Our Mission & Vision

The Center of Hope Foundation, Inc. provides people with disabilities and their families the resources, services and opportunities to be contributing members of their communities, and to achieve the most fulfilling and meaningful lives possible.

To hope is fundamental to the human condition. We hope for the well-being of our families, caring relationships, financial wholeness, health and productivity. We hope for the prosperity of our friends, neighbors and community. We even hope for peace and stability for the larger world around us.

The Center of Hope Foundation, Inc. fosters the fulfillment of this hope by broadening the scope of care with the provision of an expanding safety net of resources, advocacy and services to an ever widening circle of individuals and families facing disabilities or disabling circumstances.

Guiding Statements

• To foster the acquisition of those skills necessary for obtaining and maintaining a viable standard of living.
• To assist individuals with severe disabilities to develop and acquire the services and resources, which will allow them to meet their goals for meaningful and productive living.
• To facilitate the development of each person’s confidence and self-esteem crucial for one’s growth, development and independence.
• To assist with the development and nurturing of fulfilling relationships.

408 Individuals served through day programs. An additional 300 individuals and families are served through community support and advocacy.

CoHF serves individuals from 64 towns in Central Massachusetts and Northeastern Connecticut.

In FY19 program members volunteered at 37 of sites in the local community.
Overview of the Annual Events for Fiscal Year 2019

Once again, the Center of Hope had a wonderful year of growth and community involvement. During July, the first month of the fiscal year, the Center celebrated its new Sturbridge Day Habilitation Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony. This event was attended by many community supporters including the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Mary Lou Sudders. During the course of the year, this program has grown so rapidly that we are already looking for additional space.

Another set of activities that engages the community and helps the Center of Hope is our fundraising events. These events included the annual Golf Tournament; the Wine Tasting auction at Point Breeze; two road races, the Gobble Gobble in November and the Cinco De Mile in May, and Country for a Cause, which all help support our Special Olympics program and Holiday Giving Program. Furthermore, the Southbridge Credit Union sponsored a Worcester Bravehearts fundraising event, which made a donation for every home run. Other generous donations were from the Blanchard Means Foundation, which they requested be used for Arts and Music programs for our participants, along with the Scott McKay Golf Tournament and the Hoyt and Herman F. Becker Foundations.

In addition to these fundraising events, the Center started a new Horticultural Program with a grant funded by the Wells Foundation which was used to purchase and build a green house.

One of the most successful employment initiatives this year was the internship program located at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center and Harrington Hospital. This program was funded by a grant request written by Cindy Howard to the Nationford Arc and funded by Walmart. It has provided wonderful training and employment opportunities for our highly motivated people with disabilities.

Among its many endeavors, the Center continues to engage in other community activities, as well. As an example, and as part of this commitment, each year Center staff and participants volunteer to participate in Beautify Southbridge Day with other members of the community. This activity involves a clean-up effort in areas of town needing the attention. The community is most grateful for our leadership and participation.

Finally, with reference to participant services, the Center has furthered its philosophy of care and advocacy by participating in a training on “Trauma Informed Care” presented on Professional Development Day. Although our agency has a strong commitment to care and support, this training has further educated staff on the dynamics behind the reasons individuals struggle with their life circumstances and stresses the importance of patience, creative and caring supports and unconditional positive regard.

Each year the Center continues with its irrevocable commitment to its mission in providing the support, resources and care to ensure that participants and families may obtain the most fulfilling lives possible. This care is maintained by the unusual, wonderful and committed staff of the Center of Hope.

With Highest Regard,

Jim Howard
Day Habilitation Programs

The Center of Hope Foundation, Inc. operates five Day Habilitation Programs in Southbridge and Sturbridge, MA. All programs offer individuals specific skill trainings, as well as community access outings.

The Day Habilitation Programs continue to provide services and supports to individuals with varying levels of disabilities. Programs continue to focus on community involvement, increasing independence through life skills and on developing individual’s self-esteem and confidence.

Intake Summary FY’19

FY 2019 Income

FY 2019 Expenses
West Street Day Habilitation serves a diverse array of individuals with a wide range of needs. Individuals accessing this program vary in need from completely independent to those requiring full physical assistance in all support areas. Our areas of support include feeding, bathroom assistance, PT and OT recommendations and exercises.

West Street Day Habilitation also offers full-time nursing care, medication distribution, g-tube feeding, and maintaining the health and well-being of each individual. Dining and personal care may range from hand over hand assistance to supervision for safety reasons.

The program offers a six week rotating schedule of trainings and activities, incorporating fun and creative curriculum emphasizing important areas of everyday knowledge and life skills such as: hygiene, nutrition and health, safety, emotions, social skills, gross and fine motor, money and purchasing, and exercise. Each month offers a new calendar of community access trips, in the nearby community or surrounding towns, with multiple choices of dining, shopping, exercise, socialization, and more.

Daily communication meetings are held by staff, encouraging a smooth transfer of information and the best possible support for our members.

New skills trainings & curriculum ideas implemented.

• A fine motor activity where program members have to find 6 objects that are mixed in a plastic box that contains dried beans. The program members are timed and the top 3 individuals with the fastest times compete against one another and have the opportunity to win a prize.

• A gross motor game called noodle ball where individuals sit around the table and use pool noodles that are cut in half and they have to keep the balloons in the air using the pool noodles.

Achieve with us.
The Center of Hope Day Habilitation (COHDH) started the year serving 143 adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. COHDH offers skills training daily which involves healthy eating, community safety, money skills, men’s and women’s groups, kitchen workshop, fine motor and independent living skills.

Weekly, individuals from the community come into the program for reverse integration. These include: karaoke, drum circle and creative writing.

During a typical week, COHDH uses the community for outreach and integration. Our program members utilize the local YMCA for swimming, basketball and working out in the exercise room. COHDH also goes on bowling trips three times a week and uses two different bowling alleys. Our program members go on weekly trips to local shops and businesses.

Each month the program holds a house meeting with staff and program members. These meetings are an opportunity for program members to voice their ideas and input in creating the monthly calendar. These meetings are also an opportunity for program members to take an active role in programmatic development.

**Programmatic Changes and Improvements**

COHDH had its outside deck area updated and expanded. Program members in wheel chairs now have the space to turn around and can interact with peers due to more space. The deck received better supports structurally which made the area safer.

COHDH also had a change in Administration staff. Long time Administrator, Kristine Bauce, moved on to other opportunities and will be greatly missed. Daniel Vaszbiner, former Program Director for Sturbridge Day Habilitation, received the new position as Administrator for COHDH. The transition was successful with staff, program members and families.
Sturbridge Day Habilitation

Amanda Cournyer, Program Administrator
Allison Routhier, Program Director

Sturbridge Day Habilitation is the most recent addition to the Center of Hope Foundation. Sturbridge Day Habilitation offers a variety of community-based activities aligned with life skills trainings that are facilitated within the program. Sturbridge Day Habilitation provides services to 117 individuals with an emphasis on volunteer options, and community-based activities geared towards physical activity. Sturbridge Day Habilitation supports many individuals with split funding sources providing vocational opportunities through the agency’s Employment Supports Department. The mission for this day program, is for individuals attending to make daily decisions and create schedules based on their interest and skill set.

Sturbridge Day Habilitation strives to expand reverse integration within the day program. Some of our success with reverse integration continues to be a monthly drum circle, a seminar on healthy relationships provided by Harrington Memorial Hospital, and a seminar on cyber bullying and internet safety by Venture Community Services.

The management team of StDH created a 4-week rotating schedule for their volunteer opportunities. This allows program members an equal opportunity to sign up for these popular sites.

Monthly, Sturbridge Day Habilitation holds house meetings for the participants where they can have an active roll on how their calendar schedule looks for the upcoming month and can give request for programmatic ideas. During each monthly meeting staff go over safety topics and human rights. A staff meeting is also held to address any upcoming issues and go over programmatic changes.
Quinebaug River Day Habilitation Program is a clinical based program that is designed to serve adult individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The program supports individuals with significant behavioral challenges. The Clinical Department plays an active role in training all staff in positive behavioral supports to encourage independence rather than restrictive measures.

The Quinebaug River program was constructed to reduce environmental stimulus utilizing cold color schemes and texture paint to dampen sound. The program also offers sensory based curriculum to promote different forms of active participation and range of motion. This includes self-calming walks through scenic local recreational areas where they take part in energy discharge activities, as well as the occasional picnic with staff and peers. One of the participants’ favorite features in our program is our “Screen Cloud” television. This direct connection to the senior management team’s computer allows pictures to be posted to the Screen Cloud and for the participants to view pictures of themselves, peers and staff participating in skills trainings, program cookouts, community trips, and even Special Olympic sporting events. Along with community activities we also offer the opportunity to purchase a swim pass at Focus Fitness where the participant can exercise and swimming daily. experience energy discharge by going swimming daily.

Monthly, the program holds a participant meeting called a “House meeting” in which the participants make suggestions as to trips they would like to attend in the future. These suggestions are then included on a monthly calendar in which participants take home. Each month the participant will circle two choices of trips they would like to attend for the upcoming month. Some of these trips include: shopping at their favorite store, going out to eat at their favorite restaurant, visiting a local farm where they can feed and pet the animals, and participating in physical activities such as visiting the park and playing basketball, frisbee or going for a walk on a trail with the group.
Southbridge Day Habilitation

Julie Monette, Program Administrator
Roger Hodgkins, Program Director

Southbridge Day Habilitation serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities along with medically fragile individuals. Individuals participate in skills trainings in sensory motor skills, fine and gross motor skills, self-help skills, independent living skills, communication skills and social skills.

Each individual has a daily schedule that assists them in attending skills trainings that help them maximize their full potential. Daily schedules are designed to be flexible to better serve individual’s needs. Schedules have been modified to assist the program members who are medically fragile in attaining goals and objectives. Skills trainings are geared toward a sensory based curriculum.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind came to the program to do a training for staff on how to best serve our individuals with vision issues.

- The program purchased two pieces of equipment to assist our individuals in standing; a mechanical stander and a stand easy. These assist individuals who are unable to stand on their own or have trouble standing for long periods of time.

- Friday is always karaoke, and everyone enjoys this.

- The program hosts monthly drum therapy where everyone no matter their ability gets involved.
The Employment Services Department implemented work assessments in FY19; a standardized approach to assessing potential intakes. Individuals complete surveys and a 2-3 day on-site work assessment to gauge whether an individual’s interests and level of motivation coincide with job opportunities the agency has to offer. This has enhanced consumer satisfaction; ensuring we are person centered and can properly fulfill obligations.

The Employment Services Department placed individuals at 8 new community based work sites and established 6 new volunteer sites at the Woodstock, CT Community Kitchen, the Putnam, CT Community Kitchen, Green Valley Crossings Church in Putnam, CT, Ecotarium in Worcester, MA, the Southwick Zoo in Mendon, MA; PAWS cat shelter in Woodstock, CT, and in July 2019 we began volunteering at the agencies food pantry; assisting in shopping and distributing food to those in need.

The Employment Services Department placed nineteen individuals at community-based sites including Wendy’s, CVS, Harrington Memorial Hospital, Henke Sass, Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center, the Town of Southbridge Dining Services, Bay Path Vocational Cafeteria, Webster-Dudley Boys and Girls Club, St. Camillus Health Center and the Publick House.

The Department has secured a professional hairdresser to come to the agency monthly to provide on-site reduced price haircuts. This has helped individuals with low income and transportation difficulties the opportunity to maintain a professional appearance.

Partners for Positions an internship program providing individuals ready for competitive employment with a real-world training opportunity while providing employers with a risk-free trial period, was launched in July 2018.

This newly established program was a great success that led to 5 job placements with all of the individuals still maintaining their employment at time of this report. Internships took place at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center with individuals learning transferable skills in housekeeping, laundry services, and dishwashing. Harrington Memorial Hospital also participated and individuals worked in their Transport Department and Dining Services. Partners for Positions helped enhance Community Partnerships and the Employment Services Team plans to expand its program into more communities and fields. The Job Development Team continues to be successful in job placements and retention of jobs is high at 95%.
The Center of Hope Foundation’s Clinical Department is committed to enriching the lives of the individuals we serve through advocacy, behavioral supports, staff training and empowerment. The Clinical Department is used as a support to the programs to assist and uphold the agency’s mission statement through behavioral health supports. We implement behavioral supports that outline proactive measures with the least restrictive interventions. We also support staff through role modeling and training to ensure the most consistent and supportive environment for the individuals we serve. The Clinical Department attends ISP/IP, risk and team meetings for individuals who require clinical support. Through these supports, we promote and create opportunities for increased independence through personal growth. There is a strong clinical presence within the programs that provides proactive strategies and reinforcement of positive behaviors.

Throughout the last year the Clinical Department along with Kelly Hutton the Director of Support Services, was involved in heading a committee to transform the Center of Hope into a Trauma Informed Care agency. In August 2018, the Center of Hope Foundation, Inc. started a Trauma Informed Care Initiative. The agency created a work group to address how to create and promote an environment of safety, choice, empowerment and healing. Along with the clinical staff and Director of Support Services, this group consisted of staff from various facets of the agency. In February 2019, at the annual Professional Development Day, all agency staff were trained in TIC and self-care. Trauma Informed Care is at the heart of our agency. We seek to treat all people with respect and dignity, and to help people to live the most meaningful lives possible. TIC has been added into our framework of our behavior support plans and guidelines. TIC has also been added to new staff orientation which is completed by one of the Clinical Coordinators each month.

The agency sends satisfaction surveys to program members, providers, family members and guardians on an annual basis. The data displays that overall, program members and stakeholders are satisfied with our services.
The Center of Hope Foundation, Inc’s Mission states that we will “provide people with disabilities and their families from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds with the resources, services and opportunities to be contributing members of their communities in order to achieve the most fulfilling and meaningful lives possible.”

Diversity Among Board Members

Diversity Among Person’s Served

Cultural/Diversity Competency

Diversity Among Staff

Men and women from different ethnic groups, cultures, generations, skills, backgrounds, religions, orientations and other unique differences are sought after in each aspect of the agency. Diversity in board membership, staff, volunteers, consultants, program members, etc. is encouraged.
In Home Support

Michelle Chapdelaine, Director of Residential Services

The Center of Hope’s Supported Housing Program provides in home supports that are specifically designed around each individual’s abilities and needs. Each individual served by the program is unique in their interest, support needs and skill level, therefore staffing support hours for individuals currently in the program vary from as little as 5 hours a week to a maximum of 14 hours a week.

Our Supported Housing services are designed to help ensure stability and to maximize each individuals’ ability to live as independently as they are capable.

The following supports are in place:

- Budgeting and paying rent
- Medication monitoring and management
- Activities of daily living
- Assistance with meal preparation
  - Housekeeping
  - Shopping
- Developing support networks and socialization
- Medical and health services
- Counseling and support in achieving self-identified goals
- Assistance in meeting tenant obligations and complying with house rules
  - Referrals to other services or programs
  - Conflict-resolution training
  - Employment opportunities and access

Two residents are being tutored to get their GED at the Jacob Edwards Library.
Outreach, Community Connections and Marketing

The CoHF continues the uphill battle in overall awareness about our organization and the disability community. Despite the competition for funding and other threats to the agency, we continue to grow and thrive through several efforts and strategies.

The CoHF continues to increase its services and ability to serve by taking advantage of the opportunity and trends in the field. The agency is strong in our reputation throughout the disability community in the towns we serve, with our surveys being mainly positive. We are financially stable, and have dedicated and passionate staff, families and advocates who are open to new ideas. We have unique offerings in our field which provide effective differentiation from other businesses.

CoHF recognized that the company has to keep developing strategies for growth or the agency will not remain sustainable. We continue to use the community for outreach and integration. We continue to grow our volunteerism and expand our footprint within the community.

Other accomplishments to be noted was taking part in celebrating our differences by participating in Autism Awareness and National Down Syndrome Day. Center of Hope Foundation was a part of Assumption College’s celebration of Autism Awareness and the (almost) completion of the World’s Largest Puzzle! Groups were sent weekly to help put together COHF’s portion of the 40,000+ piece puzzle depicting scenes from Disney favorites. The puzzle was presented during a reception in March showcasing the Best Buddies program.

COHF partnered with Tantasqua Junior High School to participate in the One World Strong Marathon. This world-wide event embodies the core principles of connection and co-operation, supporting the belief that people around the world should work together toward a common goal. Program members, staff and students from Tantasqua came together and completed 9,310 total laps (.25 mile/lap) totaling 2,327.5 miles and 88.4 completed 26.2 marathons. Program members and the students all had a great time completing these marathons together.

CoHF hosted an event on May 30, 2019 at the AC Marriott in Worcester, Massachusetts. Legislators, Senators, human service agencies, staff and families of the ID/DD community all gathered with Governor Charlie Baker to discuss and bring awareness about the “Workforce Crisis” and other important issues. Four of our staff received awards for their dedicated support and the impacts that they make on the people we serve. The Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center received “The Ripple Effect Award” because of their enthusiastic recommendations they have made to the rest of the community to “jump on board” with the “Partners for Positions” program.
Volunteer Board of Directors

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Key Administration

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Asst. to the President, CEO, Awilda Torres
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Assistant Executive Vice President, COO, Erika Travinski
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Transportation Director, Sean Cristofori

Facilities Management
Plant Manager, Ralph Gillespie

Day Program Services
Director of Support Services, Kelly Hutton
Director of Training, Sharon Doyen
Director of Quality Services, Kim Liss
Director of Safety, Renee Proulx
Director of Clinical and Family Services & Human Rights Coordinator, Ryan Chauvin