

The Community Connection

A publication that recognizes the importance and potential of all people



LIMA SENIOR DECA CELEBRATES DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

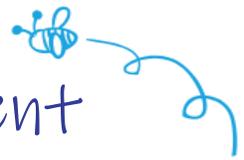
Lima Senior DECA celebrated diversity and inclusion at a home basketball game. There were activities and special concessions throughout the night. Athletes from Allen County Special Olympics and members of our FANs volunteer network received free admission to the game. DECA is a nationwide association of marketing students that encourages the development of business and leadership skills.



A CHRISTMAS CABARET AT UNOH

For the second year in a row, Seth Kunkleman and Karen Dorsey performed in A Christmas Cabaret at the University of Northwestern Ohio. The show features 20 talented, local musicians. Seth and Karen received a standing ovation this year!

A note from the Superintendent



Theresa and Julia; Theresa used to be Julia's SSA.
The two still keep in touch.

Happy New Year! At the start of this new year, I want to review some challenges of 2019 as well as our promise for the coming year.

I have to admit I've had to stop and start this article three times because the end of the year got the best of me, and I had a bit of writer's block. Then during a trip over the holidays, I caught a segment on the news in North Carolina that seemed to apply to Lima/Allen County. The commentator reported that in 2019, the United States saw the first population decrease in the past 100 years. He went on to explain the pros and cons. The first con was the labor shortage. We have been talking for over two years about the workforce shortage in the Direct Support Professional (DSP) world. This past year, the plethora of available jobs in our county and the labor shortage caught up with us at the board of DD too. It was a tough year in several areas of the agency. However, we forged ahead: spent lots of time interviewing, hiring, adjusting duties, and creatively trying to tackle the situation we faced.

Specifically, we have seen unprecedented changes in one of our most critical positions, Service & Support Associates, the SSAs as they are called. There are many reasons for this turnover - promotions, new opportunities, job stressors, etc. There is no hiding this is a tough job, one with *many* expectations; however, it is also highly rewarding. It takes a year to just scratch the surface of knowing all an SSA has to know. They are asked to coordinate, mentor, problem solve, budget, monitor, mitigate, support, and many other things, each and every day. I would say the SSA role really takes a good two years to feel comfortable in, so you can see the challenge we face with 11 new SSAs hired in the past two years.

In no way do I want this to sound bleak. We are very excited to have new staff join us. They bring new energy, creative ideas, and hearts that are falling in love with the people we serve. I have seen their huge smiles and heard their eager questions. We have a solid orientation and training process in place, and we sure hope they feel completely supported in every way as they begin a new career with us.

With that said, I am asking for a bit of grace from our partners and families. Our new SSAs will not have all the answers. They will get it wrong sometimes, and they may tell you more than once, "I have to talk to my supervisor about that." They have a big job to do, but I know they all want to excel. We want them to feel encouraged, not defeated. In some cases, *you* may have the answer they need. Share your wisdom! Be patient as they learn. Do not hesitate to call any one of us, if you need help. We are all here for that purpose!

In addition to SSA changes, referrals and intakes were consistently very high in Early Intervention and Service & Support Administration for most of 2019. We served more children, birth to age 3, all year than at any other time in our history. That is great news, because people are reaching out to get the services their children need. However, at the same time, changes in the field of DD, substitute coverage on caseloads (including babies born to our staff!), and roles changing have added to the pressure of accomplishing all that needs done. All of this, and I have yet to mention that we could not find a certified Intervention Specialist for Marimor School this year. Our staff have pulled together beautifully for the students in our care during the 2019-2020 school year.

So, why am I writing about this to begin a new year? None of this is to make an excuse in any way, just to ask for a heaping amount of patience with us as we settle into 2020. These changes impact us at all levels of the agency. Please let us know where we are faltering (or succeeding!) because we truly want to deliver the best customer care we can. We take the feedback we receive seriously, and our promise is that we will remain ever focused on our mission to *Support individuals with developmental disabilities in Allen County by strengthening partnerships and providing high quality services.* Thank you for the role you play. Here's to a wonderful year!

Theresa Schnipke



MERCY HEALTH RESIDENTS VISIT ACBDD

Doctors in the residency program at Mercy Health St. Rita's come to Allen County Board of DD as part of their training process. Residents spend two days at our agency, learning about the services we provide. These residents specialize in Family Medicine; partnering with our agency helps them better serve patients with developmental disabilities. Dr. Sean Gallagher is pictured here with Kristen Miller, our Intake Coordinator for children.

SHAWNEE'S HYPE MAN

Caidan Rodgers was the Team Manager for the 2019 Shawnee football team, and he's now the designated hype man for the basketball team. Caidan got involved in Shawnee athletics thanks to his friend, Jon Barker. Both boys are seniors at Shawnee High School. Visit acbdd.org/blog/ to read Caidan's story.



PREVENT CHILD LEAD POISONING

Lisa Salyers from the Ohio Department of Health talked to our staff about the dangers of lead exposure in children. Please consider having your children tested for lead exposure if you live in a house built before 1978 or your childcare is in a building built before 1978. This is especially important for children under three. Ask your doctor or contact the Allen County Department of Health for more information on the test.

ALLEN COUNTY PROVIDER EARNS STATEWIDE RECOGNITION

Lindsey Phillips was recognized as the 2019 Front Line Supervisor by the Ohio Provider Resource Association. This award is designated "for those individuals who make it all come together" - and Lindsey is certainly that. As the Habilitation Manager at Marimor Industries, Inc., she supervises employees and supports people with developmental disabilities, so they can work and get involved in the community. Lindsey is kind, creative, easy to work with, and dedicated to all those served by Marimor Industries, Inc.



FISCAL FACTS



In Ohio, county boards of developmental disabilities fund more than 90% of Early Intervention (EI) services. In 2020, the federal government will contribute \$15 million, the state government will contribute \$23 million, and county boards will contribute around \$80 million.

In 2018, Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities had expenditures totaling \$518,314.73 for EI services. In 2019, expenditures totaled \$541,154.27 for EI services, with a steady increase in referrals throughout the year.



**2500 Ada Road
Lima, Ohio 45801**

“Supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in Allen County by strengthening partnerships and providing high quality services.”

CONNECT WITH US:

Allen County Board of DD.....	419-221-1385
Marimor School.....	419-221-1262
Early Intervention.....	419-221-1262
Reporting Abuse, Neglect or Theft.....	419-221-1385
TTY.....	419-221-3393
After Hours/On-Call SSA.....	419-302-8825

www.acbdd.org



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Phyllis Montrose, Secretary	Adam Stolly
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FREE DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4
4:00 - 7:00 P.M.**

**MARKET ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1100 W. MARKET ST. LIMA, OH**

Hosted by our Early Intervention team, this is open to children from birth to five years old. Screenings will include hearing, vision, speech, nutrition, behavior, autism, growth, and motor skills. Registration ends at 6:30 p.m.

