

Connections

The quarterly newsletter of Community Living, Inc.

A word from our CEO

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I was recently asked to participate in a focus group for a community needs assessment.

As we all sat there talking about the un-met needs in our community, why they were un-met and what we should do about them, the facilitator asked the group what was working *well*. That can sometimes be a more difficult question to answer. But when I thought about it for a second, a recurring theme came to mind – collaboration.

I participate in groups with the Department of Aging, Frederick Memorial Hospital, The Chamber of Commerce, and Translt, to name a few — all of which were formed as collaborative efforts to solve a problem. People frequently talk about Frederick being a unique place to live, and the level of cooperation among organizations is just one

example of that. Few nonprofits have all the resources needed to do everything they want to do, and having partners to help fulfill the missions of Frederick's organizations is crucial.



As Community Living strives to do more with the same resources, I appreciate our partners and collaborators. We are always looking for activities in which people can participate, jobs for people we support, and opportunities to educate, advocate, and give back. And I have found people all around this county who are willing to come together to help others be successful. We are so grateful to be able to take advantage of these great opportunities to work together and help one another. So while I've said it before, collaboration is one of the keys to our success, and I'm glad that it goes both ways.

—Michael Planz

A word from our CFO



It's spring so that means our team, finance committee and Board of Directors are hard at work preparing for the start of the new fiscal year. It goes without saying that the upcoming 2019 fiscal year will be an important one.

First, as of July 1, 2018, minimum wage will increase a little more than 9 percent (from \$9.25 to \$10.10).

Secondly, after an initially proposed 1 percent funding increase in the original state budget, the General Assembly restored the legislatively mandated 3.5 percent increase to the Developmental Disabilities Administration, which is passed on to providers like CLI. This increase in funding is great news, as state funding is the life blood of our revenue annually, but it's easy to see that a gap in

funding (3.5 percent increase) versus desired and necessary wage

increases (9 percent) is pretty significant.



As we look back over the current fiscal year there are many reasons to be proud. We've persevered through changes and challenges to be in a stronger financial position than the company has had in years, but there is still more we can and want to do for the people we serve and our staff. The support we receive from our community, donors, and volunteers is critical to living out our mission to empower adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live their lives to the fullest.

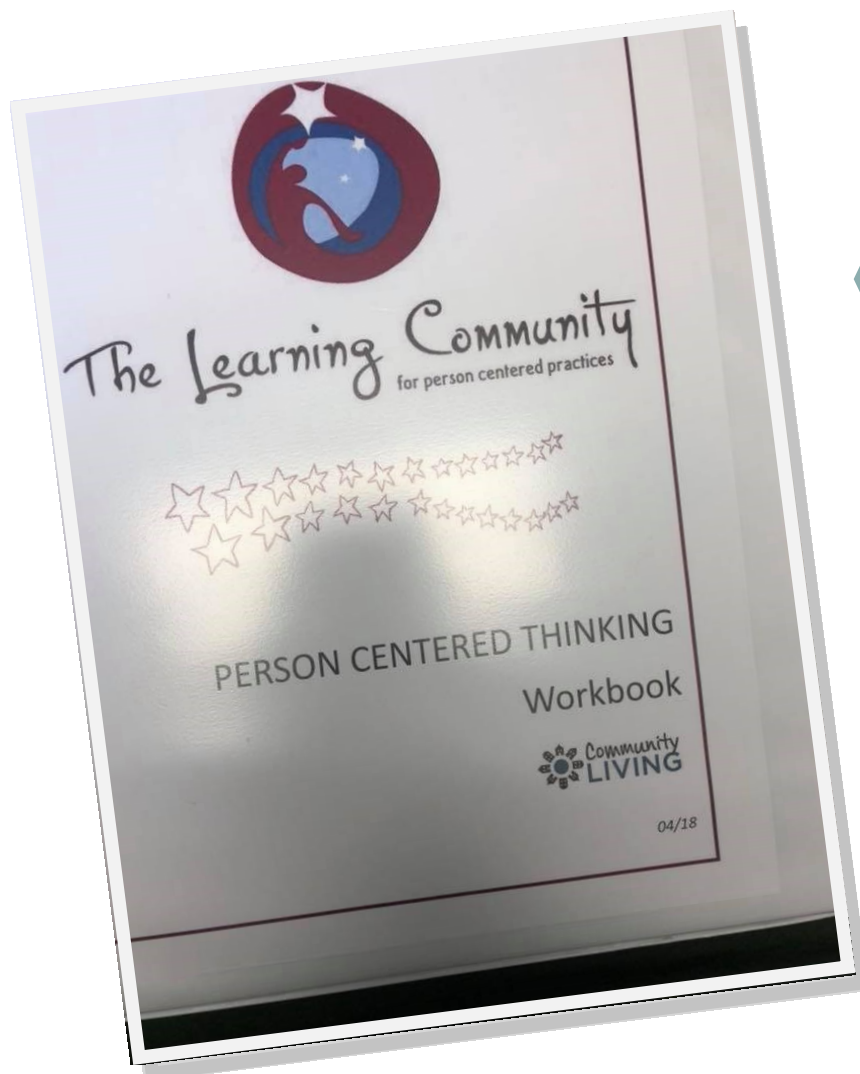
Thank you.

—Jeff Griffin

Recent events

Person-Centered Thinking Training

Recently, Community Living applied for and received a grant from the Ausherman Family Foundation for person-centered thinking training. Person-centered thinking is a term used in the disability services field to describe how to provide care while identifying and honoring each individual's needs, desires, passions and goals. It means seeing the person, not the diagnosis, in the most individualized way possible. Lately, there has been a push toward more person-centered thinking within disability services organizations, and CLI is proud to be at the forefront of that movement here in Frederick. To make this a reality, we are using the generous grant from the Ausherman Family Foundation to fund person-centered training for our staff. Special thanks to the Foundation for making this possible!



All CLI staff are expected to take this training. To learn more, contact trainer Matt Cora at 301-663-8811 ext. 1233 or [email him here](#).

Recent events

Attaboy Beer Fundraiser

In March, our friends at [Attaboy Beer](#) held their “Be a Good Sporto” St. Patrick’s Day fundraiser for Community Living. As part of the event, held March 14th-18th, Attaboy donated \$3 from the purchase of every Sporto draft or Sporto to go beer to CLI. The amazing people of Frederick raised over \$500 through this event. Thank you, Attaboy! We are so grateful for your partnership and support!

Attaboy Beer co-owner Carly Ogden, third from left, presents a check for \$512.00 to CLI’s CEO Michael Planz, left, on May 2. Pictured with them are Chris, second from left, who receives services through CLI, and Elaina Lyons, right, CLI’s fundraising and marketing director.



**BE A GOOD
SPORTO**

Recent events

Spring Bingo

On Saturday, May 12th, we held our annual Spring Bingo. This year, we took the event to [Orioles Nest #331](#) right here in Frederick. We had a blast giving out amazing prizes and eating delicious brunch foods, courtesy of the Orioles Nest chefs. Special thanks to [WLR Automotive \(The Lube Center, The Auto Spa and The Auto Repair\)](#) for sponsoring this event and helping us make it a reality!



Left: Representatives of WLR Automotive (The Lube Center, The Auto Spa, and The Auto Repair) pose for a picture with CLI's CEO Michael Planz at Brunch Bingo May 12.



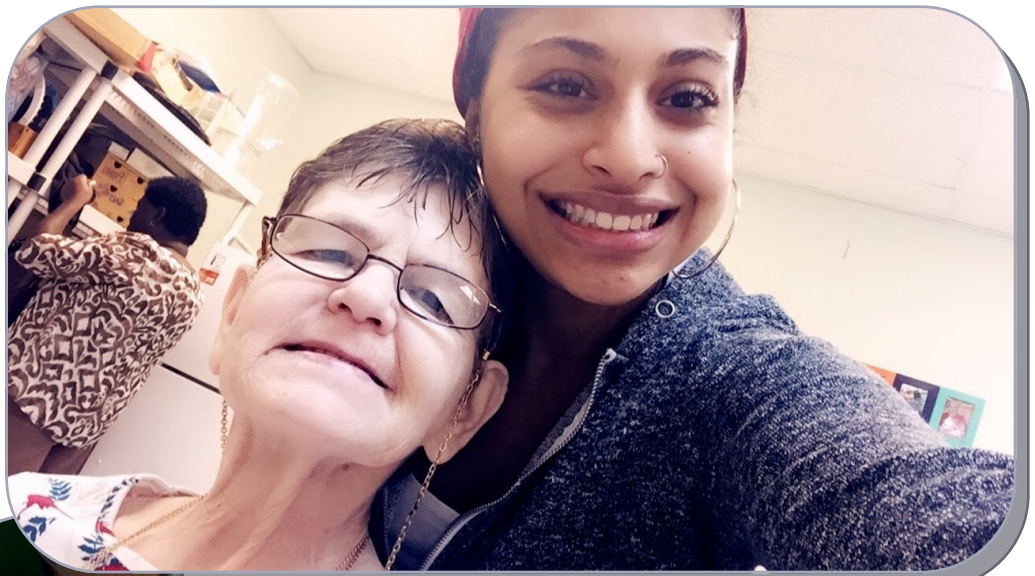
Below: CLI's maintenance director, Shane Powers, poses for a picture with James, who receives services at CLI, during Brunch Bingo.

Thank you!

Our Volunteers

These past few months, we've had the pleasure of working with some amazing volunteers. From house cleanup to trips with people we serve, our volunteers are truly invaluable to what we do, and make the biggest difference in the world. We are so grateful for their time, energy and hard work. Thank you!

Right: Volunteer Rachel Hodge poses for a picture with Aleta in our ROW program; below, left: volunteers Rachel Hodge, left, and Ivonne Pinott are shown in ROW; below, right: Brook Hill United Methodist Church volunteers, from left, Stacy Reb, Kathy Mitchell, Bill Pritchard, Elizabeth List, Lynn Mitchell, Miguel Gonzalez, and Lois MacGillivray, pose for a picture while doing yardwork at a CLI house April 21.



Thank you!

The Weinberg Foundation

In March, we were given the news that we received a grant from The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation! This two-year \$100,000 grant will be so very helpful to us in continuing our mission to serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities here in Frederick.

From all of us at CLI to The Weinberg Foundation: Thank you!



Trainer's Nook

Safety check: Emergency preparedness

Creating an emergency kit

When disaster strikes, there's comfort in knowing you are prepared to handle it. Every home should have a supply kit ready in case of an emergency. Kits should be stored in plastic containers to avoid damage, and updated every six months to make sure items still work and food is not expired.

Don't wait for something to happen; protect your family by stocking up your kit:

- ☐ Water (one gallon per person, per day, for at least three days)
- ☐ Enough nonperishable food (for at least three days) and a can opener. It's best to keep protein-packed foods you can cook without electricity, such as tuna, nut butter or granola bars, and have appropriate food for everyone in your family, including infants and pets.
- ☐ Hand crank radio or battery powered radio with extra batteries – to stay up-to-date on the latest weather alerts
- ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries to get around safely should the power go out
- ☐ First aid kit with the basics, such as gauze, tape, etc. and an emergency reference material, such as NSC First Aid quick guide
- ☐ Toolkit with scissors and basic tools in case you need to shut off utilities etc.
- ☐ Hand sanitizer, moist towelettes and garbage bags for sanitation
- ☐ Plastic sheeting & duct tape – in case a window breaks or you get a leak in your roof
- ☐ Whistle to signal for help in case you get stuck and rescuers need to locate you

Don't forget about your car

We can't predict where we'll be when a thunderstorm or blizzard occurs. But what we can do is plan ahead – including creating an emergency kit for your car.

Here are some basics to consider:

- ☐ A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod-type jack
- ☐ Jumper cables
- ☐ Toolkit
- ☐ Working flashlight and extra batteries
- ☐ Reflective triangles and brightly-colored cloth – to place around your vehicle to make it visible
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Non-perishable, high energy foods like unsalted nuts, dried fruits and hard candy
- ☐ Drinking water
- ☐ Family/emergency number contact sheet that includes numbers for your auto insurance and a towing company
- ☐ Car charger for your cell phone
- ☐ Additional items, like a snow brush, shovel, windshield washer fluid, warm clothing and blankets would be needed during the winter months

Fast Stat:

Hurricanes, blizzards and melting snow are common – but often overlooked – causes of flooding. It only takes a **few inches of water** from a flood to cause **tens of thousands of dollars in damage**.
(National Flood Insurance Program)

If there's a flash flood warning in your area, immediately move your family and essential items to higher ground and avoid damaged areas. You won't want to risk getting stuck or injured.

Graphic courtesy: National Safety Council.

News from Support Services

Many of the folks who participate in the Support Services Department had a rough winter with several cases of the flu, upper respiratory infections and colds. But none of that stopped us from having fun. Over the last few months, we have participated in cooking classes, gone to FCC for art, gone to a few gyms for exercise, volunteered at the Frederick Running Festival, participated in a variety of sports, seen a few movies, gone to parties, and attended many events.

One of the highlights of the season so far was a trip to Dinosaur Zoo Live at the Maryland Theatre in March. David, Alarik and Chris, pictured below, had a blast!

As the weather warms up, we are excited for more adventures and trips in the sun!



News from our Vocational Program

Community Living recently nominated Connor to receive one of this year's Achievement Awards presented annually by the Maryland Association of Community Services (MACS).

Connor began working as a utility tech in the Food and Nutrition department of Frederick Memorial Hospital in March of 2016. Connor was initially supported full-time by a job coach, and some thought he would need one-on-one support indefinitely. However, Connor immediately showed himself to be a reliable and solid employee.



As he learned his kitchen tasks, he also gradually developed relationships with co-workers and was soon no longer as reliant on outside job coaching. Before long, a job coach was not needed at all, as Connor could rely on the natural support of his supervisor and co-workers. Thanks to the support of his family, Connor soon also began working on weekends and occasionally filling in for others' shifts, as needed. His co-workers and supervisor have so much to say about his great work. Here's just one example: "Connor has been a quiet force in the dish room. He is very positive and will tackle whatever his assigned tasks are once he gets the routine. He has always been an asset to the team and that is why we have given him more hours. His coworkers and management all value his efforts for the department."

While he has been able to work without outside support, until recently Connor was still completely dependent on others to provide transportation to and from the hospital. With the support of his family and team at Community Living, Connor is now comfortable utilizing TransIt Plus independently. We are all proud of the steps Connor is taking toward greater independence. Way to go Connor. Keep up the great work!

Congrats!

News from Retirement Our Way (ROW) — Farewell from ROW Coordinator, Madison Thurman

As my time at Community Living comes to an end, I can't help but reflect on the laughter, lessons, and experiences that I've had during my tenure. Sweet and naive 19-year-old Madison arrived at CLI ready to change the world. Over the last eight years, the world may not have changed, but my perspective did.

The people that we support at CLI taught me that our circumstances don't have to stay stagnant, that small acts of kindness really can change someone's day. They taught me how to speak without words, how to hear someone as opposed to just listening – there have been so many other tidbit arrows of change shot into my character, that I could never do them justice within this small space of words. I can only hope that I have given the people we support here an ounce of what they have given me. The lessons that I've learned at CLI have forever changed me; I am forever grateful.

To my dear coworkers – keep listening, keep evolving, remain teachable, and dance at all of the parties. Lastly, to my exuberant, tenacious, self-advocating, priceless friends – “thank you, for everything.”

—Madison Thurman



At the end of May, Madison will be leaving CLI to pursue an exciting new career opportunity. We are so proud of all she's accomplished here, and grateful for all she's given to the people we serve and our staff over the last several years. Good luck, Madison!



News from Residential

Many of the people we serve in our Residential Department have celebrated spring by starting new activities including bocce, golf and cheerleading. This is the start of the spring Special Olympics and many are already beginning to plan for the final county games that will once again be held in Towson in July. One of our residents, April, did so well in her county competition last year in bocce, that she is now representing the state and will fly out to Washington state to compete against all of the other state competitors in July. We are very happy that April will have that opportunity to show off her skills!



Linda and Gerald are shown at their celebration of love ceremony at Trinity United Methodist Church April 19.

Two other people we serve, Susie and Laura, just returned from a fun-filled week at Disney World. They saw Mickey Mouse in all kinds of settings and took pictures with many of the beloved Disney characters. Many residents have already enjoyed or are looking forward to early vacations, including trips to Dollywood and Virginia Beach.

We also celebrated a special commitment ceremony this spring! Gerald and Linda finally "tied the knot" after many years of dating. There was a great turnout at Trinity United Methodist Church to witness the ceremony and share in a lovely dinner. The happy couple went off to Nashville to enjoy some fun and music in the following week. They are now looking forward to sharing a home and enjoying the rest of their lives together.

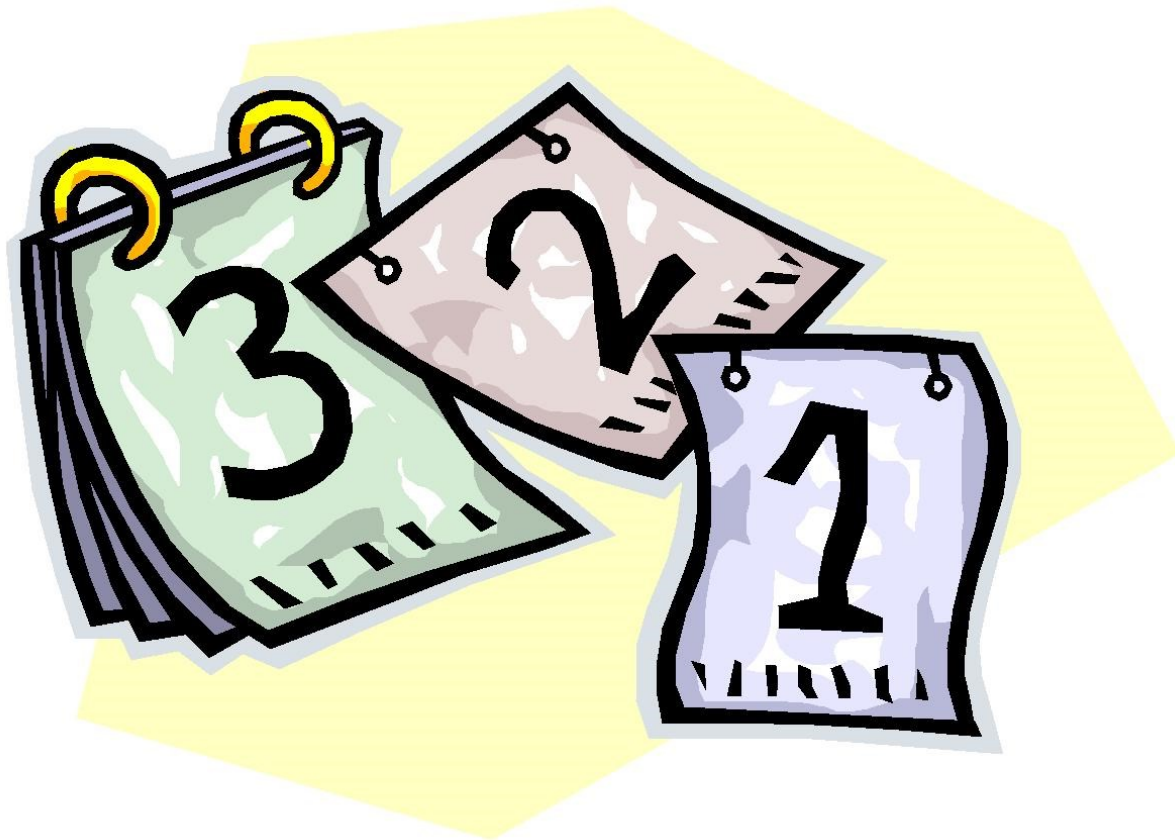
Check out [this Frederick News-Post article](#) written about the ceremony!

Coming up at CLI

Community Fun Day

Mark your calendars for our annual Community Fun Day, held this year on Saturday, August 4th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, sponsored by Wegmans! This free event for all ages will feature, food, vendors, games, activities, and more.

Stay tuned for a flyer and details.



Our new employees:

1. **Sydnee Thurman**
2. **Myesha Jackson-White**
3. **Claritza Espaillat**
4. **Ericka Gundy**
5. **Turkessa Williams-Russell**
6. **Jennifer Hill**
7. **Pricilla Green**

Welcome!



We'd love to stay connected!

**Please send us your updated contact information
(phone number, address and email) so we can keep you
up to date on everything going on at CLI!**

Send your info to
elainal@clifrederick.org

And be sure to follow us on social media:

www.facebook.com/CLIFrederick
[@CLIFrederick](#)