

The View From The

Ridge



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE... FOR A LIFETIME

Riddell, The Reserves Network Honored by Murray Ridge

Each year, Murray Ridge Center recognizes an individual or organization that goes 'above and beyond the call of duty' in helping people with developmental disabilities. And this year, the award was presented to TWO companies who have truly embraced this quality by teaming up to provide employment opportunities to those individuals.

The C.A.R.E.S. Award stands for Community . . . Awareness . . . Recognition . . . Education . . . and Service. This year the award was given to both **Riddell** and **The Reserves Network**.

A key to business success is cultivating valuable partnerships – and this year's C.A.R.E.S. award certainly demonstrates a winning partnership at work! Like many manufacturers today, North Ridgeville-based Riddell, the acknowledged leader in the football helmet industry, was facing some special staffing challenges. It was becoming increasingly difficult to find enough people – and the right people – to fill important seasonal factory positions such as sorting parts for helmets being refurbished, making labels, inserting padding in helmet pockets and assembling kits for sporting goods stores.

Fortunately, Riddell had already cultivated a positive relationship with The Reserves Network, a leading provider of flexible staffing solutions . . . so those two companies began working together to think 'out of the box.'

That's where the magic happened. **Chris Farinacci**, on-site manager for The Reserves Network at Riddell, learned from a counterpart at another manufacturing firm about the company's positive relationship with **Carol Wallace** of Murray Ridge's Supported Employment Program. Having heard of the quality of the work – and the quality of the workers – available through Murray Ridge, the Reserves Network linked Riddell with our agency – and the results were a 'win-win-win' for all involved!

According to Riddell and The Reserves Network, the employees from Murray Ridge are, "hard workers who love the fact that they have their job." Riddell Human Resources Manager **Leigh Cullen** said, "They are very genuine and are so excited to wear a Riddell shirt and to be a part of the Riddell organization. We have all formed a really



Accepting the C.A.R.E.S. Award at a recent ceremony were (from left) Michelle Stiles and Chris Farinacci from The Reserves Network, and Leigh Cullen from Riddell.

special relationship. (The employees from Murray Ridge) have stepped up everyone's game," she said. "When our staff sees a person with developmental disabilities doing quality work, it inspires them to do even better." Riddell and The Reserves Network are already planning future expansion of this relationship with Murray Ridge. "This has opened the door to many more opportunities," they said.

Back to School Memories — 2019



The first day of school this year was an exciting and wonderful day for students and staff alike! Here are a few memories of that special day!!

Left: **Khloe Smiddy**

Right: **Rosalie Chamberlain** with Classroom Aide **Lisa Koney**

Center: **JaLaysia Brown** with School Receptionist **Peggy Smith**

Below left: **Calvin Kaminski**, with Early Intervention Supervisor **Heather Knobler**

Below right: **CJ Martin** with Director of Education, **Dann Swift**



'Find Your Voice' Self-Advocacy Event

On August 22 Murray Ridge held its 'Find Your Voice' countywide self-advocacy event. Funding for this event was provided through the Myrtle Endowment Fund of the Community Foundation of Lorain County. This event featured guest speakers, **Josh Anderson** from No Regretz, and **Britta Hough** from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, as well as Lorain County consumers, **Megan Beals, Matthew Schoerverth, Dan Fenik, and Diana Clement.**

Josh Anderson inspired the audience members to set goals for themselves, be persistent, and live with no regrets. Britta Hough discussed options for finding your own unique path to community employment. The four Lorain County consumers shared their experiences with self-advocacy as well as their successes, dreams, and hopes for the future.

One of the highlights of the evening was the prize drawings. Winners received the opportunity to attend STIR training and the upcoming Synergy conference. STIR training teaches people how to become a self-advocate, while the Synergy conference allows individuals with disabilities to network and learn about a variety of topics, including advocacy, safety, planning, and using technology. Winners also received t-shirts, cards, and fun take home baskets. Everyone who attended enjoyed a taco bar, an ice cream cart from Trikeable Treats, and the fun and exciting atmosphere. Keep your eye out for future advocacy events. In the meantime, Find Your Voice and keep reaching for your dreams!!



Pictured clockwise from top left: **Josh Anderson, Megan Beals, Diana Clement, Matthew Schoerverth, Dan Fenik, and Britta Hough.**

Murray Ridge Preschool Earns 5-Star Award



The Murray Ridge Preschool Program recently earned a 5-Star rating for meeting the quality standards established by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Department of Education. **Step Up to Quality** is a Five-Star Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement system created to recognize and promote early learning and development programs that meet quality standards over and above the health and safety licensing requirements.

Murray Ridge Preschool 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. For more information, contact **Dann Swift**, Director of Educational Services at (440) 329-3760.

Students Help Kids 'Sleep in Heavenly Peace'

Murray Ridge School students are volunteering for work experience at Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SIHP), an organization that helps assemble beds for children in need.

Roger Dorsey (pictured far right), the founder of the local SIHP chapter, has offered to help students from our school who may be in need of a bed and has also offered to bring a bed to our school on October 11th for the school's "Crew Ceremony" so parents can see the finished product. Pictured with Roger are Liaison Teacher **Julie Kraker** and student **Jason Yee**.



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.

At the Orchard . . .



Lindsay Bookshar's class at Murray Ridge School visited Apple Hill Orchard to get everything needed to make apple crisp. Shown is **Obed Robledo**.

Just for Kicks . . .



A fun game of kickball was the perfect school-wide event to "kick" off the school year and allow staff and students to enjoy the nice late-summer weather. Pictured is **Brayden Altobelli**.

Tracey Carroll Recognized by Murray Ridge Housing Board



Administrative Secretary **Tracey Carroll**, who will be retiring from Murray Ridge at the end of this year, was honored by the Murray Ridge Housing Corporation (MRHC) Board at its October 29 meeting in recognition of her 25 years of service to the housing board.

Vice Chairman **Terry "Pete" Shilling** said that Tracey has been an invaluable member of the MRHC team and that she was the 'backbone to the operation.' The Murray Ridge Housing Board Secretary/Treasurer, **Pete Barth** said he will miss Tracey greatly and he hoped she would enjoy her retirement.

MRHC is a non-profit housing board formed in January, 1992 for the purpose of providing financing, acquisition and management of housing in Lorain County for individuals with developmental disabilities. Collectively the 33 homes owned by MRHC, all located in traditional residential neighborhoods in Lorain County provide safe and affordable housing for more than 100 individuals.

Nominations Sought for Exceptional Service Awards

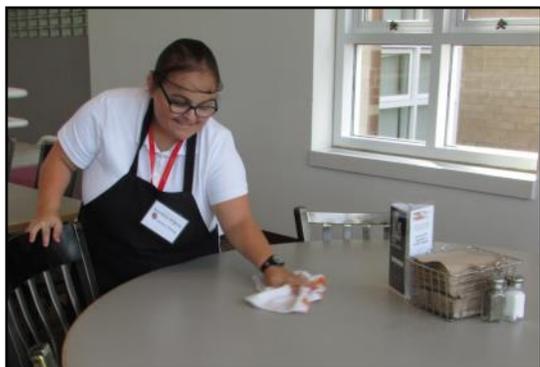
Do you know a Murray Ridge employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication and have significantly contributed to the well being of people with developmental disabilities? Nominate that employee for an Exceptional Service Award! If you are a community member; consumer; or parent, guardian, sibling 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

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Murray Ridge Center was once again pleased to participate in **National Disability Employment Awareness Month** — an annual awareness campaign that takes place each October. During October, we saluted the nearly 1,000 Lorain County citizens with developmental disabilities who are part of the local workforce, and the more than 100 local businesses that provide jobs for these individuals. Through our three Opportunity and Vocational Centers (OVCs) and Supported Employment Program, Murray Ridge Center continues to focus on finding and placing individuals in positions where they can grow and excel in today's competitive job market.

Anyone interested in employing someone with a developmental disability can call our Supported Employment Program at (440) 324-4993.

Check out the stories below for just a couple of recent examples of how our program participants are making a huge difference in our local business community!



Saundra Kilgore – Saundra has attended our Day Program at the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC) since 2014. She has participated in training at community-based work sites at Oberlin College (dishwashing/lobby attendant duties), First Church in Oberlin (custodial duties), and Splash Zone (janitorial duties). She was employed by Oberlin College Dining Services in March of this year. Saundra received assistance from Murray Ridge with obtaining the job, and support from a job coach to master her duties on the job. Murray Ridge now provides her with ongoing follow-along supports, and with transportation to and from work. When asked about her job at Oberlin College, Saundra simply says “I love it!”

Bryon Ragin – Bryon also attends the OOVC. He participated in training at the following group employment work sites: Oberlin College (dishwashing/lobby attendant duties) and First Church in Oberlin (custodial duties). In August of this year, Bryon was employed by Pizza Hut in Oberlin as a dish washer.

Bryon's family assists him with transportation to and from work. He received assistance from Murray Ridge with obtaining the job and job coaching to learn his employer's expectations. We now provide him with ongoing follow-along supports.

Staff reports that Bryon is doing well at Pizza Hut. He has perfect attendance and his managers like him. When asked about his job, Bryon says he likes it and says his co-workers are 'nice.'



Special Olympics Tennis Squad Brings Home Gold, Silver



The Murray Ridge Raiders Special Olympics Squad had a successful trip to Columbus for the State Games bringing home 30 medals in total. Pictured left are (l-r) Tennis Gold Medal winners (and State Champions) **Michael Cooper, Victor Elder** and **Andrew Prihoda**, with Silver Medalist **David Zsigray**.

Congratulations to the Raiders Tennis Team and **Coach Starr Price** for a great showing in Columbus. *See full State Special Olympics Games results below.*

Congratulations again to all the Murray Ridge athletes who took part in the State Special Olympics Games in Columbus several weeks ago. The team brought back 11 Gold Medals, 14 Silver, 5 Bronze, as well as one 4th place finish, 3 fifth place finishes and one sixth place finish. Well done, Raiders!



Bocce Teams:
 Alexshawn Averett/Tim Stewart 4th Place
 Maria Poling/Wendy Smitkowski 5th Place
 Charity Anderson/Pamela McClain 3rd Place
 (Bronze Medalists)

Soccer Team: 2nd Place Silver Medalists

Modified Volleyball: 1st Place State Champions

Traditional Volleyball: 2nd Place Silver Medalists

Tennis/Doubles:
 Andrew Prihoda/David Zsigray 2nd Place
 Michael Cooper/Victor Elder 2nd Place

Tennis/Singles:
 Andrew Prihoda 1st Place State Champion
 David Zsigray 2nd Place Silver Medalist
 Michael Cooper 1st Place State Champion
 Victor Elder 1st Place State Champion

Track and Field:

4x400 Relay
 Alicia Lawrence, Austin Turner, Bill Lacko, Bryon Ragin 2nd Place Silver Medalist

4x100 Relay
 Elena Reinhold, Sarah Ward, Mark Lacko, Kayla Stearns 1st Place State Champions

Individual Events:
 Tom Dammeyer 5th Shotput/5th 400M Dash
 Lutz Fazekas 6th Shotput/3rd 200M Dash
 Sally Gordon 3rd Standing Long Jump/2nd 100MDash
 Kevin Johnson 1st Shotput/2nd Standing Long Jump
 Bill Lacko 1st Shotput/2nd 200M Dash
 Austin Turner 3rd 400M Dash/5th Mini Javelin
 Sarah Ward 1st Shotput/2nd 200M Dash
 Mark Lacko 2nd Shotput/3rd 200M Dash
 Alicia Lawrence 1st Standing Long Jump/3rd 200M Dash
 Kayla Stearns 1st 100M Dash/4th Mini Javelin
 Bryon Ragin 1st 200M Dash/2nd Shotput
 Elena Reinhold 2nd Mini Javelin/3rd 100M Dash

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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murrayridgecenter.org

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