

CMA's Residential Staff: Hurricane Hero's!



Several of CMA's Hurricane Hero's receive special recognition; from L to R, Cyle Holdip, Matthew Fayda, Shawwna Teresko, Heather Aylward, Kelly Steo, Jolie Abel, Eric Weigel, and Brian Welch (kneeling).

Earthquakes, hurricanes...the week of August 22 was certainly an unusual one for weather! And while the August 23 earthquake was barely noticeable on Long Island, it was clear there would be no missing the rapidly approaching Hurricane Irene.

Predicted to be massive and dangerous, CMA residential staff worked around the clock for days to prepare as Hurricane Irene came barreling towards the East Coast. Indeed, staff took every precaution to ensure that CMA residents remained safe in the face of whatever challenges the storm brought.

Thankfully, by the time the hurricane hit, it had been downgraded to a tropical storm; CMA homes escaped damage, and our residents rode out the storm safely, with a dedicated staff by their sides.

Fate took the storm down a different path; yet it was the careful planning of CMA's residential staff that ensured we were prepared for the worst. Their efforts – before, during and following the storm – made all the difference in the world.

"There are so many things we need to anticipate when prepping for a storm of this magnitude," Heather Aylward, Director of Residential Services explains. "And while we are concerned about potential damage to our homes, our real energies were focused on providing the increased levels of support many of our residents need during high-stress situations. CMA residents depend heavily on structure and predictability in their daily lives; disruptions to their routines can cause increased anxiety and be very frightening and very stressful for them. As you can imagine, Irene caused a lot of disruptions – during the storm and in the days leading up to the storm! Our primary concern was to offer as much reassurance as possible."

Indeed, in the days leading up to the actual storm CMA homes were a flurry of activity as staff cancelled residents' weekend plans and social engagements, large supplies of water and food were delivered and frequent staff meetings were held, etc. Residents living in CMA's Supported Living Program were relocated to CMA homes with 24-hour staff, and as the storm hit people were spending large amounts of time together in confined spaces. All CMA residents required higher than usual levels of support. And CMA's residential staff were on hand to ensure their needs were met, for as long as necessary.

continued on page 2



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"Hurricane Irene was a potentially dangerous storm and we took the warnings very seriously," Heather continues. "Our residents did great, even though many of them were very nervous. And I am so proud of our staff. This was a difficult situation yet they all pitched in and put the needs of our residents above all else. **Several staff left their own families and loved ones for days at a time, to be with the people we serve who depend on them.** And while there was a great deal of extra work to manage during those long days, staff recognized that just by being a familiar and comforting presence, they could help calm frayed nerves. Indeed they were a sense of stability to our residents during a particularly unstable time."

"CMA's residential staff went over and above the call of duty during the storm," Rick Gosman, president of CMA's board of directors, said. "We have always known we have a wonderful staff. The storm simply reinforced how much they care about the people we serve, and how far they will go to help in times of crisis. The board is so grateful and so proud of our team."

Hopefully, it will be years before we face another storm of Irene's magnitude. But it is comforting to know that whatever Mother Nature brings, CMA's residential staff – affectionately known as our **Hurricane Hero's** – will go the extra mile to protect the people in our care.

Happy 1st Anniversary!!

October marked the one year anniversary of CMA's newest home, which opened in October 2010. Residents and staff gathered to celebrate this happy milestone. Assistant Director of Residential Services Shawwna Tereshko explains. "In many ways the first year of living in a new home can be the most challenging. People are acclimating to each other and the house, and adjusting to a new routine. By the time we reach the first anniversary, people are generally more comfortable and settled. It is a good time to celebrate a year of accomplishments and hard work!"



Supporting CMA....easier than ever!

So many people make donations to their favorite charities at year-end. With so many worthwhile organizations vying for your donation, we ask you to remember that CMA needs you, too. CMA's year-end appeal letter is on its way to you, and we respectfully ask for your support. Our website (www.communitymainstreaming.org) and newsletters are great ways to keep up to date with CMA news, services and events; you may also make donations on-line. There is a lot on tap for 2012, including a new CMA home, new residents, and a year filled with wonderful special events—your donations support all this and more! **Please accept our thanks along with our warm wishes for a joyful holiday!**

A Message from the Executive Director Julie P. Samkoff, C.S.W.

Thirty-five years ago revolutionary change came to the way people with developmental disabilities would be seen and treated in New York. CMA was a part of that revolution.

Today New York State has one of the finest community based systems of services in the country. The system is funded in large part by Medicaid.

The system is now facing two challenges. The first is the cost of services for people with developmental disabilities. The second is the opportunity – or lack of it – for innovation in the design of our services as constrained by our system of funding. In response to these challenges, the New York State Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is working with the federal government on a proposal to significantly redesign our system.



It is our hope that a redesigned system will create greater opportunities for us to assist people and families more flexibly; yet there is little doubt service providers will be asked to do more – and serve more people – with fewer dollars. We are very concerned that this will put undue pressure on the quality of care people with developmental disabilities receive in the future.

I share this with you for several reasons. First – and most important – CMA remains 100% committed to the people in our care and we will do everything possible to minimize any disruptions in the lives of CMA residents that these changes may cause. Next, it is our responsibility to keep you – our friends, family and supporters – informed. While there are many things we do not yet know, we do know this: CMA will be affected by the redesigned system. Whatever changes the next years bring, we all know that the need for services remains great.

At CMA, we believe that people with developmental disabilities need to be a part of a community that extends beyond their families, they need a reason to leave the house in the morning, they need places to go, and responsibilities of their own to fulfill. They need to count on others, and have people count on them. Families need to know their son, daughter, brother or sister will be safe and secure throughout their life – that they will be cared for as they age or become infirm. At CMA, our definition of the “need for services” goes way beyond providing a bed and a roof. **These are the services we are advocating for.** These are the services your donations will help provide.

There are two ways you can help. You can be part of the public discussion through public hearings, submitting comments through the OPWDD website, letters or emails to the governor or Commissioner Burke. You can help keep CMA strong financially so that we can continue to make the right choices for the people we serve now & in the future.

Finally, I thank you for your contributions, and ask for your continuing support in the coming years. Fundraising dollars are more necessary now than ever before. Simply put: **we need you**. Be assured that your donations can help fill the gap caused by shrinking government funding...together we can weather this storm. **You** can make all the difference.

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please feel free to contact me at jsamkoff@communitymainstreaming.org or visit OPWDD’s website ~ www.opwdd.ny.gov.

CMA's A Celebration of Independence – Oh, What a Night!!

On October 26, more than 230 friends – old & new – packed the de Seversky Mansion for CMA's annual fundraising gala, "**A Celebration of Independence.**" The gala proudly honored cherished friends and past board members, Patricia Carpenter and Thelma Newman; both ladies were awarded The John Walter Humanitarian Award for their outstanding contributions to CMA.

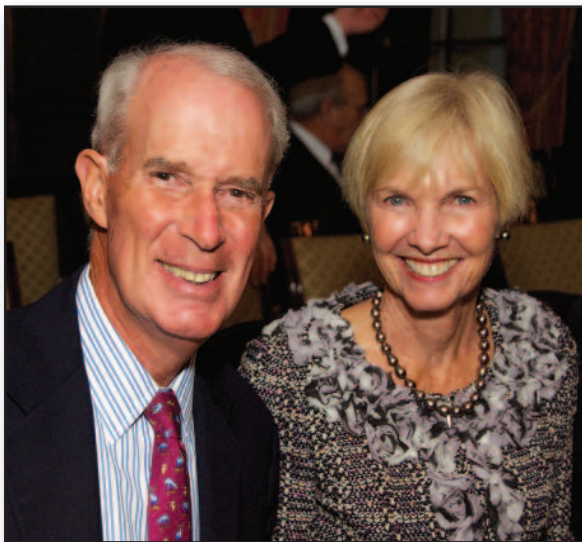
The gala's "*Believe in the Magic*" theme captured the tone of the evening perfectly! Everyone present is sure to agree—the evening celebrated Pat and Thelma, as well as the daily miracles occurring each day in the lives of the people we serve.

Event Chair Ossie Spector explained, "*This year's gala was one of our most successful fall fund raising events in recent memory. Friends, family, CMA residents, and community leaders were in attendance in force. The casual format of the evening gave everyone the opportunity to enjoy themselves while experiencing the important and meaningful mission of CMA: to enable adults with developmental disabilities to live enriched and fulfilling lives. The funds raised support a variety of CMA programs including educational and vocational opportunities. The community of constant CMA supporters is proud to invite new friends to experience the sense of accomplishment when our residents strive for and reach new goals through programs supported with the funds that we raise. Congratulations to our honorees, Pat and Thelma, two hard working, hard driving women who continue to fight for the rights of adults with developmental disabilities.*"

A highlight of the evening was the presentations given by the honorees and special guests. CMA Executive Director Julie Samkoff thanked the crowd—and especially acknowledged Pat and Thelma's many contributions as longtime board members. While sharing plans for CMA's coming year, she also explained that the need for support is greater now than ever.



CMA President Rick Glosman celebrates the evening with Hanna, Kathleen, Rhonda and Anthony.



Special Thanks to Dede and Woody Frank!



Honoree Patricia Carpenter joins together with family and friends.

The night's strongest moments came when Danny O'Shea, a CMA resident, accepted a special Certificate of Achievement. Danny expressed his gratitude for the support he receives each day from his many friends and the staff at CMA. He also spoke movingly about his family, sharing that his mother worried each day about where he would live—and her search for the perfect home for him.

While so many friends contributed to this evening, we are especially grateful for our event sponsors: The Herman Goldman Foundation, Pat Lowy and the Natalie Bailey and Herbert J. Kirshner Foundation, the Justin Family, Phoebe Lazarus, The Fifth Child Foundation and Dede & Woody Frank. We are also deeply grateful to our friend John Walter, for presenting our honorees with the John Walter Humanitarian Award.

CMA extends its warmest thanks to: Ossie Spector, Joseph Carpenter, Dede & Woody Frank, Jacque Ivory, Dr. David Newman, Prize Chair Vicki Imbarrato and the entire Planning Committee: Peter Alpert Esq., Daniel Brenner, PhD, Nancy & Charles Comer, Anne & David Donnelly, Marty Glennon, Esq., Nina & Richard Glosman, Leonard Gold, Sandi & Scott Greenfield, Jodi & Len Golden, Michael Intrabartola, David Justin, Gerry Levy, Robert Peare, CPA, James C. Romanelli • Carl R. Soller, Esq., Tom Van Buskirk, Douglas Spector, Ellen Weinberg, Esq., PeggyAnn White.

On behalf of all the men and women of CMA, thank you to everyone for making this evening so special and such a success!



Honoree Thelma Newman surrounded by family and friends.



Special Thanks to Bill & Joanne Quinn



Special Thanks to Mary & Alfred Lepore of Fifth Child Foundation

Celebrate the season, Sweet Comfort style!

There is a lot happening at the Sweet Comfort Bakery & Café these days as we prepare for the holiday season. We spent our summer testing new recipes especially designed to make the holidays extra sweet. We began with pies...we have expanded our pie selection to include: apple • pumpkin pie • sweet potato • pecan • chocolate-pecan • coconut custard • and pear cranberry crumb!



We also expanded our selection of gift baskets. The end result: more than a dozen gift baskets designed to meet wide range of tastes and budgets! Have a friend who likes chocolate? Check out our **"Chocolate Lover's"** gift basket – it is chuck full of our **homemade fudge, chocolate lace cookies, chocolate volcano cakes,** and much, much more! Our **"Coffee Break"** gift basket – filled with **coffee, homemade biscotti, & coffee crumb cake** – makes the perfect gift for a teacher, babysitter or co-worker. And who wouldn't love a basket filled with **BROWNIES!??**



And we have outdone ourselves with our collection of "holiday favorites" gift baskets! Offered in a variety of sizes, our holiday gift baskets include: oversized 10 inch chocolate chip cookie (a customer favorite!) • chocolate and white chocolate bark • rainbow cake • cupcakes • raspberry bars • chocolate & caramel drizzled popcorn • and much, much more!

Since opening, the Sweet Comfort Bakery & Café has benefited tremendously from holiday business. Every product sold, every dollar raised directly supports the bakery's mission of offering employment to the men and women living in CMA's homes. Many friends and businesses opt to support us by purchasing holiday baskets as gifts for customers, clients, employees and friends. **The bakery ships across the country and recently launched an on-line shopping page at www.communitymainstreaming.org.**

If you would like to learn more or are interested in sending an extra-meaningful gift this holiday, please call our bakery manager, Diana Broscole, at 516-883-2721.

Happy holidays!



Sweet Comfort Bakery & Cafe Welcomes County Executive Edward Mangano

The bakery was recently awarded a Community Block Development Grant from Nassau County. Paul, who has been employed by the bakery for almost two years, explained how much he enjoyed his job and then proudly accompanied Mr. Mangano on a tour of the bakery & kitchen. We extend our thanks to the County Executive and his staff for their support!



YLC's Comedy Night – 300+ and growing!

While CMA fundraising events have always been great, there is no doubt that in 2011 CMA's events exceeded all of our expectations. **CMA's Young Leadership Council's annual Comedy Night this past August is the perfect example, practically doubling in size and becoming one of the most anticipated events on the CMA calendar!** Thanks to a dedicated committee, led by co-chairs Danny Mickelson and Matt Engel, this year's event was attended by over 300 friends and supporters.



YLC Co-Chairs (L) Danny Mickelson and (R) Matt Engel present Honoree Johnathan Lerner with a caricature portrait of himself surrounded by the performing comedians.

Greatly contributing to the success of Comedy Night was its honoree, Johnathan Lerner, who was recognized for his tremendous support of both YLC and CMA. Mr. Lerner adds, "I am truly humbled to be honored by such a meaningful organization like CMA. Helping extraordinary people lead ordinary lives is what this charity does each and every day. The small part I play in supporting their cause, while gratifying, is only the tip of the iceberg. The entire staff at CMA are the ones who deserve to be recognized."

CMA wishes to thank the friends and businesses who supported Comedy Night as a sponsor:

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CMA would like to thank YLC for a fantastic event and for their commitment to helping people with developmental disabilities. YLC is happy to welcome new committee members dedicated to supporting CMA's mission – if you would like to learn more about our Young Leadership Committee, please call Diana Guerin at 516-683-0710.



Congratulations to CMA's Young Leadership Council and Honoree Johnathan Lerner!

(L to R) Michael Raab, David Miller, Ray Ellin, Matt Engel, Johnathan Lerner (middle), Danny Mickelson, Lauren Gabriel, Boz Reilly, Matthew Segal & Michael Schwartz.



Special Thanks to The Dr. Theodore A. Atlas Foundation

Working Together

As part of **National Disability Employment Awareness Month** (October), CMA's vocational program, **Working Together**, welcomed a Career Counselor from Hempstead Works. Working Together helps the people we serve prepare for and obtain employment. An important objective of the program is to connect participants to community based programs and resources that assist their job search. This particular presentation identified on-line job banks, job seeking and resume tools. The counselor also shared information about services that help participants identify individual fields of interest. Working Together participants especially appreciated the opportunity to ask questions pertaining to their own needs.



Working Together is always looking for businesses that are interested in employing people with developmental disabilities. Local businesses including Stop & Shop, TJ Maxx, the Manhasset Public Library, Filene's Basement and many others have welcomed our participants and their support is invaluable. If you work for a business that may like to learn more about employing people living in CMA homes please contact Lori Gobioff at 516-683-0710 ext. 223. CMA offers significant, on-going support to employers and your questions are welcome!



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Contributions to CMA's Newsletter are welcomed and appreciated. Please send your ideas, stories and photos for upcoming issues to:

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