Rhode Island Program Director Theresa Lefebvre was deeply moved by the kind words of a former client’s parent who shared her sentiments in a card. Additionally the mother wrote, “You will be a part of us forever. In all of his successes, know that you played a part. He will carry a piece of you with him for the rest of his life.”

SENDING GRATITUDE

Staff in Pennsylvania received a sweet appreciation email from the mother of a former client. Her daughter was treated in our Multisystemic Therapy (MST) programs. The family struggled through the virtual visits. Once they could meet in person at a safe social distance, the case improved dramatically, the youth completed her treatments, and was released.

POETIC APPRECIATION

When one Pennsylvania family wanted to express their gratitude to their child’s therapist for her dedication and hard work, they creatively crafted a poem. Each line captures a special memory they shared together during sessions. MST Therapist Jayme Johnson cherished the clever creation and shared it with her team.

DIRECTING HIS FUTURE

50-year-old James Dennis is steering his career path in a new direction. James arrived at CSI’s Delaware Residential Reentry Program in December 2020. Staff there describe him as having “an eagerness to accomplish his goals.”

After showing interest in earning his flagging license, he quickly registered for the first available class. James received his certification on January 7th and has been actively searching for a job where he can utilize his new skills. Congratulations James!

James proudly shares his new Flagging card
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

WARMING OUR CLIENTS AND OUR HEARTS

Our first annual Coats For Clients Drive garnered over 350 cold weather items for our CT residential and AIC programs. Friends from the local community and as far away as California, donated new and/or gently used quality jackets, gloves, hats, and boots to help our clients stay warm this winter. A boutique was set up in our Central Office where program staff shopped for their clients who were in need of winter gear. Additionally, we received 24 children’s coats for clients’ kids.

HOLIDAY CHEER

The holidays were extra bright this year for the youth in our CT & Rhode Island programs thanks to the help of our community supporters. We collected over $5,000 to help us furnish gifts for our young men & women. In our current state of social distancing, many of our loyal donors offered gift cards this year which staff used to purchase gifts from the wish lists the youth personally created, which made the holiday all the more magical and memorable!

TOYS FOR CLIENTS' TOTS

This year, CSI piloted a gift drive to provide presents for clients’ kids in one of our CT residential programs. We are thrilled to share our shopping elves secured over 450 toys, games, bikes, stuffed animals, & electronics which supplied gifts for over 154 children in a total of six programs!!! Program staff organized time for clients to wrap the gifts before giving them to their youngsters. Clients expressed their gratitude for helping to make the holidays special for them and their kids.

GROWING SUPPORT

We are very honored to be included in The Petit Family Foundation’s 2021 Michaela’s Garden calendar as a featured grant recipient. Many thanks to the Petit Family for their continued support as a community partner. Monies raised from the sale of the calendar support the growth of Michaela’s Garden project to educate young people on agriculture and help kindness bloom throughout our schools and communities.

PURCHASE YOUR CALENDARS HERE

FEATURED FRIEND

When we first met Pam Drzewiecki, we knew there was something magical about her. She beams with energy and radiates positivity. Pam first came to LISA, Inc. in 2018 and served as a member of our Board of Directors and our Development Committee. She has participated in organizing numerous agency events including our annual Phone-A-Thon to thank donors. Today, she plays an active role on our CSI Community Connections Group. Over the years, Pam has connected dozens of people with our mission.

Pam is deeply passionate about helping others. As owner of Powerful Purpose, she utilizes her productivity skills to coach other women to be successful. Her giveback initiative, Fill the Purse with Purpose, has provided the youth at LISA, Inc. fashionable handbags filled with useful items to build their wardrobe and confidence.

“My involvement as a Community Connection Core Member, donor, and workshop host is such an honor because I get to play a part in the bigger picture in helping LISA, Inc./CSI clients live a better life and find their purpose. This fills my heart because the give back is part of my purpose!”

Volunteer extraordinaire Pam Drzewiecki has a heart of gold
In March, we are asking the community to drive their support to our Men's Care Madness drive. Our friends with Ballheads in Meriden, CT and at The Cheshire Barber Shop are teaming up with us to host drives in their communities for our clients. We will be collecting shaving cream, razors, and other hair and body care related products for men. We are accepting new items of any quantity.

Donations can be dropped off at LISA, Inc. main lobby at 200 Executive Blvd in Southington, CT or by contacting ehyatt@csimail.org.

**MEN'S CARE MADNESS IN MARCH**

As part of our ongoing efforts to provide Welcome Care Bags to new residential clients, our Community Connections team has created a donation theme for each month of the year to collect various basic need items. This month, we are asking the community to Share the Love and help our clients stay in touch with their loved ones by donating new pens, markers, stationery, stamps, cards, and envelopes. Drop off at the LISA, Inc. main lobby at 200 Executive Blvd in Southington, CT or contact ehyatt@csimail.org.

**SHARE THE LOVE IN FEBRUARY**

**AGENCY CHAMPION**

CSI was founded in 1958 and incorporated by the courts in 1962. Mr. John Berman is one of CSI's original founders. He has practiced law in Hartford, CT for more than 63 years and has resided on the Watkinson Prisoners' Aide Society board of directors for decades. His significant contributions to advance our mission has changed the lives of thousands of people. We proudly honor Mr. Berman with our first AGENCY CHAMPION Award!

Tell us about your experience with CSI. "After founding CSI, I remained on the board of directors until 1967." During this time Mr. Berman was involved with opening the first halfway house in New England and in Hartford, the Aileen O’Connor House (then known as Hartford House), and the Watkinson House. Mr. Berman kept connected with our agency through the years via CSI board and staff members, The Watkinson Prisoners' Aide Society, and the community.

How has your involvement with Community Solutions impacted you? "I developed an interest in criminal justice as a child and it stuck with me. When we realized there was a great need for a program like transitional housing, we knew we would be changing lives. Seeing what an idea we young men had in the late 50’s turn into what CSI is today, makes me very happy and fulfilled."

**Support from a distance**

**SHOP HERE ON OUR AMAZON WISH LIST**

**SAVE THE DATE - OPEN HOUSE**

Thursday, March 25th  4-5pm (EST)

Connect to learn more about our youth programs in CT and Rhode Island and how you can make a difference in the lives of our young people.

Advanced Registration is Required. RSVP NOW
Chase Center Program Director Mike Siegal and Marketing and Grants Coordinator Sheila Carrasquillo were named the 2020 Employees of the Year at Community Solutions, Inc. (CSI). The surprise announcement was presented during our virtual staff meeting in January. Mike was recognized with the John Stein Award and Sheila with the Michael Beaudry Award for their relentless dedication and outstanding contributions to CSI. The two awards were named in honor of late staff members that made significant contributions to the agency during their lives.

Both Sheila and Mike were humbled by the honor and gave credit to their remarkable colleagues at CSI. Sheila’s parents were able to join the event via phone while Mike’s wife, parents, and grandmother linked in the Zoom meeting.

CSI CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Throughout February, CSI will be recognizing various members of its staff in celebration of Black History Month. Stay tuned to our social media sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter) for our series profiling a number of accomplished individuals who are making a difference within our agency, as well as in the communities in which they live.

ARming up AGAINST COVID

Our team is doing their part to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. Once the COVID-19 vaccine was released, our agency took steps to make it available to our staff. This work continues to support all our programs across the country.

CSI’s Chief Human Resources Officer Christine Black explains, “We strongly recommend and encourage employees, especially those working in close contact with clients, to receive the vaccine.”

TAking a stand AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In recognition of National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January 11, 2021, members of CSI’s leadership team united with staff in a socially distanced stand against human trafficking. The day was specifically dedicated to raise awareness and prevention of the illegal practice of human trafficking.
CSI's Residential Reentry Center (RRC) in Delaware serves both men and women transitioning out of Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities, or currently involved with US Probation. While the rehabilitation program can house up to 35 residents, they also have a large home confinement population of individuals serving the last portion of their federal prison sentences at their homes, under our supervision. Delaware RRC is more than just a halfway house. It is a work release program that prides itself on focusing on the person. Their programming takes a comprehensive approach to reentry including mental health, substance use, family reunification, personal finances, self care, and overall life skills with clients.

Delaware RRC's employment program works with individual clients to educate them on important life skills such as online applications, interviewing skills, money management, and conflict management, that prepare them to enter, or reenter, the workforce. Even through the pandemic, the residential program has continued to maintain a consistently high employment rate, often between 65% - 80%.

Staff at the Delaware RRC have an "open door policy" which allows clients to come to staff for help with whatever they may need. whenever they need it.

"All of these programs, along with a strong focus on personal accountability, have created endless possibilities for the clients we serve, and the communities we belong to," expressed Program Director Kristina Coldiron.

Last year, the Delaware RRC served 200 residential and home based clients.
COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS, INC. & LISA, INC.
operate more than 60 programs in 10 states and Canada.

Our strategic alliance increases our collective impact with the people we serve and in the communities we support throughout North America.

Here are snapshots of our programs state by state:

**MARYLAND** - Our therapists have increased referrals for their independent living grant in the months of December and January. Expanding their referral sources has led to increased referral flow.

**NEW JERSEY** - Families still continue to struggle with navigating virtual school. NJ’s Therapists have been working closely with school staff to support families and communities through these difficult times. Three-Fourths of our program’s intake during January came from local high schools.

**KANSAS** - Our team in Kansas is celebrating their one-year anniversary! Through a contract with the Kansas Department of Children and Families, CSI established multisystemic therapy services for youth in 18 counties in December 2019.

**RHODE ISLAND** - Youth participated in a Science Fair creating original experiments. Staff shared the boys did an awesome job presenting their projects that they worked so hard to complete.

**CONNECTICUT** - Thanks to a Connecticut Community Foundation grant, Chase Center in Waterbury can maintain their extensive cleaning practices to prevent the spread of COVID.

**GEORGIA** - A 15-year-old youth, who started receiving home-based therapy in November 2020, is already showing great progress with his coping skills, anger management, and drug abuse thanks to the dedicated support of his CSI therapist.

**CALIFORNIA** - Ventura County offers a unique program for state parolees in CA to participate in a Community Based Firefighter Training Camp where they are trained in paramedic, wildland fire, and structure fire prevention and suppression. CSI provides 1:1 and group services to these participating individuals to support their efforts to successfully reentry into the community. Our agency recently earned high praise from this program’s funder, the Board of State and Community Corrections.

**PENNSYLVANIA** - Staff have maintained high clinical intensity despite the many challenges over the last many months. Many therapists have taken more cases above normal caseloads and using telehealth to their advantage.

**EMPOWERING PROGRAMS**

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