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CLCC welcomes new executive director

NICOLE ZAPPONE

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COVENTRY — Creative Living Community of Connecticut (CLCC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to working with adults with neurodiversity abilities through inclusive housing, work opportunities and social and recreational programming, welcomed a new executive director.

Michelle Joyce, who just started with the organization, has a background in community development, strategic planning and nonprofit leadership.

In this role as executive director, she will collaborate with the CLCC board, partners and supporters to advance the organization's vision. She will also help further recreational programming and social enterprise initiatives. This includes CLCC's microgreens and farmstand programs.

"I started and learned about Creative Living Community first as a fellow in the UConn Encore Connecticut Program," Joyce said. "I worked with them doing some grant research in the fall of 2025, and I just fell in love with the organization and their mission."

The organization has a farmstand in Coventry, located at 2645 Boston Turnpike, which will be open on May 15.

At the farmstand, products are available for purchase, including locally grown food, other vendor

products, art by people in the program and a private-label condiment line. The farmstand is operated from May through October.

CLCC also partners with local farms such as Long Meadow Farm (Coventry), Pebblebrook Maple Farm (Hampton) and others in Glastonbury, Wethersfield, Hartford, Colchester, Manchester, Vernon, Ellington, South Windsor, Torrington, Hanover, Centerbrook and Bolton.

The farmstand is a postand-beam barn that was built in 2020. The program at the farmstand provides vocational training and paid employment in a variety of agricultural jobs. Skill development areas include chicken care, gardening, retail management, retail marketing and customer service.

"We also operate down in Tolland Greenhouse, where Curtis and Andy help us grow microgreens that we sell to local individuals and restaurants in the community," Joyce said. "We've got a great tie-in to our farming heritage here on the property, and we're looking to start to move beyond."

Another big project is Cottage Community. The project will be an inclusive community for those with and without developmental disabilities, where Joyce said they can live, work, play and feel included.

"We're very blessed, because the town has been very welcoming



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Sallie D'Attilio, Andy Zownir, Michelle Joyce, Curtis Hall and Cynthia Hall pose outside the Creative Community Living in Connecticut's farmstand in Coventry.

since we purchased the property and started our operations up here," Joyce said.

Across the 10-acre property, the organization is planning to build a residential community of one-, two- and three-bedroom homes. The property was acquired in 2018.

Joyce brings to her new position over 20 years of experience in strategic leadership, marketing, and program development that spans the corporate and nonprofit sectors.

"Joyce brings not only deep experience but a heartfelt commitment to building communities where everyone belongs," said Stephen Gustafson, president of the Board of Directors. "We are thrilled to welcome her to CLCC. Her warmth, vision and collaborative spirit will help strengthen the relationships at the core of our mission and guide us as we continue creating opportunities for adults of all abilities to thrive."

In addition, Joyce has led

marketing initiatives recognized with a Torch Award for leadership and innovation and has founded a consulting practice focused on organizational growth. She has also taught business and marketing as an adjunct professor of business at Goodwin College.

Her educational background includes a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Bay Path University, an MBA in Entrepreneurial Practices & Innovative Thinking from Bay Path University and a Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit/Public/Organizational Management from Fairfield University.

"I'm really excited to join Creative Living Community of Connecticut," Joyce said. "CLCC is creating something special — a place where adults of all abilities can live, connect and be part of a supportive community. I am looking forward to working with the board, families, and our community partners to help bring that vision to life."