

THE BEACON



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March/April 2019

As promised in the January-February Beacon, I wanted to share some more detailed information about what we are learning about some of the State budget proposals and how they impact individuals served and the County Board system as a whole. As I have been referencing for the past few months, our system continues to face a workforce shortage across the State. We have not been immune to the impacts of this concern here in Clermont County. In an effort to address this, both State and the County Board system have agreed to partner to fund a Direct Support Wage increase by raising rates for homemaker/personal care services. This rate increase will be to support providers to pay direct staff more on the hour to recruit and retain them to work with individuals that need services. Other areas of attention in the budget bill are as follows: A revised non-medical transportation (NMT) reimbursement rate to support transportation system redesign that is funded with state dollars; A summary provider suspension process for county boards to use when the health and safety of people served is put in jeopardy by a specific provider; and a requirement for county boards of DD to maintain five-year cash forecasts to promote responsible financial planning and ensure long-term fiscal sustainability.

At the end of this year, we will be saying goodbye to Kimberleigh Szaz, our Early Childhood Director, and Jay Williams, our Wildey School Principal. They will both be retiring after long and very successful tenures with the agency. Earlier in the year we posted and advertised for these positions, in an effort to provide for some transition time between the time Kimberleigh and Jay retire and when the new candidates start. I am excited to announce that Beth Martin, who has worked in the Regional Infant Hearing Program for many years for the agency, will be the new Early Childhood Director, and Jody Bailey, who has most recently worked in the Milford School District, will be taking over for Jay as the Wildey School Principal. I am very excited for both of them and am looking forward to them carrying on the great work that Kimberleigh and Jay have done over the years.

Finally, it was really great to see the many ways the agency celebrated March as DD awareness Month this year. There were a number of volunteer and awareness events throughout the month that really just solidified for me how fortunate we are to be a part of a community that supports people with developmental and intellectual disabilities in so many ways. To find out about all the different things that are happening throughout our agency and the community, be sure to like our Facebook and Twitter social media sites.

Have a great rest of the Spring!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Ottke".

Dan Ottke

Superintendent

Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities



Thanks for the Memories

As you already know, March was DD Awareness Month and WHEW...what a month it was! Each week was filled with lots of great ways for us to get involved, spread the word about developmental disabilities, AND give back to our communities. Here is a recap:



On February 20, Nick Weiss of the Miami Township Kroger (Branch Hill location), accepted the Clermont County Commissioners Proclamation, along with his parents.



Self advocates and their advisers traveled to Columbus on March 5 to attend the annual Ohio Statehouse Advocacy and Awareness Day. We heard Jeff Davis, the new director of the Ohio Department of DD, address the audience, as well as Governor Mike DeWine. We also got to meet with Senator Joe Uecker before he rushed off to attend the Governor's State of the State address.



On March 8, students from the Wildey School Age Program presented Thank-You Bags to members of the Clermont County Special Response Team and the Clermont County Sheriff's Office Investigations Department.

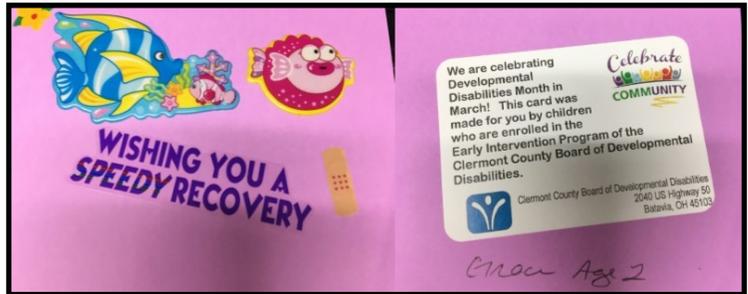
The Donald A. Collins Center Adult Services Program decided to prepare Take-Away Snack Bags for all family members staying at the Ronald McDonald House. These consisted of snacks as well as napkins, a small notebook, and a Clermont DD pen.





During the second week of March, the Wildey Adult Services Department prepared craft bags for children staying at the Ronald McDonald House. Whether they are a patient waiting for treatment, or a sibling, they will receive a lot of fun items to choose from each day they are there!

On March 20, we participated in an on-air interview with Local 12 as part of an awareness campaign with the Southwestern Ohio Council of Governments (SWOCOG - Hamilton, Butler, Warren, Clermont, Montgomery, and Greene County Boards of DD). Lisa Davis from Clermont DD is pictured on the left, with Beth and Sue who are roommates that live in Hamilton County, along with Sheila Gray of Local 12's morning show. You can see our Public Service Announcements running on Local 12 in prime spots from now until May (and then sporadically throughout the rest of the year).



All month long, toddlers from our Early Intervention program created Get Well Cards for kiddos admitted at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. They enjoyed this so much, this will be a on-going project throughout the year.

Finally, self advocates from Clermont County Turn Up the Voices hosted a get together at Eastgate Mall on March 26. This is the first quarterly meeting for advocates in Clermont, Clinton, Butler, and Warren Counties. We were pleased to be the first hosts.



We also taped a podcast and were contacted by WCPO Channel 9 to tape a story about the need for direct support professionals in the DD field. It was a BUSY month, but we wouldn't have it any other way. Many thanks to everyone who made each venture of our awareness month possible!





VISIT US ONLINE
WWW.CLERMONTDD.ORG

Share Your Recipes With Us!



We are working on the 2019 issue of the "Clermont DD is Cookin'" cookbook and would LOVE to put your favorites inside.

Email Suzanne Diesel at sdiesel@clermontdd.org You can submit as many recipes as you'd like! Just have them in by June 1!

As in previous years, the 2019 cookbook will be distributed at the Clermont County Fair in July and at all events that follow. For the next year, everyone will get to enjoy your favorites for breakfast, lunch, and dinner!

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.