



CAPTAIN
Community Human Services

News&Notes
Winter 2025

Creating Lasting Change: Investing in a Brighter Future for All

Thanks to you, CAPTAIN Community Human Services has been a cornerstone of support in our community, helping children, families, seniors, and individuals in crisis for nearly 50 years. Through essential programs like emergency housing, life skills education, and volunteer services, your generosity has made a lasting impact and laid the foundation for lifelong change

This vital work would not be possible without you. In 2024 alone, volunteers dedicated **over 32,725 hours of service**, while individuals and businesses generously donated **nearly \$310,000 worth of goods and services**.

These contributions don't just support our programs—they help create a ripple effect of transformation throughout our community.

Our approach is holistic. From preventing crises before they happen, to offering compassionate intervention during the most challenging times, to moving families toward self-sufficiency, our programs are designed to make a lasting impact. But as economic challenges continue to grow, the demand for our services is more urgent than ever.

To sustain and expand these programs, long-term investment is crucial. Your generosity - whether through donations, monthly giving, or volunteering - plays an indispensable role in ensuring that CAPTAIN CHS' programs can continue to meet the increasing needs of our community. You are not just a donor, volunteer, or supporter; you are a partner in building a brighter future for those who need it most.

As we look toward 2025 and beyond, we hope you will continue to invest in a future where every individual, no matter their circumstances, has the opportunity to thrive.



Lifting people up. Building brighter futures.

HUNGER | HOMELESSNESS | ECONOMIC CRISIS | COMMUNITY SUPPORT | EMPOWERMENT
captaincares.org

From the desk of Executive Director **Andy Gilpin**



Andy Gilpin
Executive Director

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Friends and Supporters,

In a world that often feels increasingly disconnected, the principles of dignity and compassion stand as beacons of hope and humanity. For organizations like CAPTAIN Community Human Services (CHS), these values are not just ideals but the very foundation of our mission to uplift individuals and families in times of need.

At its core, dignity is about recognizing the inherent worth of every person, regardless of their circumstances. Whether someone is struggling with homelessness, hunger, or any of life's many challenges, treating them with dignity ensures that their humanity is preserved. Compassion, on the other hand, is the active expression of empathy — the willingness to walk alongside someone in their pain and help them find a path forward.

In the work of CAPTAIN CHS, dignity and compassion intersect in powerful ways. Every program, from the Youth Shelter to the Family Development programs, is designed to empower individuals, not just meet their immediate needs. This approach is transformative. It replaces feelings of helplessness and shame with hope and a sense of agency, allowing people to rebuild their lives.

Consider the story of Maria, a mother who turned to CAPTAIN CHS when she and her daughter, Emily, faced homelessness. Rather than being treated as a problem to solve, Maria was met with kindness, respect, and a listening ear. She wasn't just given shelter; she was provided with resources, guidance, and the support needed to regain her independence. That dignity and compassion gave Maria the confidence to overcome her challenges and build a better future for Emily.

The importance of these values extends beyond the individuals served. For communities, embracing dignity and compassion fosters unity and resilience. When we view our neighbors not as "others" but as part of a shared human experience, we create spaces where everyone can thrive.

In today's fast-paced, often polarized society, it's easy to forget the simple but profound impact of treating one another with kindness and respect. But our incredible volunteers, staff, supporters, and clients remind us that every act of compassion, no matter how small, ripples outward. A meal for a hungry family, a warm bed for a youth in crisis, or a word of encouragement for a struggling senior can ignite a chain reaction of hope and healing.

As we look to the future, let us commit to weaving dignity and compassion into the fabric of our communities. Let us challenge ourselves to embody them in our daily lives. Together, we can create a world where everyone is seen, valued, and given the opportunity to succeed.

Because, as we work hard to demonstrate in our work every day, dignity and compassion are not just ideals; they are the tools with which we build a better world.

With my gratitude for your continued support,

Andy Gilpin
Executive Director

Spreading Joy: Toys for Toga & Holiday Programs



The magic of the holiday season came alive once again through Toys for Toga 2024 and CAPTAIN CHS' annual holiday programs, cherished annual traditions that embody the spirit of giving in our community. This year's campaign brought together neighbors, businesses, and volunteers with one shared mission: to ensure every child experiences the joy of the holidays, no matter their circumstances.



Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, Toys for Toga collected hundreds of toys and gifts that were distributed to local children in need. From cuddly stuffed animals to board games and art supplies, each item brought a smile to a child's face and hope to their family during what can often be a challenging time.



But Toys for Toga is just one part of the many ways CAPTAIN CHS works to support families during the holiday season. Our Coats for CAPTAIN, Thanksgiving Baskets, Adopt-a-Family, and Toy Shop programs also played vital roles in ensuring that local families had everything they needed to celebrate the season with warmth and joy. Families received holiday meals, gift cards, and additional support to make the holidays a little brighter, no matter their financial situation.



These programs, along with Toys for Toga, are made possible by the generosity of local businesses, donors, and volunteers who give their time, resources, and hearts to those in need. The success of these efforts is a testament to the power of community.



The giving campaign's success, along with all of our holiday initiatives, highlights the strength and kindness of our neighbors. Local businesses hosted collection boxes, volunteers worked tirelessly to sort and distribute donations, and families contributed with open hearts. Together, we made sure that the magic of the holidays reached every corner of our region.

Our holidays programs aren't just about gifts—they're about spreading love, kindness, and the message that no one is forgotten. To everyone who participated, donated, or shared the word, thank you for helping us make this holiday season brighter for so many.

Here's to continuing these wonderful traditions and bringing even more joy in the years to come!



Hidden Gems at CAPTAIN's Treasures Thrift Shop



Nestled in the heart of our community, CAPTAIN's Treasures is more than just a thrift shop—it's a source of hope and support for local families. Offering gently-used, high-quality clothing and home goods at unbeatable prices, this special store combines savings with purpose, directly benefiting those in need.

A Mission That Gives Back

Every purchase at CAPTAIN's Treasures supports CAPTAIN CHS's 30+ programs, which serve children, families, and seniors in our community. From youth services to senior support, the funds raised here help sustain vital initiatives that uplift and strengthen lives.

Powered by Community Spirit

The store's success is thanks to over 60 dedicated volunteers who sort donations, organize displays, and create a welcoming shopping experience. Their commitment makes CAPTAIN's Treasures a true community effort.

Affordable Shopping with Heart

Whether you're searching for trendy clothing, one-of-a-kind home décor, or vintage treasures, CAPTAIN's Treasures offers something for everyone. But the impact doesn't stop there. Through the Voucher Program, the shop provides essential items free of charge to individuals and families in crisis, including victims of domestic violence, those displaced by local disasters, and others facing difficult circumstances. Every item sold or donated helps ensure no one is left without the basics they need to rebuild their lives.

How You Can Help

Support CAPTAIN's Treasures by donating gently-used items or volunteering your time. Every contribution helps sustain this vital resource, ensuring it continues to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors.

Next time you're out, stop by CAPTAIN's Treasures. Find hidden gems, save money, and make a meaningful impact—all in one visit. Together, we're building a stronger, more compassionate community.

Visit captaincares.org/treasures to check out the monthly specials and information on how to donate!



CAPTAIN'S TREASURES Thrift Shop

At the area's best next-to-new shop, you'll find everything you need from gently-used, quality clothing and home goods at great savings for families - all while supporting local kids, families, and seniors through our over 30 programs!

Located at the Shops of Halfmoon, 1705 Route 9, Clifton Park, NY 12065
Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm | Sat 10am-3pm | Sun 12pm-3pm



Clothing



Home Goods



Jewelry & Purses



And so much more!



...all at amazing prices!

Confronting Hunger & Homelessness in Our Community

Across the communities we serve, a stark reality continues to confront individuals and families: the inability to afford life's basic necessities.

In Saratoga County, nearly a third of households remain in precarious financial situations, forced to make heart-wrenching choices between essentials like food, housing, childcare, and medical expenses every single day. In neighboring Fulton County, that figure remains alarmingly high at over 43%, while Montgomery County is even more severely affected, with nearly 48% of households struggling to make ends meet.

The challenges brought on by the pandemic persist, underscoring the fragility of economic stability for many. During the height of the crisis, the CARES Act Emergency Solutions Grant (CARES ESG) provided a critical lifeline, channeling \$2.5 million to Saratoga County. This funding enabled an extraordinary collaboration among 10 different agencies, led by CAPTAIN CHS, offering comprehensive services including street outreach, emergency shelter, and eviction prevention.

Over two years, this partnership provided support to 2,171 individuals from 1,602 households. It was a testament to the power of community-driven solutions, addressing homelessness in all its forms and prioritizing housing and supportive services for those most in need. However, as of early 2023, the CARES ESG funding has been fully expended, leaving many vulnerable families without the safety net they so desperately need.

In 2025, CAPTAIN CHS continues to be a steadfast presence on the front lines, offering crisis services and essential programs to those in need. Yet the landscape has shifted: the demand for assistance has grown exponentially, while available resources have diminished. Rising inflation, escalating housing costs, and deepening income disparities have only added to the strain on struggling households.

To address this crisis, we must act collectively. Prioritizing funding and enacting policies that combat financial insecurity and homelessness are essential steps. Simultaneously, tackling systemic issues such as mental health care accessibility and income inequality is critical for creating long-term solutions.

The hunger and homelessness crisis in our local towns and cities serves as a sobering reminder of the profound economic disparities that exist—even in our picturesque rural areas. But there is hope. The resilience of our community, combined with the collaborative spirit of CAPTAIN CHS and its partners, has already made a significant impact. However, the work is far from over.

As we move forward, only through sustained and unified efforts can we meet the growing needs of our neighbors and build a more equitable future for all. Together, we can make a difference.



Make a Difference in Your Community

Make a difference in your community and be part of our mission to lift people up and build brighter futures by hosting a fundraising event of your own! There are so many fun and amazing ways to support kids, families, and seniors in our community. The opportunities are endless, and CAPTAIN CHS staff are here to help!

Get Your Business Involved

- Host a fundraiser or raffle event
- Host a Percentage Back Day
- Donate to a Dress Casual Work Day
- Ask customers to round up their change
- Offer employees matching donations

Get Your Family Involved

- Donate in lieu of celebratory gifts
- Organize a fun event like a bowl-a-thon
- Plan a day of service together
- Organize a neighborhood collection
- Share your generosity on social media

Get Your Social Club Involved

- Organize a Food Pantry Drive
- Host a fundraising dinner or brunch
- Collect donations at your meetings
- Invite CAPTAIN CHS for a presentation
- Plan a group service project

Contact Ava at 518-399-4624 or ava@captaincares.org to get started!

Spreading Hope During the Holidays: Street Outreach

The holiday season is a time of joy and togetherness, but for some, it can also bring challenges of loss, separation, and uncertainty. Recognizing these difficulties, the CAPTAIN CHS Street Outreach Program dedicated December to making a meaningful impact on vulnerable youth in our community.

Holiday Trainings to Support Youth

To better serve and connect with youth during this emotionally charged time of year, the Street Outreach team completed essential trainings, including: Loss and Separation for Youth During the Holidays; De-escalation Techniques; and Trauma-Informed Care.

Winterfest: A Partnership for Connection

In collaboration with Fulton Montgomery Community College, the Street Outreach team hosted Winterfest—a heartwarming event designed to bring students together for snacks, activities, and socializing, while also learning about CAPTAIN CHS programs.

The response was overwhelming, with approximately 90 students stopping by to inquire about the program and pick up a goodie bag filled with information about the Street Outreach Program, hot chocolate and marshmallows, candy, and candy canes.

A Christmas Party to Remember

The Street Outreach team hosted a special Christmas party for youth during the weekly drop-in featuring a delicious meal prepared by volunteers, desserts donated by Cravings Bakery, and fun activities. Each youth received thoughtful gifts, including essential items like coats, blankets, and hygiene kits, ensuring they felt supported and cared for.



A December to Remember for SHHY



The holidays can be a challenging time for many, especially for youth experiencing homelessness. At CAPTAIN CHS, the Supportive Housing for Homeless Youth (SHHY) program went above and beyond this December to make the season bright and meaningful for its residents.

Holiday Celebration Brings Joy and Connection

This year, residents, staff, and supporters gathered for a holiday celebration filled with delicious food, gingerbread house building, and the warmth of connection. Recognizing

that the holidays often evoke mixed emotions, the SHHY team worked closely with each resident to create a personalized wish list of their top three wants. From practical items to unique gifts—including a Golden Girls motivational calendar—gifts were thoughtfully selected and wrapped.

The moment of gift-giving during the celebration was truly heartwarming, as residents' joy and gratitude filled the room. The event was more than just a party; it was a testament to the power of community and care.

Prioritizing Mental Health Support

Mental health remains a crucial focus for the SHHY program. In December, the team worked diligently to connect residents with new mental health counseling services, which are in short supply. To further promote well-being, SHHY is partnering with the local YMCA to provide residents with memberships, encouraging physical activity as a way to support mental health. A meeting scheduled for early January aims to finalize this partnership and expand access to holistic health resources.

A Story of Resilience



Recently, a client came into the Rapid Rehousing program with rather specific and challenging needs.

Sarah was relatively young - in her early twenties - and only recently hired at a new job; nothing was guaranteed. She needed to be in close proximity to her mother, who had custody of her daughter due to Sarah's homelessness.

Without access to a vehicle for Sarah and with Clifton Park being such an expensive area for rentals, this case seemed very unlikely to find a resolution with all the needed accommodations.

Despite this, an apartment was located through the remarkable efforts of our ESG Housing Specialist. Only one catch - the rent was substantially higher than Sarah expected.

Yet this adversity didn't stop her determination and she moved forward with the lease. Since being housed, Sarah began work at a full time job and has since added a part-time position to help cover those increased expenses.

Through CAPTAIN CHS' case management, Sarah has already gained financial independence and is quickly rekindling a relationship with her child.

Sarah's case embodies CAPTAIN CHS' motto of lifting people up and building brighter futures. Today, Sarah stands on her own two feet - proudly and strongly.

Save-the-Date: Upcoming Events



SAVE THE DATE!
WEDNESDAY
MARCH 26th

join us for this year's

DAY OF GIVING
AND GRAB SOME SUBS

because...

100% OF SALES
will be going to



CAPTAIN
Community Human Services

USE THE APP FOR FREE DELIVERY!

LEARN MORE AT [CAPTAINCARES.ORG/JERSEYMIKES](https://captaincares.org/jerseymikes)
OR [JERSEYMIKES.COM/MOG](https://jerseymikes.com/mog)



**Route 50 Mile
Road Race**

June 12, 2025

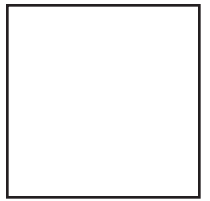
More details at
captaincares.org/route50

AN
**Unbridled
AFFAIR**



THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2025 | 6:00PM - 10:00PM
PRIME AT SARATOGA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB
450 UNION AVENUE, SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY
VIEW MORE DETAILS AT [UNBRIDLEDAFFAIR.ORG](https://unbridledaffair.org)

Event Sponsorship Opportunities available! Contact Ava at 518-399-4624 or email ava@captaincares.org.



CAPTAIN CHS volunteers are the heart of everything we do, and we were overjoyed to celebrate their incredible dedication and impact at last year's **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner**. With the generous support of the **Clifton Park Elks Lodge**, it was a heartfelt evening filled with gratitude, laughter, and recognition for the countless hours our volunteers give to support children, families, and seniors in our community.

