



Meaningful lives for people with disabilities



21 PLUS TIMES WINTER 2024



“Snowflakes are one of nature’s most fragile things, but just look what they can do when they stick together.”

- Vesta Kelly



MESSAGE FROM 21 PLUS

Dear Family and Friends,

21 Plus welcomes our newest Board Members - Dan Latini, entrepreneur and owner of Dan Can Home Services, LLC; Orville Morades, founder and owner of Morades and Associates, a consulting and facilitation firm dedicated to helping people create change in modern institutions and for social good; and Elisabeth Parker, Assistant Director and Adjunct Professor, Rohrer College of Business Center for Professional Development, Rowan University. 21 Plus is excited to benefit from their experience and expertise and very honored that they have chosen to volunteer their time with 21 Plus.

We are proud to reinvest in our infrastructure with capital maintenance projects throughout the organization. We are obtaining a second wheelchair vehicle in 2024 thanks in part to grant support from OceanFirst Foundation and 21 Plus Foundation. We are in the process of updating several heating ventilation and air condition systems that will be more powerful and energy efficient. Several of our decks and ramps are getting complete makeovers, painting and sprucing up our homes and creating additional bedrooms.

We continue to support and encourage our staff to enhance their skills through the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals E-Badge Academy and College of Direct Support, thanks in part with support from a grant from Community Medical Center Foundation.

Our employee-run Positive Action Committee is in full swing gearing up for our Holiday Open House. Employees, their families, friends of 21 Plus and people we support are all welcome to stop by, have a light refreshment and see our office staffs' friendly decorating contest (for more information about our Holiday Open House, please contact Lisa at our administrative office - 732-240-3118).

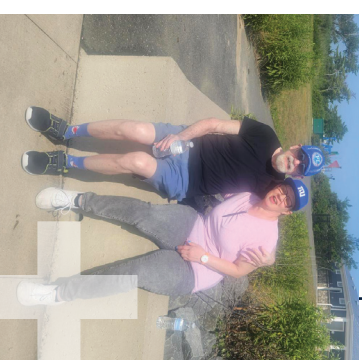
As an organization we value our employees and recognize the importance of wellness, including physical, mental, and emotional. We are exploring ways to share a holistic wellness program to reach our employees, offering a variety of ways to have self-care, gratitude, and workplace engagement.

We are looking forward to the holiday season and a bright 2025. Join us in sharing the next chapter of the 21 Plus story and furthering our mission "To Enable Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to Lead Fulfilling Lives Working in Partnership with Families and Communities." #JoinUs #BetterTogether #SupportUs

We are one agency, one mission.

Sincerely,

Diane Hutton-Rose
Executive Director
21 Plus, Inc.



Meaningful lives for people with disabilities



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+ WHO ARE WE?

21 Plus, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides community-based programs for individuals over the age of 21 with developmental disabilities. Our mission is to enable individuals with disabilities to lead fulfilling lives working in partnership with families and communities.

+ WHY ARE WE HERE?

In 1979, a small group of families had a need. Their sons and daughters (who had developmental disabilities) were graduating from high school at age 21 and did not have a program, training or a job to look forward to. How would they spend their days? How would they socialize with friends? What did they have to look forward to? These families came together to form 21 Plus, Inc. Today, our services have grown to include residential services, adult training centers and employment support throughout Ocean and Camden Counties. Over the past 40 years, we have expanded into 12 group homes, four apartments, an employment program and two Adult Training Centers.

+ WHAT PROGRAMS DO WE OFFER?

Residential
Apartments
Group homes

Vocational
Adult training centers
Supported employment

+ EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

Our annual Employee Appreciation Lunch was held on Thursday, September 19th. This event is held annually as a day to celebrate 21 Plus staff as a group, with lunch, awards and basket raffles.

For the second time, our Employee Appreciation Lunch was held at the East Dover Banquet Hall. Special thanks to OceanFirst Foundation for sponsoring the catering for this year's event. The HR Department and Positive Action Committee worked hard to create table arrangements and put together the always popular door prize baskets.

The lunch featured a heartwarming slideshow of staff and the individuals we support. There were videos from individuals and letters from family members expressing how much their staff mean to them. Rick Askoff, family member and board member, spoke to the attendees about the difference 21 Plus has made in the life of his son. Board President Lisa Peck thanked staff on behalf of the board.

This event is also when we announce our Community Partner, and this year, Gallagher Insurance was named. They have worked with 21 Plus for years to provide the agency and staff with quality insurance and coverage. Focused on treating clients respectfully and responsively, Ian, Matt and the Gallagher team make themselves available for any and all questions and concerns that can arise in the insurance realm. In addition to being a broker to find the best value for agency insurance, they have become our broker to find the most robust medical dental vision and life insurance for our employees with high value. As we seek to expand residential services Gallagher has been a key resource in scoping out environmental risk to ensure our next property is in an area without flood risks- and you would be surprised flood risk is not exclusive to Ocean County

Our thanks to Ian, Matt and the entire Gallagher team for your partnership and always being a phone call or email away we need you!



+ ATC RECEIVES 3-YEAR CERTIFICATION

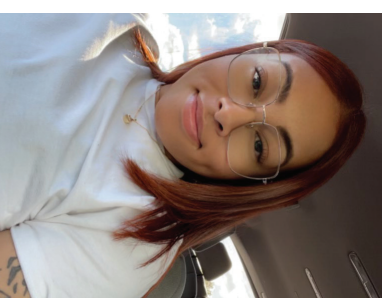
21 Plus has two Adult Training Centers - Main Street ATC and Route 70 ATC. In August of this year, DDD (Division of Developmental Disabilities) came out to review the ATC's for certification renewal. This is a really big deal, and preparing for the review takes time and effort.

All kinds of things are reviewed for certification renewal, activities calendars, menus, trainings, staff notes for billing, staff files, and more. Our ATC staff and supervisors put in a lot of hard work to make sure that the day programs run smoothly and the individuals who attend day program are fulfilled. DDD and Medicaid have strict requirements for agencies like 21 Plus, so when the DDD team came to conduct the review there was a lot to look at. They interviewed staff and individuals receiving services. They reviewed 20% of staff files as well as 20% of individuals files. DDD went back 6-months in 21 Plus's billing software to review notes.

21 Plus is excited to announce that thanks to the hard work of the ATC staff DDD awarded the Adult Training Centers with 3-year certifications. Teamwork makes the dream work and we are so proud of our instructors and ATC supervisors! Great job!

+ NJACP HERO AWARD

21 Plus is proud to announce that Program Administrator Mariah Hall is this year's NJACP Heros award winner. Mariah was celebrated at a viewing party in the office. Her Senior Program Administrator Neil Luli presented her with flowers and her coworkers Shawn and Stephanie were there too. Mariah received a certificate and gift card from NJACP.



Mariah started at 21 Plus just before the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, and since then has faced many challenges, tackling each one with grace. From safeguarding individuals during the pandemic to transitioning individuals and staff while consolidating programs, Mariah puts her best foot forward. She takes on each task head-on, always keeping the mission of 21 Plus at the forefront. Congratulations on this well-deserved award, Mariah! We are so proud of you!

+ FOUNDATION UPDATE

Our 3rd annual Fall Festival on September 7th at Veterans Park was a fun filled day of music and activities for everyone. Shorty Long was amazing and Mayhem Cornhole held a great tournament!

We were excited to have three food trucks and Mister Softee. Our children's activities included face painting and balloon animals. One of our vendors had kids making sand art treasures. Speaking of vendors? We were so excited to have all kinds of vendors, from handmade crafts to baked bread, there was something for everyone!

Save the date for our 2nd annual Casino Night on Friday, January 24, 2025, from 6-10pm at B2 Bistro in Bayville. Last year's event was a great night of gambling and prizes, and this year's prizes are shaping up to be even more exciting! Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are available - for more information contact us at 732-240-3118 or info@21plus.org.

