



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

June 2019

Murray Ridge School Celebrates the Class of 2019

Friends, family members, caregivers and agency staff celebrated seven seniors during their recent transition ceremony at Murray Ridge School.

In addition to performances of "Lean on Me" and "This Little Heart of Mine" by the Murray Ridge Choraleers, speeches were delivered by Director of Educational Services Dann Swift, Superintendent Amber Fisher, Keynote Speaker Dr. Jim Chapple of Ashland University, and Gregg Heiden from the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center.

The 18th Annual David Elsasser Spirit Award was presented to Lorenzo Cooke by Kathy Oblak, Mother of David Elsasser, a previous student at Murray Ridge School who passed away.

In addition to congratulating the Class of 2019, Superintendent Fisher offered, "Congratulations to the parents, caregivers and family members who have provided today's honorees with limitless love and support, helped them to celebrate each milestone, and instilled in them the confidence necessary for continued growth."



From left: Desiree Aponte, Corde Barnwell, Lorenzo Cooke, Loryn Caso, Hannah Duta, Kief Maldonado. (Not present, Jose Gonzalez, Jr.)

For more commencement coverage, see Pages 2-3...

Did you know that individuals on Medicaid who need assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing and dressing can access (through use of the Medicaid card) up to 14 hours per week of Home Health Aide or Nursing services? This year, beginning with this issue of the *Murray Ridge Courier*, we will highlight each month a different State Plan Home Health provider that works with individuals with developmental disabilities in Lorain County. For more information about services covered with the Medicaid card ('Medicaid State Plan services'), see the Ohio Department of Medicaid's website at Medicaid.ohio.gov or contact the Murray Ridge Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department at (440) 324-2366.



Spotlight on ...

E.J.Q. Home Health Care, Inc.

For 23 years E.J.Q. Home Health Care, Inc. has been providing home health care services. We are a family business and we consider our staff and clients as part of that family. We strive to build good working relationships, as the care provider, with the individuals who we are assisting, their families, and the Service and Support Administrators involved in their care. As a provider we offer services under many components including Medicaid State Plan. Although, the State Plan component only allows for up to 14 hrs. a week, those hours are still significant to those receiving the services, which is why we continue to provide them. Our company philosophy states that we believe every human being is unique and to be valued and respected. We strive to provide accessible quality care while assisting clients in meeting their greatest health potential. We want our clients to be able to remain in their homes while maintaining an appropriate quality of life and we strive to help our clients and their families in managing their health needs on a daily basis.

Submitted by Theresa Esterhazy, E.J.Q. Administrator

The Class of 2019



Desiree Aponte has been described as the "diva of all divas!" She has been attending Murray Ridge School since preschool. She enjoys spending time with her peers here at Murray Ridge School and is interested in many types of music. Desiree's laughter is contagious!



Corde Barnwell is known to be a jokester. Corde's personality can brighten up a room. Corde loves to dance, sing and play basketball. Corde recently started exercising several times a week in hopes that he will be a great contender in adult Special Olympics. Gym class was the highlight of Corde's school day. During his time at Murray Ridge School Corde worked at Pandey's Garden Center. He also helped with pizza delivery, recycling and clothing protector distribution at school. Corde was a mentor to younger students and was a pen pal with adults from the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC). Corde plans to attend the Rising Sun Adult Center. His laughter will be missed at Murray Ridge School.



Loryn Caso is a happy individual. She loves country music as well as singing and dancing. Loryn loved to participate in the talent show, dancing to "Boot Scootin Boogie." During her time at Murray Ridge, she assisted on the Pizza Land crew on Thursdays and worked at Second Harvest Food Bank. Loryn has a special personality and can light up a room with her sense of humor.



Lorenzo Cooke is everyone's friend. He loves listening to music, attending sporting events and coloring. Lorenzo loves to work and stay busy. During his time at Murray Ridge School Lorenzo worked at Rebman's Bowling Alley, Second Harvest Food Bank and Peace Community Church. He also helped with pizza delivery, recycling and clothing protector distribution at the school. Lorenzo loved being a mentor to intermediate and primary students. Boy Scouts was also a favorite activity for Lorenzo. Lorenzo plans to attend the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center. Lorenzo and his amazing wardrobe will be missed!



Hannah Duta is a fun-loving young woman who has been a student at Murray Ridge for the last 17 years, having started here as a preschooler. Her favorite activities at the school included reading books, music class, dances, and socializing with her friends. She enjoys learning and making crafts as a hobby. To celebrate her completing school, she is having a party. After graduation she plans to assist in household responsibilities and participate in family outings.



Jose Gonzalez, Jr. is a handsome and strong young man who has been attending Murray Ridge since age 6. Jose really enjoys music class and watching NASCAR. Jose loves going on field trips and being outdoors. After graduating, Jose's infectious smile will be greatly missed walking through the halls at Murray Ridge School.



Kief Maldonado is a wonderful young man who has attended Murray Ridge School for twelve years. In Kief's free time, he enjoys lights, listening to music, watching TV and movies, and participating in activities with his family. Kief's fondest memory of school is the teachers that he has had. After graduation, Kief will celebrate with a cookout with his family and friends.



More Commencement Memories



Above left: Lorenzo Cooke received the David Elsasser Spirit Award. Right: Kief Maldonado poses with Superintendent Amber Fisher (standing, left) and Supervisor Stacie Starr. Below left: Hannah Duta and Stacie Starr pose in a selfie. Below right, the Murray Ridge Choraleers prepare for their stirring commencement performance.



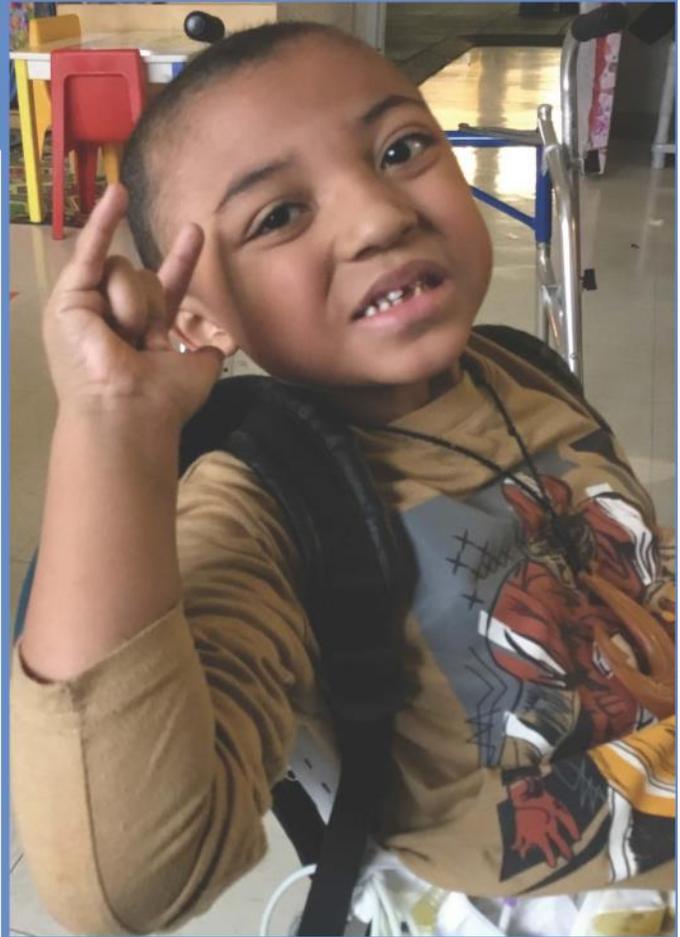
MURRAY RIDGE PRESCHOOL

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. The Preschool Program runs Tuesday through Friday. Children with disabilities must be referred to the Murray Ridge Preschool Program by their local school districts. Applications for typically-developing children are available through Murray Ridge School.

WE OFFER:

- Individualized Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy in the classroom
- An extensive collection of early childhood educational equipment
- Full-time nurse on site
- Door-to-door transportation services
- A well-rounded curriculum based on the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards
- Dynamic, ODE-certified staff
- Physical development through indoor/outdoor physical education classes
- Music classes



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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Assistive Technology Lending Libraries Available Locally

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC) has developed a Guide to Assistive Technology Lending Libraries across the State of Ohio. The purpose of the guide is to increase awareness and access to resources found in libraries that loan assistive technology, medical equipment and adaptive toys. Many of these programs offer these services for free.

In addition to listing organizations that provide materials within six specific regions across the state, there is also a listing of organizations that will provide materials to anyone in Ohio, some requiring pick-up while others will ship to you.

To view the entire guide, go to <http://ddc.ohio.gov/ohio-at-lending-libraries>, which includes a link to an online interactive map.

Murray Ridge School also provides a lending library for children who participate in the Early Intervention Program.

Q & A Corner

As the system for serving people with developmental disabilities evolves, those eligible for services and their family members may have many questions. Below are answers to a couple of questions that have arisen. In future editions of the *Courier*, we will address frequently asked questions (2-3 at a time) in the "Q&A Corner."

Q. Why have individuals on the waiting list with 'Current Needs' not been enrolled on Medicaid waivers (like the Individual Options Waiver, the SELF Waiver, and the Level I Waiver) by the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD) this year?

A. A new waiting list rule went into effect on 09/01/2018; this rule requires use of a brand new assessment tool to determine needs, and requires that those with more needs (as defined by the rule) be enrolled on waivers before those with fewer needs. As a result, we are not permitted to enroll individuals with 'Current Needs' on Medicaid waivers until all individuals who were on the waiting list prior to 09/01/2018 have been assessed using the new tool (because otherwise waiver enrollments would occur in an impermissible order). While the waiting list rule requires that everyone who was on the waiting list before 09/01/2018 be assessed by 12/31/2020, LCBDD made a commitment to complete the assessments by 12/31/2019. At this time, we expect the assessments to be completed ahead of schedule.

Q. How many providers of Adult Day Supports are currently serving Medicaid waiver recipients in the county?

A. As of the date of publication of this newsletter, 17 providers of Adult Day Supports are serving Medicaid waiver recipients in Lorain County. These include: *Alpha Care; Creative Enrichment Centers of Ohio; Learning Farm; Lucy Idol Center; Medina Creative Accessibility; Murray Ridge Center; Our Lady of the Wayside/Pathways; REM Ohio Inc.; Rising Sun Centers; Triad; The Link; United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) - Westlake Location; Capabilities; Lakeshore Adult Center - Westlake Location; ResCare; Just Like Home; and Vocational Guidance Services (VGS).*

More providers are expected to join this group in the near future.



If you are a Lorain County resident with developmental disabilities or a family member/advocate of an eligible individual and have unanswered questions, we would like to have the opportunity to address your concerns in person. In the month of July, Superintendent Fisher has set aside 7/11 and 7/25 for individual meetings with LCBDD-eligible individuals and/or their family members; appointments will be available from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on those dates. To schedule your meeting, please contact Michelle Trupo, Administrative Assistant, at (440) 329-3734. Additional opportunities for meetings will be available throughout the year.

Lorain County Commissioner Visits Murray Ridge



Thank you to Lorain County Commissioner Sharon Sweda for recently visiting Murray Ridge School and the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center. Not only did she make quick friends of some of our pre-school students, but she was also able to see first-hand some of our adult consumers hard at work.



Exceptional Service Award Presented to OOVC Staff Member

Congratulations to Adult Program Instructor **Tammy Stanley** of the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC) for receiving the latest Exceptional Service Award. The family member nominating her wrote that she, "goes above and beyond to communicate with my family and make my aunt feel loved. . . (Tammy) cares, she shows her love for the clients, and she is always thinking about how to make her clients feel special. Tammy is a wonderful person."

Nominations Sought for Exceptional Service Awards

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 Chris Vasco, Community Education/Volunteer Director. Please 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. If you have any questions, contact Chris at (440) 329-3734 or cvasco@murrayridgecenter.org



From left: Superintendent Amber Fisher, Tammy Stanley, and Murray Ridge Board Member Dan White.

June 2019

Activities & Events

- 6/10 - Murray Ridge School Day Camp begins (runs through 6/28)
 - 6/12 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
 - 6/15 - Avon Duck Tape Festival
 - 6/19 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
 - 6/21 - LCBDD Adult Dance, 7-9 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road, Elyria*
- *It is your responsibility to ensure that a Statement of Understanding with all required signatures is on file for you before the date of the dance; this is an admission requirement. Contact Jill Camp at 282-2131 with questions.*
- 6/24 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

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BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on May 20, 2019:

The Board unanimously established the dollar amount that the Family Support Parent Committee is authorized to approve for the third quarter of 2019. Director of Business, Greg Westgate, reviewed the 2020 Tax Budget, and it was approved by the Board. Superintendent Amber Fisher provided updates on House revisions to the biennium budget bill: additional state funds were included to increase the statewide average direct support professional (DSP) wage to \$13.00 per hour by the end of the biennium (this is \$0.62/hour more than the 'as introduced' bill, which would have raised the average DSP wage from \$11.12/hour to \$12.38/hr. over the biennium); an amendment allowing county boards of developmental disabilities (DD) to establish Medicaid reserve accounts for DSP wage increases was included; \$1.5 Million of the \$24.7 Million earmarked for Early Intervention in the 'as introduced' bill was re-allocated for Sight Centers; language was added that would require a new workgroup to study recommended changes to (Medicaid waiver) payment systems for day and (Non-Medical) transportation services, and testimony in opposition to this provision and/or urging expedited review by the workgroup was given; and a provision was added which would require county boards of DD to provide information about certain types of services (particularly Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities) when a person inquires about available services. Dr. Fisher discussed recommended additions to the Governing Rules and Regulations; the recommended changes were approved unanimously. Minor corrections to the 2019/2020 Pre-school calendar were also approved.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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Work at the Ridge

Anyone looking for a rewarding career should consider working with or on behalf of local citizens with developmental disabilities. While we're fortunate to have hundreds of skilled and dedicated employees presently on our team, a variety of excellent full and part-time opportunities are available at Murray Ridge throughout the year.

Opportunities range from critically important roles as direct service professionals, to a wide variety of other professional and support roles. Whether you come to us right out of school – are looking to make a career change – or are a retiree looking for a position with flexible hours, why not consider joining the Murray Ridge team?

For the latest job opportunities, visit our website at murrayridgecenter.org. You may find something that is just right for you, and a chance for a rewarding job that makes an important difference in the lives of others.

News You Can Use

AMC theatres is proud to partner with the Autism Society to offer unique movie showings where they turn the lights up, and turn the sound down, so viewers can get up, dance, walk, shout or sing!

AMC's Sensory Friendly Film program is available every month on the **second and fourth Saturday (family-friendly)** and **Tuesday evenings (for older audiences)**.

Please check your local theatre listings for specific showtimes, and don't forget to share your family fun with #AMCSensoryFriendly.

For more information, go to <https://amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films>