



CAPTAIN
Community Human Services

NEWS&NOTES
Winter 2026

Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Future



Lifting people up. Building brighter futures.

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

Leader, Neighbor, & Community Hero: Honoring Andy Gilpin



Andy Gilpin
Outgoing
Executive Director

In every organization, there are people who leave fingerprints on programs, on missions, and most importantly, on the lives of others. For CAPTAIN Community Human Services, one of those people is Andy Gilpin.

For more than a decade, Andy has been woven into the fabric of CAPTAIN CHS: first as a passionate advocate for runaway and homeless youth, then as Associate Executive Director, and eventually as Executive Director, guiding the organization through some of its most transformational years.

But to the many who know him, not just as a colleague, but as a collaborator, partner, mentor, and friend, the title matters far less than the heart behind it.

Andy's leadership came at a time when the needs in our community were rapidly growing. Families were reeling from crisis, an unprecedented number of youth were facing homelessness, many seniors were aging without support, and neighbors had suddenly

found themselves one paycheck away from hardship. For help, they all turned to CAPTAIN CHS.

Under Andy's guidance, the agency expanded its reach across Saratoga, Fulton, and Montgomery Counties, stabilized hundreds of households, launched innovative programs, and strengthened resources for young people, families, and seniors alike. Volunteer engagement climbed past 26,000 hours annually, and partnerships flourished in ways that will continue to ripple outward for years to come.

Through every milestone, Andy led with a philosophy as simple as it was powerful: meet people where they are, lift them up where they dream to be, and never lose sight of the dignity every person carries.

Andy's work has always centered on those whose stories often stay invisible. For him, these were never just programs. They were people... people who deserved a champion.

His commitment extended beyond CAPTAIN CHS walls as he co-chaired statewide committees, collaborated on regional efforts to end youth homelessness, and built relationships that allowed voices from our community to be heard in places where decisions are made.

Ask Andy why he comes to work each day, and he won't point to numbers, budgets, or plans.

He'll point to the moment a teen at the Youth Shelter exhaled for the first time knowing they were safe. He'll tell you about volunteers who turned compassion into action. He'll talk about the belief that every person deserves stability, hope, and a place to belong.

That has always been his legacy: a leader who sees people first.

As Andy steps back from his day-to-day role, his imprint on CAPTAIN CHS is unmistakable.

He built programs that will continue changing lives. He guided staff and volunteers who will carry the mission forward. He helped shape a culture grounded in compassion, innovation, and humanity. And most importantly, he leaves behind a stronger, more resilient community, because of the thousands of lives touched along the way.

CAPTAIN CHS stands on a foundation strengthened by Andy's vision, spirit, and resolve.

Andy would be the first to say the work has always been a team effort. But every thriving team needs someone who believes deeply enough to inspire others, to shoulder the hard days, and to keep moving forward until solutions take shape.

That was and continues to be Andy.

Thank you, Andy. For leading with heart. For showing what community truly means. And for proving every day that together we can lift people up and build brighter futures.

Andy has transitioned into a new role, Director of Strategic Initiatives, and will continue to be a large part of CAPTAIN CHS. We're pleased to welcome Scott DeMarco as our incoming Executive Director, previously the Treasurer for our Board of Directors. Get to know Scott more on the next page!



Please Join Us!



Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Future

February 26, 2026 | 5pm - 8pm | Van Patten Golf Club

Join us for an evening of connection and celebration featuring a light dinner assortment, cash bar, and live musical quartet. Together, we will **honor Andy Gilpin** and recognize the extraordinary leadership and commitment he has given to CAPTAIN CHS over the years. We will also **welcome Scott DeMarco** as our new Executive Director and **share our vision for the future** as we look ahead to the next chapter of impact in our community.

Find more details and RSVP at captaincares.org/celebrate

Please note space is limited.

On the Cover: Andy Gilpin, outgoing Executive Director, with Bill and Anne Long, co-founders and long-time supporters of CAPTAIN Community Human Services at the 2025 ALS Walk.

Get to Know Our New Executive Director, **Scott DeMarco**



Scott DeMarco
Executive Director

Board of Directors

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Dr. Roscoe Lilly
Dr. Bill Long
Anthony Mashuta
Tom Savino
Todd Shimkus
Kevin Tollisen
Virginia Touhey

Staff: Outside of your work, how do you like to spend your time?

Scott: Outside of work, most of our time is family and friends time - kids, pets (three dogs and a cat), and the everyday chaos. When we can, my wife and I get to the Adirondacks to hike and paddle. Being outside is how I reset.

Staff: What are some of your favorite local spots?

Scott: Saratoga State Park is a special place for us - I proposed to my wife there, and we renewed our vows on our 10 and 20 year anniversaries. We also love local We also love local breweries - anywhere you can grab a good meal and feel the community.

Staff: What inspires or motivates you when the work gets challenging?

Scott: I grew up around a strong work ethic and a real responsibility to serve others - that's from my parents. And honestly, what keeps me going here is our staff and volunteers: the way they show up for people, even on hard days.

Staff: Being from the area, what does it mean for you to serve this community?

Scott: I have relatives that have been in this area for many generations, and a grandparent that immigrated in her lifetime, which is probably similar to many people in our region. I've benefited from the opportunities this community can offer, and I feel a responsibility to help make sure more people can access those same chances, especially when life gets complicated.

Staff: What excites you most about stepping into the role of Executive Director?

Scott: CAPTAIN CHS has real momentum right now - impactful programs, the Building Brighter Futures campaign, and social enterprise initiatives like CAPTAIN's Treasures. What excites me most is building on what the team has already set in motion and ensuring that growth translates to even better outcomes for those we serve.

Staff: What drew you to CAPTAIN CHS?

Scott: I was drawn to CAPTAIN CHS because I saw staff, volunteers, and board members stepping up in meaningful ways, and I didn't want to stand on the sidelines. Over time, the mission and the culture really matched how I wanted to lead: practical support, human dignity, and lifting people up.

Staff: What does success look like for you- for the organization and those it serves?

Scott: For the people we serve, success looks like real progress - safety, stability, and the ability to make choices again. For CAPTAIN CHS, it looks like measurable impact, a healthy culture where staff can do their best work without burning out, strong partnerships, and sustainable funding so we're here for the long haul.

Staff: What values are most important to you and how does that reflect your leadership and vision for CAPTAIN CHS?

Scott: CAPTAIN CHS's values are genuinely aligned with mine: human dignity and compassion, inclusion and equity, self-determination and empowerment, caring for ourselves and others, and leading change while building on strengths in our community. As a leader, that means I listen first, I'm direct and fair, I expect professionalism, and I want decisions to be both people-centered and accountable to results.

Because of you, more children, families, and seniors in our community received help this year than ever before. When needs grew in 2025, your generosity ensured our neighbors were not left to face hunger, housing instability, or crisis alone. You stepped up, again and again, and your compassion allowed CAPTAIN CHS to respond, support, and stand beside those who needed it most. None of this could have happened without you!

HUNGER

- **3,021** food pantry orders helped an average of **770** people across **260** households each month put food on the table
- **12,949** free summer meals kept children nourished when school was out
- **567** holiday food baskets helped families celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas with dignity

HOMELESSNESS

- **43** youth received a safe place to sleep and supportive services at the Youth Shelter
- **84** homeless youth moved off the streets and toward stability
- **44** households avoided eviction or found safe, stable housing

ECONOMIC CRISIS

- **2,155** individuals received support during a financial crisis, helping stabilize households in moments of urgent need
- **142** Family Development mentoring sessions supported families as they worked toward long-term stability
- **155** children and adults stayed warm this winter with coats, hats, and gloves
- **148** youth started the school year prepared with essential school supplies
- **562** youth experienced the joy of the holidays through holiday programs

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- **103** individuals were referred to the Safe Harbour Anti-Trafficking Program, including **40** cases of confirmed trafficking, connecting survivors to safety and support
- **602** tax returns were prepared at no cost through VITA, helping individuals and families keep more of what they earned
- **55** children received after-school enrichment and homework help, strengthening learning and confidence
- **38,240** hours of service were contributed by more than **400** dedicated volunteers, extending your impact across the community
- **2,234** hours of family support services helped youth with behavioral and developmental challenges and the families who support them

EMPOWERMENT

- **73,923** miles were driven to support local seniors, helping them stay connected to care, groceries, and community
- **101** students gained job skills that prepared them for future success
- **869** hours of service were provided by CAPteen volunteers, building leadership and growing a culture of philanthropy
- **77** bikes helped youth and adults access transportation, independence, and opportunity
- **25** scholarships opened the door for youth to participate in recreational activities they otherwise couldn't afford
- **40** youth attended free summer day camp, giving them a safe, enriching place to learn and play

Additionally, this year's Annual Appeal raised over \$163,000! Because of your generosity, children, families, and seniors are continuing to receive the essential services they need through over 30 programs and services. So from the bottom of our hearts (and if we could shout from the rooftops we would)...

THANK YOU!

Building Brighter Futures: Boldly Building Community Together

The need in our community is growing—and growing fast.

Every day, more families, seniors, and individuals turn to CAPTAIN Community Human Services (CHS) for help. Since 2016, demand for our programs has surged by 35% (see *figure 1 to the right*), pushing us beyond capacity as we work tirelessly to meet the rising tide of urgent needs. For nearly 50 years, CAPTAIN CHS has been a trusted lifeline, offering compassionate, critical support to the most vulnerable among us.

And now, the stakes are even higher.

By 2030, the Capital Region's population will rise to 800,000, with Saratoga County nearing 250,000 residents. Among them, 1 in 3 households already struggles to make ends meet. Seniors over age 65 now make up 18% of the population, outpacing school-age children, and their needs are growing rapidly. Alarmingly, 10% of children and 9% of seniors in our area are expected to live below the poverty line.

The truth is clear: **Our community's needs are evolving faster than ever, and the systems built decades ago can no longer meet the scale or complexity of today's challenges.**

We've reached a pivotal moment:

Will we continue to respond crisis by crisis, or will we reimagine how we serve, grow, and lead?

CAPTAIN CHS is choosing transformation.

With bold leadership and a clear vision, our Board of Directors has launched a capital campaign to revolutionize how we deliver services, expanding our reach, rethinking our models, and building a more resilient community for the future.

This is more than a campaign. It's a movement.

A chance to amplify our impact, invest in innovation, and create a stronger, more connected Capital Region and beyond - *together*.

How the Brighter Futures Campaign Changes Lives

Establishing a Community Engagement & Resource Center

The Brighter Futures Campaign will create a larger, integrated, and accessible Community Engagement & Resource Center, designed to meet growing needs and make it easier for individuals and families to find help in one welcoming place.

This center will strengthen and expand:

- **A state-of-the-art food pantry** that increases capacity and dignity for families facing hunger
- **Family assistance** during economic crisis, providing timely support when it matters most
- **Family support and mental health services**, helping individuals and families build stability and resilience
- **Housing and homelessness services**, connecting people to safe, stable housing
- **Child care and a family resource center**, supporting working families and early development
- **A collaborative co-working space**, fostering partnerships that extend services and deepen community impact



Investing in Innovation & Programming

The Brighter Futures Campaign will invest in innovative programs and infrastructure that help individuals and families move beyond crisis toward long-term stability and self-sufficiency. By strengthening today's programs and preparing for future needs, this investment ensures support doesn't deepen dependency—but builds opportunity.

This investment will support:

- **New technology implementation** to improve access, coordination, and efficiency across services
- **Smart workspaces and integrated technology** that enhance collaboration and service delivery
- **Expanded staffing and volunteer support**, strengthening the CAPTAIN CHS team where demand is greatest
- **Dedicated classroom space** for education, workforce development, and life-skills programming
- **A commercial kitchen** to complement the expanded food pantry and support nutrition-focused programs
- **A transitional living program** that helps individuals move from crisis housing to independence

Strengthening Collaboration

The Brighter Futures Campaign will strengthen collaboration across our community by investing in the people and partnerships that make our work possible. By supporting employee well-being, developing future leaders, and creating shared spaces for connection, this effort amplifies impact far beyond CAPTAIN CHS alone.

This focus will support:

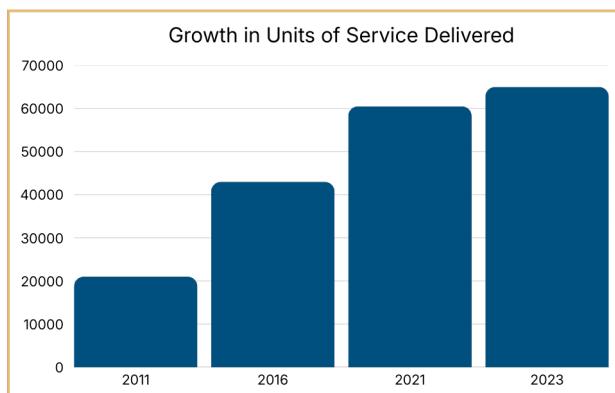
- **Collaborative co-working spaces** for staff and community partners to work side by side
- **Expanded training rooms, classrooms, and meeting areas** to support learning and collaboration
- **A grant development collaborative** that helps local nonprofits grow resources and sustainability
- **An Innovation Collaborative mentoring program** to strengthen professional development across the social impact sector
- **Deeper partnerships with local nonprofits**, ensuring services are coordinated, efficient, and responsive to community needs

Why Now?

The needs facing our community have grown more complex, more urgent, and more interconnected than ever before. Families are seeking help not just with one challenge, but with food, housing, financial stability, and mental health, often all at once. Seniors need reliable support to remain independent, and young people need safe, stable spaces to grow and thrive.

At the same time, CAPTAIN CHS programs are serving more people than our current space and systems were ever designed to support. Demand continues to rise, and the cost of waiting is measured in missed opportunities for stability, dignity, and long-term success.

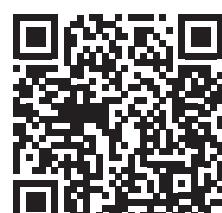
The Brighter Futures Campaign is a proactive investment in our community's future - one that expands access, strengthens collaboration, and builds the capacity needed to respond today while preparing for tomorrow. Acting now ensures that when our neighbors reach out for help, the support they need is already in place.



Join us. Because building a better future isn't optional.

It's necessary.

Give now by scanning the QR code to the right or visiting captaincares.org/brighterfutures



The Importance of **Community** and How You Can Help

At every age, community is important. It helps us feel safe, cared for, and connected. Community can mean many things. It might our family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, people going through similar experiences, or local organizations. **But do we make community a priority? And do we have enough connection in our lives?**

Every year, many people feel more alone. We see family less often. We don't know our neighbors as well. We meet fewer new people. This isn't always our fault. Many things have led us to this, like spending more time online, living farther from family, adjusting after COVID, and having fewer places to gather outside of home and work.

Another big reason people feel alone is our focus on independence. We are often taught to handle everything on our own. Sometimes this means struggling quietly instead of asking for help. Life can feel stressful and competitive, and it's even harder when we feel like we're doing it all on our own.



So why does community matter? According to Samantha Stein, Psy.D., a sense of community and belonging "is vital for our psychological well-being...it can help us feel we're part of something larger than ourselves" (Psychology Today). Feeling like you belong is important for mental health. It helps people feel part of something bigger. Being connected to others can lower stress because we all have people to talk to, ask for advice, and lean on. Community is also good for physical health. Friends and neighbors can encourage us to get out more and help when we are sick or need care.

So how do you build community? Is it too late? It's never too late! And luckily, CAPTAIN CHS can help.

1. Make a list of people and places: Write down family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and groups you know. This can be short or long. Even people you don't talk to often count. Having a list can help when you need support and don't know who to call.

2. Start by helping others: One of the best ways to build a community is to be the kind of support you want. Let people know you're willing to help or listen. Try to be specific, like offering to give someone a ride to a doctor's appointment.

3. Join a group or volunteer: Volunteering helps you meet people and feel connected. It also gives you a sense of purpose. CAPTAIN CHS has more than 30 programs, so there are many ways to get involved. If you don't have time to volunteer, that's okay! There are other ways to participate. Visit captaincares.org/how-to-help to learn more.

4. Go to events with a purpose: Meeting new people can feel scary. Going to an event with a clear reason can make it easier. This could be a class, workshop, children's event, or volunteer activity. CAPTAIN CHS hosts many events for kids, families, and seniors all year long. Learn more at captaincares.org/calendar.

5. Use community resources that already exist: You don't have to build everything on your own. Many programs already exist to help and connect people. CAPTAIN CHS supports people of all ages with food, housing, financial help, and community programs. Learn more about our services at captaincares.org.

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!

Hope on Every Shelf: Food Pantry Surge and How YOU Helped

This past fall, families in our community and across the nation faced unprecedented challenges just to put food on the table. SNAP benefits were reduced for many households. Grocery prices rose more than 3%, outpacing inflation. Even fast food became noticeably more expensive. For many families, hunger and uncertainty became part of everyday life.

In that moment, our community -YOU! - stepped up and made all the difference!

In January 2025, CAPTAIN CHS's Emergency Food & Hygiene Pantry served **651** individuals across **214** households. Just two months earlier, in November, the pantry served **1,069** individuals in **328** households - **an almost 65% increase in need!**

This is historic. In all of 2024, the pantry served an average of 610 individuals in 195 households per month.

Meeting this dramatic rise in need was only possible because of the collective response of our community. Staff, volunteers, and donors rose to the moment. Local businesses and organizations hosted dozens of food drives on our behalf. Community members donated food, grocery store gift cards, and financial support. And CAPTAIN CHS volunteers went above and beyond - contributing **more than 3,500 hours** in the food pantry last year alone.

Because of you, families did not have to face hunger alone.

We're deeply grateful to everyone who helped meet this extraordinary level of need. Together, we're working to ensure that no individual or family in our community goes hungry, today or in the months and years ahead.

Save-the-Date: Upcoming Events



**Route 50 Mile
Road Race**
June 11, 2026
More details at
captaincares.org/route50



**AN
Unbridled
AFFAIR**

THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2026 | 6:00PM - 10:00PM
PRIME AT SARATOGA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB
450 UNION AVENUE, SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY
VIEW MORE DETAILS AT UNBRIDLEDAFFAIR.ORG

**February 18th | All Day
Fundraiser at Red Robin, Clifton Park**
20% of food sales go to CAPTAIN CHS

In person: tell your server you are there for the CAPTAIN CHS fundraiser before paying.

For online orders: in the menu, go to the category labeled "Fundraisers (To-Go Only)" and add to your bag.

**March 5 | 4:00pm-8:00pm
Fundraiser at Chick-fil-A, Clifton Park**
up to 15% of proceeds to CAPTAIN CHS

Use code "Captain26" when doing mobile dine-in, mobile carry-out, and/or mobile drive-thru using the Chick-fil-A app.

Orders placed directly at the restaurant registers are NOT eligible.

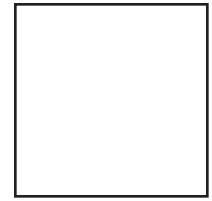
Event Sponsorship Opportunities available!
Contact Ava at 518-399-4624 or email ava@captaincares.org.

Our Year in Photos: Some of the Moments That Moved Us





CAPTAIN Community Human Services
543 Saratoga Road
Glenville, NY 12302



See the impact **YOU** made last year and the bold vision you're helping bring to life in 2026 and beyond!



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!