



Annual Report 2011

Looking to the future while we celebrate our past – 35th Anniversary

Mission Statement

Center for Living & Working is a non-profit Independent Living Center, which takes its direction from persons with disabilities. We advocate to empower people with disabilities to take active roles in their lives and in the community in which they live. We provide comprehensive and innovative programs and services in order to maximize individual independence and opportunities. We are driven by the belief that consumers must always be equal members of society with equal access.

Empowering Independence - October 2010, CLW celebrated 35 years of ever evolving independent living programs and services so people of all ages and all disabilities along with people who are deaf and hard of hearing, may live as independently as they so choose within their community. A celebratory event was held at the Beechwood Hotel in Worcester, MA with over 200 consumers, friends, family and colleagues attending. The evening's guest speakers included: Commissioner Charles Carr, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Commissioner Heidi Reed, Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Keynote Speaker, Assistant Secretary Jean McGuire, Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

This year was again a year of ongoing challenges and successes. The economic uncertainties didn't improve from last year, but at the same time, our ongoing proactive approach to planning and partnering allowed CLW to not only sustain our core funding for services and staffing level, but also to stay on track with our strategic planning for a capital improvement project so our staff and consumers have a healthier and more accessible work and service environment.

A special "Thank You" to all who supported CLW's need to renovate the office space so that it is life safety compliant, meets ADA standards, and physical space meets staff capacity. After receiving financial support from Worcester area's private family foundations - George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation, Stoddard Charitable Trust, Fletcher Foundation, Fred Harris Daniels Foundation, Hoche-Scofield Foundation and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the project began in December 2010 and was completed on March 1, 2011.

Our **Advocacy** this year was strong and acknowledged - In partnership with Easter Seals of Massachusetts and Elder Services of Worcester Area, a partner in the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium (ADRC), a Legislative Breakfast was held in January 2011, allowing each agency to discuss with Legislators, the importance of continued funding for programs and services which have a direct and personal impact on the quality and independence of the lives of the citizens of Central MA. The turnout was strong and the feeling of sincere concern was present, as we discussed the fiscal challenges we are all facing. Legislators left with a clearer understanding of how important the continued funding is to people with disabilities and elders. The group committed to working together as we all navigate through the challenging times ahead.

CLW worked with fellow Independent Living Centers in advocating throughout the year against budget cuts for the MassHealth Personal Care Management Program, MRC's Independent Living Service and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services. Ultimately, the voices of consumers, staff, and advocates of the disability community were heard and the ILC's of MA were level funded.

In an effort to increase awareness of our programs and services so people with disabilities have an opportunity to enhance their independence, CLW created a variety of outreach materials which includes, a videotaped public service announcement for television, a written public service announcement for newspapers, posters promoting CLW in both English and Spanish as well as an Impact Video. Our programs continue to strengthen and expand as a result of our outreach efforts. CLW was honored to have been nominated and presented with the Providers Council Health and Human Services – Peer Leadership Recognition Award- for providing quality Human Services on behalf of the citizens of Massachusetts.

Our growth, successes and overall good fortune would not have been possible without a group effort and commitment to our mission from CLW's Board of Directors, our staff and volunteers, along with our consumers and all the service providers we partner with throughout the year.

We recognize the State and Federal fiscal challenges ahead for 2012 and CLW stands ready to advocate for programs and services which have a direct impact on an individual's independence. People with disabilities must always have a voice for choice and be equal members of society with equal access.

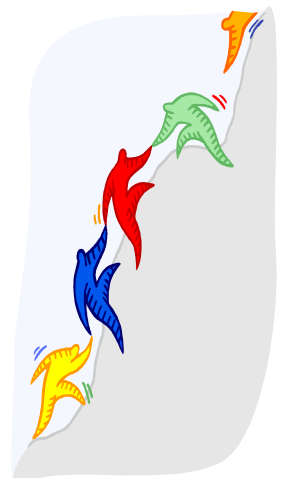
Ann M. Ruder
Executive Director

Empowering Independence– Consumer Successes

CLW has seen great successes this past year and has continued to build on this momentum to provide independent living services and skills to a wide variety of consumers. We have assisted many of our consumers in obtaining driver's permits, getting paid employment, transitioning out of nursing facilities, and procuring accessible housing.

One of the stories that stand out from this year is Josie, a participant in the summer 2011 Transition to Adulthood Program Vocational Internship Program. Josie participated in workshops and gained valuable work experience through her internship at CLW. Throughout her internship, she worked one on one with her skills trainer to learn administrative skills such as using our complex office machines (fax, copier, scanner, etc.). Based on her vocational skills, attained through workshops and skills training, Josie was offered a part-time position at CLW. Josie assists the IL Department with clerical duties and is a valuable asset to the team.

Another success for the IL Department is Harold's recent transition from a nursing facility. When Harold came to CLW, he was reluctant to living in a long term care facility after having multiple surgeries on his back and knees. CLW advocated on Harold's behalf to obtain an accessible apartment. Harold had a very low income, a lack of family supports, and his prospects for getting back into the community were limited. The transition services along with the support of our IL department were crucial to his recovery. In partnership with MRC, Harold was provided with furniture, appliances and home goods to assist him in regaining his independence. Today, Harold is happily living in his own apartment in the community and is continuing to work with the IL Department to further his independence in regards to transportation.



***“Nothing About
Us Without Us”***

Four Core Independent Living Services

Core Services of the Independent Living Services Department are funded by State Independent Living and Federal Title VII– Part C funds. Our trained Independent Living Specialists provide four core services to our consumers. All of our services are provided to all individuals, regardless of disability.

Skills Training: This service assists consumers in learning or improving independent living skills, for example, how to fill out applications for housing, social security, budgeting, cooking, and managing benefits for consumers.

Peer Counseling: Allows consumers to tap into the experiences of peers and individuals with disabilities through a peer modeling approach. Peer counseling includes: personal growth, problem solving, social networks and challenges with daily living, amongst others.

Information & Referral: Our staff are trained to assist individuals and care providers in finding and understanding information about human service resources in the community and to link people with appropriate service providers and/or to supply descriptive information about the agencies and organizations which offer services.

Advocacy: CLW helps individuals with disabilities know and assert their rights with, for example, the health care system, accessing financial benefits, transportation and access issues. Educated consumers can become their own best advocates.

Additional Specialized Programs and Services

ADA/Access: Individuals with disabilities are guaranteed equal opportunity through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which mandates accessibility of programs and facilities. CLW provides cities, towns and the private sector “Self Studies” that could reveal structural barriers and a Transition Plan indicating how access will be attained.

ADRC: A joint initiative with Central Mass Agency on Aging, Elder Services of Worcester Area, Montachusett Home Care and Tri-Valley, Inc., the Aging and Disability Consortia (ADRC) of Central, MA is part of a statewide initiative dedicated to giving people information to make informed decisions about long term care including where individuals want to live and receive services. The ADRC program offers Information and Referral and Options Counseling as a free service to any individual that has a disability.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Program (DHILS): The DHILS program offering the four core independent living services, with additional “Target Area” requirements. The target areas are: safe communities, jobs and self– sufficiency, wellness & quality of health care, transition to adulthood, emergency preparedness, and peer parent training. The DHILS program has also expanded its catchment area to include some northeast cities and towns.

Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP): The TAP works with youth with disabilities between the ages of 14-22 to support a smooth transition from high school into adulthood. Our specialized skills trainers offer: individual education plan or individual transition plan advocacy, post secondary education, support to families, independent living skills training, pre-drivers permit classes, housing advocacy, assistive technology, peer support and counseling, community education and recreation. CLW believes in supporting our future leaders as they transition to adulthood.

Personal Care Management Program (PCM): This program is designed to allow consumers to be independent regarding the choices that impact their lives. Consumers receive skills training on how to manage their own program, which allows them both the right and responsibility of independence. The program is available to individuals who qualify to receive MassHealth insurance.

Housing Assistance: The ability to finding accessible housing is a major concern for individuals with disabilities. CLW's full-time housing coordinator is highly specialized in providing information & referral on housing availabilities, laws and rights. This also includes assisting with filling out applications, searching for affordable/accessible housing, reasonable accommodations, and advocacy.

Federal Title VII-Part B: Home modification and/or assistive technology can mean the ability to live independently or not. Through this program, certain individuals can obtain up to \$2,000 for small home modifications or assistive technology (AT) equipment in order to remain independent. CLW staff will assist eligible applicants apply for a low interest loan for AT through an agreement with Easter Seals.

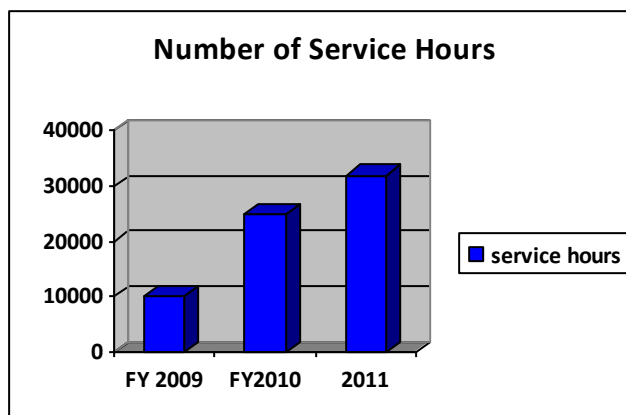
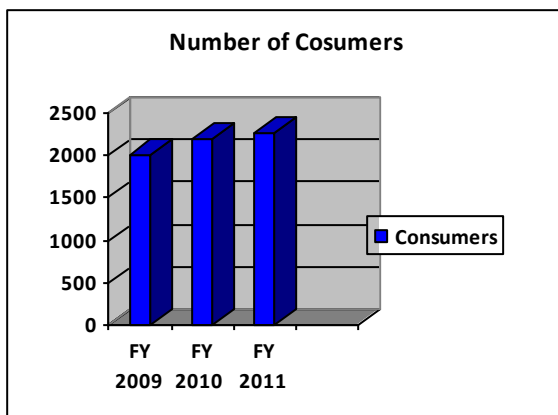
Vocational Rehabilitation Independent Living (VRIL): CLW contracts with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) to provide the four core services to individuals. A MRC counselor will contact CLW for a consumer to receive services through one of our independent living specialists. CLW and MRC work together to ensure a consumers needs, evaluation or goals are met.

Nursing Home Initiative: CLW provides assistance to people with disabilities in returning back to community living. As part of this initiative, CLW helps individuals explore what types of living options and supports are available in the community. We provide the advocacy and assistance necessary for a smooth transition back into the community. From advocacy, peer support, and referral for in-home care to exploration and explanation of transportation options, financial benefits, and sources for medical supplies- CLW is recognized for helping people transition to community living.

Transition to Adulthood Vocational Internship Program: CLW piloted a successful summer internship program for youth with disabilities in the school system from June through August 2011. The program provided vocational and skills building workshops and paid stipend internships. The program supported team building and peer mentorships. CLW is excited to start planning for Summer 2012– Vocational Internship Program.

Specialized Technical Equipment Program (STEP): The STEP at CLW provides a variety of specialized equipment for people who have difficulty using a telephone. CLW carries a wide selection of assistive equipment and accessories that allow you to communicate more effectively on daily basis. These accessories include telephones, telephone components, as well as visual signalers and assistive listening devises.

Statistics: FY 2011 Consumers & Service Hours



Success Story

Maggie is a young woman who has been hard of hearing since birth. CLW first met with Maggie in early 2011 when she was pregnant with her first child. She was concerned with being able to provide a safe environment for her baby. We were able to secure financial assistance for a visual baby crier and safety alarm system for her home. In an effort to be proactive about her independence, Maggie also applied for housing and is currently on the waiting list.

Maggie is always pleasant but very shy— it was three months before she smiled! Since that time she has become more talkative and expressive about her concerns and feelings. After the birth of her daughter, she has also joined our Deaf Parent Support group which has allowed her to interact with other parents. Maggie continues to gain confidence and grow in her new role as mother and as a person who is hard of hearing.

“Continues to gain confidence and grow”

Meet our Staff!



Our team brings an abundance of knowledge and life experiences to every individual we meet and to our day-to-day operations. From Skills Trainers to Volunteers to Interns and Administrative, we consider ourselves a family of individuals and role models. We make it a point and strive to never lose sight of our mission in assisting persons with disabilities achieve the independence and social inclusion they wish to achieve. CLW commends our staff for all they do everyday in bringing vibrancy and passion to our agency and our mission. *Thank you!*

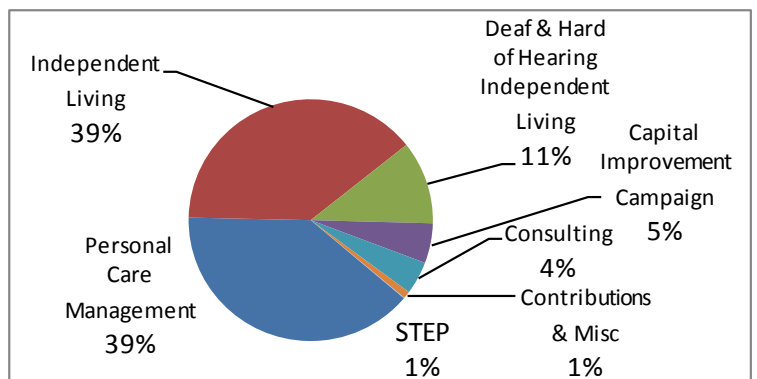
FY 2011 Revenues & Expenses: Three-year comparison

Revenues	FY11	FY10	FY09
Government Contracts (PCM, IL, DHHIL)	1,942,470	1,775,707	1,839,943
Verizon			137,817
Consulting & Other Program Revenue		53,207	48,436
Capital Improvement	115,000		
Contributions	17,219	11,470	2,580
STEP	526	2,039	
Miscellaneous	2,615	2,100	5,427
Total Revenues	2,173,471	1,844,523	2,034,203

Expenses

Personnel Costs	1,314,785	1,170,452	1,348,809
Operating Costs	523,350	500,219	589,007
Total Expenses	1,838,135	1,670,671	1,937,816

FY 2011 Income by Program





Center for Living & Working, Inc.
484 Main Street, Suite 345
Denholm Building
Worcester, MA 01608

508 798-0350 V/TTY
800 570-4020 Toll Free
508-755-1003 TTY
508-762-1164 VP

Fitchburg Branch
76 Summer Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
978 345-1568 V/TTY

We're on the Web!
www.centerlw.org

History

Center for Living & Working, Inc., a 501 (c)(3) non-profit agency, began in 1975 in Worcester, Massachusetts. CLW was established by a core group of young adults with disabilities dedicated to the empowerment of all persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible. The primary mission of CLW has not changed since its inception. However, programs and services have constantly evolved and improved to meet the changing needs of consumers with disabilities. CLW is a consumer directed, multi-faceted agency in the Central Massachusetts area offering a variety of the most comprehensive services for people with disabilities. CLW's consumers live in diverse areas within the region from rural to inner-city neighborhoods and suburban towns. They represent numerous ethnic and cultural populations, two factors which have promoted the agency to develop extensive service programs and an effective service delivery system.

Donations

A donation to CLW helps us serve over 2,000 people with disabilities and advocate for tens of thousands more in a number of critical areas including housing, healthcare, PCA services, transportation, adaptive technology, communications, civil rights law, education and employment. CLW relies on the generosity of members, corporations, foundations and individuals who see the importance of independence of people with disabilities as a vital part of the social fabric of the Central, MA area.

Yes! I want to make a \$_____ contribution to CLW.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ State: _____

Email: _____

\$ _____ (amount of total contribution)

Enclosed is my check payable to CLW

Please charge my Visa MasterCard

Card number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Thank you.

Please send to:
Center for Living & Working
484 Main Street, Suite 345
Worcester, MA 01608