

CAU in the News

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AMERIGROUP Extends Community Reach by Partnering with Community Access Unlimited AMERIGROUP Foundation donates \$4,500 to support community living for people with disabilities



AMERIGROUP Foundation has donated \$4,500 to Community Access Unlimited (CAU) to help support the agency's mission of enabling people with disabilities to live full and rewarding lives in the community rather than living in institutions. AMERIGROUP Foundation is the philanthropic arm of AMERIGROUP Corporation, a multistate managed health care company serving more than 116,000 subscribers in New Jersey through AMERIGROUP Community Care.

AMERIGROUP provides community-focused managed care services with an emphasis on the public sector health care market to improve health outcomes and expand access to care. With a similar commitment to improving

the lives of its members within the community, Community Access Unlimited is an ideal partner for AMERIGROUP to expand its reach, according to Rachelle Graham, vice president of sales and marketing.

"We think Community Access Unlimited is a strong partner and we support what they do in the community," Graham said. "Our mission is to support low-income families, including people who are blind, aged and disabled. What Community Access does in the community is consistent with what we do to enable people to live more independent and healthy lives."

CAU has enjoyed AMERIGROUP's support for a number of years. The company is an in-kind

contributor to CAU's annual walk-a-thon and golf outing fundraisers and regularly provides health education to CAU members and staff, including developing health curriculums for programs and holding classes on health issues such as stress management and diabetes.

The \$4,500 donation will help CAU continue to provide the support and services needed to help people with disabilities live independently within the community, including housing, life management training, employment and vocation training and recreation.

"The support of business partners within the community such as AMERIGROUP is essential to our mission, especially at a time when state funding has been diminished due to budget constraints," said Joanne Oppelt, program director at CAU. "It costs New Jersey taxpayers about \$225,000 annually to house a person with disabilities in an institution. The cost for providing community housing for CAU members runs just \$30,000 to \$80,000 annually, and our members contribute to the community while enjoying much more fulfilling lives."

Helping people enjoy healthier and more fulfilling lives aligns with the mission of AMERIGROUP, as well.

"A person's wellness and the level of wellness in their lifestyle correlates with awareness," Graham said. "The extent that Community Access and AMERIGROUP can bridge that awareness is very important."