

Pipeline Quarterly

A quarterly feature publication of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

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Winter 2012-2013

"I've learned a lot from him!"

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Awareness and Advocacy Advance Success



On March 5 in the Statehouse Atrium approximately 600 people representing Ohio's developmental disabilities community came together amidst an environment of awareness and advocacy to learn, share, influence ... and have fun!

... in the Community.

Winter 2012-13 includes the month of March - traditionally a busy month with celebrations of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month across the state. This year's statewide theme, "Look Beyond" generated quite a buzz with County Boards of DD and other service providers picking up on the idea that we should all look beyond a person's disability to see their potential. And the annual statewide DD Awareness Month kickoff event on March 5 spotlighted the potential and the successes of several individuals in an expanded program this year including legislative advocacy efforts (pp 4-5).

Budget preparation for 2014-2015 has continued through the winter months, with DODD providing input to Governor Kasich's proposed budget presented in February, and now under consideration by the General Assembly. Assuring

fiscally-sustainable programs and services that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have told us they want and need is the foundation for our planning.

Within that framework is improving employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. In this issue of *Pipeline Quarterly* we report progress on the positive impact already felt by Governor Kasich's Employment First initiative, as well as stories of success and change as people served by Ohio's DD services system move out into their communities and enjoy greater freedom.

LookBeyond

In this Issue of PQ

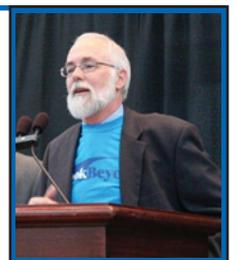
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Director's Message

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"I applaud each of you, as we recognize your many accomplishments today."

-Director Martin at DD Awareness and Advocacy Day



Employment First Initiative Moves Forward in 2013

Ohio's Employment First website has launched! - www.ohioemploymentfirst.org

Since its signing on March 19, 2012, Governor Kasich's Employment First initiative has been embraced by Ohio's developmental disabilities community and provided a needed re-focusing of priorities for adults with disabilities and for employers, as well. Part of the plan during its first year was the goal of launching a website to provide updated and fresh information for individuals, families, and professionals - to create opportunities for all individuals with developmental disabilities to work within their communities. The online resource is now at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org.

State policy news, best practices, resources, Employment First Taskforce updates, and an event calendar are all

available. Content will be continually updated, including videos, photos, and success stories to be added in the coming months. With the click of a button, anyone can submit an event related to employment, request a speaker for an event, or send an email with employment-related information or questions.

The new website is another step toward shifting peoples' expectations and transforming a culture so that community employment is the preferred and expected outcome for individuals with developmental disabilities.



Kristen Helling to Lead Project Management for Employment First, Other DODD Programs



"I have witnessed first-hand the remarkable opportunities that exist for people with developmental disabilities when we support their choice to obtain community employment." -Kristen Helling

Kristen Helling recently joined DODD as Community Advisor in the Division of Policy and Strategic Direction. She will be coordinating implementation of Ohio's Employment First initiative along with other stakeholder partners. The statewide effort also establishes an Employment First Taskforce and Advisory Committee to improve employment outcomes for working-age adults with developmental disabilities. DODD is the lead agency responsible for coordinating the Taskforce efforts.

Helling has been working with the Taskforce since its inception through her previous role as a vocational rehabilitation supervisor and technical assistance advisor for the Bridges to Transition program at the Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities (OACB). Her experience also includes program coordination at the Knox County Board of DD, implementing work exploration efforts to help transition-age youth prepare for employment opportunities after high school.

Within the next few months, the Taskforce will select six implementation sites around the state to build teams of local leaders who will develop specific employment plans for their areas.

Contact Kristen Helling at kristen.helling@dodd.ohio.gov



Opportunities are Key to Success for People with Disabilities

Excerpted from a Letter to the Editor by Stephen L. Williams, Superintendent, Belmont County Board of Developmental Disabilities

"People with disabilities want what most of us take for granted. They want a life that has people, places and things in it that matter to them. The Belmont County Board of DD helps people create that life by connecting them to opportunities in the community where those things are found. We do this through the relationships we have with others. Our community partners are helping us expand opportunities for people and preserve resources, so we can serve more people in better ways. *One of the things people value the most is a job.* Through our provider partners, we are supporting their efforts to create or locate employment ... where adults with disabilities can work and learn alongside everyone else. During Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we thank the citizens of our county who *look beyond disability to see what each person has to offer.* You are recognizing potential, forming relationships, and providing opportunities for people with disabilities ...

"...to contribute alongside everyone else in our community, and that means success for us all."

Contact Steve Williams at swilliams@bcbdd.org

Disabilities Commission Joins in Policy-Making - Mayor of Stow Spotlights Talent, Requests Input -



(L. to R.) Sara Drew, Mayor of Stow, with artist Krissie Sclurry, and Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh, at an unveiling of art from the Summit County DD Microenterprise program displayed in a conference room in Drew's offices.

Photo courtesy, Stow Sentry

Awareness of individual talents, and advocacy opportunities for front-line input into city government are a win-win situation for *everyone* in their community. In Stow, Ohio, Mayor Sara Drew's advocacy for people with disabilities continued undiminished when she began her role with the city in 2012. Prior to becoming the city's Mayor, Drew's career spanned nearly 20 years working with, and on behalf of, individuals with developmental disabilities as a service coordinator with the Summit County Board of DD.

One of the ways Mayor Drew has continued her advocacy efforts is by founding the *Stow Disabilities Commission* -- believed to be the first of its kind in the state. According to Summit County Board of DD Director of Communications Billie Jo David, "With the creation of the *Disabilities Commission*, Mayor Drew has gone above and beyond what's required by law...

"Instead of just saying, 'We want our city to be ADA compliant,' she's really proactive in getting feedback from her constituents on how to make the city more accessible and change attitudes."

Due to her efforts on behalf of individuals with disabilities, including the newly-formed *Commission*, Mayor Drew was presented an Ohio Public Images (OPI) "Excellence" award for DD awareness efforts by an elected official. OPI awards are given annually to individuals or entities who go 'above and beyond' to develop, promote, or support positive images of people with developmental disabilities. The awards were presented this year on March 11, in conjunction with Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, and the annual County Board Superintendents Association conference.

Mayor Drew accepted the recognition noting, "My professional background is working with people who have disabilities, plus there's the personal tie-in with my daughter. It really is something I have always espoused ... that our community is better when *every person* can fully participate." She also noted the importance of encouraging community acceptance of people with disabilities, and advancing employment opportunities for them, deeming the *Stow Disabilities Commission* an "... important first step to further improving the physical, political, and social landscapes for people with developmental disabilities." 

More information: www.publicimagesnetwork.org; <http://www.stow.oh.us/index.php>

- Director's Message - Planning for 2014-15



by John Martin
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Ohio's 2014-15 budget is in the review and discussion phase in the General Assembly, and must be in place by July 1, 2013. DODD is exploring all avenues to assure that our funding works as hard as possible for the nearly 90,000 individuals and their families who rely on our developmental disabilities service system to help them live successful and meaningful lives in their communities.

Some key areas in this budget process include:

- Supporting the focus on community-based jobs for adults with disabilities, as well as on early intervention services for children. This will require some re-balancing of system resources.
- Downsizing our Developmental Centers, and converting 'beds' funded for Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF-IID) to home-and community-based waiver services in smaller settings.
- Using technology to help individuals achieve greater independence in their lives, and make good choices via easily accessible information and services.

This is but a short list of what our next budget will need to support, and I am confident that the efforts of this Administration will help us to make progress in these and other key areas.

-Respectfully, John Martin

Awareness and Advocacy Go Hand-in-Hand

Annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Kickoff Event Expands Advocacy Efforts

Developmental Disabilities Awareness & Advocacy Day, March 5th at the Ohio Statehouse, represented a new partnership blending the annual *Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Kickoff* and the state-wide *Legislative Advocacy Day* activities previously held separately. The Awareness and Advocacy venues flowed through 'The People's House' with an awareness program in the Statehouse Atrium and advocacy meetings with legislators both onsite, and across High Street at the Vern Riffe Center.

Celebrating the 2013 DD Awareness Month theme, "Look Beyond," the day was organized by DODD, Ohio Public Images (OPI), the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council), Ohio SIBS, The Arc of Ohio, and other stakeholders.

Speakers included DODD Director John Martin, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) Executive Director Kevin Miller, several self-advocates, state legislators, and service providers. As they stepped up to the podium to share their thoughts with the nearly 600 people in attendance it was clear that there is much pride and progress in Ohio's developmental disabilities community.

Words of wisdom from a full day of Awareness and Advocacy included ...



State Representative Barbara Sears,

"Improving Ohio means improving the lives of ALL Ohioans. Tell us how we can improve things for YOU!"



State Senator Eric Kearney,

"Individuals may have different challenges in life, but we all have the same rights, and should expect nothing less."



Left: Self advocate Courtney Jordan, the first person to enroll in Medicaid Buy-In (MBI) in Medina County, stressed the benefits of MBI, and encouraged others to look into it for themselves ...

"MBI has allowed me to save more of the money I earn in my job at the Medina County Board of DD. In fact, for me it was the ticket to independence. Maybe it can be for you, too!"



Right: Greetings from Franklin County self advocate Christine Brown! She brought her considerable energy to the podium ...

"The SELF Waiver gives me service options that I need, and saves money for the system. Self-directed services are what's needed. Let's speak up!"



Points Shared with Legislators

The Ohio DD Council assisted individuals in organizing some thoughts as they met with their legislators during the *Awareness and Advocacy Day* this year:

1. Support for House Bill 84, which would provide a tax credit to people who add ramps to their homes and/or make bathrooms more accessible for people with disabilities.
2. Keep *Employment First* language in the budget, which says that people with disabilities should be able to work in the community if they so choose.
3. Support increased wages for direct support professionals.
4. Support 'Medicaid Expansion.' Without it, other services will need to be cut.

This year, nearly 200 individuals met with their legislators during the course of the event.



Expanding Awareness and Advocacy Efforts (cont. from p. 4)



- Sibling Support -

Franklin County Board of DD President Dean Fadel (left) and brother, Jeff, speak to the importance of siblings in the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Dean acknowledges,

"My brother is just as much an advocate for me as I am for him. I've learned a lot from him!"

Jeff modestly responded, **"Yes, you have."**

Special thanks to Deaf Services Center sign language interpreters Tina Shifflet (above, far left) and Rhonda Phelps, who translated for the event.



- Group Support -

LifeBuilders day service program participants from Delaware and Franklin counties returned in 2013 to the Statehouse program where Destiny Hawkins (far left) last year was a presenter on the subject of Project STIR and their 2012 graduating class. She says,

"I'm back again this year to see what else I can learn."

Awareness and Advocacy ... Foster Employment



Mark Kayes (left) an employee with LaRosa's Pizza in Cincinnati, with Mike LaRosa – The Boss.

Work, work, work... that's what Mark Kayes likes to do!

And at LaRosa's Pizza in Cincinnati they celebrate Mark's abilities and enthusiasm. Speaking at *Developmental Disabilities Awareness and Advocacy Day*, Mark took the podium and told attendees in no uncertain terms that he has been working at LaRosa's for more than seven years and loves his job. He said, "I enter the orders and make sure they are done right. I am very busy doing that."

The fact that Mark was born without arms has not hampered his work ethic or performance. LaRosa's official Steve Browne says, "We can't hire enough people like Mark! He keeps track of orders using his toes ... and we never have to worry about him getting the job done." ☺

A Cup of Coffee ... A Great Opportunity

Huron County Board of DD (a.k.a. 'Christie Lane') Superintendent, Dr. Dee Zeffiro-Krenisky wrote a column for a local newspaper recently, sharing a few thoughts on the subject of community employment. She began:

"I sipped a cup of coffee on a cold February morning. It came at the end of a year-long saga, and not surprisingly, it was the best cup of coffee ever!"

The opening of *Higher Grounds* by Christie Lane coffee shop was the culmination of a year-long effort between Christie Lane and the administration of Mercy Willard Hospital to offer individuals with developmental disabilities an opportunity for community-based employment, and an opportunity to build and be part of an entrepreneurial operation. It is one more way in which individuals with developmental disabilities can participate and contribute to the daily ebb and flow of society.

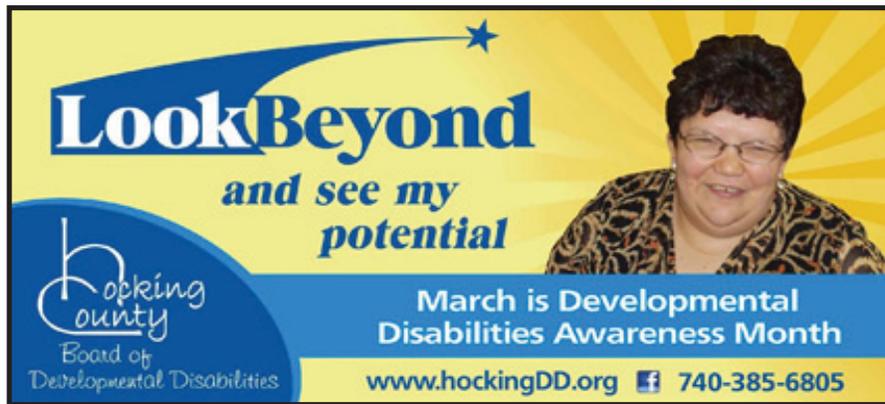
(cont. p. 8)



Dr. Dee with a cup of Higher Grounds

More Developmental Center Residents Explore Community Living

Developmental Centers share stories of success and change.



Marsha Mace ... and her engaging face ... greets viewers of outdoor media in Hocking County.

She's not only 'looking beyond,' she's looking right at you!

Marsha's march to community living began in 1999 at Gallipolis Developmental Center, where she lived until 2011. After a few placements in smaller settings that did not work out as well as hoped, Marsha found a home, as we first reported in *Pipeline Quarterly* • Summer 2012.

More Good News for Marsha in 2013

According to Kimberly Shepler, Marsha bounces out of bed every morning with a big smile, walks to the kitchen and joins her foster dad for a cup of coffee before heading to Hocking Valley Industries where she works five days a week.

Since moving from Gallipolis Developmental Center to a 'group home,' then ultimately to a foster family home, Marsha has experienced many positive changes in her life. Shepler, whose parents adopted Marsha, says,

"For one thing, she really loves to be on the go, and a couple of family trips this past year gave Marsha the opportunity to see other states for the first time."

She also notes that Marsha's communication skills have improved with an ever-expanding vocabulary. Using her new level of ability, she is now verbalizing more about what she wants, or is thinking about. Shepler adds, "Marsha is anxious for Spring so she can get outside and ride her three-wheeled bicycle on the area bike paths. She loves being part of a big family, the holiday gatherings, birthdays and other celebrations. Living in a family environment gives Marsha the personal attention and atmosphere that is important to her health, personal growth and happiness."



Looking Beyond Marsha

Ohio's Developmental Centers (DCs) continue a planned gradual downsizing process and sharper focus on community involvement. Overall, DC staff report that strong support from their regional service areas has helped greatly in affording new opportunities for DC residents, including moving into homes in their communities.

As DODD Director John Martin recently stated, "We look at each individual and see if they might be better-served and more successful in a smaller setting, and then what kind of supports they might need. In doing so, we have reduced the total population within the state's DCs by 14% over the past two years – slightly better than the national average for states operating such centers, which is about 12%."

MVDC, a Case in Point

In *Pipeline*, January 30, 2013, a milestone was marked in the evolution of Mount Vernon Developmental Center (MVDC) ... On January 24, 2013 the last residents moved out of Rian Hall. Its 65-year history included service to thousands of patients with tuberculosis, persons with mental illness, and, since 1969, was the home for

(cont. on p. 7)

Marsha and her cat, Yum-Yum

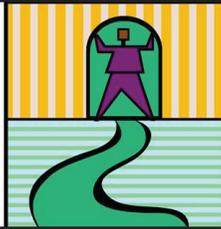
were big favorites of readers responding to our Summer 2012 issue of *Pipeline Quarterly*.

"We love Yum-Yum, and Marsha looks happy, too!"

More about Ohio's DCs online at www.dodd.ohio.gov. Click on Residential Services, Developmental Centers.

Residential Resources - New Homes, New Opportunities

The number of individuals served at each of Ohio's ten Developmental Centers is getting smaller, as community-based residential service waivers are accessed through a planned, ongoing census reduction.



Artist's illustration of proposed development

(cont. from p. 6)

persons with developmental disabilities living on the MVDC campus. Thousands of employees and residents lived and worked in Rian Hall over those years. Ohio's developmental disabilities system honors this history, and now looks to the future.

MVDC Superintendent Ernie Fischer shared these thoughts on the subject in the *MVDC Beacon* newsletter,

"And so you ask, what exactly is the future? Good question. MVDC, like all of Ohio's ten Developmental Centers, will continue to get smaller. We have worked with families, guardians, County Boards of DD, and other service providers over the past five years to facilitate the placement of 91 individuals into a variety of community-based settings." He continued,

"These placements have brought some families closer together and provided new opportunities for (former) MVDC residents. We serve, and will continue to serve, as a resource for technical assistance to families, County Boards, and providers, and as a short-term residential placement for persons who are in crisis or in need of stabilization."

Smaller Settings

As part of this process, DODD has announced a new initiative -- the development of 20 six-bed Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICFs/IID) to be located throughout the state, serving individuals previously residing in a Developmental Center. A 'Request for Interest' regarding this initiative was posted online at www.dodd.ohio.gov and was due March 29.

This model will allow individuals with higher needs to receive bundled services in smaller, more homelike settings. The state will provide more intensive monitoring of each individual who moves to these homes and oversee admissions and discharges for these homes.

DODD will work closely with partners in service delivery and families who desire more monitoring when their loved ones move out of state-operated centers.



Private Development of Residential Resources Creative Housing and Homeport Ohio Propose Unique Development

Homeport Ohio, and Creative Housing Inc., have partnered to submit a proposal to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency to develop a housing complex in Columbus. The development is unique, in that within the proposed 56-unit apartment complex for seniors, six units are set aside to provide supportive housing for seniors with disabilities. Creative Housing renovation staff worked with the development's architect to refine plans for designated accessible units.

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program



Opening the Door to an Affordable Place to Call Home

Administered by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program is an incentive program designed to increase the supply of quality, affordable rental housing, by helping developers offset the costs of rental housing developments for people with low to moderate income. The program is designed to be a catalyst for building new, affordable housing in the state and nation.

Homeport works through a network of partnerships to generate affordable home ownership and rental housing opportunities for low and moderate income Central Ohio residents. Creative Housing CEO Patrick Rafter commented, "We hope to demonstrate to the Ohio Financing Agency that people with disabilities, who generally have been left out of Ohio's low and moderate income housing developments, should be included."



More on Ohio's Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC), at <http://www.ohiohome.org/lihtc/default>

Sondra Williams Earns the Governor's Courage Award



Along with a hearty hug from Governor John Kasich, Sondra Williams received a Governor's Courage Award in February.

Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives William Batchelder applauds at left.



As part of the 2013 State of the State address, Governor John Kasich presented the annual Governor's Courage Awards, honoring inspirational Ohioans. Recipients of the medals this year included Astronaut Neil Armstrong; staff and faculty at Chardon High School - site of a tragic shooting in 2012; and, Sondra Williams, an adult with autism who also is the Director of the Autism Research Institute's Youth Division.

Williams was recognized for her many accomplishments as a self-advocate with Autism, as well as for her advocacy work and endeavors on behalf of all individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Having spent most of her life misdiagnosed, and having been institutionalized for several years, Williams' life story is one of courage.

As a member of the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) Advisory Board and the Autism Society's panel of advisors, Sondra presents nationally on the subject of ASD and is the author of a book, *Reflections of Self*. She recently participated on a panel with fellow OCALI Advisory Board members, presenting new Ohio Autism Recommendations to the Interagency Work Group on Autism (IWGA).



Congratulations to Sondra, and to all Governor's Courage Award Recipients.

Cup of Coffee (cont. from p. 5)

Dr. Dee continued, "Perhaps the opening of the coffee shop within Mercy Willard Hospital expresses the changing dynamics in how we look at and accept individuals with developmental disabilities. On our part, it is a sign of some progress made toward employment opportunities for the individuals who receive our services.

Many of the individuals we serve are not content working in a more rigid environment such as a sheltered workshop, where opportunities are limited. Because they have developmental disabilities does not mean they shouldn't have choices. While some individuals are content in a workshop, others will gravitate toward jobs in the community. As an agency founded to serve these individuals, we must be diligent in seeking creative ways to offer employment opportunities.

The *Higher Grounds* coffee shop is important because it represents the next step in employment ... entrepreneurship. Years from now, I hope we will look back on the day we opened the coffee shop as the 'jumping off point' for business ventures created for, and operated by, individuals with developmental disabilities."



Publication Notes

Published four times annually (fall, winter, spring, summer) by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), Division of Legislative Affairs & Communications, *Pipeline Quarterly* focuses on people, highlights topics of interest to the developmental disabilities community, and supports DODD core concepts and philosophy.

We thank all who have allowed us to speak with them for this issue, and who have contributed to its preparation. Reader ideas, comments, and feedback are always welcomed.

Submit ideas and feedback to editor Sherry Steinman, at sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov, or call (614) 644-0262.

Both the *Pipeline Quarterly* and the twice-monthly *Pipeline* publications are archived at dodd.ohio.gov/pipeline/



"Look Beyond" is the theme for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, March 2013. More information at www.publicimagesnetwork.org



Higher Grounds Coffee Shop grand opening, Huron County. February 2013