



Fact Sheet

Organizational Overview:

Community Options is a national non-profit organization which provides housing and employment supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The operation was founded by its President & CEO, Robert Stack, in 1989. The organization serves over 2,000 individuals nationally, many of whom previously resided in state run institutions or aged out of school based support programs. Its services span 41 locations throughout 11 states and maintains its headquarters in Princeton, NJ.

Mission:

Community Options' mission is to develop housing and employment supports for persons with disabilities.

Philosophy:

Community Options believes people with disabilities should live in the community in homes that meet their individual needs rather than be placed in segregated settings such as state schools, supported living centers, institutions or nursing homes.

Community Options believes that individuals with disabilities should have the opportunity to work in a real business setting alongside trained professionals, allowing individuals to interact with the community and the opportunity to acquire social and employment skills. A variety of the organization's programs support this employment philosophy.

Community Options uses the Gentle Teaching methodology and other positive approaches to support people with disabilities. No aversive conditioning or negative behavior modification is used. All initiatives undertaken by Community Options are people-centered, based on respect for the individuals and their families, and designed to provide individuals the opportunity to live self-determined lives.

Core Services:

- **Housing:**

- Residences are typically wholly-owned by Community Options
- Individuals are placed based on their needs and their choices, in safe and attractive neighborhoods
- Most residences house 3 individuals, the maximum capacity of a typical Community Options homes is 4 individuals, with a few exceptions
- Individuals receive 24/7 direct support care from highly trained staff in accordance to the individual's Habilitation or Support Plan

- **Employment:**

- **Supported Employment** helps individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain competitive employment in the community. Community Options partners with a variety of businesses, such as Wal-Mart, CVS Pharmacy, AMC Theaters, Sodexo as well as local and regional businesses.
- **STEP** (School to Employment Program) is a transition job training program for high school students and young adults with special needs, providing students with transferable vocational and social skills. Community Options STEP operates in NJ, PA and SC
- **Option Quest** provides community-based activities for people not yet interested in or prepared for competitive employment. The program provides exposure to volunteer and part-time work opportunities that develop social and vocational skills.

- **Community Options Enterprises** maintain wholly owned entrepreneurial businesses that successfully integrate people with disabilities into the workforce, helping to overcome the barriers to working in community based settings. The business operations are Vaseful, a florist business in Edison, NJ; Presents of Mind, a gift shop based in Flanders, NJ; and The Daily Plan-It, a complete office, conference and copy center with four locations in New Jersey.
- **Medical Day Programs:** Through its Red Ribbon Academy, Community Options provides medical, therapeutic and recreational supports that are people-centered for individuals with more severe and fragile medical disabilities. There are currently two Red Ribbon Academy locations in New Jersey.

States of Operation & Population Served:

Community Options serves more than 2,300 individuals in 41 locations across 11 states:

Arizona	Kentucky	Maryland	Texas
New Jersey	New Mexico	New York	Utah
Pennsylvania	South Carolina	Tennessee	

Fundraising Events

Cupid's Chase - Community Options' signature fundraising event, a 5K run on Valentine's Day weekend every year in more than 30 communities in the states of operation. All proceeds generated benefit the local Community Options operations, enhancing the programs and homes of the individuals served. Money raised locally stays local, and to date, Cupid's Chase 5K races have raised more than \$1 million.

<http://www.comop.org/cupidschase/>

Spring Golf Classic – Each May, Community Options holds its golf classic event to raise funds in support of the individuals it serves. In 2017 and 2018, the event will be held at The Union League Golf Club at Torresdale in Philadelphia, PA, where the very first Community Options Golf Classic was held more than 20 years ago.

<http://www.comop.org/events/golf-tournament/>

Overview of Employment & Housing for Disabled Adults:

More than 1 million non-institutionalized adults, aged 21 to 64, with any disability, who were not working, were actively seeking employment in 2015. An **estimated 1.1 million adults** with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (IDD) live in the United States. Roughly half of those individuals live at home with aging parents or other family (661,000) and more than 200,000 are on the waiting list for Medicaid Home & Community Based Service (HBCS) waiver. Nearly half a million individuals live in congregate settings ranging from 4 to 16+ to a home/facility and approximately 24,000 live in nursing homes or institutions. (FY 2014 RISP – University of Minnesota)