



# MAS MATTERS

ADULT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

*A Lifetime of Caring* ♥



CONNECTING. GROWTH. ACHIEVING.



VOLUME 3

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## **From the desk of Shawn M. McInerney President/CEO**



**The commitment to promoting independence for the individuals we serve and support remains central to Midland's core principles.**

**A few years ago, Midland initiated a partnership with Home Care Therapeutics with the goal of bringing occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech and language services directly to individuals residing in Midland's group homes and supervised apartments. This partnership reflects Midland's ongoing commitment to creating and facilitating pathways for individuals to achieve greater independence and autonomy.**

**This objective aligns closely with Midland's Strategic Plan and our Plan for Aging. Since this partnership began, a number of individuals have demonstrated significant improvements in adaptive living skills. Much of this progress can be attributed to the therapies provided by Home Care Therapeutics within our group homes and supervised apartments. The therapeutic plans developed by licensed practitioners are further reinforced and generalized through the daily support provided by Midland's Support Counselors.**

**The inclusion of in-home therapy services has produced a number of tangible and meaningful outcomes. By way of example, one individual who previously required a two-person assist to rise from a seated position is now able to stand with only minimal staff assistance. We have also witnessed individuals develop improved sensory skills and awareness through occupational therapy. Others have made important gains in ambulation, gait, mobility, and posture.**

**These critical life skills play an important role in enhancing overall quality of life. Gait and mobility training, for example, can help reduce the risk of falls. Through ongoing therapy, reinforced by our Support Counselors, individuals are also demonstrating greater independence with dressing and improvements in fine motor skills—all essential components of living a more independent life.**  
(continued on next page).



## **From the desk of Shawn M. McInerney President/CEO**



**Our partnership with Home Care Therapeutics has also resulted in recommendations for orthotics and other adaptive devices designed to enhance mobility, promote independence, and improve overall quality of life.**

**The broader takeaway is that all of us, regardless of our abilities, capabilities, or limitations, are lifelong learners. We often do not fully recognize what we are capable of until we are given the opportunity, encouragement, and support to discover it.**

**With your help, and together as a community, Midland remains committed to our core principle of providing an enriching life for every person we support. That commitment takes many forms. It can be seen in bringing therapists directly into our group homes and apartments; facilitating supported employment opportunities through our eight area business partners, a network that continues to grow; inviting guest speakers to the Work Center to introduce individuals to different vocations and possibilities; and hosting our annual art show at Explores, which provides a platform for creativity and artistic expression.**

**Each of these opportunities represents a different thread, but together they form the fabric of what Midland continuously strives to achieve: a truly person-centered organization that recognizes each individual's abilities, encourages growth, and creates opportunities for greater independence, fulfillment, and quality of life. It is an ongoing process of identifying possibilities, providing the right support, and building upon each individual's progress.**

**Just like the individuals we serve, Midland continues to learn and grow. We are constantly looking for ways to do more, to do better, and to create new opportunities for the people entrusted to our support.**

**It is a philosophy captured in one simple thought:**

**"We are always a work in progress; never perfect... always evolving."**

## COMMUNITY OUTINGS



**Can you guess where they are?**

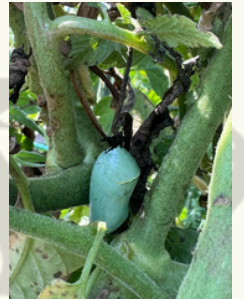
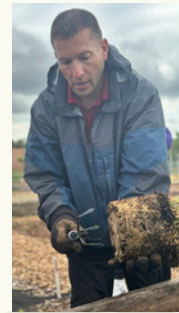
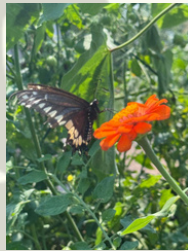


## Growing Together

Each year, Roger Johnson helps the Explores program secure a garden plot at the Branchburg Community Garden, giving our participants the opportunity to learn, grow, and get their hands in the soil.

This year, James Bushong and Midland Alumni Phillip Tellep donated supplies and their time to help create our Butterfly Garden. They shared their knowledge and guided our participants in caring for the garden.

Our garden attracted beautiful butterflies and produced tomatoes and basil! We are grateful to Roger, James, and Phillip for helping make this garden a wonderful hands-on experience for Explores. 🌱 🦋 🍅



# Explores *Butterfly Garden*



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# MIDLAND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES: SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

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Midland's Employment Services Program is proud to support 35 individuals who are currently working in competitive jobs alongside their peers at businesses throughout the community.

Through Midland's Supported Employment Group program, individuals have the opportunity to earn competitive wages, develop valuable job skills, build confidence, and increase their independence. Individuals are hired and paid directly by the employer and earn minimum wage or higher. Midland currently supports individuals working at Fiddler's Elbow Country Club, Readington Township, Royal Farms, The Ryland Inn, Scentbird, ShopRite in Clinton and Flemington, Top Safety, and Wawa locations in Bridgewater and Piscataway.

Midland works with local businesses to develop employment opportunities that match the abilities, interests, and support needs of the individuals we serve.

## HOW SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GROUP WORKS

- **Competitive Integrated Employment:** Individuals are employed by community businesses and work alongside employees without disabilities.
- **Transportation:** A Midland Employment Specialist transports individuals to and from their community job site as part of their Supported Employment services.
- **On-the-Job Support:** A Midland Employment Specialist remains at the worksite to provide support as needed. This may include learning job tasks, following workplace routines, communicating with supervisors and coworkers, and developing the skills needed to become more independent at work.
- **DDD/Medicaid Funded Support:** The individual's DDD budget pays for the Supported Employment services provided by Midland, including transportation and on-the-job support. The employer-not DDD or Midland-pays the individual's wages.

fiddler's elbow



Wawa

ROYAL FARMS



SCENTBIRD  
NEW YORK

Through these community employment opportunities, Midland supports individuals in achieving greater independence, workplace success, and a meaningful participation in their community.

# FAMILY BBQ

Even a summer storm couldn't stop our participants from shining! ☀️ Our Friends & Family BBQ brought everyone together for a day filled with great food, music, games, laughter, and wonderful conversations. And what better way to celebrate than on July 4th—America's 250th birthday! 🇺🇸 Our individuals enjoyed showing off their favorite sports team gear while spending time with friends, family, and their MAS community. It was more than just a picnic—it was a celebration of community, friendship, and making every moment count! ❤️💜💙



CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY!



# EXPLORES *Art Show*

This annual Art Show, honors the power of creativity and use art for the participants to connect with our community.





## Staying Healthy as we Transition from Summer to Fall



Health and  
Wellness  
Corner

Michele Casey, RN  
BSN, CDDN, CSN-NJ,  
Director of Nursing

As summer comes to an end and fall begins, changes in weather, routines, and schedules can bring an increase in seasonal illnesses. The Midland Adult Services Nursing Department would like to remind everyone that a few simple precautions can help protect the health and well-being of the individuals we support, as well as our families, our staff, and ourselves.

### Watch for Signs of Illness

Fall often brings an increase in respiratory illnesses such as colds, influenza, COVID-19, and other viral infections. Please be alert for changes such as:

- Fever or chills
- Cough, congestion, or sore throat
- Increased fatigue or weakness
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Changes in appetite or fluid intake
- Increased confusion or changes in usual behavior

Individuals who are not feeling well should be monitored closely, and the Nursing Department should be notified of significant changes in health or behavior.

### Hand Hygiene Is One of Our Best Defenses

Frequent and thorough handwashing is one of the simplest ways to prevent the spread of illness. Encourage individuals to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, particularly before eating, after using the restroom, after coughing or sneezing, and after returning from community activities.

When soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used. However, soap and water handwashing is preferred.

### Don't Forget About Hydration

Even though temperatures begin to cool in the fall, hydration remains important. Encourage individuals to drink fluids regularly throughout the day. This is especially important for individuals who may have difficulty recognizing or communicating thirst, and those prone to dehydration due to medical conditions or medications.



# Staying Healthy as we Transition from Summer to Fall



## Medication & Heat Safety

Some medications can make it harder for the body to tolerate heat or maintain adequate hydration. Certain medications may increase sensitivity to heat, reduce sweating, increase fluid loss, or affect thirst and the body's ability to regulate temperature. This can increase the risk of dehydration or heat-related illness, even when an individual does not appear to be overheated. Examples of medications that may affect heat tolerance or hydration include some:

- Diuretics ("water pills")
- Antihistamines
- Antipsychotic medications
- Antidepressants
- Anticholinergic medications
- Blood pressure medications
- Seizure medications
- Medications that cause increased urination or gastrointestinal fluid loss

Watch for signs of dehydration or heat-related illness, including increased thirst, dry mouth, decreased urination, dark-colored urine, dizziness, weakness, headache, confusion, unusual fatigue, or changes in behavior.

## Prepare for Flu Season

Fall is an excellent time to discuss seasonal influenza vaccination with healthcare providers. Families and guardians should consult with the individual's healthcare provider regarding recommended vaccinations and any questions about immunizations.

## A Reminder from Nursing

Small preventive measures can make a big difference. Clean hands, good hydration, appropriate clothing, staying home when sick, and early recognition of changes in health all help keep our Midland community healthy.

If you have questions or concerns about an individual's health, please contact the Midland Adult Services Nursing Department. We are here to support the health, safety, and wellness of the individuals we serve.



Congratulations, Jamie Fernandez, on this well-deserved honor and thank you for the meaningful difference you make every day at Midland!

## CELEBRATING OUR DSP HEROES!



Jamie was presented with his award at Midland by President & CEO Shawn McInerney and Director of Employment Services Bill Liberatore.

During National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week, in September, Midland is proud to celebrate Jamie Fernandez, who was nominated by Midland for the New Jersey Association of Community Providers (NJACP) 7th Annual Heroes Recognition Awards.

This special recognition honors Direct Support Professionals who demonstrate outstanding dedication, compassion, and commitment in supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## July 17 Mark Your Calendar!

Know someone who would like to join or renew their Alumni membership? Contact Stacey Carr at [carr@midlandnj.org](mailto:carr@midlandnj.org) to request a membership form.

Join today and keep the Midland connections going! ❤️

## ALUMNI SCHEDULE

FOR MORE INFO:  
CONTACT: STACEY CARR (908) 800-9927  
CARR@MIDLANDNJ.ORG

|          |                     |
|----------|---------------------|
| 10/16/26 | SCARE-A-TASTIC      |
| 11/13/26 | BINGO               |
| 12/11/26 | HOLLY JOLLY HOLIDAY |
| 10/29/27 | FOOTBALL FRENZY     |
| 03/05/27 | COUNTRY HOE DOWN    |
| 04/09/27 | FLOWER POWER        |
| 05/14/27 | SEMI-FORMAL         |
| 06/4/27  | SUMMER BREEZE       |



# GET INVOLVED

*Make a difference in  
our shared Midland  
community!*

Midland relies on the generosity and support of our friends, families, and the greater community to continue to provide life-changing programs and services to our students and adults.

The Midland Foundation is responsible for reducing the gap between the funds available and the funds needed to meet Midland's mission and vision.

Midland hosts annual events to support fundraising efforts

**The Midland Golf Classic** – Oct. 5, 2026

**Midland Goes to the Movies with PNC** – Nov. 22, 2026

**Midland Basket Bash (Tricky Tray)** – Feb. 20, 2027

**Move for Midland** – May 1, 2027

*Want to learn more,  
attend, join a committee,  
or volunteer?*

**Contact Brianne:**



908-800-9942

[Rabouin@midlandnj.org](mailto:Rabouin@midlandnj.org)

