

# Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities

## *The Community Connection*

A publication that recognizes the importance and potential of all people



Some people shop at Sam's Club on the weekends, just to see Dennis and his smile!

### DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

We are proud of the many individuals we serve who are employed in the community. If you ever go to Sam's Club, you might recognize Dennis Cook. Dennis greets customers, stocks shelves, loads and unloads carts, helps cashiers, and assists on the sales floor. Dennis is a valued employee – his manager, Steve, said that he has a great attitude and is a pleasure. Dennis' job matters to him, and he takes great pride in doing it correctly.

We invite all employers in Allen County to hire people with disabilities. Call us at 419-221-1385, and we will help connect you with someone who is ready to work.

---

### A NEW ALL ABILITY PLAYGROUND AT CAMP ROBIN ROGERS

The new All Ability Playground at Camp Robin Rogers is officially open to all! We celebrated with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the end of October. Thank you to our community for making this playground possible. We hope you will visit. We are still raising funds to build the second All Ability Playground at Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Every donation helps!

Learn more and give at <https://allabilityplayground.org/donate/>

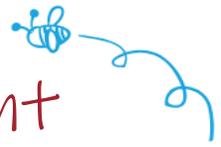


Thank you to students and staff from Apollo Career Center, who installed a new sidewalk and pavers for the playground at Camp Robin Rogers.



Two children play on the All Ability Playground at Camp Robin Rogers.

# A note from the Superintendent



This year has been interesting – and that’s an understatement. Since March, we’ve had to change so many of the ways we provide services to people with developmental disabilities. Through all of this, we are proud to say that we have not been closed even one day. I look forward to the time when we can resume all in-person services and activities. And yet, I am grateful for all we’ve learned about running this organization through remote and digital platforms. One year ago, I had no idea how to facilitate a Zoom call – and the thought of staff working or providing therapy from home would have seemed impossible. Look how far we have come in 9 months. Here’s a summary of where we are today.

Our Early Intervention (EI) services continue to be mostly virtual, and it has been amazing to see our developmental specialists and therapists work with families in this way. They have not missed one beat. EI staff learned quickly that they need to see babies in person for the best developmental evaluations - and they figured out how to provide this service safely on campus. Research shows that starting intervention services early gives a child the best chance to learn and grow. If you’re concerned with your child’s development, there is no need to wait. Call our EI team at (419) 221-1385, ext. 1017 with questions or to schedule an evaluation.

We are improving our processes every day, as our Service & Support Associates continue to provide case management services. Service & Support Associates (SSAs) have been in regular contact with the people they serve throughout the pandemic. In addition to using Zoom and other technology, SSAs have started to safely visit homes and day programs to check in, hold meetings, and problem-solve. Across the agency, we communicate often about protocol to keep everyone healthy. We have learned through the past 9 months just how important SSAs are to the people we serve.

Our offices are at 75% capacity each day, with the other 25% working remotely. Staff rotate to share our limited office space in the safest way. Make no mistake: whether in the office or at home, our staff are busy helping people, responding to crises, and doing about anything else you can imagine.

Marimor School opened on September 3, which is a huge blessing. We are providing in-school and virtual services to best meet the needs of our students with intensive medical needs. We have small cohorts, where students and staff stay together all day. We also continue to host the Allen County ESC preschool, so a lot is happening on campus every day... including lots of cleaning!

Unfortunately, most of our community programs are paused, while we figure out what is next. We have not been able to visit nursing homes, host FANs activities, or plan other events. We know people are anxious to get back to living and doing all they love.

On that note, I am excited to welcome Tammy Delong as our new Community Connections Specialist. She’s replacing Sarah Troyer, who is moving to Pittsburgh later this year. Stay tuned for updates on how FANs and other community programs will return, under Tammy’s guidance. Feel free to call Tammy at 419-221-1385, ext. 1008, if you’d like to introduce yourself.

Thank you to the many residents of this county who support our programs and services. We love what we do, and we love the people even more. Please do not hesitate to call our offices, if you have any questions or want to know more about our services. We are open!



Please join us in welcoming Tammy Delong (R) as the new Community Connections Specialist. We are sad to say goodbye to Sarah Troyer (L), but we wish her well on her new adventure in Pittsburgh.



**THANK YOU FOR A GREAT BBQ**  
 Our Chicken Barbeque on October 1 was a success! Although several changes were made to keep our volunteers and customers safe, we were able to have another sell-out BBQ. More than \$5,500 was raised for the All Ability Playgrounds of Allen County. The weather was wonderful that day. Mr. Chicken cruised around the campus, delighting our drive-thru customers and the ESC preschool students, following COVID-19 guidelines.



Cheryl Zimmerly retired in October after 22 years at ACBDD.

## PROVIDERS: THE PEOPLE ON THE FRONT LINES

We cannot thank our providers and their Direct Support Professionals enough. They are the ones working round the clock - in homes and day programs - to keep people with developmental disabilities safe, happy, and healthy. We have been in constant contact with providers, helping them in any way we can. We've been available in crisis situations, even sending our staff to work in their offices. To date, we have provided approximately \$76,850 to support providers during this pandemic. Recently, we delivered a Clorox 360 cleaning tool to Marimor Industries. If you're a provider and there's a way we can help you, please let us know.



Theresa is pictured here with Rashawna Perry, Director of Marimor Industries, Inc. Marimor Industries is currently operating at 72% capacity, per COVID-19 state guidelines.

## THANKFUL FOR THE PEOPLE WE'VE KNOWN

Allen County Board of DD has experienced a number of losses this year, some due to COVID-19 and some not. While this has been sad, we are grateful for the time we got to spend with so many wonderful people. We've celebrated the retirements of Jeff Newfer, Peggy Folk, Julie Konop, Michelle Stemen, Cheryl Zimmerly, and Shirley Evans. We've also mourned the loss of longtime friends Larry Bowers, Doug Bensman, and, most recently, Commissioner Jay Begg. Our thanks to Jay for the leadership and kindness that he continually showed our organization. We will miss him.



Jay, center, served as Commissioner for seven years. In that time, he was a wonderful advocate for Allen County Board of DD and residents with disabilities.

## FISCAL FACTS



Allen County Board of DD's annual budget goes through three revisions. In July, our Director of Business begins preparing the budget for the following year. The Superintendent, Leadership Team, and Finance Committee review draft one in October. The Finance Committee reviews draft two in November. Draft three is presented to the Finance Committee and the Board in December for approval.



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](http://www.acbdd.org)



**Members of the Allen County Board:**

- |                             |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Thomas Fleming, President   | Christina Hood |
| Bob McPheron, Vice Pres.    | Linda Lehman   |
| Phyllis Montrose, Secretary | Adam Stolly    |
| Martin Garlock              |                |



Shirley Evans (L) is retiring this year. In August, she won our 2020 Weinheimer Advocacy Award for her dedication and exemplary work as our Investigative Agent.



Julie Konop (L) retired after working as an SSA for 31 years.