



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

January 2014

A Message From The Superintendent



As we look forward to a promising new year, it's important to reflect upon those past successes and developments that will impact our future course. In 2013, there was no more significant success at Murray Ridge, because of its impact on all else that we do, than the passage of our five-year 1.69 mills replacement levy. This achievement

will enable Murray Ridge to continue the important programs that provide lifelong support for Lorain County residents with developmental disabilities. I wish to thank the many staff, program participants and their families, board members, and friends of Murray Ridge for their efforts to get the word out about the scope and importance of our work, and our dedication to excellent stewardship of public funds. Most importantly, I wish to thank the community for its strong vote of confidence, and shared commitment to the well being of people with developmental disabilities.

Enthusiastic testimonials about our Early Intervention services by parents of infants and toddlers (ages 0 – 3) who participated in this program evidenced its high level of effectiveness, and the initiative taken within the Early Intervention department to embrace cutting edge techniques for promoting early childhood development and detecting/diagnosing delays guarantees that Murray Ridge will continue to be all that it can be for young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays.

Steady enrollment within our preschool and school aged programs evidenced the continued importance of Murray Ridge School as an option for Lorain County students with developmental disabilities, and particularly for those children with the most significant cognitive, physical and medical challenges. The continued and extraordinary commitment and creativity of our school staff ensures that these children will not only receive exceptional educational services, but will also

be able to participate in the same types of special activities as their typically developing peers, activities such as boy scouts, school plays, athletics, senior prom, and much more.

While the success of our ballot issue was most critical for the continuation of our services for children, the passage of the levy also significantly impacted our adult, residential and family support programs. This fall, our board was able to authorize our Service & Support Administration Department to begin the process of enrolling fifteen additional people on the Individual Options (IO) Waiver, thereby enabling them to access residential and community-based services that are funded with a combination of local and federal dollars. Given the very significant funding cutbacks in recent years, this represented the first movement of our IO Waiver waiting list in several years, and enabled individuals with intensive needs and/or aged family caregivers to access residential placement and/or more extensive support services. We will continue to closely monitor developments involving costs and revenues as we manage our waiting lists for residential services/Medicaid waivers in the months and years ahead.

The recent addition of a part-time Quality Assurance Manager (a position that replaced our part-time Community Education Specialist) will enable us to continue to examine and enhance our existing adult and residential programs and facilities, while closely monitoring the changing needs and preferences of those we serve. Additionally, our QA Manager and others at Murray Ridge will seek to partner with community organizations, such as the Lorain County Metro Parks, and with families and caregivers to expand opportunities for eligible children and adults to engage in social and recreational activities within their community.

Expansion, during 2013, of activity and responsibility in the areas of quality assurance and Medicaid waiver administration will, likewise, keep Murray Ridge Center's Service and Support Administration (SSA) department very busy in 2014 and the years ahead. Last year, responsibility for the Transitions Developmental

Disability Waiver (TDDW) was transferred from the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DoDD); as a result, SSAs are now administering nearly 100 new waivers, and are working with some families who are new to Murray Ridge. SSAs also became responsible, last year, for a provider compliance review process that was previously conducted by DoDD. It is expected that the critical role of the SSA department in providing service planning and coordination, waiting list management, eligibility determination, and information and referral will continue to grow.

Due to the statewide Employment First Initiative, growth in Murray Ridge Center's Supported Employment Program will be a focus in 2014. Representatives from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) will work together with agency staff to find community-based jobs for additional individuals, and Murray Ridge Center will explore ways to strategically expand relationships with local employers. Additionally, the exceptional staff within our Opportunity and Vocational Centers will continue, creatively, to provide a wide variety of opportunities for program partici-

pants to engage in interesting activities that build important life skills, and to facilitate community-based activities. The part-time Activity Aides that were added to the Murray Ridge Adult Services staff over the course of 2013 will be important contributors to these efforts.

As we embrace the hopes and challenges of the new year, I am reminded that it truly takes a village to accomplish the mission of Murray Ridge Center. We, at Murray Ridge, are blessed, first and foremost, by the wonderful individuals we serve who continuously strive to make accomplishments, while challenging and inspiring us to do our best on their behalves. We are blessed also by our incredible, skilled and dedicated staff; the family members of those we serve, whose support and partnership is essential; our other partners within the local business and social services community; and the many friends of Murray Ridge who support our agency and those we serve in countless ways. I look forward to working with all of you in what promises to be an exciting and productive year ahead.

R.I.C.H.E.S. Recognizes Diamond Award Winner

Recently the 2013 R.I.C.H.E.S. committee had the honor of awarding its highest level award, the Diamond Award, to staff person Susan Craycraft.

Susan is a Vocational Placement Specialist who works out of the EOVC Community Employment office. Throughout her years of working with our consumers, Susan noticed that they sometimes are unable to furnish their homes or apartments. Whether it's due to a recent move, a change in living status, or an emergency, even the most basic items like a chair, table, or bed might not be available.

Susan also recognized that staff, friends, and neighbors couldn't always find a good way to get rid of excess furniture they had, or items they no longer wanted.

Combining these two concepts gave rise to Susan's idea: Extra Blessings. Extra Blessings accepts donations of household items like chairs, tables, lamps, TVs - all of the things that make a living area a home - and stores them until they are needed by adults who receive MRC services.

Not only has Susan secured a storage location for the

items, she has set up a tracking system so that she knows what items are available and who may have the greatest need of those items. To date, her Extra Blessings items have helped several of our consumers in setting up a home.



Susan Craycraft poses with her Diamond Award.

Thank you Susan for all of the time, effort, and care you put into making your idea a success. You have certainly furthered our mission of helping people...for a lifetime!

Exchange Student Learns Crucial Skills at OOV

Harri Santoso is a long way from home.

A lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, Harri is studying in the United States through Oberlin College's Shansi program, and volunteering at the Murray Ridge Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center.

Oberlin Shansi is an independent, nonprofit organization that promotes understanding and communication between Asians and Americans through individual and group educational and social programs, educational and cultural exchanges, and community projects. Shansi partners with Oberlin College and universities and non-governmental organizations in China, India, Indonesia, and Japan to achieve this goal. Founded in 1908, it is among the oldest educational exchange programs in the United States, and allows students like Harri to travel overseas and receive education in areas that may not be available in the students' home country.

Harri already holds a BA in Psychology and a Masters in Special Education, but a 2011 scholarship from the Aceh government prompted him to look to the United States for a better understanding of how to bring Special Education home...something he feels is severely lacking in his country.

"We have no research center for developmental disabilities," said Harri. "We have no access for persons with disabilities in many places."

While volunteering at Murray Ridge Center, Harri has had the opportunity to learn more about developmental disabilities, and the steps that the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities has taken to serve those with DD.

"I've gotten so much out of volunteering here. All of the Murray Ridge staff are very open-minded; they are friendly, gave me time to ask questions, and have



Harri works with consumer, Steven Greszler, at the OOV.

shared their feelings on working with people with developmental disabilities. They work with passion and professionalism, and with skill and heart as well."

In addition to his work at Murray Ridge Center, Harri has been studying developmental psychology and researching autism in the neuroscience department at Oberlin College, and has been observing how the campus and town of Oberlin are equipped for individuals with disabilities.

On his return to Indonesia in January, Harri plans on working and teaching in the newly formed Special Education program at Syiah Kuala University, and hopes to someday complete his PhD in the United States.

"I have a huge dream," Harri said of his work in Special Education. "I would like to make a center for developmental disability research in my state. I would like to be part of history in my state and make life for people with developmental disabilities better for the future."

BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on December 20, 2013:

It was reported that the Board Award Committee has an Exceptional Service Award winner who will be honored at the next Board meeting. OOV program participant Jennifer Jones presented a slide show that she had prepared highlighting what Murray Ridge Center means to her. The Board established the dollar amount that the Family Support Parent Committee is authorized to approve in the first quarter of 2014. Also reviewed and approved were the Individual Cost Ceilings for Supported Living, and an agreement with Murray Ridge Production Center. The 2014 Board calendar was discussed; no meeting will be held in July or October, and meetings will continue to be held on Fridays (usually the last Friday of each month) at 12:30 p.m.

Holiday Happenings at Murray Ridge!

Murray Ridge Center was in full swing this past December as students from Murray Ridge School, adults attending our Opportunity/Vocational Centers, and residents from our group homes celebrated the holidays!



At **Murray Ridge School**, the holiday season meant the Santa Shop, bake and craft sales, and a Christmas production! Shawn Selmon, teacher Shannon Tandrich, Chloe Breeding, and classroom aide Shelly Stipe acted out *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* during the Dancing Wheels show (left). And Logan Terrill took money and delivered smiles at the craft sale (right). The school also had a visit from Santa, where students—and staff! - had the opportunity to visit with the big guy.



More than 60 people attended the **Meister Road group home's** annual Christmas party held for residents, families, friends, and staff. Music, games, and decorating the Christmas tree kept party-goers busy while dinner was prepared. And Santa Claus stopped by for a visit, pictures, and to present each resident with a special gift from the North Pole!

Thank you to all who helped make this party another success for the residents of the Meister Road group home!

Meister Road group home resident Scott Helbig (middle) poses with Santa, sister Amanda Beeman, and her brother.

Adults at the **Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center** were surprised to have three visitors from the Lorain branch of Advance America this December! Each quarter, staff from this company go out into the community to interact with Lorain County residents, and they chose Murray Ridge Center for their fourth quarter visit! Attendees (back row, left to right) Tim Sima, Jonathon Allen, Allean Frederick, Mike Tolleni, (front row, left to right) Benji Lewis, James Peters, Sheri Reitenbach, Kim Herman, David Zsgray and Bill Stewart posed with Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, and a holiday bear during the visit!



Triumph through the Challenges

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Who should attend?

This course series is for nurses, social workers, counselors, physicians, educators, parents and caregivers who work with individuals that may have had prenatal exposure to alcohol/drugs.

Learn about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and how to best work with those affected in order to reach his/her fullest potential.

Gather useful tips and local resources!

Discover ways to succeed!

2014 Spring Course Series

Evening Sessions:

April 1, 2014: Section 1, 6-9 p.m.

April 3, 2014: Section 2, 6-9 p.m.

April 8, 2014: Section 3, 6-9 p.m.

April 10, 2014: Section 4, 6-9 p.m.

Location:

Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities Service & Support Administration Bldg.
9740 Murray Ridge Road, Elyria, 44035

*Evening parking available at Murray Ridge SSA lot. Please enter in back door.

Register

www.loraincountyhealth.com/fasdcourse

Contact: Natalie Karn, R.N., M.S.N.

440.284.3272, nkarn@loraincountyhealth.com

No fee to attend. Space is limited.

Bring your own personal refreshments and food.

Facilitators:

Natalie Karn R.N., M.S.N.

Lorain County General Health District Public Health Nurse

Kathleen Bevaque, M.Ed.

Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Sponsor:



@LorainCoHealth



Lorain County General Health District

Series Details

- **Section 1:** FASD Basic Facts; Characteristics; Chronological vs. Developmental Age
- **Section 2:** Neurological Issues & Behaviors of FASD; Coping Skills
- **Section 3:** Developing Effective Strategies for FASD; Advocacy & Finding Resources
- **Section 4:** Advocacy in Schools; Discipline; Daily Living & Future Planning for Individuals with FASD

Contact Hours Available

- Nurses; provided by Lorain County Community College Department of Allied Health and Nursing
- Social workers, counselors, and chemical dependency RCH; provided by the ADAS Board of Lorain County
- Developmental Disability hours provided by Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities.
- Certificate of Attendance for contact hours given.



A PRESCHOOL OPTION

The Murray Ridge Preschool Program offers students with a variety of developmental disabilities the advantages of in-room therapies, an array of state-of-the-art equipment, outstanding staff and an opportunity to learn alongside typically-developing peers.

Murray Ridge Preschool Offers:

- Individualized Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy in the classroom
- An extensive collection of early childhood educational equipment
- Full-time nurse on site
- Behavior Support Services
- Music classes



- A well-rounded curriculum based on the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards
- Dynamic, ODE-certified staff
- Physical development through indoor/outdoor physical education classes
- Door-to-door transportation services

Did You Know...

The Murray Ridge preschool serves children with a wide range of developmental disabilities, from those with mild delays to those profoundly impacted, and Murray Ridge is a recognized leader in its comprehensive approach to teaching children with autism. The Preschool Program runs Tuesday through Friday. Children with disabilities must be referred to the Murray Ridge Preschool Program by their local school district. Applications for typically-developing children are available through Murray Ridge School (see below).

For More Information Contact:
Dann Swift
Director of Educational Services
Murray Ridge School
9750 Murray Ridge Road
Elyria, Oh 44035
440.329-3760
dswift@murrayridgecenter.org
www.murrayridgecenter.org



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Activities and Events

- 1/1 - **Agency closed for New Year's Day**
- 1/2 - Murray Ridge Support Group Meeting, EOVC, 4:15 p.m.
- 1/6 - **Murray Ridge School resumes classes**
- 1/20 - **Agency closed for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday**
- 1/23 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:00 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 1/29 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting , 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 1/31- LCBDD Organizational Meeting , 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 1/31 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council begins immediately following the Organizational Meeting

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 	2 	3	4
5	6 	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 	21	22	23 	24	25
26	27	28	29 	30	31 	

Swimmers Compete in Special Olympics Ohio State Aquatics Championship

14 athletes from Murray Ridge Center competed in the 42st Annual Ohio Special Olympics State Aquatics Meet on December 14-15, 2013, at the Ohio State University McCorkle Aquatic Pavilion. Results:

Gold:

Mike Urban - 100 meter freestyle
 JoAnn Gall - 25 meter backstroke, 25 meter freestyle
 Shari Reitenbach - 50 meter freestyle, 50 meter backstroke
 James Peters - 25 meter freestyle

Silver:

Amy Trigilio - 50 meter freestyle
 Mike Kopis - 50 meter freestyle
 James Peters - 50 meter freestyle
 Kyle Young - 25 meter freestyle
 Kevin Plata - 100 meter freestyle
 Michael Elliott - 25 meter backstroke
 4 x 50 freestyle relay team - Stephanie Budweg, JoAnn Gall, Amy Trigilio, Shari Reitenbach

Bronze:

Lutz Fazekas – 50 meter freestyle, 25 meter freestyle
 Mike Urban – 50 meter backstroke
 Ryan Eliason – 100 meter freestyle
 Mike Kopis – 25 meter backstroke



Back (L-R): Michael Elliott, N. Ridgeville; Mike Urban, Oberlin; Kyle Young, Wellington; Lutz Fazekas, Elyria; James Peters, Elyria; Ryan Eliason, Grafton. Middle: JoAnn Gall, Oberlin; Mike Kopis, Lorain; Katie Kellogg, Lorain; Shari Reitenbach, Elyria. Front: Stephanie Budweg, Oberlin; Amy Trigilio, Amherst; Kevin Plata, Grafton; Kenny Martin, Lorain. Not shown: Head Coach, Anne Born; Assistants: Brian Chutes, Sean Morris, Noreen Romano.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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Exceptional Service Award

Do you know a Murray Ridge employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication and have significantly contributed to the well being of people with developmental disabilities? Nominate that employee for an Exceptional Service Award! If you are a community member; consumer; or parent, guardian, sibling or other relative of a Murray Ridge program participant, submit your nomination to Jennifer Judkins, Public Relations/Volunteer Director. Include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the employee. All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for consideration. The Board presents Exceptional Service Awards on a quarterly basis at regular scheduled meetings, usually held on the last Friday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Board Room. If you have any questions, contact Jenn Judkins at 440-329-3734 or jjudkins@murrayridgecenter.org.

Inclusive Playground FREE Admission!

Visit the Lorain County Metro Parks Inclusive Playground! Free at this time, the unique playground incorporates water play (shut down for season), structured play, and natural play environments. People of all ages and abilities will be able to use the area and enjoy the play features. Stop in and visit today!



47160 Hollstein Drive
Amherst, Ohio 44001
(440) 984-3470

Work at the Ridge!

Check out our website
www.murrayridgecenter.org to see
our open positions!

