, learn, play, and pursue their dreams in the community of their choice. The person has a primary role in Person-Centered Planning and should be provided the opportunity to lead and participate fully in this process.

Board Physical Plant Inspections by Melissa Garrido and Colleen Tapia

The Board Physical Plant Inspection is a Compass initiative that showcases a commitment to maintaining high standards across sites, emphasizing the importance of a safe, welcoming environment for all. Great job to everyone contributing to these successes.

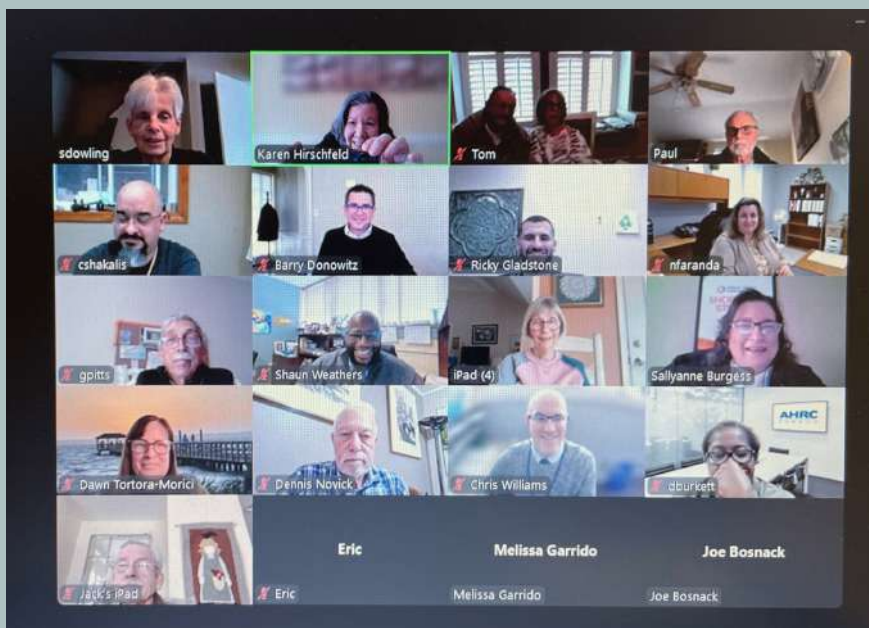
A special thanks to the Board Inspectors, who are committed to this process.

Sue Dowling has been instrumental in coordinating this initiative since its inception, Sue is officially "retiring" from oversight of this criterion. Sue has been a vital leader who oversaw all efforts with precision and expertise. We are grateful for her work. This initiative will now be coordinated by Mellissa Garrido. We welcome Mellisa! 12 physical plant inspections were completed since March of 2025 with 7 significant issues noted.

Some comments included:

A tidy house that is well kept and has a very pleasant staff.

Nice large house. Newly renovated looks great and all repairs completed .



SIBLING GROUP

Join Us!

- **Sibling Holiday Dinner: December 11th, 2025: 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm. Brookville Mansion**
Please contact Colleen Tapia at ctapia@ahrc.org for more information
or visit our website at <https://www.citizens-inc.org/>

Sibling Barbeque

On June 26th, 2025 over a hundred people came together at Brookville for the annual Sibling Barbeque, celebrating the unique and enduring bond between siblings. At Citizens Options Unlimited we recognize and deeply value the role that siblings play in the lives of the people we support. As parents age or life circumstances evolve, siblings often step into the role of primary caregivers and advocates, providing essential support and continuity. Their dedication not only strengthens their family connections but also enhances the broader Citizens community.



From the Desk of the Citizens Options Unlimited

Dear Families and Friends,

May has been a month of meaningful achievement for the Citizens Options Unlimited community. After a successful three-day Compass validation visit, Citizens Options Unlimited remains one of just four agencies in New York State, alongside AHRC Nassau, to hold Compass designation. Auditors from the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) connected with self-advocates, family members, staff, and volunteers to assess person-centered supports and share opportunities for continued growth. Thank you to everyone who participated in this important process.

Another milestone for our shared community was the enacted New York State budget, which reflected our calls for increased investment in disability services. The FY2026 budget includes a 2.6% targeted inflationary increase (TII). When considered with last year's rate rebasing, this creates an almost 15% average rate increase and significant progress. As we use our one-click campaign to spotlight our needs, I also encourage you to take a moment to thank the governor and our state officials for their commitment to a strong future for New Yorkers with developmental disabilities and their families.

Our advocacy work is far from over. Medicaid cuts are being considered at the federal level and could severely limit funding for services, including OPWDD and home-and community-based services. Please take five minutes and [share your support for Medicaid here](#). Together, we can strengthen the services ensuring the health and independence of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, now and in the future.

Summer is in full swing—with Session 3 underway at Camp Loyaltown and our community enjoying the sunshine and meaningful moments of connection together. Such joyful moments make Disability Pride Month a time of eventful celebration yet also a time for focused advocacy.

With the recent passage of the "One Big, Beautiful Bill Act," we are closely monitoring how these changes may impact our community and will continue to share timely advocacy updates. The Act reshapes state social safety nets by cutting Medicaid and SNAP, key programs that many in our community rely on.

In times of both progress and uncertainty, it's vital that our elected officials hear directly from you. Let them know how this legislation affects you and your loved ones.

Your continued support and advocacy matter. Thank you for being an essential part of our community.

Best regards, Stanford J. Perry, CEO



Citizens Council by Tessa Guillaume-Lewis



- The Self-Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS) Conference was well attended.
- We are looking to increasing membership and participation. Discussed having meetings at different locations- (schedule for which house started June).
- Fundraising ideas (Bingo, movie night) date and time
- We encouraged all to participate in the one click email to the governor to assist with increasing funding for us. We encourage all family and friends to complete the campaign as well.

Defiant Joy—PrideAbility

On Sunday, June 8, supporters from the Citizens Options Unlimited community lined up behind the PrideAbility banner on Gerard Avenue in Huntington to march in the 35th Annual Long Island Pride Parade.

“I’m marching because I’m gay and I support everyone who is LGBT,” said John Ginther, a self-advocate also known as DJ Jumpin’ Johnny G who is supported by Self-Direction at Citizens. “I’m out here for Pride because I want to celebrate who we are.”

During the march, John connected with paraders by taking selfies and saying hello to people along the parade route. Fellow marchers handed out Pride flags, while leading the chant: “PrideAbility is our name, Equality is our game.” The theme of this year’s parade was Defiant Joy. According to the LGBT Network, which produces the annual Long Island Pride event, the parade was denied a permit 35 years ago. Defiant Joy is defined by showing up, dancing, and celebrating in the face of opposition.

“I love the Defiant Joy theme, because I think that’s the best approach to all of this,” said Christopher M. Polistena, Assistant Director of Behavioral Health Services at Citizens Options Unlimited and Co-Advisor of PrideAbility. “To bring everyone together and to get our rights recognized and our equality recognized.”

PrideAbility proudly provides a space for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community to build connections, express themselves, and learn about LGBTQIA+ and disability issues.

“Everyone is so accepting, which is what is so lovely about PrideAbility,” said Jaime Crispin, Director of Advocacy & Community Engagement for Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) and Co-Advisor of PrideAbility. “It’s a very open group.” Interested in getting involved with PrideAbility? Email cpolistena@citizens-inc.org



April 2025

- We had Lisa Shortell come and speak about incident trends and how her department handles the trends and what they do to prevent them from happening.
- Steven and Michelle met with Jason Persan to discuss the Safe Driving Pledge and their event for Validation Week.
- Matt Hofele spoke about his advocacy efforts when he went down to Washington D.C. and spoke with local officials and legislators to help with the Medicaid cuts and the 7.8% increase in provider rates.

May 2025

- Sophia Roberts and Mike Rogers from SANYS came to the council and did a wonderful presentation on Rights to Ride. The council enjoyed the presentation.
- Michelle held a high-speed rapid person-centered planning event during Validation. About 15 people attended and Colleen did a beach ball activity to explain how to create a person-centered plan.
- Steven and Michelle held a safe driving campaign during Validation where they got about 20 people to sign the Safe Driving Pledge.
- Elise Olsen presented to the council on mental health.

June 2025

- Michelle Won the 2025 SANYS Long Island Regional self-advocate of the year award.
- We started planning our 2025 Rights Rally which took place on September 24th, 2025, in Brookville.
- Coleen, Steven and Michelle have been in contact with the Board of Elections in doing a voting training and registration.
- We are continuing our advocacy to prevent the Medicaid cuts.
- We had Mary McNamara come to the council meeting to talk about the upcoming walk and all that is coming up with the AHRC Foundation.
- Chris O'Connor and Barry Donowitz came to the council meeting and answered questions from the council and also explained their roles in the agency.

July 2025

- Council members were away at camp and on vacation.
- We started to plan a fundraiser for the people in Texas.

August 2025

- We discussed the management plan and no changes were suggested.
- We held a bake sale to help raise money for Texas on August 27th.
- Steven and Michelle presented at defensive driving and got staff to sign a pledge.
- Michelle started planning a jewelry sale to help raise money for the AHRC Foundation Walk.
- We plan to have the new CFO come to one of our council meetings.

September 2025

- We started planning the trip up to Albany and we have about 20 plus people going.
- We had the new CFO come to one of our council meetings.
- Members celebrated DSP Recognition Week by saying what they liked about their DSPs.
- We are working on getting B.J Stasio to come to one of our meetings.



Karaoke Night at the Club by Sally Anne Burgess

Thank you to staff members, Maura, Sabrina, Nick, Darnessa, Elijah, April and Esther for making dreams come true at the Rocky Point Ale House. Thank you for your enthusiasm in taking Patty, Jeffrey, Paul, Vince and Michael our for an evening of singing, dancing and true belonging. Several of the patrons commented on the great time being had by all and wanted to know more about the wonderful work you do every day. Evening highlights included Vince and Sabrina singing “Jingle Bells,” Paul singing “Ring of Fire,” Maura, Esther, Nick, Elijah and Darnessa dancing up a storm. The positive response of everyone present that evening was inspiring. Patty brought down the house with “We are Family” and as I am told the entire establishment cheered her out of the building shouting “Patty, Patty!” Thank you all for your

kindness, support, and enthusiasm, showing our local community just how wonderful the people of Shoreham are.

Loving Learning

My name is Matthew Hofele, one of the things I like to do is advocate for all people, especially people with disabilities. It is a true passion of mine to help people get what they want and deserve. I advocate as much as possible and attend all types of forums, conferences, other types of meetings and seminars for information on new policies and changes that will help me and other people in the state with developmental disabilities.

About a month ago I got an email about an academy in New York that is supported by the Georgetown University. There were a lot of people from all different agencies that got nominated to join and I was 1 of the 24 people that got the scholarship in NY, but split into 2 groups, 12 people in Albany and 12 people in NYC.

The academy taught us how to guide others on how to advocate in different ways, the fundamentals of being a leader and the difference between an advocate and leader. I also read that I was nominated by an executive director of the inter-agency council. It is another agency from OPWDD that provides services for people with disabilities in the state. Then I read the email further and read that I was 1 of the 24 chosen to get the scholarship to be in the academy! I was beyond excited, I was ecstatic!



While at the academy we learned the fundamentals of being a leader. We also learned new ways to advocate. Each day consisted of 9 or 10 lessons that were split into different sessions. We also had short breaks in between and great meals. The lessons were long but very informative and we learned a lot. The people that taught us were very nice and kind also. We even made friends there, including me! I even know her from other conferences! Each of the three days we learned all types of leadership. We also learned the differences of being a leader and a lot of different ways to advocate and how to be a leader. We were also told there will be a reunion in November to have a reunion with this group and a lot of other groups all over the state. The academy was very informative and I would love to do something like this again.

A TRIP TO CAMP LOYALTOWN By Susan Gill-Orange

The traffic was light on the way to Camp Loyaltown recently. My colleague, Samantha Rodonis and I were headed up to that Hunter Mountain resort location to speak to new camp counselors about the culture of our organization, Citizens. We took a precarious route on a narrow mountain road and reached the camp in good time. I had never been to Camp Loyaltown before, and it certainly has a great view from its cabins so it is no wonder the camp is so beloved by the many campers who travel there each year.

Our presentation was designed to provide the camp counselors with a knowledge of the type of organizational culture Citizens consists of and why it is important to maintain. We explained that Citizens is a "person-centered culture" which means that all services and supports place the person receiving those services at the center. We then discussed our roles within the organization and how the personal outcomes, which we elicit from the people we support, are used to help achieve the goals people desire. The counselors were then engaged in interpreting the "Nothing About Me, Without Me" slogan where positive, intuitive feedback was received from these international young people. Perhaps the most entertaining segment was when we had the group work on the "Leadership Pizza" exercise. This is where groups of approximately 5-6 people create a pizza on paper, divide it into 8 "slices" and write within these slices the characteristics of what they decide, as a group, are desired in a leader. The results were very enlightening with each group sharing the expectation that a leader must possess the ability to respect others. This really opened the door for more conversation and greater understanding of the nature of the organization they are associated with this summer.

It was truly a wonderful visit this year to meet all these interesting young people. Many or most of the people we spoke with shared that it was their first visit to America. I neglected to tell them that their vision of our shores, dense woodlands, wild animals and a rural landscape, were also the first glimpses our forefathers had of the continent when they arrived from foreign lands centuries ago. I am not sure it would have resonated with them as nearly all the group were eager to see New York City!

Providing insight into the foundational practices, values and mission of AHRC Nassau is essential for all those whose job it is to support people to follow their dreams. The counselors and leadership at Camp Loyaltown are fulfilling that role with the kind of enthusiasm necessary to make that an exciting journey.

Empowerment and Valued Outcomes

Rights Rally By Colleen Tapia

This year's Rights Rally was held 9/24/2025. We were fortunate to have Samantha Rodonis complete voter training and the Board of Elections shared the importance of registration. Self-advocates from Day Services locations across Long Island came to Brookville for empowerment and excitement at the annual Rights Rally. This year, our quality assurance trainers focused on voting, teaching attendees the rules and regulations surrounding registration and the various ways to cast their ballots. People shared their questions, advocates were celebrated, and many won prizes! We're grateful to the representatives from the Nassau County Board of Elections who were present to share information and help people register to vote. Thank you to Noah A. for kicking us off with the National Anthem.



Virtual Connections By Michelle Rudoff

On Tuesday May 6th the Virtual Connections program celebrated their 5-year anniversary by putting together a concert for their family and friends along with agency staff members. This concert was also during our annual Compass Validation visit. Auditors from OPWDD who came to the concert loved it and had rave reviews.

We discussed what songs we wanted to sing and what group songs we wanted to do. Michelle Bontempo and Laura Tantillo were the cohost for this concert, and Michelle R played the music during the concert. Virtual Connections was created by Jerri Walker and Savita Sharma with the help of some international staff 5 years ago around the middle of April during the pandemic to keep Camp friends connected. Over those 5 years those friendships have grown into a strong family bond and Virtual Connections have become everyone's safe place where everyone feels comfortable coming on and discussing anything that might bother them. This bond isn't just among the people attending Virtual, but among the families of the people who attend the program and also the families of everyone who has helped us over the year. We have supported each other through moving into a group home and loved ones passing. We even supported one of our musical directors Summer Sherrard graduating from college, by some of us watching her graduation virtually. We even saw another counselor's son who is nonverbal copy the movements we were making for a song during one of our music sessions while our musical director Nyle was at his house.

Anthony Rossi makes sure that everyone on Virtual's birthday is special by creating links on his account and making Zoom parties. Michelle R creates links each year and everyone logs on and rings in the New Years together. There has been so much growth over the years as when virtual started 5 years ago we didn't know how to share our screen or sound let alone put on a full concert with no assistance needed. We want to thank everyone who has been apart of Virtual the past 5 years, especially Jerri Walker, Chantal Joseph, Farah Richardson, Amanda Spletstoser and Nyle Mohan who gave us the skills and confidence to run a whole program on our own. I can't wait to see what Virtual connections do in the next 5 years and beyond.



The Annual POM Rally and Social Roles By Susan Gill-Orange



The POM theme in 2025 focuses on People Perform Different Social Roles, so this became the motivation for the POM department's POM Rally 2025 this past May. For many of the people we support, there is a distinct desire to share their interests and talents in the community. They would like to do this on a consistent basis which becomes a valued social role. In order to provide education to people receiving services regarding not only the definition of social roles but a fuller understanding of the responsibilities inherent in the role, the Rally brought people together to explore the many options available for them to acquire a social role in the community. The rally incorporated into the Power Point presentation "Social

Roles and You" not only the basics of a social role but also examples given by those with lived experiences. A highlight of the rally was the "hat exercise" where audience interaction showed the many different roles we play each day.

Michelle Bontempo is a person who shared during her POM conversation that she would like to work on becoming a better public speaker. Since then, Michelle has hosted a full session of Empowering You where she shared her self-advocate journey, advice, and answered questions from the audience. Michelle wanted to do more.

During morning overview every day at Farmingdale 1, Michelle presents the day's birthday for celebrities and anyone at the site who is celebrating. Michelle prepares for each presentation the day before by looking up the birthdays online with help from her team. When Michelle is done, everyone applauds as she goes back to her seat. If Michelle is absent, celebrity birthdays are not announced, and birthdays in the site are announced by another person.

Matt Hofele is another person whose POM has opened doors for him as he assumes the social role as advocate. Matt became inspired by stories from other self-advocates achieving their dreams by doing it for themselves by themselves. Matt's advocacy has led to meetings with Chuck Schumers Chief of Staff as well as Tom Suozzi's Chief of Staff.

After advocating with the agency for several years, Matt shared during his POM interview that he would like to become a POM interviewer to help others find their voice.

Matt went through 6 weeks of training with the POM department. In August of 2023 Matt and his colleague demonstrated their skills for CQL and Matt became a Co-Certified POM Interviewer!

The emphasis at this Rally was to ensure that everyone understands that they have the choice to pursue various social roles in the community and that a person, all persons, will wear many "hats" in their lifetimes.



Recruitment and Retention By Jim Stock

Our Talent Acquisition Team remains steadfast in its commitment to building a resilient and dedicated workforce. With thoughtful recruitment strategies and a strong employer brand, we're attracting high-caliber candidates who align with our mission and values.

Recent Recruitment Initiatives:

- Weekly **Zoom Info Sessions**: Wednesdays, 11 AM – 2 PM
- Weekly **In-Person Open Houses** at HKP: Thursdays, 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM
- Two **Saturday Open Houses** (past 6 months) at Medford and Smithtown
- **Internal Mobility Event** to promote leadership opportunities to current staff
- Job Fairs attended at: Hicksville High School, Riverhead Library, Hempstead, Suffolk BOCES
- **Monthly Hiring Events** at Shoreham
- Community outreach: Flyers posted in local groups and on Shoreham’s campus featuring upward mobility positions and application links

Learning & Professional Development

We’re investing in growth opportunities to empower our team members:

- **New Hire Orientation Attendance**:2025 YTD: **86.79%** | 2024 Avg: **71.60%**
- **CPR Certified Staff Since July 1**: 160 (including 86 new hires)
- **AMAP Class Attendance**:
 - 51.93% (2025 YTD)
 - **SCIP-R Attendance**:
 - Full: 56.04%
 - Recertification: 58%
 - **9 Staff Enrolling in Master’s in HR Management** at SUNY Stony Brook (Fall 2025)
 - Onboarded **2 Per Diem Nurses** for AMAP evening/weekend sessions
 - Partnered with **AMAP Consulting Firm** to bring on RN trainers and expand offerings

Employee Engagement & Retention

Heroes Event – June 25

Celebrated 19 incredible staff members for life-saving actions.

Employee of the Quarter (EOQ)

- January 22: Combined EOQ 2, 3 & 4 Celebration – 59 Attendees
- May 15: EOQ 1 (2025) Celebration – 43 Attendees

NADSP E-Badge Graduation

□ *October 1, 2025*: DSPs and FLS graduates who completed their E-Badge Certificates. We honor their commitment and growth!

This year’s Staffapalooza was our **largest ever** —

1,396 attendees, including 150 from Citizens! We rocked out with live music and enjoyed expanded food options. Thanks to all who made it unforgettable!

Investing in Your Future We’re proud to see record-breaking interest in our **fully funded Master’s Program** with Stony Brook University! **56 employees** have applied to the **MS in Human Resource Management** for Fall 2025 — one of our largest groups ever! We’re excited to support their academic journey.

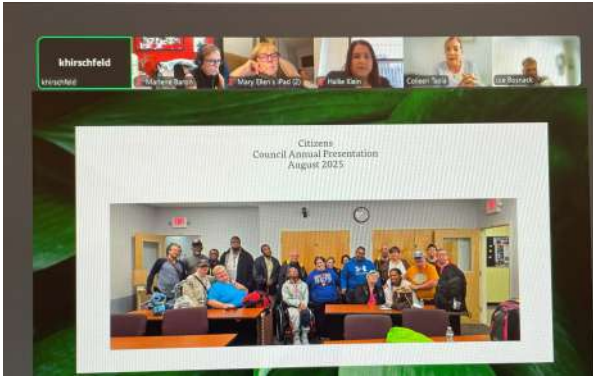
Celebrating You

Because you deserve it!

- *Administrative Support Day (April 23)*Personalized thank-you e-blasts and hand-delivered gifts to honor our administrative staff.
- *Milestones Event (March 20)*Celebrated dedicated team members with **20–45 years** of service — thank you for your incredible loyalty!
- *International HR Appreciation Luncheon (June 6)*A special lunch just for our HR team — your behind-the-scenes work doesn’t go unnoticed.

Thank You, our passion, dedication, and commitment are what make our organization thrive. Let’s continue to grow, learn, and celebrate together.





Michelle Rudoff presents Citizens Council and the Executive Councils accomplishments for the past twelve months at the August Board of Director's meeting.

- Accomplishments include:
- Participating in an agency wide voter registration initiative
- Robyn L. landing her dream job
- Meeting with OPWDD's Commissioner Baer
- Participation in



many volunteer activities

- **Citizens Council Board Members Volunteer** volunteered at the food pantry a week before year for them....over 55 turkeys went out with all drinks.
Way to go Matt & Devon!



Thanksgiving.....it is the busiest time of the the sides and other types of foods and

Red Spring Lane Honored by Local Nonprofit, i Am My Sister, For Participation in Youth Mental Health Walk



On Wednesday, September 10th, people supported at Red Spring Lane were recognized by the Glen Cove nonprofit i Am My Sister, for their active participation in the Hope N' Motion Walk for Youth Mental Health Awareness on May 17. They were joined in this effort by people from two AHRC Nassau residences, New Woods and Circle Drive. Each home received a special plaque thanking them for raising awareness around mental health in youth. They joined with neighbors, families, and local organizations walking the track at Glen Cove High School for a day of connection and community.



Regulatory Affairs by Eric Rosen

During the timeframe between April 1st 2025 and September 30th, 2025; twelve (12) site-based surveys were completed (all small IRAs). A version of OPWDD's site-based protocol continued to be utilized for these site-based surveys.

Good practices noted during these reviews included the promotion of independence; with people encouraged to participate in the routine of their home, observed positive, respectful & supportive interactions, home-like houses nicely decorated to reflect the individuals' likes and preferences and the individuals' continued satisfaction with their home and services.



EMPOWERING YOU

**Join for information and ideas
to assist you to live the life you want!**

—————
**OCTOBER: 24, 2025 10-12:00/NOON
PLAINVIEW CONFERENCE ROOM D
ADVOCATING FOR SYSTEM CHANGE**

—————
**NOVEMBER 21, 2025 10-12/NOON
PLAINVIEW CONFERENCE ROOM D
EXPANDING YOUR WORLD,
SOCIAL ROLES & YOU**

**DECEMBER 12, 2025
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**Open to members of the
community, families & advocates**

**October 9, 2025, 6:00pm- 7:00pm
“Complaint/Grievance Procedure”**

Presented by: Pam Boyle

**For information or registration,
please visit our website at AHRC.org
or email lfanuzzi@ahrc.org or
Call:516-293-2016, ext. 5369**

The Compass Committee & The Quality Enhancement Process

Citizens has a grievance procedure which people are encouraged to follow. The grievance procedure fosters a supportive and pleasant environment for people receiving services with Citizens and also encourages parents, guardians and correspondents to communicate their complaints and concerns as they arise with their loved ones to the house manager. Should resolution of the complaint escalate beyond the house manager or applicable supervisor and require further intervention from agency leadership, the agency will take steps to review and resolve the complaint with the correspondent. The formal complaints and resolutions captured are tracked and reviewed quarterly by the Compass Committee for resolution and trends. Trends are assessed as is corrective action that is systemic in nature (if applicable). Please reach out to agency leadership with any questions you may have.

POM Summary by Bridget Cariello

As of August 19th, 2025, about 191 interviews were completed. These include information for people attending day and residential options. There are several additional interviews pending close out by the second quarter of 2025.

During Q1 and Q2 all CQL Certified Trainers completed recertification, and one certified interviewer completed their trainer certification with 100 percent efficacy by CQL standards. The co-certified team is preparing for their recertification in September of 2025.

During Q3, the following person-driven initiatives and activities are in progress: Social Role Inservice and Banner Event, Upcoming Follow Up and Tracking Stories from Day of Community Engagement, Mentoring of WFA/Person Centered Culture Initiative, Round Table Discussion led by Self-Advocates on How to obtain Social Roles, In-service for Day and Residential and Directors on Social Roles and Banner Event.

Which indicator areas have the **most outcomes met**? The total highest number of outcomes met is found in the indicator “People are treated Fairly” with 90.40% outcomes met. Another indicator showing most outcomes met is in the areas of Natural Supports and Intimate Relations 84.18% of people meeting this outcome in Natural Supports. 84.18% of people meeting that objective of people having intimate relationships. Upon reviewing these outcome areas, data shows that consistent rights training, which includes Fair Treatment, helps to standardize how a person can recognize and report unfair treatment.

Natural Supports and Intimate Relations remain with a majority of outcomes met because the organizational best practices include a robust history of collaboration, communication and engagement with families and people who are important to the circle of person supported. A system of continuous engagement, open door policies, and life plan meetings all include the natural supports a person receiving services invites. These practices create an opportunity to build and strengthen natural supports.

Respect 87.01% has a high number of outcomes met as organizational practices expand ways to promote active participation in life plan meetings and exploring new opportunities as interests change. Safety 84.75% remains with a high number of outcomes met due to organizational best practice, training and continuous communication within the person’s circle of support.

Which indicator areas have the **most supports met**?

Supports are met at 99.44% within the area of People are Safe and Treated Fairly at 92.66%. In addition, Natural Supports are met at 94% and Best Health at 94%. This is a clear indication that strong support enables personal outcomes to be met more readily as these support areas are attached to the higher outcomes met indicators. The support follows consistent guidelines for the above areas. Safety precaution and health objectives are found daily in Protective Oversight. Connection with natural support is a standard agency practice as is promoting fair treatment for all.

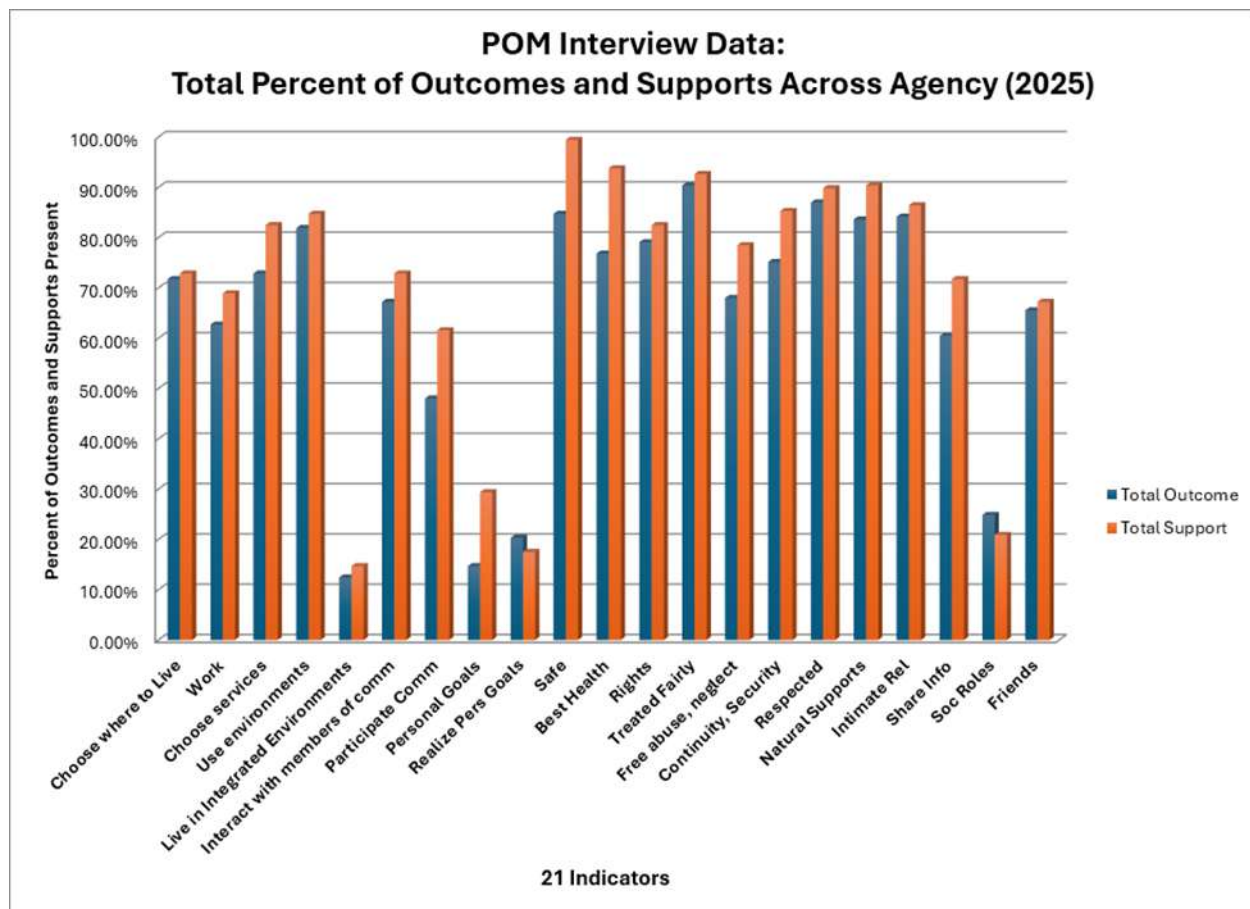
Within the sub-domain of Best Health 93.79% and Natural Supports 90.40% data denotes these areas as having the most supports met.

Which indicator areas have the **least outcomes met?**

Choosing Personal Goals (14.69%) Realize Goals (20.34%), Integrated Environments (12.43%) Social Roles (24.86%) These indicator areas remain the least met and contain the least amount of supports met. This reveals clearly that where support is not strong, outcomes are not met successfully.

For Personal Goal Outcomes to be met, they are actively worked on with support. Our family of organizations actively promotes Choice and Self-Selection with our day options, Integration is continuously promoted, and community efforts increase with opportunities like those at Wheatley Farm and Arts Center. At WFAC, the community joins with people supported and their staff to participate in various activities to promote education, experience and exposure. Social Roles, which has been incorporated into our 2025 strategic planning and is part of our 2025 POM Goal.

**About 350 people reached to train support and provide opportunities to increase Social Roles to date in 2025.*



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