

Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities

The Community Connection

A publication that recognizes the importance and potential of all people



Spring 2021

2021 PARTNERSHIP AWARD WINNERS

We held our annual Partnership Luncheon on March 30. After cancelling last year's luncheon, we were so glad to recognize and thank our many partners in the community. They all contribute to the health and happiness of people with developmental disabilities. We handed out nine awards this year, and you can meet all the winners below.



Marty Garlock (L) won the 2021 President's Award. He has served on our board for almost 12 years and will leave a lasting impact.



Kathy Luhn (L) and Deb Roberts (R) are our 2021 Partners in the Community for their work on behalf of Allen County Public Health.



Tom Berger is a 2021 Partner in the Community for his work as Director of the Allen County Emergency Management Agency.



Shawn Guthrie (M) is our 2021 Partner in Education for her remarkable teaching in special education.



Nick Goergens (R) and his wife Katie (not pictured) are our 2021 Partners in Advocacy; they started Operation Save the Lost to help keep children who may wander safe.



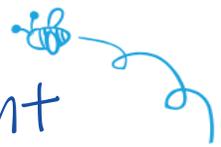
Chief Supermarkets is our 2021 Partner in Employment for employing and valuing people with developmental disabilities.

Kellie Nester (R) is our 2021 Partner in Service Provision. As a Coordinator at Goodwill Easter Seals, she is kind, dependable and caring.



Carl Houts (L) won the 2021 John Wilt "I Love My Community" Award. Carl is a friend to all, and he's involved in his community in many different ways.

A note from the Superintendent



Dick Haas and his wife Gerry (R) at the new All Ability Playground at Camp Robin Rogers, October 2020.

As we turned the calendar to 2021, there was no running or hiding from all that did not happen last year. We cancelled more than 130 events in 2020. We cannot gloss over the hundreds of people that did not receive services as they anticipated or wanted. It was a tough year. However, we are off to a great start in 2021. In January, we approved our new, three-year Strategic Plan and 2021 Annual Action Plan. You can find these documents on our website at <https://acbdd.org/administration/strategic-plan/>. They are full of great promise for the future. We are looking at new and exciting collaborations with local partners and building the second All Ability Playground in the new Marimor Legacy Park, east of Marimor School and connected to Ottawa Metro Park. Wait until you see it!

Earlier this year, we hosted six vaccine clinics at Marimor School, in collaboration with Allen County Public Health. Approximately 200 people we serve are now vaccinated for COVID-19. 60% of our staff are also vaccinated. In March, we celebrated Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in the best and safest ways we could - it was wonderful to see so many people at our Reverse Parade and Partnership Luncheon.

We know that more and more people are returning to day programming, and we are making plans for our Early Intervention team to get back to home visits very soon. We hear that many industries are talking about staying fully remote, even after the pandemic subsides. Not us! Our services are meant to be in person. Up close and personal. By March 22, 90% of our employees were on campus full time, with some teleworking. Our employees thrive when they can laugh in the hall or lean on a co-worker for help with a tough problem.

At the end of 2020, we said goodbye to Richard Haas, the last living member of the original Board that formed the Allen County Board of DD in 1967. He became a good friend during our 50th anniversary celebration, and I was pleased to see him in October at the Camp Robin Rogers playground dedication. He cared deeply for children with special education needs and he is missed.

As we ease back to normalcy, my take-away from 2020 is this: we can operate in a complete world shutdown - thanks to technology and perseverance. We can meet needs and encourage each other, taking every necessary safety precaution. County boards and providers can be strong allies. And lastly, our services are ESSENTIAL and we proved it.

Thank you for reading our newsletter and for your contribution to what makes us, us. It is a privilege to serve our community.

Theresa Schnipke
Superintendent



A few photos from our Reverse Parade!



A MESSAGE FROM SELF-ADVOCATES

*By Mandy Lehman, Helen Zimmerman, Serena Coulter, Tamara Webster and Machal Hoops
Members of Allen County Board of DD's Project STIR*

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan designated March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Since that time, people with developmental disabilities have worked to bring awareness and acceptance to the public, while celebrating diversity. Most people know someone with a disability, but do they understand that the needs, wants and personal experiences are very similar to their own?

The Allen County Board of DD promotes self-advocacy and hosts a group of self-advocates that wanted to share their thoughts for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month:

“Talk to me as the adult that I am. I may have challenges, but with some help, I have been able to overcome them to be a productive person. I have a job, I pay taxes. I enjoy drawing cartoon animals and volunteering, and I like to be involved in my community. I advocate for myself and for others. Give people with disabilities a chance to work and be included in all areas of life.”

“My disability is just one piece of who I am. I like to work, hang out with friends, paint nails. I’m talented and play the piano, and I like being a part of my community.”

“I want people to be more aware of disabilities and know we have more similarities than differences. Educate yourself – get to know me.”

“I was diagnosed with Autism at an early age, and growing up it was difficult to make friends. I wished I wasn’t different. But as I got older I realized I wasn’t different, I’m the same as everyone else; I have feelings.”

“I am a good person. I have help with some things, like money, but I take care of myself. I have a job, I clean, cook and take care of my home. I set goals for my life. I like to socialize and go places with friends. I want to be treated with respect like other adults. And please don’t talk down to me like I’m a kid.”

People with disabilities want full acceptance, respect, opportunities, friends, equal rights and the chance to have a good life in their community. So, ask yourself if you are doing all you can to make your community welcoming for people of every ability. Please contact ACBDD if you are looking to hire great employees, want to volunteer or get involved, or need information on how your organization can be more inclusive.

A small group of self-advocates gathered for virtual DD Awareness and Advocacy Day in March. They met remotely with Senator Matt Huffman and Representative Bob Cupp’s aide.



Associates from Proctor & Gamble participated in our Reverse Parade and handed out household items to every vehicle!

FISCAL FACTS



In fiscal year 2021, we have served 414 people on home and community-based waivers. We’ve authorized \$16,075,283.01 in total costs. The average per person is \$68,216.23 for the Individual Options waiver, \$15,182.28 for the Level One waiver, and \$19,989.15 for the Self-Empowered Life Funding waiver. The county board is responsible for 30.32% of the total cost, which comes to \$4,874,025.81. Our share is typically closer to 40%, but the federal government is paying a higher percentage this year as part of its COVID-19 response.



**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



Members of the Allen County Board:

Thomas Fleming, President Christina Hood
Bob McPheron, Vice Pres. Linda Lehman
Phyllis Montrose, Secretary Ty Butterfield
Martin Garlock



Adam Stolly (M) transitioned off of our board at the end of 2020. We'll miss you, Adam!



We welcomed Ty Butterfield to our board in January. We look forward to working with him!
