



Andre advocates for people wherever he goes.

I am here to help!

I am the chairperson of the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council. My name is Andre Robinson and I am an advocate for people with disabilities.

Our organization's goal and mission is to improve the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. We do this by advocating for change wherever we see barriers that can hinder opportunities for people. The DD Council works to ensure that the voices of people with disabilities are heard, to help people to live life to the fullest and support them in achieving their life dreams.

Some of the Council's community initiatives include an education campaign to eliminate the "r" word forever. We also helped with a grant program called "Smiles Across Michigan" which identified dental services for people that needed access to those resources and we also are focusing on introducing people to secondary education opportunities and showing them that they can get a college degree and also have the right supports in place to help them achieve their goals.

If you need help with resources or have advocacy questions, I'm here to help! Contact me at 734-722-7665 or arobinson@comlivserv.com. Visit www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil for more information.

Freedom PRESS Newsletter Debuts

Community Living Services was formed with the primary mission of closing the state institutions for people with developmental disabilities. Along with the efforts of other agencies throughout the state, all institutions for people with developmental disabilities have been closed.

We would like this publication to have something for everyone whether you are

in need of understanding the public mental health system, stories of success in the lives of people we support, ways in which you can be involved or any items of local, state or national interest. We would like your feedback on what you would like to know more about and we will try and accommodate your request. We believe all people have similar aspirations for their lives and

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Community Living Services is funded by The Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency and by The Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority. The Senior Services division is under contract with The United Way of Southeastern Michigan, Detroit Area Agency on Aging 1-A, Area on Aging 1-B, The Senior Alliance Area Agency on Aging 1-C, The Information Center and the city of Allen Park.



No More Institutions!

"It was such a nice experience to celebrate and to be proud of such a great accomplishment. It's a great achievement for our state," said Spectrum Community Services Executive Director Barb Fowkes.

Fowkes is reminiscing about a recent celebration of the closure of the Mt. Pleasant Center which at one time housed hundreds of people with developmental disabilities. Fowkes, who used to work as direct care staff at the Plymouth Center knows first hand what it's like to work in an institution.

"No one deserved to be in those institutions, but today the proof is there. Moving people into the community was the right thing to do because I have seen lives that have been transformed. We helped move people out of Mt. Pleasant and now they are thriving in their community."

Fowkes, along with many other CLS providers, started

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Time To Speak Up!

In just a few weeks, members of the House and Senate will be home from Washington giving us the opportunity to convince them to protect funding for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities before a major vote is expected in July. Their recess is from June 27-July 1st.

The message to these local politicians is simple:

- ✓ Don't cut Medicaid
- ✓ The budget cannot be balanced on the backs of people with disabilities
- ✓ Share your story and tell them exactly how your life would drastically change if cuts were implemented.

The ARC recommends you contact the local offices of your state representatives and schedule a visit with them. Below is a list of the state lawmakers and their districts.

**this information was received from the ARC Michigan.

State Reps in Wayne County

District	Name	Party
2	Lisa Howze	D
3	Alberta Tinsley-Tilabi	D
4	Maureen Stapleton	D
5	John Olumba	D
8	Thomas Stallworth	D
10	Harvey Santana	D
14	Paul Clemente	D
15	George T. Darany	D
17	Phil Cavanaugh	D
20	Kurt Heise	R
23	Pat Somerville	R

State Reps in Oakland County

District	Name	Party
26	Jim Townsend	D
35	Rudy Hobbs	D
46	Bradford Jacobsen	R

State Senators

Debbie Stabenow
Carl Levin

New Members Wanted for Developmental Disabilities Council

The Developmental Disabilities Council is looking for new members. The group consists of people with disabilities, parents, guardians, families and agency representatives. A council member's duties are to represent people with developmental disabilities and the community at large in addressing issues, rights, responsibilities and needs of people with disabilities. Council members volunteer about 10 hours a month and most meetings are held in Lansing.

If you're interested please call 517-334-6123 or TDD 517-334-7354.

No More Institutions!

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their careers working in institutions and several of them can attest to the fact that people's lives are so much better when they have choice and freedom in their lives. Today some of those same provider's sons and daughters have taken the reigns from their parents and are working as providers.

"I only have bad memories about the institution that I lived in," said Westland resident and CLS Board member Ray Schuholz. "It's hard to think about those days but now my life is completely different. I am living in an apartment, have a job, a car and manage my budget. Life is good."

At one time, Michigan had 13 institutions and three were in Wayne County. Today Michigan is only one of 11 states and the largest state that does not have a person with a disability living in an institution. The Mt. Pleasant Center was the last institution in the state to close down.

Motivational Speaker “Keeps It Real” For Kids

If you need some motivation, hire Dan Perry at your next event! Dan can inspire a crowd especially high school students in just a few short minutes. His message, “Don’t drink and drive.” Dan was involved in a serious car accident 13 years ago leaving him paralyzed from the neck down. Most people would give up hope, but the accident has actually given Dan a reason to live by spreading his message to the youth of today. His life demonstrates that a horrible, tragic event can turn out to be positive in many ways.



Dan celebrates moving into his new home with family and friends.

Dan receives services and support from the CLS Oakland County division and his independent supports coordinator

Maria Miller is very helpful in assisting with finding schools and events in which he is hired to speak. Last year he was the keynote speaker at a large conference in Baltimore!

Another major accomplishment over the last year is he moved out of a group home and into a beautiful home of his own in Pontiac. “This has made Dan and his mom so happy”, said ISC Maria Miller.

This summer Dan will continue to update his presentations and soon he will launch a new website www.danielperryinspirations.com. He is always looking for speaking opportunities so if you’re interested contact Maria Miller at mariaeileen@yahoo.com.

CLS Vision

People will fully participate in their communities and have a quality of life which comes from freedom and its responsibilities, the authority to make their own life decisions, and the control of resources to implement them

CLS Mission

To assist and advocate for each person:
To control and exercise authority over their own lives
To live a life of freedom, opportunity and relationships, as family, friend and neighbors.
To share in full community membership and citizenship.

Oakland County Open House for new Ferndale Offices!



L to R: Ferndale Chamber of Commerce Director Carol Jackson, Chamber Exec. Dir. Jennifer Roosenberg, OCCMHA Exec. Dir. Jeff Brown, CLS CFO Bill Yordy, Chamber Vice-chair Jay McMillian, Chamber Chair Jerome Raska, OC Commissioner Craig Covey, Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter, CLS OC Exec. Dir. Annette Downey, CLS OC Dir. Of Supports Lisa Ballien, CLS President/CEO James Dehem and CLS VP of Operations Paul Newman.

The CLS Oakland County division has moved to fantastic Ferndale and held a ribbon cutting several months ago. Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter along with Chamber of Commerce members and other dignitaries were on hand to celebrate. About 200 people showed up at the event.

“We picked Ferndale because it’s a very inclusive community and we want to be here for many years,” said Executive Director Annette Downey.

The new address is 642 East Nine Mile, Ferndale.

Biggest Fundraiser of the Year!



Friends of Community Living Services is proud to present its largest fundraiser of the year, “Evening with Friends.” The date is Thursday, September 22, 2011 at Laurel Manor in Livonia.

There is also a Business Expo and awards ceremony that evening. Tickets are \$50 and a table of 10 is \$500.

Year Round Fundraising Opportunities



Friends of Community Living Services is an independent, non-profit organization that raises funds for people that are supported by CLS. Various fundraisers are scheduled year

round including Texas Hold 'Em poker tournaments, Red Wing hockey ticket fundraisers, Classic Car Shows to our biggest event of the year, Evening with Friends, an awards ceremony that recognizes people we support and those in the community who support them.

The funds raised by Friends of CLS are disbursed for the direct benefit of the people we support. Individual grants

Newsletter Debuts

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having a disability does not matter.

We hope you enjoy this inaugural issue of our newsletter, "Freedom Press."

If you would like to be on the mailing list, please e-mail Public Relations Director Tiffany Devon at tdevon@comlivserv.com or call 734-722-7185.

For more information about CLS and its services, log onto www.comlivserv.com.

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are awarded for community and life enhancing opportunities such as small business start-ups, community organization memberships and tuition costs or related requests for assistance not able to be supported with public funds.

Please call or e-mail and let us know if you'd like to get involved in one of our many fundraisers throughout the year, 734-722-7185.



Their voices were heard! About a dozen people stood up for what they believe in and spoke to their state representatives in Lansing recently. Each of them wrote letters asking legislators to restore their Medicaid benefits and to not make any more budget reductions. Everyone got a chance to talk with their district representative or their staff members and are looking forward to their next visit.

Seen here at the Capitol – L to R: Chris Taylor, John Wendt, Danny Tolliver, Jason Dore, Ray Schuhholz, Shari Davidek, Corey Evanovich, Fadel Morgan, Jim Gaylor and John Toppi.

CLS Senior Services Division

The Senior Division provides supports to over 100 older adults through its **In-Home Support, Adult Day Respite and Nursing Home Transition services**. These services help older adults stay in their homes or return to their homes and chose the kind of support they need to live as independently as possible. "CLS has a contract with the Detroit Area Agency on Aging to move people out of nursing homes back into the community."

Currently we have moved 20 people from Detroit-based nursing homes back into a home in the community," said Director Elaine Taverna. "This is some of the most rewarding work we do and the need is great to get people out of nursing homes and back into the community." CLS has secured contracts with The Senior Alliance, Area Agency on Aging 1-C and The Information Center, to transition people out of nursing homes and anticipates this will increase substantially by end of spring 2011.

The Senior Services Division also works with several other partner agencies and offers these other services for older adults:

- In Home Supports and Services
- Resources and Health Benefits
- Aging and Disability Resource Center

For more information please log onto the website, www.comlivserv.com or call Elaine Taverna at 734-722-6035 or etaverna@comlivserv.com.