



- 03 Fatherhood Car Show
- 04 Success Stories
- 07 In The Community
- 08 Safe House Halloween Event
- 09 Paint Night



THE COMMUNITY

Fall
2024

Quarterly Community Newsletter

Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. and Chautauqua Opportunities for Development, Inc.

CEO BECOMES A CERTIFIED COMMUNITY ACTION PROFESSIONAL

Diane Hewitt-Johnson, Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.'s CEO, recently achieved status as a Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP). Diane was among 112 CCAP graduates who were recognized in August 2024 at the National Community Action Partnership (NCAP) Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington. The CCAP credential recognizes those who demonstrate knowledge and application of the core competencies required to effectively carry out the vision, mission, purpose and values of the Community Action movement.

The process for earning certification consists of a period of study followed by a proctored, online exam and a rigorous, independent research and writing assignment on a specific topic. Candidates must pass both components to earn certification. Diane was able to earn the certification within six months, although candidates are allowed three years to complete it. Certification remains current for four years, during which time there is a requirement for continuing education.

Individuals pursuing the CCAP are provided with guidance in leading the Community Action Agency, positioning (*con't on page 2*)



Dunkirk
10825 Bennett Rd. Dunkirk, NY (716) 366-8176

Jamestown (716) 661-9430
402 Chandler St Jamestown, NY

Youth Safe House 1(888) 877-9647

CEO Certification continued...



(con't from page 1) it to effectively serve the best interests of people in poverty. In addition to increasing her knowledge of community action practices and strengthening leadership skills, Diane's aspirations include becoming a mentor for other community action professionals across the country.

Diane Hewitt-Johnson became the interim CEO of Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. in 2018, followed by appointment as CEO six months later. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree

in Management from Houghton College and a Master of Science in Strategic Leadership from Roberts Wesleyan College, where she also received the Distinguished Leadership Award. She completed an Associates in Applied Science in Business Administration at Jamestown Community College. Diane currently serves on the Board of Directors of the nationwide organization CAPLAW (Community Action Program Legal Services, Inc.), and is the Vice-President on the Board of the NYS Community Action Association (NYSCAA).

COI has been in existence since 1965 and is the federally designated Community Action Agency (CAA) in Chautauqua County. It is one of over 1,100 Community Action Agencies across the country, including 47 in NY State. COI is tasked with providing innovative services to individuals and families to help them achieve economic security, while partnering with other agencies to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to deliver holistic services. The agency will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2025.



Fatherhood Program's 3rd Annual Car Show

The weather was spectacular as Chautauqua Opportunities Inc.'s Fatherhood Program celebrated another successful car show in 2024!



Summer Food Service Program was a Huge Summer Success!



COI's Summer Food Service Program offers free, healthy meals and snacks for children and teens ages 18 and under at gathering points such as parks, community centers, schools, and libraries throughout the county. The purpose of the program is to ensure that children are provided with nutritious food during the summer months when school is not in session. New for 2024, sites had the option of providing "grab and go" meals and snacks for families to take and eat at home, resulting in healthy meals being distributed to many more children than in past years. COI collaborated with 26 sites to provide meals, and 14 of them offered the grab and go option. Meals include fruits, vegetables, grains, and protein.

COI prepared and delivered a total of 19,885 breakfasts, 20,000 lunches, and 6,416 snacks that were eaten by the children at partnering community sites. Additionally, 979 breakfasts, 15,248 lunches, and 7,846 snacks were distributed to families as grab and go meals to be eaten at home.

One new site this year, a private rental complex for low-income families, turned out to be a huge success. A resident of the complex reached out to inquire about the program after she noticed that many children were going without a good food source during the summer. She found herself struggling to provide not only for her own family, but also for many of the other children. This tenant volunteered her time every day to open the recreational room in the complex to receive meals and provide an open site for distribution. Through word of mouth, news of the program soon spread to other families who started coming to the open site. This site alone provided 3,797 lunches and 3,797 snacks throughout July and August. The volunteer also provided an occasional activity for the children to do during the lunch distribution. COI truly appreciates her assistance in making sure children are provided with healthy food.

COI's goal for 2025 is to encourage more sites to offer grab and go meals and snacks so that the program is able to reach more children. Funding for the program is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Congratulations, Craig Rodgers

Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. would like to congratulate Craig Rodgers, Construction Manager, for his acceptance as a Board Member for the New York State Weatherization Directors Association (NYSWDA). Craig was nominated and inducted to the Board at the 2024 NYSCAA & NYSWDA Annual Conference at Lake Placid on September 19th!



Emerging Leaders Institute Graduates

Congratulations to Elizabeth Campbell, Amanda Straight and Craig Rodgers for graduating from New York State Community Action Association's Emerging Leaders Institute (ELI.) ELI is a leadership development program designed to grow future leaders within the New York State Community Action Network. Participants receive formal training on different leadership styles, build relationships with others both locally and across the state and participate in engaging discussions impacting Community Action.

Craig complete ELI 1.0, while Amanda and Elizabeth completed ELI2.0, having participated in ELI 1.0 in 2023.



Pictured above are Elizabeth Campbell, Executive Assistant to the CEO, Amanda Straight, Deputy Director of Housing and Community Development, and Craig Rodgers, Construction Manager

Success Stories

Lead Smart Partnership - Above and Beyond



Pictured with Gabe Shields is Josiah Lamp, Directory of Housing and Community Development

Recently, Gabriel Shields, COI's Healthy Homes Program Manager, accepted the Lead (Pb) Smart Partnership Above and Beyond Award. The award recognizes COI's contributions to providing lead hazard remediation in Chautauqua County.

The award was presented at the 2nd Annual Lead Education Conference in October. COI partners with the Chautauqua County Health Department to provide lead remediation services.

CODI Success Story

In 2023, Shawna Tellinghuisen and her husband opened Epic Floats and Wellness which is a unique wellness business that brings a holistic approach to relaxation in their community. They had a clear mission: to provide a tranquil space where people could escape the stress of daily life and focus on rejuvenating their minds and bodies. From float therapy to wellness services, Epic Floats quickly became a beacon of well-being in the area.

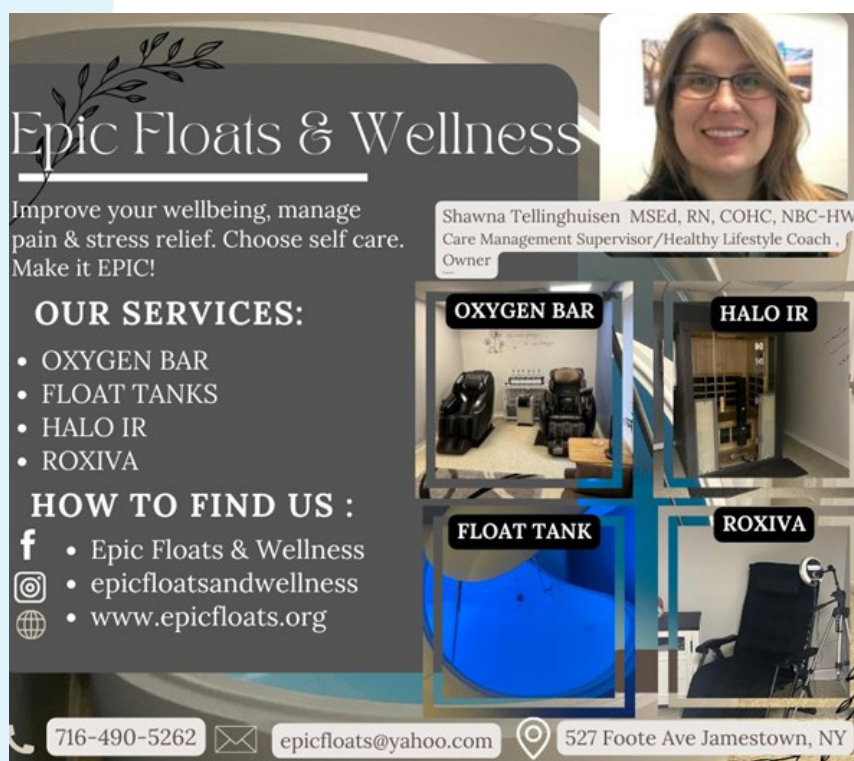
In celebration of Women in Small Business Month this October, Chautauqua Opportunities for Development, Inc. (CODI) launched a special Women in Business Facebook

Feature to highlight and support women entrepreneurs in the region. When Shawna was approached by CODI to be featured, she was thrilled at the opportunity—not only for the exposure it would bring to her business but also to uplift and support other women-owned businesses in the community.

The Women in Business post showcased the incredible services available at Epic Floats and Wellness. Within just one day, the post reached 2,585 people which is such a fantastic response that has helped spread the word about Shawna's business to an even wider audience. The engagement was overwhelming, with new followers and many comments from people excited to learn about this unique wellness offering in their area.

Since the feature, Shawna has been an enthusiastic supporter of the other women featured by CODI. In following the posts, Shawna was the first to like, share, and cheer on the successes of fellow women entrepreneurs, which is truly what collaboration and community support is all about. This positive engagement has also resulted in an increase in likes and follows on the Epic Floats social media pages, helping the business grow its online presence.

The team at CODI is proud to continue supporting Shawna and her husband, offering technical assistance and guidance as their business grows. They look forward to collaborating with them in the future and watching Epic Floats and Wellness thrive.



Trip to Aber's Acres

On a warm afternoon at the end of September, Head Start Home Based families embarked on an adventure to Aber's Acres. The farm and farmstand, located in Kennedy NY, was a cornucopia of sights, smells, sounds, and tastes. The group was led by a kind and enthusiastic employee named Rachel, who captured the awe of the children as she led them around the farm.

The children walked through the gigantic garden that was teeming with a variety of flowers, vegetables, and insect life. Rachel pointed out and named the plants, and allowed the children to pick some. Some of the children were brave enough to try a bite of the kale!



In the Community

The families also explored the irrigation pond and saw the motor that pumps the water out to help the plants thrive. On the other side of the pond, the children investigated the plot of Christmas trees. They noticed the many different sizes depending on how many years each tree had been growing.

Finally, each person was given a berry basket and let loose in the raspberry patch. Many berries were large and juicy and the children had to look carefully to find the best ones. Some of the berries actually made it into the baskets and there were lots of red-stained smiles! The children were each sent home with a gourd and an apple.

Many thanks to Aber's Acres for an amazing field trip!



Safe House Halloween Event

This was the first year COI's Safe House hosted a Halloween event, and it was ghoulishly successful! Approximately 180 individuals including parents and children, attended the event. Children were able to color a mask of their choice, get a picture with the Great Pumpkin and fill their bags with plenty of treats!



Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc

Diane Hewitt-Johnson, CEO

Housing and Community Development

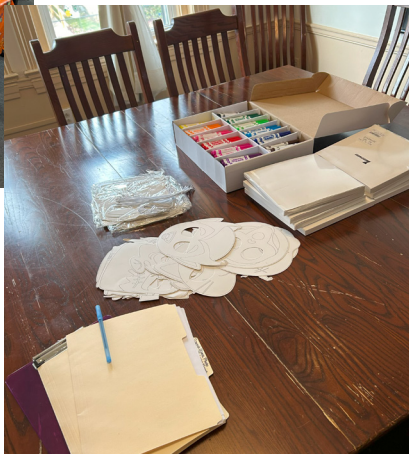
Josiah Lamp, Director

- Foreclosure Prevention
- Homebuyer Education
- Homeless Prevention & Rehousing
- Housing Rehabilitation
- Lead Hazard Control
- Tenant Services
- Weatherization

Early Care and Education

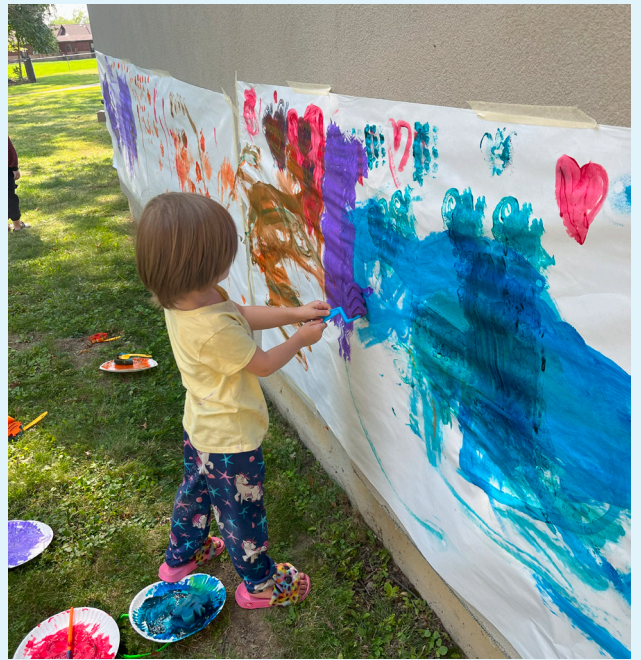
Bill Vogt, Director

- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships
- Universal Pre-K



Home-Based Program Paint Night

COL's Head Start had an amazing turnout at a recent Paint Night at Connections North in Dunkirk. Families in COL's Head Start Home-Based program came together to explore the world of Product vs. Process Art, learning the unique benefits of both approaches. Children enjoyed using their large motor movements to create a mural, while families painted their own canvases and were able to take home a special project to continue the fun at home. In addition to the creative activities, families were provided with a Home Fire Safety Checklist to help keep



Child Care Council Susan Marker, Director

Child Care Resource and Referral
Legally Exempt
Training
Family Court Child Care
USDA Summer Food Services Program

Health and Family Services Chris Nicosia, Director

Licensed Home Care
Fatherhood Program
Mobile Crisis Outreach
Migrant Health Outreach
Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter
Transitional Independent Living Program

Economic Development Michael Michalski, Sr. Accounting Manager

Entrepreneurial Technical Assistance
Small Business Essentials Training
Small Business Lending
Incubator Space
Consumer Appliance Loans

their homes safe. It was also a great opportunity for fathers and father figures, as representatives from COL's Fatherhood program were on hand to discuss resources and support available to them. Thanks to everyone who joined us for such a vibrant and meaningful evening!



COMMUNITY FOR ALL AGES

COMMUNITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING

WHEN & WHERE?

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 14TH
AT 5PM

ALL MEMEBERS OF THE
COMMUNTIY ARE INVITED!!

JOIN WITH THE LINK OR QR CODE:
JOIN ZOOM MEETING

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/89578803464?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89578803464?pwd=75ZHT0IRN5LPJYLRTOWIG9JVK4091X.1)
[PWD=75ZHT0IRN5LPJYLRTOWIG9JVK4091X.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89578803464?pwd=75ZHT0IRN5LPJYLRTOWIG9JVK4091X.1)

MEETING ID: 895 7880 3464

PASSCODE: 854300

GUEST SPEAKERS
AND PRIZES

JOIN OUR SPEAKERS FROM

- CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING
- JAMESTOWN YWCA

PRIZES

- \$200 VISA GIFT CARD
- \$50 VISA GIFT CARD
- 2 - 1 MONTH MEMBERSHIPS TO CHAUTAUQUA HEALTH & FITNESS

CHAUTAUQUA OPPORTUNITIES, INC.
HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES



www.chautauquaopportunities.com



@chautauquaopportunities



@chautopp



@chautopp

Upcoming Events

NOV 14, 2024
Community Council
Virtual Meeting
5pm - 7pm

NOV 28-29, 2024
Thanksgiving Holiday
CLOSED

DEC 18, 2024
Santa at the Safe
House
5pm - 7pm

NOV 16, 2024
First Time Homebuyer
class -Jamestown
9am - 5pm

DEC 14, 2024
First Time Homebuyer
class -Dunkirk
9am - 5pm

DEC 25, 2024
Christmas Holiday
Closed

Contact Us

For all general inquiries, please contact :

Michael Yerico Administration Building
17 W. Courtney St
Dunkirk, NY 14048
(716) 366-3333
info@chautopp.org