

“LIGHTING THE WAY TO BETTER
COMMUNICATION”



July/August
2015

Clermont County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

The Beacon



Make a Nomination for Our “Good Fortune” Dinner

Each year, the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities holds a Recognition Dinner to thank the many people in our community who give back to us in so many ways. It is our “good fortune” to work with these individuals, businesses, and community members!

Nominations are open August 31 through September 30 in the following categories:

**Self Advocate
Provider
Advocate
Foster Parents
Business
Business Partner
Volunteer
Friends of DD
Community Leader
Triumph Staff Award**

To make a nomination in one or several categories, visit the Clermont DD website (www.clermontdd.org), or contact ldavis@clermontdd.org, (513) 732-4921.

From the Superintendent

Dan Ottke

As I sit down to write this, students are back from their summer break and Wildey School is back in business for the 2015/2016 school year. We also celebrated another productive summer with the students who participated in their summer work experiences through our Bridges to Transition program. It's exciting to see some of the teenagers who started in the program and have been a part of it for 4 or 5 years that are now graduating and getting jobs.

As mentioned in the last edition of the Beacon, Superintendent Forums and Focus Groups took place in July and August to update individuals, families, guardians, and providers about what is happening at a National, State, and Local level regarding services for individuals with Developmental Disabilities. Also, as result of our Focus Groups, there were a number of ideas shared that could improve services or processes. The information received is being reviewed and categorized by our Long Range Planning Committee in an effort to ultimately share themes with our Board as we look to plan for 2016. I want to say thank you to all those who took the time to come out for the forums and the Focus Groups. It means a lot that you would take the time to do so. In the next edition of the Beacon I will share in more detail some of the things that were shared.

One of the big news items coming out of the State Budget process was the funding of approximately 3,000 state-funded waivers to bring down the waiting list, and to give individuals considering or living in an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) the option to live in the community with a waiver. With the funding approved, a work group representing County Boards, providers, individuals and families, and DODD staff was formed to develop a plan to distribute the waivers. We are certainly anticipating that individuals living here in Clermont County will benefit from these new waiver services. I will share more about the outcome of this news in upcoming editions.

Finally, we recently learned about the signing of the ABLE Act into law here in Ohio. This is truly exciting news! The Ohio Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act allows for the creation of special tax-advantaged savings accounts for people with disabilities to save money without jeopardizing their eligibility for assistance programs on which they rely. This could have a dramatic impact on individuals being able to work in the community, earn wages and save those wages without it impacting their benefits.

Please pay close attention to our website for more details at www.clermontdd.org.

If there are any questions please feel free to contact me at 732-4930.

Sincerely,

Dan Ottke, Superintendent





ACTIVITY UPDATE

September 15	*Visit the Amish/ Lunch at the Food Court in Mt. Orab	11:00-4:30 P.M.	Bring money for lunch and any purchases you may make	Meet at JC Penney parking lot
September 14, 21, 28	Monday's Bowling League	3:00-5:00 P.M.	\$6.00	Eastgate Lanes Milford 575-2828
September 16	Luau Dance	7:00-9:00 P.M.	Free	Loveland American Legion
September 16,23, 30	Wednesday's Bowling League	11:00-1:00 P.M.	\$6.00	Eastgate Lanes Milford 575-2828
September 29	Movie	TBA	\$5.50	Milford Cinemas

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to work a shift at the Clermont DD fair booths this year. It was EXTREMELY hot (hotter than normal) but everyone braved the heat to greet the public. In total, we distributed 1,100 cookbooks and shared program information to the many people who stopped by our booths. Thank you to the Clermont County Agricultural Society for giving us the opportunity to participate each year!



Transitioning through BRIDGES

What do you do when you are a teenager with nothing to do during Summer Break? You sign up for the Clermont DD BRIDGES to Transition program, of course!

BRIDGES is designed to give students with special needs a taste of the work world. They are split into three groups to give them a sample of the skills needed to get a job after graduation.

Twenty-eight students participated in Career Exploration. This BRIDGES program teaches students to think about etiquette, how to act when on the job, how not to dress when going on an interview, etc. Twelve students participated in the Summer Youth Work Experience and worked in small groups at three different businesses: Grant's Farm and Greenhouse, Big Lots Beechmont, and Coney Island Park. Landscaping, customer service, and store work were just a few of the things the students experienced at these locations. The employers were very impressed with the level of work each student achieved, and look forward to seeing them next year.

Two students participated in the Summer Job Development program, which means they were actually hired by a company in early spring AND received a paycheck. These employers were Kings Island and Tractor Supply. We couldn't be more happy for the students!

Although it's technically a summer program, the staff work with many of the students year round. Watch for future articles about the BRIDGES program in upcoming issues of The Beacon!



Students who attended BRIDGES summer picnic with their families were, from left: Kyle Stewart, Tyler LeRoy, Tanner LeRoy, Ayanna Davis, Avery Clark, Rayce Curry, Conner Malott, Holly Henderson, Kelsey Ventura, and Heather White, and Elena Ferguson.

ADA - 25 Years Later

It was a historic moment on July 26, 1990 when President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act. This new law carried with it important information-- how to adapt your home, business, or office to include space for someone who uses a wheelchair; how to put a counter/beeper on a Walk/Don't Walk sign so that someone who is blind can "hear" when it is safe to cross the street; how to provide an interpreter for someone who is deaf so that he or she can enjoy a theater performance, and so on. This significant legislation carried with it something more...the opportunity for citizens with disabilities to become more independent and more free to live their lives, just as everyone else does. It was a poignant move for our government in 1990 and now, twenty-five years later, it is just as moving.

The Center for Independent Living Options hosted a 25th Anniversary Celebration on July 27, 2015 and the Clermont County Board of DD was proud to be part of the festivities. It all began with a Disability Pride March from City Hall to Fountain Square, followed by a vendor fair, entertainment, and speeches from City Council members, advocacy groups, and more. It was a great day, and we learned so much from visiting with the hundreds of people who attended. Most importantly, we learned that "within the heart of each community, EVERYONE belongs."

(Pictures by Lisa Davis, Clermont DD, and Lisa Danford, Hamilton DDS)



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1. Log into Amazon.com.
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3. Choose Clermont DD Empowers Me.



That's it! It's **FREE** and again, 0.5% of each purchase you make will be donated by Amazon to Clermont DD Empowers Me.
Contact ldavis@clermontdd.org or (513) 732-4921 for more information.

Calling 911...Are You Prepared?

When an emergency happens, we know to call 911 for emergency responders to be dispatched within minutes. In order to help you be better prepared, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities has created a brochure with helpful hints, a sample script, and other important information.

Being prepared means you will be more precise in giving information to the 911 Operator in an actual emergency. For a copy or the DODD brochure or to learn more, visit <http://dodd.ohio.gov/HealthandSafety/Documents/When%20to%20Call%20911%20Brochure.pdf> or www.clermontdd.org.



Siblings with a Mission

Nathan Grant is a senior at Cincinnati Country Day. He lives in Loveland with his parents and twin brother, Nik. Nathan and Nik have always been close buddies. Even though Nik was born with MPS II Hunter Syndrome, he and Nathan have always shared that special twin bond. Over the years, Nik has been in and out of the hospital, and Nathan (along with their parents), has been by Nik's side. While on an internship last year, Nathan met several teenagers who also have siblings who have disabilities, and had experienced some of the same ups and downs that Nathan experienced throughout Nik's hospitalizations. The teens discussed the fact that there are support groups for parents, spouses, and children for various issues...AA, cancer, smoking, grief, etc. However, there was really nothing for siblings. There are occasional workshops for siblings, but nothing in the way of a support group lead by and driven by the siblings themselves. Nathan and his friends set out to change this!

For almost a year, they have been working on a website called "Siblings with a Mission." Their official launch was on August 10, making their dreams turn into reality with the flip of a switch. Siblingswithamission.org is more than just a website; it is a platform for siblings to video chat, blog, share stories, and gather support from the strengths of others who have already walked in these shoes.

On this site, you will find stories about international teens and their siblings who have disabilities—some are doing well; others have passed away yet are still a big part of the sibling's life story. The idea is to have video chats throughout the month, discuss different issues, assist each other through difficult times, and celebrate with each other when accomplishments happen. This group of siblings are hoping to bring an informational conference to Cincinnati in the near future and encourage siblings across the world to participate in volunteer projects. Already, they are taking on volunteering at their local Ronald McDonald Houses in their respective neighborhoods, and their list just keeps growing. Basically, they are AMAZING teens.

To learn more, visit www.siblingswithamission.org. The stories that are shared will bring a smile to your face and a tear to your eye!

Picture Caption: Nathan and Nik Grant live in Loveland with their parents, Viji and Bob. Nathan is the 2014 winner of Clermont's Got Talent.



Clermont County Board of DD
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Board Members

- Rex Parsons - President
- Kim Pellington - Vice President
- Robert Grant- Secretary
- Laurie Benintendi
- Greg Carson
- Emily Chesnut
- Harry Snyder

Superintendent

Dan Ottke



UPCOMING EVENTS *Mark Your Calendars*



<p><i>Catfishing Tournament</i> September 12 & 13, East Fork Lake</p> <p>Information and online registration: empowersmeboard.org</p>	<p><i>Amish Mafia Benefit Concert</i> October 24, Talon Tavern (Milford)</p> <p>Great music, silent auction, and more. Info at empowersmeboard.org</p>
<p><i>The Rusty Ball</i> October 24, Duke Energy Center</p> <p>We are one of the Rusty Griswolds' Charities! Purchase tickets at tickets.therustyball.com</p>	<p><i>Clermont's Got Talent</i> November 6, The Anderson Center</p> <p>Recruiting acts now! Contact Suzanne at 732-5028 or sdiesel@clermontdd.org</p>

THE BEACON is published monthly by the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Please direct any questions or send your press releases to: Lisa Davis, Community Relations Director Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities 2040 US Highway 50 Batavia, OH 45103
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