

THE BEACON

September/October 2015



2040 US Highway 50
Batavia, OH 45103
513-732-7000

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From the Superintendent

In October, we are always excited to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month. We are proud of our record of assisting individuals with Developmental Disabilities here in Clermont County to find jobs and retain them. As we head into the Fall, this is also the planning time of year for staff and the Board.

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. As promised, I wanted to share some of the themes that came out of those sessions.

First and foremost, a common theme shared was increased communication and information sharing. Individuals and families said they would like to see more information shared about Medicaid waivers and waiting list procedures. Families shared concerns about Future Planning for their loved one and how to get questions answered about this subject. Questions about School to Adult transition were common this summer. In response to this we are planning four forums, one for each quarter in 2016 to discuss these topics: Agency communication with individuals and families; Information about Medicaid Waivers; Future planning; and School to Adult Transition.

Another theme that was prevalent from the sessions was the lack of consistent transportation options for individuals with Developmental Disabilities here in Clermont County. This is certainly not a new theme, but there were some ideas shared to see if "Rideshare" concepts could be explored where individuals and families could communicate with one another or be able to share their need and see if some in the DD community could assist them if they were going in the same direction. This will be a goal for the agency heading into next year to see if a system like this can be derived and implemented.

If you missed the opportunity to share some of your thoughts and ideas this summer, I will be planning some more Library meetings in November to allow for further input about these ideas and also get feedback on some of the other agency proposed goals for next year. We also will be scheduling a formal public input session regarding the 2016 Strategic Plan.

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.

Dan Ottke

Dan Ottke - Superintendent

Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities



Disability is “One Part of Who I Am”



In October, we celebrated National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) to recognize people with developmental disabilities in the workforce. The Clermont County Commissioners presented a proclamation on September 23 to Ethan Stuempfle. Ethan has worked at Kroger Eastgate for four years, and lives in his own apartment in Union Township. The Commissioners thanked Ethan for accepting the proclamation on behalf of Clermont DD, and commended him on his long-term employment.

We honored Red Robin Gourmet Burgers as the Business Advisory Council’s “2015 Employer of the Year.” Matt Lisa is the General Manager, and he has opened the doors of his restaurant to four people with disabilities this year. Job titles for these employees include hostess, bussers, and dishwasher. Whenever Matt has an opening, he contacts the Clermont DD Job Placement Specialists to see if anyone from Clermont DD’s Community Employment Department might be interested in working at Red Robin. Matt works well with our job coaches, but stresses independence for the individual throughout the job training. Matt and his team were

honored at the Clermont Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Forum on October 21.

Each year, the US Department of Labor chooses a theme for NDEAM. This year’s theme was “My disability is one part of who I am.” This theme defines many of the people who work in community employment in Clermont County and helps us remember that ability much more important than disability.

Donald - The Inside Story



Donald Osner is a resident of Milford in Clermont County, Ohio. Donald was born with Spastic Hemiplegia cerebral Palsy. After finishing school Donald started working for a period of time at a local company. After a few years working there, Donald decided to quit due to a conflict of interests. Donald kept a part-time job at LaRosas Pizza but in order to pay his bills part-time work was not going to cover them all. Donald went to his sister and brother-in-law to ask for help. They helped Donald out with his bills for 4 months while Donald looked for employment. Donald was unable to find full time employment on his own.

Towards the end of December 2012, Donald lost his apartment due to not being able to find employment.

Donald’s friend helped him get set up with a homeless shelter until he got back on his feet. In November, before Donald went into the Homeless shelter he reached out to Clermont Board of DD to register for services. Donald lived in the shelter for over 3 months. Once Donald received the news that he was eligible for services his SSA and Job Placement Specialist met with Donald and the Job Placement Specialist already had a job in mind for Donald that was a great fit. Once Donald started receiving

services from Clermont County Board of DD his life turned around and did a complete 360. Donald was hired on at Round Bottom Recycling and in less than a month after being hired Donald moved into a new apartment.

Fast forward to now 2015, Donald is still employed and working part-time while living in his apartment and receiving services through Clermont Board Of DD. Donald recently purchased a new car and plans to work until his car is paid off in 5 years and then he will retire. Donald is very grateful for the services he receives through Clermont County Board of DD.

Written By: Jeni Fulton

Community Employment

Program Manager

Fishing with LOTS of Friends

Each year, the Southern Ohio Coonhunters Club invites students and adults to their lodge for a fun day of fishing. We call this day "Fishing with a Friend," because we get the chance to meet lots of people who become our friends before the day is over. This collaboration began as a dream of Mark McIlrath, an employee of the Clermont County Juvenile Probation Department, who wanted to see kids from his program get involved in helping kids from other walks of life. Mark passed away several years ago, but we have helped carry on his legacy by hosting a fishing day each year in his honor.

This year, the event took place on October 2. Over 80 children and adults from Clermont DD participated AND almost everyone caught a fish! It was a cold and overcast day, but we didn't have to worry about sunburns and bugs! Instead, we huddled close to the fire ring when we weren't fishing, and enjoyed a great day with our new friends. We even brought home trophies!

Many thanks to Bobby Dobbs from the Southern Ohio Coonhunters Club, Nicole Nicodemus and Doug Young from Clermont County Juvenile Probation, and Clermont DD Empowers Me board

member Jeff Diesel (for volunteering to be our Chef for the day!)



Measuring Up

Ryan Michael, Grand Marshal, presented a check to the students of Wildey school on September 9, 2015. The donation is from the Knights of Columbus, Monsignor Gerdes Council in Amelia and comes from their "Measure Up" campaign. Throughout this campaign, members of the K of C Council collect donations outside of stores in the area, as well as from their respective church congregations in an effort to make a difference in

their community. As you can see from Wildey Students Cierra Mitchell, Catherine May, and Darren Shoemake...they certainly make a difference in OUR lives at Wildey!



Join us at an Upcoming Activity!

Are you interested in meeting new friends? Do you have some spare time in the afternoons or evenings? If so, come join us at an upcoming community activity. We would love to meet you, learn all about your family and friends, and introduce you to the Clermont County Community.

Contact Angie Stanton, Activity Coordinator, at (513) 732-4923 or
stanton@clermontdd.org You can also find us on Facebook under Clermont County Board of DD, and Twitter under @ClermontDD.

Join us for some fun!



"Find us on Cerkl,
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or Linked In for
instant updates
about our agency."



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THE BEACON is published monthly by the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Please direct any questions or send your press releases to:

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The mission of the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to promote safe and supportive environments while understanding our responsibility to respect the choices and needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and to empower them to be engaged in their community.