

A group of people during our Day Program at a Frederick Keys baseball game

Summer Connections


Welcome to the Summer 2025 edition of Connections! Things are heating up around here and we have some very exciting updates coming from some of our departments, including Residential Services, Quality Assurance, Support Services, and our Meaningful Day Program. Also, we will receive an important message from our CEO Michael Planz.

We also wanted to highlight some important events that have happened here at Community Living recently. First, we learn about summer activities and appreciation to our staff and coordinators from Debra, our Director of Residential. Next, a piece from a person we support, Zack, titled “I am my own Person.” We find out about the Frederick Running Festival and the volunteer work from Support Services. Meaningful Day shares their success about the Spring EmployABILITY Showcase and what they have been up to recently. Lastly, we also highlight our Maryland Association of Community Services Self-Insurance Group’s membership and receiving the Martin W. Dennis Award of Merit for outstanding safety achievement.


If you’re interested in learning more about these amazing happenings, then keep reading!



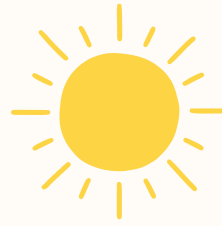
A Message from our CEO, Michael Planz



It seems like it's been a dreary, gloomy May and beginning of June. Luckily, we here at Community Living have not let the weather dampen our spirits! The people we support have continued their hectic schedules of sports, shows, and vacations among other things. And, while the rain may have helped the drought, our community garden could use a little more sunshine. I still get sunshine though when I hear the success stories of people who are living their lives to the fullest. It brightens my day when I go to the grocery store and see someone we support on the job, doing something meaningful and fulfilling for them. Jobs give people purpose and it's one of the most important things we can do to support people. Early in my career, I worked at Goodwill along with many people who received residential services from Community Living. Years later, even though they long since retired, people still talk about the work they did and how important it was to them. A job is not just a source of income; it provides daily social interaction and helps build relationships.



More from
Michael on the
next page!



All Staff Meeting Update

We recently held our summer all-staff meeting. Rich, the father of James, someone we support, was one of the speakers. He reflected on his son's service with another organization leading up to the Covid pandemic and the distress his son experienced due to isolation and boredom. He then went on to talk about the transition he has seen with James at Community Living – for the first time in his life he refers to people as friends, he speaks fondly of the recreational and social experiences he has, and he talks about his job and how proud he is of the work he does. While I speak often of our successes, it was truly meaningful for our staff to hear from the family of someone many of them know. It provided a tangible example of the difference they make every day. That's why I ask everyone to take a minute, if you see someone with a disability in your community, to say "hello" and maybe get to know them. There is nothing in the world that is more important for someone's well being, than meaningful relationships.

- Michael,
CEO



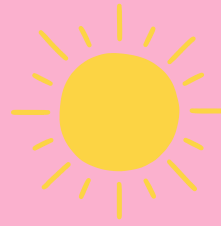
James, someone we support,
visiting Sideling Hill Mountain



Rich, James' father, speaking at the
all-staff meeting



Micheal speaking at the
all-staff meeting



Residential Department

Our Residential Department continues to thrive, making a lasting impact in the lives of those we serve through personalized care, strong relationships, and a shared commitment to excellence. We are constantly on the go, and with summer approaching we have more activities in the works.

We would like to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to our support staff that work tirelessly to ensure that the people we support are active and have all the opportunities that we all strive for!

As Director of the Residential Department, I would like to thank my coordinators that work diligently every day to make certain that the department runs smoothly.

- Debra,
Director of Residential Services



DSP Byran with Ted, who won the grand prize at BINGO!



DSP Oluu with Connor and Aaron at a Frederick Flying Cows game



Quality Assurance

"I am my own Person" by Zack

In this edition of the newsletter, we celebrate individuality and self-understanding by highlighting the unique interests of a person we support. We sat down with Zack to learn more about what he enjoys, especially the activities he prefers doing solo rather than in a group setting.

Zack has been part of Community Living for 16 years, receiving various supports throughout his journey. He leads a fulfilling and rewarding life, including holding the same job for an impressive 17 years. What an accomplishment!

Zack has a wide range of interests and is always open to trying something new. He enjoys a variety of sports and activities. He makes time each week, and throughout the year, to focus on the things he loves. These include visiting a local pool hall weekly, golfing when the weather is nice, attending antique car shows, and participating in a winter bowling league he's been part of for over 20 years.

Music is another passion of his. He loves attending concerts and musical theatre performances. He's a regular at Toby's Dinner Theatre, Baker Park concerts, and shows at the Weinberg Center - where he had the chance to see his favorite musician, Kathy Mattea, last fall.

- Jena, *Community Outreach*
QA Coordinator



Zack golfing at Gettysburg National Golf Club



Zack at Belle's Pool Hall



Zack at Toby's seeing The Music Man



Support Services

Each year we love to be involved with the Frederick Running Festival, be it rain or shine.

How great it is that we are known to be dependable, know what to do and have mastered our tasks. We helped set up and distribute shirts to runners, handed out their hard-earned medals, assisted with the Kids' Fun Run, served snacks and drinks, handled gear check before and after the race, and helped clean up once it was all done!

The joy our CLI volunteers have when they are called by their names and told that it is nice to see them again is unforgettable.

We are known, admired and looked upon as fantastic volunteers! Each year we have fun, love to help, and receive a volunteer shirt.

We love spring and summer, and all the familiar and new adventures these seasons bring, whether indoors or outdoors. We plan to pick fruit and vegetables, hike, try new gyms, attend outdoor concerts, shows, and sporting events, and spend time with friends.

We are looking ahead to a great year and the 2026 race!

- Carlota,

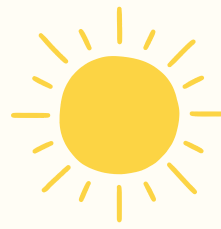
Director of Support Services



Jena with Greg and Stanley at the Kids' Fun Run table



Anaelle helping with the kids' slide



MEANINGFUL DAY

On May 13th, CLI and several of the county's DDA provider agencies collaborated to host the Frederick County EmployABILITY Showcase and Business Discussion. The day began with an interactive discussion with representatives of several area businesses, and was moderated by Rick Weldon, President and CEO of the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce. Among the attendees were State Delegate Kris Fair and our own Michael Planz. The discussion was followed by Frederick's premier reverse job fair for people with disabilities which for the first time included FCPS students seeking work-based learning experiences, a program offered and funded by the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). A young gentleman we support in this program has since secured summer employment at Lee Delauter & Sons, Inc. (LDS) in Middletown, where we will support him in his six-week paid internship

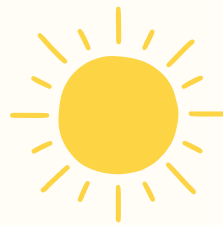
Thank you to our very own Randy Kiser! He introduced the concept of a "reverse job fair" to Frederick County. Through his efforts, the EmployABILITY Showcase has become a cornerstone event, connecting people with disabilities to meaningful employment opportunities and fostering inclusivity within our community.



Randy Kiser (left), Delegate Kris Fair (center), and Michael Planz (right)



FCPS student & LDS intern on his first day (left), Lee Delauter & Sons, Inc. (LDS) employee (center), and Job Coach Ashleigh (right)



MEANINGFUL DAY

In addition to the showcase, supporting people in employment, and our more typical spring activities (including bowling, movies, Bingo, TopGolf, art classes at the Delaplaine, and planting new crops at the community garden), recipients of meaningful day services also recently enjoyed attending, “A Century of Song” lunch show by Antietam Entertainment in Hagerstown, a performance of “Noah” at Sight & Sound Theatres in Lancaster (PA), Summerfest at Baker Park, and a Frederick Keys baseball game. Many thanks to our direct support professionals, who enrich the lives of those we support in discovering and living their best lives!

- Tom B.,
Director of Day Services



DSP Theresa and Caleb at the Delaplaine Art Center Workshop



Starr watering plants at Ballenger Creek Community Garden



DSP's Tim and Ashleigh with Bill and Jesse at Frederick Keys Senior Day game

= SUMMER =



MACS SIG and Award of Merit

Community Living, Inc. was honored as an original member of the **MACS Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Group (MACS SIG)**, which was founded in April 1995 and recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. This group provides workers' compensation coverage to community service-related organizations in the State of Maryland and has 46 members as of December 31, 2024.

Additionally, Community Living, Inc. received the **Martin W. Dennis Award of Merit** for outstanding safety achievement. In order to qualify for this award, the organization must have obtained an average loss ratio for the past three years of 25% or less.

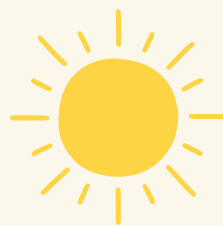
- Tom E.,
Chief Financial Officer

Tom Evans, our Chief Financial Officer, and Kim Daigre, our Human Resources Director, played a key role in helping Community Living earn this wonderful achievement and recognition. Thank you, Tom and Kim!



Connections

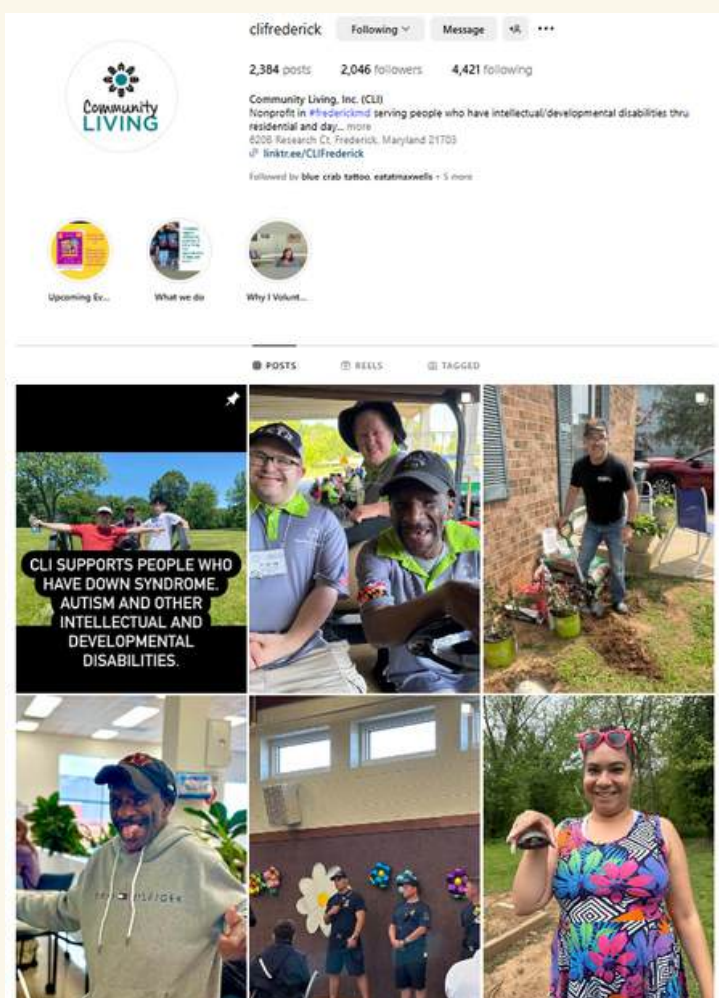
Newsletter for Community Living, Inc.



SUMMER 2025

Connect and Stay in Touch with us!

Community Living, Inc. (CLI) is a nonprofit that provides supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To learn more about CLI and what we do, visit <https://communitylivinginc.org>



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