

# What's Up at CCS

August 2015



Champlain Community Services

## From the Director

I hope you're all enjoying the gorgeous Vermont summer . . . and that you saw CCS was once again voted the *Best Nonprofit Organization* by Champlain Business Journal readers. There are wonderful things happening at CCS!



**Elizabeth Sightler,**  
Executive Director

We are proud to be a part of a *creative collaboration* with five other developmental services around the state to share some administrative resources and functions. This allows us share program strengths with each other, unites providers statewide, and helps us to be even more efficient.

CCS also recently started a *partnership* with HomeBase, Inc. a non-profit with a unique wrap-around residential/community model.

Emily Anderson, the facilitator of our self-advocacy group, *Champlain Voices*, is working with the team to bring legislators to CCS to learn more about our work.

Our Way2Work program is particularly active, having launched its *School2Work* component. We are collaborating with The Gibney Family Foundation and the Division of Blind and Visually Impaired, and are preparing for a new collaboration with area schools called, "Bridging." Through these collaborations, and others, School2Work will help more students make successful transitions from high school to employment in the competitive workplace.

Of course, on a daily basis CCS continues to provide consumers wonderful one-to-one work and community support services, and to *increase outreach* to help the wider community better understand the importance of our work and the value of the people we serve.

Sincerely,

## Self-Advocates Reaching Out

**Champlain Voices**, the self-advocacy initiative hosted and facilitated by CCS, is a lively, active group that meets here every week. It is part of **Green Mountain Self Advocates**, a statewide organization supporting the efforts of people with developmental disabilities to take control of their lives, make decisions, solve problems, and to speak for themselves

Champlain Voices members set the following goals as points of focus this year:

- \* Learning how the State Budget effects our lives and the services we receive;
- \* Raising the awareness of others (especially legislators and other people who make big decisions) about how developmental services assist our lives, and enrich those of people we come in contact with;
- \* Participating, in service to our communities, in the "Reading Inclusion" program. Adults with disabilities visit a classroom, read a book about disability and then have a discussion with the students;
- \* Raising money and go on a fun field trip.



The group invited a number of Vermont legislators to a Champlain Voices meeting and CCS Open House in October to share information and dialogue.

### ***Ally Award to CCS Executive Director***

At the annual statewide self-advocates conference *Voices and Choices*, the members of Champlain Voices voted Elizabeth Sightler "Ally of the Year," saying, "Her inspiration has given our group a lot of room to grow."



Taylor Terry & Elizabeth Sightler

### ***Tenth Annual Auction a Success***

CCS celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Auction and Dinner in May at the Sheraton, and the event raised nearly \$11,000 for our programs. Special thanks to our Auction Committee volunteers, Board members **Sara Vizvarie-Crothers** and **Demttria Hayman** and UVM intern **Katie Kritsitansen** for making it extra brilliant!

Two highlights of the night were the fun photo backdrop with CCS logo, donated by **Banners Unlimited**, and a football autographed by New England Patriots star quarterback Tom Brady (which went for \$1,000!). **Auctioneer Jamie Polli of GameshowsVT** was electrifying, as always, and featured speaker **Taylor Terry** was inspiring.

Thanks to our **sponsors**, North Country Federal Credit Union, Kinney Drugs Foundation and Affiliated Associates and our **co-sponsors**, Sara Vizverie, Century 21 Jack, Paul Frank + Collins, Vermont Federal Credit Union and Northfield Savings Bank.



### ***CCS Plants a Garden***

Thanks to catalyst **Kate Martin**, service coordinator, CCS consumers planted and are tending to a raised-bed vegetable garden!



Located just off the entrance to our building, the garden allows consumers to experience the joy of gardening,

while also providing fresh vegetables for our cooking classes and kitchen.

Thanks to **Green Mountain Compost** for a donation of soil, and **Red Wagon Plants, Agway, Paquette Full of Posies**, and our own **Lucy Rogate** for donating veggie starts to this project.

### ***CCS Named "Best of Best" Nonprofit – AGAIN!***

CCS earned "**Best Nonprofit Organization**" honors for the second straight year in *Champlain Business Journal's* "Best of the Best Business" Readers Poll.

Because career and workforce development and job placement - and strong partnerships with area employers - are CCS signatures, we are especially proud to be recognized by a readership that includes business professionals and owners throughout Vermont.



## ***SUPPORT THE CCS ANNUAL FUND!***

Please consider a gift to the CCS Annual Fund. Your gift directly supports our programs, and helps leverage additional dollars by showing foundations, companies and other potential partners that the people who know us best invest in our work!

**Contact Mike Reilly at 655-0511 x 125 with questions.**

