



community interactions inc.

connections

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Strengthening Communities: A Day of Service



Volunteers from Enterprise Fleet Management and CI team members stop to pose for a photo. "This was not a day off for the Enterprise team, this was a Day of Service and they were tirelessly dedicated to what they were doing."

On April 11th, Community Interactions (CI) welcomed a team of 20 volunteers from Enterprise Fleet Management as part of The Enterprise Day of Service volunteer event. As Chris Lynn, CI's Operations Director for Programs and Services said, "The team of volunteers from Enterprise Fleet Management helped to improve several homes, and with a coat of paint, transformed one area of our Pennsylvania Day Program facility into a bright and welcoming space."

The Enterprise team came out to three sites that included two houses and the CI's Day Program facility. Over the course of the day, Enterprise volunteers worked to improve these areas. In fact, at CI's Governor Markham residence, the energetic volunteers stained a deck, painted, and did extensive landscaping and gardening work.

"The garden created at the Cherry Tree residence was the shining star of the day," said Chris, adding, "This was not a day off for the Enterprise team, this was a Day of Service and they were tirelessly dedicated to what they were doing. I don't think they even took a break. We had great expectations of what was going to be accomplished, but they far exceeded them. They did a wonderful job and we're so grateful."

CI could not fully live up to its name and mission without the vital service of its outsourced fleet of 80-some vehicles that connect the men and women CI supports with their communities and provide opportunities for social inclusion.

Whether it's transporting individuals to and from CI's Day Program, doctor's appointments, outings, or jobs in the community, CI's fleet, managed and repaired by Enterprise Fleet Management, ensures that individuals and staff get where they need to go and that operations run smoothly.

For a little more than a year now, CI has been working with Enterprise Fleet Management, a privately-

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Message from the CEO

Christopher Saulino, Ph.D.
President/CEO

I'm grateful and excited to be in my new role as CEO of Community Interactions. I have dedicated my career to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Over the last several months, we have made tremendous strides in working to improve the culture at CI by developing trainings and a cultural understanding of who we are. This is where the concept of "CI family" becomes very important, since we are a company made up of many families – a tree with many branches.

All of our families...of the individuals we support, our staff, our advocates and stakeholders...are the lifeblood of CI. One of our great strengths throughout the history of Community Interactions is fostering these unique and wonderful relationships, which leads to the "CI Way".

Our Strategic Plan is our roadmap to the success of CI and aligns nicely into our philosophy which includes: cultivating the organization, expanding who we serve, improving the quality of our services and getting essential feedback from staff. This aligns with making sure that our family is healthy for the next five to ten years... and beyond.

As we move forward with our plans for the future and our goal of keeping the CI family strong, one important issue is ensuring that our Mission, Vision and Values are in line with the people we employ and those we hire. We are excited about growing our agency and expanding our services and making CI a provider of choice.

Best wishes to the entire CI family for a safe and happy summer.

Our Mission:

Community Interactions, Inc. (CI) provides quality services for people with intellectual, physical and behavioral health challenges to help them create lifestyles consistent with their communities while respecting individual choice, self determination and culture.

PEOPLE

Carrie Carter



Community Interactions' new Managing Director, Carrie Carter, has only been on the job since April 1st, but already feels like part of the CI family.

Carrie, who oversees all of CI's Residential and Day programs in Pennsylvania and Delaware, as well as clinical nursing and operations, began her career in human services 19 years ago. She joined CI after more than a year with the nonprofit Inperium and their affiliate Supportive Concepts

for Families, based in Reading, Pa. Prior to that she spent 17-and-a-half years with the behavioral health provider Project Transition in Bucks County, where she cut her teeth in the human services field and grew with the small company.

"I'm really excited to be here," said Carrie. "To come from a large organization to a smaller more family-like environment really feels like home. I really have that nostalgic feel here."

Carrie grew up in Montgomery County and now lives in Quakertown, Bucks County. She holds an associate bachelor's degree from the Pennsylvania Business Institute, and attended Villanova University where she graduated from the Project Management Program.

Carrie loves to travel, read and spend time with her family, and is devoted to her three goddaughters who live in Phoenix, and her two nieces and nephew.

Norman Nelson



Norman Nelson does not shy away from work. For the past 22 years he's been coaching football, basketball and track at Springfield High School, and for 20 of those years has also been a DSP with Community Interactions.

The Delaware County native grew up in Morton and now lives in Brookhaven. He attended Springfield High School, where he was asked upon graduation what he wanted to do in the future.

His goal then, he said, was to open a community center and help mentor kids. Today he mentors kids through his coaching and through a lot of charity work. He also belongs to a motorcycle club that annually sponsors a Father's Day outing for children whose fathers are absent from their lives.

"I'm still on the same path of giving back and making a difference," said Norman, who attended Cheyney University, and whose daughter Tamara, 22, will be graduating from college in December. "I enjoy what I'm doing so it doesn't feel like work."

During the school year he works at CI on the weekends and on holidays putting in double shifts assisting CI individuals with daily life skills and everyday living. With his summers off from coaching at Springfield High, Norman switches to full-time at CI's Day Program.

Norman's connection to CI came through a friend of his who worked at the nonprofit at the time. He was looking for some extra hours and applied, got the job and has enjoyed it ever since. He said that when he started at CI it felt like a family, but that it changed over the years to more of a business model. He's happy to see the shift back to the family setting.

FOCUS ON

Scoring Sixers Season Tickets!



(Photo above) Charles proudly showing off his Sixers T-shirt. (Photo right, top from left) Patrick, Bill and John at one of the winter games. (Photo right, bottom from left) Ronnie, Don, and Kenny heading out to a game from the CI office.

When it comes to supporting your local sports team, there's nothing like the intensity and excitement of attending a home game surrounded by legions of fans all cheering in unison. For the past five years, CI individuals and team members have been enjoying season tickets to the 76ers and getting the chance to show their support and enthusiasm from the stands of the Wells Fargo Center in South Philadelphia.

"A lot of people expressed interest in going to sporting events," said CI's Kristy Sheldon, who manages the Sixers season tickets. "It can be very

SPOTLIGHT ON

From the Heart

When Vivian Chavis, popularly known as "Miss Viv," walked through the doors of CI 13 years ago, to apply for a Direct Support Professional position, her initial reaction was one of uncertainty.

"I didn't know if I could do this or not," she said. "I left a job at Rohm and Haas' computer manufacturing company in Delaware to come into this field. But I fit right in, like I had already been here 20 or 30 years."

Prior to her five years at Rohm and Haas, Miss Viv worked at the now shuttered Medford Meat company for almost two decades. None of her prior work experience prepared her for the new career as a DSP, but she said, she always had it in her to nurture people.

"It's all in taking care of people and showing your love," said the mother of two sons, and grandmother of six grandchildren. "If it's not in your heart you can't do it."

From the very beginning, Miss Viv has been working with longtime CI

HAPPENINGS



expensive to go to see the Phillies or the Eagles, but Don [Szegda, CI's former President and CEO] was able to initiate the purchase of the Sixers season tickets."

Every season, Kristy sets up a whiteboard in her office with the Sixers home game schedule. She will send out an e-mail to all the team facilitators in charge of CI's homes, and to program specialists alerting them to

the schedule and ticket availability. Staff, in turn, check with their individuals to see who is interested in going to a game. In addition, folks stop in her office on a regular basis to see what games are available and she will sign them up.

"I make sure everybody gets a chance to see a game. I want to be fair to everyone," Kristy said. Needless to say, tickets generally go like hot cakes.

One particular game this past season had CI Sixers fans clamoring for tickets. It was the only game the LA Lakers played in Philadelphia and starred the newly-signed LeBron James.

"Because everyone wanted to go to that game, we held a raffle during our Health and Safety Day in October," said Kristy. "Four individuals and two staff members from our Wallingford House won the tickets."

"I think it's a great thing for the individuals," added Kristy. "The games give them something to look forward to, and it gives them time to be with staff outside of the home. They just love the crowds and the excitement."



(From left) Julie Heydeman, Sara Hudson and Jane Bostwick at Widener University. Sara completed her first year in Widener's Inclusive Higher Education Program on May 28th.



CI's Delaware team (back row, from left) Akin Moradeyo, Antoinette Trusty, Barry Foster, and (front row, from left) Joseph Amuti, Janette Austin, and Michael Samuels at the May 23rd Management Team Meeting.

resident George, 75. His roommate, Bill, whom Miss Viv also supported, sadly passed away in 2015.

Up until five years ago when George suffered a stroke, which impaired his mobility and speech, he and Miss Viv could be seen everywhere. Today, George uses a wheelchair for the most part, and although they don't venture out as much as they used to, they still try to get out and hit a few of George's favorite spots, like the Olive Garden or Best Buy, where he heads straight for the DVD section in search of classic Westerns to add to his large collection.



George and Miss Viv at a CI BBQ.

The two have formed a very strong bond over the years.

"One day he started calling me mom and never stopped," said Miss Viv, a New Castle, Delaware resident. "I asked him why he was calling me mom, and he said, 'because you take care of me.'"

For her part, Miss Viv feels like George is one of her own - part of her family. In fact he calls her sons his brothers, and shares in many of the family get-togethers. George is also very close with his niece and nephew and their families, who Miss Viv said are very supportive and involved in his life.

"Working with George and with people with disabilities, you have to be thorough and give a lot of TLC," said Miss Viv, who is not looking to retire any time soon. "It's about George and taking care of his needs, and helping him live the best life possible."



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Strengthening Communities

held, full-service fleet management business for companies, government agencies and organizations operating medium-sized fleets of 20 or more vehicles. The company is an affiliate of Enterprise Holdings Inc., which has a global fleet of 2 million vehicles – the largest and most diverse privately-owned fleet in the world.

“At Enterprise, we work to strengthen the communities and neighborhoods where our employees live and work,” said Becci Miller, Enterprise Fleet Management Area Sales Manager, who led the team of Enterprise volunteers. “In fact, in Philadelphia, we conduct one fun event and one community volunteer event each quarter. We try to support initiatives that are important to our employees and partners and CI was a perfect match. They were so welcoming.”

The Enterprise Day of Service volunteer event came about through the initial effort of Anthony Tori Jr., the Enterprise Fleet Management Account Manager assigned to CI. Chris Lynn, who chairs CI’s technology committee for the nonprofit’s strategic plan, was looking at ways to fund one of the committee’s initiatives concerning Smart Home technology. Anthony expressed interest in supporting the CI technology committee with the help of the Enterprise Holdings Foundation and connected Chris with Becci Miller, both a member of the committee and an employee of Enterprise Fleet Management.

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