

A RAMP BUILT WITH LOVE FOR MISS JOSIE

Josie and her parents had never heard of Dudley, Merrill, Roger or Don. But each day they see the fruits of their labors, for which they are very grateful.

In October, members of the St. John's Lutheran Church in Marysville showed up en masse at Josie's Richwood home to build a very large ramp for the 7-year-old, who has considerable developmental disabilities.

One of the church's outreach groups, Loving in Actions and in Truth, assembled a team of 17 volunteers and had the ramp built in one day.

Josie's parents, Jessica and Nicholas Hoodlet, are grateful for the help and concern of people they had never met.

And the rest of Union County should be grateful for such unselfish men who know how to swing a hammer and handle a drill. Don Werling, who heads the outreach group that formed in 2006,

CONTINUED: See *Built With Love*, Page 4



RYAN CELEBRATES ONE YEAR ON THE JOB

Ryan Obenour has recently celebrated his one-year anniversary as the receptionist at UCO Industries.

Ryan, who is employed through Columbus Center for Human Services (CCHS), enjoys coming to work each day and, as he puts it, being the "face of the company." He takes a lot of pride in being the first one that people see when they arrive to UCO.

Ryan has been served through WorkNet since high school in various ways. In 2015, he was seeking full-time employment after holding two part-time jobs for a number of years. Community Employment Manager Nick Bowsher had just the right fit for him.

"Ryan is so friendly and helpful," Nick said. "I knew he would be a good candidate for the



open receptionist position at UCO."

Amanda Eley, CEO of UCO, said, "Ryan has many roles at UCO Industries. His most important job is to greet all customers, many employees, and a host of other people who come through our door. He is always professional with our guests and

employees. He is also very dependable. He is the face of UCO Industries to many people and we are thankful to have him work here."

When asked what Ryan likes about his job, he responded, "I really enjoy the people I work with. I also enjoy getting to do different tasks each day and helping with special projects at UCO."

Make sure to say hello and congratulations to Ryan next time you visit UCO. You can't miss his smiling face when you walk in the door!

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

PROGRAM OPENS HOMES TO PEOPLE WITH DD

The UCBDD is one of 88 county boards of developmental disabilities in Ohio serving more than 93,000 Ohioans with developmental disabilities who receive services and support to live as independently as possible in their communities.

Historically, many of these individuals lived in institutions or with their parents throughout their lifetime, whereas most typically developing children reach adulthood and move out of their family home to continue to grow and mature as adults in the community.

Ohio Shared Living is a flexible service model that provides services and support to individuals with developmental disabilities through people who open their homes to provide support to those individuals. It offers the opportunity to enhance the family/community living experience for both the individual served and the host family.

The county board works carefully to match up people interested in offering their home as a shared living option with individuals with disabilities who are looking for a family experience when living in the community. The needs, skills and personalities of individuals and mentors are taken into consideration to create a successful match that leads to a meaningful, long-term relationship.

Mentors provide individuals with opportunities to participate in normal, everyday family life such as discovering new hobbies, doing household

chores, learning new skills, socializing with family and friends, improving independence, and participating in community events.

Providing services to a person with a developmental disability through an Ohio Shared Living arrangement offers the mentor or host family with a way of earning income in a non-traditional way. Providers are paid through a Medicaid Waiver. To be eligible for Ohio Shared Living services, the individual moving into the home must have a developmental disability, be enrolled in a Medicaid Individual Options Waiver, and be interested in living in a small family environment.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a provider of services through Ohio Shared Living program, you can contact the Support Services Division of the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities at 937-645-6707. For a great perspective from people already in a Shared Living scenario, visit: <http://ohiosharedliving.com/Pages/default.aspx>

If you are an individual with developmental disabilities and are interested in learning more about Ohio Shared Living, request information from your county board service consultant. They can help gather information and weigh the options in order to make an informed decision.

Ohio Shared Living is not for everyone, but for some, it is a rewarding experience, both for the individual receiving the service and the host family that provides it.

SPECIAL OLYMPIANS COMPLETE FALL SCHEDULE

This past fall was a busy season for Union County Special Olympics. We began the season with one of our athletes' favorite sports - bowling - with more than 40 athletes participating. Twenty bowlers competed in the state bowling tournament. Five Cougars joined Union County's inaugural swim team, and all five qualified



(Left to right) – Riley Karcher, Kyle Slane, Shamon Daniels, Clinton Taylor, Jason Sinden

for the state meet at Ohio State University. This winter our basketball team returns to the hardwood. The Cougars have their eye on a state championship.



Top Row (Left to right) – Dylan Cook, Anthony Cipriano, LaShonda Wright, Tyler Dillahunt, Shawn Smith, Jorge Nicol, Clyde Hamilton, Rodney Newman, Steve Burns, John Herron
Middle Row – Chris Waters, Nick Ott, Carol Sharp
Bottom – Elaine Pope, Kelvin Jones, Chelsea Babione

ON THE MOVE



ALISHA OWENS

Alisha comes to UCBDD with more than 15-years experience supporting individuals with developmental disabilities, including direct service, supported employment and support administration. She graduated from Ohio State University with a master's degree in social work. Alisha resides in Raymond with her husband and three children. She returns to the field after four years as a stay-at-home mom and is excited to get back into doing what she loves. Alisha is very active in her church, and enjoys running, sewing and spending time with her family.



AMANDA SETLIFF

A Cleveland native, Amanda earned a bachelor's degree in human development and family science at OSU. She previously worked at Delaware County Job and Family Services as an employment counselor. She enjoys spending time with her boyfriend, Spencer, and their daughter, Cadence. They live in Delaware.



CAYLA WARNOCK

Cayla previously worked for the Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency and at FirstMerit Bank. She attended Shawnee State University where

she played softball and obtained a bachelor's degree in sociology. Cayla has completed her master's in public administration. She also works part-time for the City of Dublin as a recreation supervisor and is the JV softball coach at Grandview High School. She plays in a men's fast pitch softball league, volunteers at the Southern Ohio Medical Center Hospice, and spends time with her family and friends.



KLARKE RANSOME

Klarke is the adapted physical education teacher at Harold Lewis Center. He has a bachelor's degree in health/physical education from Wilmington College. Before joining Harold Lewis, Klarke taught physical education at a Columbus charter school. In his spare time, Klarke enjoys playing basketball, going to sporting events, golfing, and spending time with his girlfriend.



LOGAN PLUMB

Logan is the new investigative agent for UCBDD. He has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Bowling Green State University. He also is a graduate of Marysville High School. In his free time, Logan enjoys working out and spending time with friends. He loves sports and is an Ohio State fan.

SUPERINTENDENT *continued from pg. 8*

The Union and Hardin County boards will maintain their own personnel and programs and continue to operate as separate entities. No one wants to lose local control. That will not happen. I will be just as engaged in the Hardin County communities as I am in Union County. Both boards will continue to be involved in serving individuals with developmental disabilities in their respective communities.

I have every confidence that it will be successful. More importantly, it needs to be successful as we look for ways to reduce costs while delivering quality services.

During the trial period, Hardin and Union Counties will split the cost of my salary. That results in an immediate savings for both counties. Moving forward, we will see if there are other areas where we can share services. When that is feasible, we will do so in order to best care for the tax dollars we receive.

This is not an unusual arrangement. Currently, Shelby and Champaign counties, and Knox and Coshocton counties share a superintendent, and have done so successfully. Shelby and Champaign counties currently share the costs of ten positions resulting in over \$200,000 in savings annually.

We can expect to see more of this type of consolidation around the state.

Think of how every small community once had their own high schools. Over time, they began consolidating, which resulted in financial savings. These financial savings resulted in schools being able to offer a wider variety of classes, resulting in a better education for our children.

That is the goal of sharing services. We want to be fiscally responsible, while offering the widest and most comprehensive services to the individuals we serve.

SUPPORT SERVICES

BUILT WITH LOVE *continued from pg. 1*

operates on volunteer time, donations and a great partnership with the Marysville Home Depot. In the past 10 years, the group has built 389 ramps. It also has remodeled many bathrooms, kitchens and staircases to make them accessible for individuals with disabilities. For all of this, the group has never charged anyone a dime.

"Sometimes, we need to take a step back, take a breath, and realize how fortunate we are to live in Union County where there are people who still care deeply about their fellow citizens," said Kara Brown, superintendent of the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities. "As we approach the holidays, we should pause to consider all our many blessings."

Jessica said, "They were absolutely amazing. It was such a blessing. I couldn't believe it. One minute we are trying to figure out how to get Josie a ramp, and the next there were all these wonderful men out here getting it done for us. We are so very thankful and appreciative."

Josie is a cute, Richwood first-grader who suffered a stroke at birth, has suffered three heart attacks, and the list of medical issues her mother has tracked over the years fills five typed pages.

With two major back surgeries on the near horizon, Josie will soon need a motorized wheelchair to help her move around. She is already a high risk for falling and her low bone density makes fractures an inevitability.

While their insurance company agreed to pay for the motorized wheelchair, they also required that a ramp be built at Josie's home.

That was an expense Josie's parents could ill afford.

That is when two separate but intermingled events came together to help Josie and her parents.

During a meeting with Dani Nicol, a service consultant with the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities, to discuss Josie's Individual Service Plan, Jessica expressed concerns about how they could afford the ramp.

With a couple of phone calls, the ramp was built in about a week.

Dani was able to secure Resource Allocation for Families Today funds from the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities to purchase



the materials. These funds are designated for such expenses for individuals with developmental disabilities.

However, there remained an unanswered question: Who would build the ramp?

This past May, Dani participated in the local Community Care Day sponsored by United Way, where she stained a ramp that the men from St. John's had built, and it reminded her that this group may be an option to help this young girl.

There was never any doubt about the decision.

"Our goal is to reach the unchurched and help meet their earthly requirements, like ramps, while sharing the message of our savior, Jesus Christ," Werling said.

With every impending project, Werling sends out an email to the 60 members of the Loving in Actions and in Truth team. The ones who are available show up when it's time to work.

St. John's church family has watched the men give back to the community unselfishly for years.

"I am just proud to know such caring and dedicated people," Dani said. "The work they do is a direct touch to the people in our community who so often have nowhere else to turn."

MR. KLARKE'S PE CLASS IS A BIG HIT!

"Play or exercise? A child's body doesn't know the difference. But their mind tells them when they are having fun!"

— David Kittner, Founder of Youth Fitness Guy

Scooter boards! Giant bouncy balls! Obstacle courses! Parachutes!

These are just a few of the fun toys and activities that can be found in Klarke Ransome's gymnasium at the Harold Lewis Center.

Ransome joined the HLC staff in early September and his philosophy on the benefits of preschool physical fitness echoes David Kittner's sentiment.

"I am very passionate and enthusiastic about physical fitness at the preschool level," Klarke said. "My focus is to help my students improve their balance, coordination and strength through fine and gross motor activities. PE class also gives the students the opportunity to develop social interaction and play skills with their classmates in a safe and fun environment."

"Why do you like Mr. Klarke's gym class?"

Aiden, Penguin Room: Because Mr. Klarke makes it fun.

Leighton, Penguin Room: We do lots of stretching and exercise.

Isabelle, Penguin Room: I like playing the frozen pumpkin game.

Mia, Penguin Room: I like playing the fun games and playing with Mr. Klarke.

Allie, Owl Room: I like playing on the scooters.

Ellie, Owl Room: Run, run, run, run, run, run.

Cayden, Owl Room: Because Mr. Klarke is awesome and we kick balls.

Tatum, Giraffe Room: I like running and playing the helicopter game.

Aubrey, Giraffe Room: I like skipping and playing Duck, Duck, Goose.

Johnalyn, Giraffe Room: I like that we take turns.

Brooklyn, Duck Room: Mr. Klarke has cool stuff.

Lilly, Duck Room: I like playing in the gym and kicking the balls.

Caroline, Duck Room: I like Mr. Klarke.

Averee, Duck Room: It's fun to go outside and I really like Mr. Klarke.

Roman, Butterfly Room: I like to run like crazy.



Harold Lewis Center Dates to Remember:

January 2 HLC Closed

January 16 HLC Closed-MLK Day

February 17-21 Winter Break

February 25 Winter Carnival

March 13-24 Spring Break



BLESS LLC HELPS INDIVIDUALS REACH GOALS, DREAMS

Editor's Note: Each month, Kaleidoscope offers a Union County day provider the opportunity to share with readers about events and their organization. This article was provided by Leslie Basinger of Basinger Life Enhancement Support Services (BLESS LLC).

Basinger Life Enhancement Support Services (BLESS LLC) provides a wide range of services to adults of all ages, and with various needs.

They specialize in working with individuals with high intensity behaviors, mental health and developmental disabilities (DD) diagnosis.

BLESS LLC was established in 2014 by Robert "Bobby" M. Basinger. The company was created to touch the lives of others by helping them achieve their goals and dreams. Currently, they provide services in seven counties serving more than 130 individuals and with more than 100 employees.

Prior to starting BLESS LLC, Bobby worked for several privately run agencies in his 15 years of experience. Serving the DD population has been his family's life work with collectively more than 75 years of experience. His family taught him that all are equal and should be treated as such. BLESS LLC wants everyone to do for themselves what they are capable of doing and teach in other areas so they can grow in their independence and achieve their goals.

In Individual Support Plan meetings, individuals are always asked what they would like to do, and where they would like to go. At times, some of the places they would like to go may seem a bit farfetched, but as an agency we strive to make it happen.

Some of their outings they have participated in include professional sporting events, World Wrestling Entertainment, monster truck shows, a Taylor Swift concert, helicopter rides, and numerous vacations to places like Florida, Tennessee, New York, North Carolina, and Japan.



Christopher Serafini enjoys a Marysville High School baseball game.



Kayla Brannan enjoying time in the pool.



Racheal Vance showing off her beautiful masquerade mask.



B.L.E.S.S. LLC

Special Olympics Dates to Remember:

February 11 Basketball Skills Competition
February 18 Polar Bear Plunge for
Special Olympics

February 25-26 Area Basketball Tournament
March 11-12 State Basketball Tournament

MORE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS COMING TO UCBDD

In an effort to abide by law changes from the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS), there will be a transition occurring at UCBDD through WorkNet.

Beginning Dec. 31, 2017, WorkNet will no longer be part of UCBDD as a provider of supported employment services.

This is to comply with the Conflict-Free Case Management portion of the law. Under the new law, county boards of developmental disabilities cannot provide the services that they are authorizing payment for through individualized service plans. Instead, eligible individuals will get the opportunity to choose from a number of providers for their job development, job coaching and job retention services.

UCBDD staff has been working hard to recruit and train new providers in Union County. UCBDD had until 2019 to comply with these law changes, but felt it was best to move forward.

UCBDD Superintendent Kara Brown said, "By beginning this process now, we are able to control our path and give the individuals we serve and their families a year to transition to a new provider. We felt this was the right thing to do."

WorkNet has had a long, successful history as part of UCBDD in helping people obtain and keep employment. UCBDD committed to continuing to support people seeking community employment. This philosophy also aligns with the Employment First Initiative laid out by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and Governor John Kasich.

"WorkNet has been one of the best, if not the best, providers of community employment in Ohio," Brown said "Recently, Union County had 56 percent of eligible adults employed or pursuing community employment. The only other county even close had 53 percent. The success rests solely with WorkNet staff and the great things they have done over the past 25 years. "WorkNet's creativity and commitment to community employment has helped people with varying needs find meaningful work in a variety of businesses. Relationships with people and employers have been the key to creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities where none previously existed. We will strive to maintain that culture in Union County."

Because of the past success of WorkNet and the continued effort of UCBDD to work towards more integration and acceptance of people with disabilities,

the WorkNet staff will still be employed through UCBDD. The staff will continue to support people who are employed, or seeking community employment, as a specialized department of UCBDD, even after the transition of services.

"WorkNet employees have a full understanding of community employment," said Brown. "By keeping these employees at UCBDD we continue to offer individuals and families access to this expertise. It also allows them to maintain a singular focus on community employment. This will add valuable insight to people and to service consultants."

"By beginning this process now, we are able to control our path and give the individuals we serve and their families a year to transition to a new provider. We felt this was the right thing to do."

Meetings were held with individuals and families served through WorkNet on Nov. 1 to present the reasons for the changes and allow for questions to be answered. Additionally, UCBDD hosted a provider fair on Nov. 15 to allow those served through WorkNet to meet some of the agencies and their staff that will be providing support employment services.

Eight employment providers participated in the first of two employment provider fairs.

The fairs serve to connect individuals receiving WorkNet services to providers that provide employment services in Union County. During the next year, these individuals will choose from the eight employment providers based on their needs and preferences. Many individuals were excited after seeing the variety of different options.

Stephanie Stires, vocational coordinator for Creative Foundations, said, "I wanted to let you know how much we enjoyed the Provider Fair yesterday. It was something special to meet some of the individuals you serve."

For more information, contact Nick Bowsher, community employment manager at nbowsher@ucbdd.org.



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An old man was walking an ocean shoreline littered with hundreds of starfish. He observed a young boy attempting to save them all by throwing them back into the water.

"You can't save them all," said the old man. "And besides, what difference will it really make?"

The young boy picked up another, threw it in the water and said, "I'm not sure, but I think it will make a difference to that one!"

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MISSION

"To facilitate support and services that respect the person and their choices."

VISION

"To foster a culture of community acceptance and inclusion that allows everyone an equal opportunity to pursue a fulfilling and meaningful life."

CORE VALUES

EXCELLENCE is exceeding the high standards we set for ourselves.

CUSTOMER DRIVEN is identifying and meeting the needs of our customers.

COLLABORATION is partnering with internal and external stakeholders.

INTEGRITY is doing the right thing...period.

STEWARDSHIP is the efficient and effective use of people, time, facilities, money and other resources.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

An open line of communication is the key to providing excellent services to the citizens of Union County with developmental disabilities. Persons with any questions or concerns about programs/services being provided by the Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities are urged to contact the program. Please feel free to contact Kara Brown, Superintendent.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS?

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities:
1.877.464.6733 • 1.800.228.5405 (TDD)

Ohio Legal Rights Service: 1.800.282.9181

CREATIVELY ADDRESSING THE FUTURE



Kara Brown

Around Ohio, County Boards of Developmental Disabilities serve two masters, so to speak.

First, we serve the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. Our days are spent helping them access services to improve the quality of their lives, whether it is through community employment, housing, therapy, recreation, education, or any of the avenues we have at our disposal that allow them to become more independent in their lives.

Secondly, we are responsible to you, the taxpayer. We are the stewards of both tax dollars and the public trust. We must be transparent and open with the money we spend, making sure that we deliver our services in the most fiscally conscientious way.

So, how do we meet the needs of these two constituencies during these difficult economic times?

One way is the consolidation of services.

I was recently named the superintendent of the Hardin County Board of Developmental Disabilities. I will perform those duties along with my responsibilities as superintendent in Union County. This sharing arrangement begins Dec. 1 with a one-year trial.

CONTINUED: See Superintendent's Message, Page 3

