

## EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: Jill DeRios



Resident Services Coordinator Jill DeRios has worked at New Community Corporation for five years.

Jill DeRios started working at New Community Corporation five years ago as the administrative assistant at Extended Care before making the move to the Resident Services Department. She has served as the Resident Services Coordinator at Commons Senior for a year and a half.

Her journey to her current role began when she was laid off from her position in a home energy assistance program, located at a church on Orange Street in Newark. She decided to fill out an application for a job with New Community and was brought in for an interview for a receptionist position. That position was filled with someone else, but she was asked if she would be interested in an administrative assistant position instead. DeRios was a bit hesitant because she had no experience in that area, but she agreed to the

interview and was hired on the spot by the late Betty Lawson, former administrator of Extended Care.

After Lawson's passing, DeRios remained at Extended Care and helped out wherever she was needed, doing filing and shredding, helping with mail and assisting in the laundry room. She then worked under the subsequent administrators, Robert Smolin and Veronica Onwunaka, before moving to the Resident Services Department.

DeRios decided she wanted to be part of Resident Services to closely help the seniors living in NCC housing. When an opening became available, she jumped at the chance to apply and got the job.

Resident Services Director Donnette Burrowes-Williams has seen great growth in DeRios since joining the department.

"She accepts constructive criticism very well and uses it to make changes in her daily routine working with the residents. She's funny and finds joy in what she does daily for the residents and is a team player. Jill is dependable and can be depended upon to get the job done," Burrowes-Williams said. "Jill takes her mistakes as a learning tool for improvement instead of looking at it as a failure. Her positive attitude makes her successful on the team. I look forward for continued growth in her daily duties as assigned which will contribute to the overall success of the department."

As a Resident Services Coordinator, DeRios has many responsibilities. She keeps track of residents who have gone to the hospital, updating their condition in the files and visiting them if they are admitted. She also conducts home visits where she notes any issues with the apartment and fills out a form noting the wellness of the resident. Residents who are frail or often hospitalized receive more wellness visits.

DeRios also assists residents who come to the office for services. She helps residents fill out applications for food assistance and other social service agencies and also makes calls for medical transportation.

She sets the monthly calendar with the other Resident Services Coordinator in the building, Delonie Barthelemy, which includes workshops and trips, and participates in ongoing trainings. DeRios also keeps residents' information up to date, including the vial of life forms that provide emergency personnel with emergency contact information and a list of the medications the resident takes.

DeRios enjoys providing workshops and gatherings for the senior residents.

"My favorite part of the job is reaching out to the community partners," she said. "And also reaching out to different companies who come in and do the wellness presentations for our seniors."

DeRios grew up in Newark as part of a large family with five sisters and seven brothers and is still very close to her living relatives.

"Family means everything to me. I love my family," she said. "I love the activities, I love the gatherings, I love the road trips."

In addition to her biological family, DeRios is very close to the girlfriends she has had since childhood.

"We've been together 50 something years. The same girls," DeRios said. "We go to each other's houses and we decide what we're going to cook. We've been doing that for so long."

DeRios said her spare time is spent with family and friends and shopping outings.

"ShopRite, Walmart, family and friends. That's my spare time," she said.