



# The Murray Ridge Courier

MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE... FOR A LIFETIME

December 2020

## Agency Staff Recognized for Years of Service, Attendance

Below is a list of Murray Ridge staff members who would have been recognized at the 2020 Agency In-service for meeting years-of-service benchmarks. Staff reaching 5 years will be receiving lanyards; those reaching 10, 15, 20 and 25 years will be receiving special pins; and staff reaching 30 and 35 years will be given plaques and special gifts. Additionally a tree on the agency grounds will be named in honor of the 35-year awardee. Please join us in thanking all of these employees for the exceptional work they do each and every day on behalf of Lorain County residents with developmental disabilities. To read profiles of our 30-35 year honorees, see pages 4-5.

### 35 Years

Mark Kaminski

### 30 Years

Jennifer Dutton  
Julie Wukie  
Dawn Neubauer  
Mary Wright  
Pamela Rose Sebastian  
Jeffry Christopher  
Mary Linsky

### 25 Years

Gloria Henline  
Susan Craycraft  
Tony Hamilton  
Jeffrey Miller  
Ruby Board  
Kevin Chutes  
Tammy Stanley  
Denise Fordanich



### 20 Years

Monica Lane  
Bernadette Seitz  
Deanne King  
Karen Hart  
Julie Kraker  
Kathleen Witte  
Michelle Woodham  
Kevin Donoughe  
Dann Swift  
Mary Lakner  
Kathleen Bevaque  
Troy Braden  
Jennifer Doseck

### 15 Years

Casimiera Supel  
John Syrowski  
Jennifer Hall  
Merle Simmons  
Emily Ramos  
Margaret Byrd  
Caroline Raines  
James Collins  
Kelly Moe

### 10 Years

David Blevins  
Carol Cable  
Joseph Neubauer

### 5 Years

Christine Mazze  
Loretta Binder  
Robert Devenny  
Ryenne Gelp  
Christa Searles  
Stacie Starr  
Renee Mele  
Maria Santana  
Anita Graham  
Lindsay Bookshar  
Samuel Elias  
Jennifer Hakko  
Kamaria Jones



MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE... FOR A LIFETIME

## PERFECT ATTENDANCE HONOREES

(these employees had perfect attendance from Oct. 1, 2019-Sept. 30, 2020)

John Bender  
Alisha Marin  
Lisa Reed  
Robert Hokes  
Danielle Burgess  
Sherry Lacko-Chutes  
Jaclina Rush

Tyler Robinson  
Heather Mills  
Doug Johnson  
Larry Schuman  
Richard Hales  
Todd Bernable  
Brian Chutes

Kathleen Bevaque  
Mary Shimer  
Kathryn Justy  
Cynthia Castro White  
Victoria Delossantos  
John Renfrow  
Diana Biber

# Flu and COVID-19 - The Key Differences

## ↓ FLU

### Symptoms Begin:

1 to 4 days after infection.

### Complications:

Can occur, but are less likely because of immunity built up over time.

### Hallmark Symptoms:

Fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, sore throat, runny nose, headache, and body aches.

### Spread:

Both flu and COVID-19 can spread from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another and mainly by air droplets.

## ↓ COVID-19

### Symptoms Begin:

As early as 2 days after infection or as late as 14.

### Complications:

COVID-19 is a new virus, so most people have no immunity. Severe respiratory complication may come on extremely quickly.

### Hallmark Symptoms:

Many symptoms are similar to the flu, however those infected with COVID-19 sometimes experience loss of taste or smell.

### Spread:

COVID-19 is more contagious among certain people and age groups than flu. Also, the virus can spread more quickly and easily than the flu, resulting in continuous spread, also called superspread.



MIKE DEWINE  
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Ohio

Department  
of Health

[coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov)



We don't have a vaccine for COVID-19,  
but we do have one for flu.

It's possible to be sick with both flu and  
COVID-19 at the same time.

Get the flu shot.



Lorain County  
Public Health  
For the Health of Us All

# Governor Announces Ohio COVID Vaccination Program

**Governor Mike DeWine** recently announced details for Ohio's first phase of vaccine distribution that is expected to begin on or around mid-December.

During Phase 1, vaccine supply will be limited, and Ohio will focus on vaccinating those who wish to be vaccinated in the critical Phase 1A groups outlined in the graphic (right).

This first phase will include people with developmental disabilities who live in group settings and the direct support professionals (DSPs) who support them.

**Ohio's Vaccination Program**  
- A Phased Approach

**During Phase 1 vaccine supply will be limited.**

Vaccine administration will be focused on reaching critical groups.

**PHASE 1A**

- Health care workers and personnel, who are routinely involved in the care of COVID-19 patients
- Residents and staff at nursing homes
- Residents and staff at assisted living facilities
- Patients and staff at state psychiatric hospitals
- People with intellectual disabilities and those with mental illness, who live in group homes or centers and staff at those locations
- Residents and staff at our Ohio veterans homes
- EMS responders

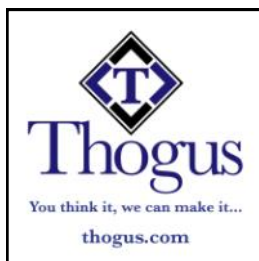
All available vaccines will be administered to those who **choose** to receive it.

OHIO TOGETHER OHIO MIKE DEWINE GOVERNOR OF OHIO Ohio Department of Health coronavirus.ohio.gov



## SE Department Helps During COVID-19 Pandemic

As the novel coronavirus spread across the world, **Thogus Products**, a custom plastic injection molding business in Avon Lake, experienced a dramatic increase in orders for face shields - and Murray Ridge was there to help. Over the course of a month, Thogus bolstered its workforce by adding five employees from the Murray Ridge Supported Employment (SE) Program.



Anyone interested in learning how to add a person with developmental disabilities to your workforce, can contact the Murray Ridge SE Department at 324-4993.

## Browns Star Shows Support Of Special Olympics

As part of the ongoing efforts of the NFL's My Cause, My Cleats campaign, more than 30 Browns players shared a powerful source of faith, inspiration and cognizance through custom footwear choices with signature meanings to each. Participating Browns players wore their cleats in the December 6 game against the Tennessee Titans. Check out the cleats Quarterback **Baker Mayfield** wore that day. Thank you, Baker Mayfield for your strong support of Special Olympics!!



## Meet our 30 and 35-Year Employees . . .

Mark joined Murray Ridge in June 1985 and has been the Production Manager at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) since 1996. Mark is considered a 'true leader' in the production department, sharing praise of other staff and being very safety conscious. Not only does Mark clearly take a personal interest in our consumers, carefully matching their skills with the job at hand, but he also has designed specific systems to ensure accurate reporting of dozens of different parts used for jobs. In his personal life, Mark is an avid hiker, works as an EMT, volunteers at the Wellington Food Bank, and is active in his church, St. Patrick's in Wellington.

**Mark Kaminski**

**35 Years**



**Jennifer Dutton**

**30 Years**

Jennifer seemed destined to work at Murray Ridge – in fact, she remembers as a child riding on a Murray Ridge bus with her Mom as the driver (when things like that were allowed!). She always wanted to work with and help individuals with disabilities, and started at Meister in a 'relief staff' role right out of high school in October, 1989. She's worked as an aide and as an instructor, most recently at LOVC. "I love working at Murray Ridge with all the consumers. The individuals that I work with bring such joy and love into my life. They always make me smile," Jennifer says. In addition to camping and canoeing, the Elyria resident says "my biggest joy these days is being a Grandma," to her granddaughter, Charlotte.

Julie has been a nurse at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) since 1995, following stints at the agency's former Avon Lake facility, the Habilitation Services Center (now the Admin Building) and the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC). "I truly LIKE my job," she says. "The consumers always make my day with their smiles, their funny personalities, and their positivity! I truly feel grateful that I found Murray Ridge." When she retires, Julie says she would like to work on renovating an old hotel that her family owns – and she would also like to spend winters in a warmer climate.

**Julie Wukie**

**30 Years**



**Dawn Neubauer**

**30 Years**

After working through high school and college at a summer camp with kids with special needs, Dawn joined Murray Ridge in February, 1990 as a Habilitation Specialist. She's worked at our Oberlin and Elyria centers, at the School (as Transition Coordinator), and as an SSA. In her spare time, Dawn says she loves to read – especially by the ocean! About her time at Murray Ridge, Dawn says, "I have met some wonderful people. It's so nice to be able to impact a person's life in a good way by being able to help them. I have loved seeing that the smallest things can bring joy and happiness to others. It's been very satisfying to see the work I do has been able to help people, consumers and families. It's amazing to me that with all of the hurdles some of our consumers go through, they can have such happiness."

## . . . Congratulations!!!!

Mary officially retired in November 2020 after working at Murray Ridge since July 1990. A Sheffield Lake native, Mary said the favorite part of her time at Murray Ridge was forming meaningful relationships with the consumers for whom she served as Team Leader. She said, "working with (consumers) has impacted my life without a doubt." In her personal life Mary has enjoyed reading, baking, cooking and exercising – especially running. In fact, she's been a competitive runner for years, and has competed in six marathons. In her retirement, Mary says she plans to get a part-time job . . . hopefully as a Physical Fitness instructor . . . and take some time to both run and travel with her husband.

**Mary  
Wright**

**30 Years**



**Pamela  
Rose  
Sebastian**

**30 Years**

Pam started her career working with CCBDD as a Habilitation Specialist. She then worked with individuals with mental illness and developmental disabilities at Dial Industries - first as a counselor and then Workshop Manager. Pam then joined Help Foundation/Six Chimneys where her first job was to move individuals out of institutions into a 46 bed apartment building. She then started the Joint Independent Living Project (JILP), a first of its kind in Ohio, where she placed more than 200 individuals in apartments and provided them with services. She joined Murray Ridge in July, 1990 as a Habilitation Manager, then served as LCBDD HR Coordinator, developing the Orientation program, and served as LOVC, OOV and EOVC Director before becoming the current Director of Adult Services. Pam, who grew up in Parma, says "You gotta love the Ridge! I love the people I work with I love the consumers and love the way the agency cares for the staff and consumers." While she says she likes music, gardening and decorating in her spare time, when asked whether she had any plans for when she decides to retire, Pam gave the cryptic answer, "Possibly . . ."

After joining Murray Ridge in September 1990, Jeff was initially assigned to the Habilitation Services Center (now the Admin Building) then was transferred to OOV when it opened working in Area 1 as a Habilitation Specialist and until transferring to LOVC. At LOVC he worked in Area 5 which had quite a few individuals with behavioral issues. In 2000, he returned to OOV, again in Area 1, where he has been ever since. Jeff is known to be quite the woodworker, and is talented in making furniture, which he occasionally auctions off to raise money for consumer benefits. While Jeff admits he doesn't like attention, and "isn't too good at blowing my own horn," he did say, "It has been a good 30 years and I have enjoyed the staff and consumers I have worked with. All the thanks and recognition that I have ever enjoyed is when I have made someone's life better and they have acknowledged it."

**Jeff  
Christopher**

**30 Years**



**Mary  
Linsky**

**30 Years**

Since joining Murray Ridge in April, 1990, Mary admits to "not moving around much" within the organization – always working in the Business Department. But that doesn't mean she hasn't been involved with other departments. In fact, Mary coached Special Olympics volleyball and track, and says her time "coaching and getting to know the athletes is a memory I will carry with me." An Amherst native, Mary says spending time with her family is a 'dream come true' especially when boating on Lake Erie and stopping at the Lake Erie Islands. When she retires, Mary plans to "explore the world" — including Italy, where her sister owns a bed and breakfast!

## Four ways to prep for the holidays (during a pandemic)

When the weather turns colder and Thanksgiving comes and goes, we start planning for the upcoming holiday season. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, **Lorain County Public Health (LCPH)** predicts that the holidays will look and feel quite different this year. Prepare for the upcoming season with some of these practical tips:

- **Think about and plan for your COVID-19 comfort level.** LCPH knows that a person's risk for COVID-19 increases when you spend more time with a lot of people in a small space. Use this knowledge to plan this year's holiday celebrations. For example, normally multiple families spend hours inside a house to celebrate with a meal. This year, shift your holiday plans. Decide what level of risk you feel comfortable with, then talk with your family about it. Perhaps celebrate only with your household. Or, gather in a larger house or space for distanced, masked social time either before or after eating at separate homes.
- **Continue festive, low-risk activities.** Some fall and winter activities pose a lower risk for COVID-19 since they happen outdoors with few people. Go for a walk at a location near you - some parks have even promised to plow their paths when it snows. Watch a movie with your household. Find ways to feel festive while slowing the spread of COVID-19.
- **Continue good habits.** Some people have reported to LCPH that the pandemic inspired them to start healthy habits. Continue these habits through the fall and winter if possible. If you began daily walks, consider ways to stay active in the winter. If you continue walking, bundle up and watch for wet or slippery surfaces as the weather gets colder. Or, find a free exercise video online - start at [UnitedWeSweat.org](http://UnitedWeSweat.org). If you started cooking at home more, try out new healthy recipes with winter squash (see one below). Eating vegetables like winter squash helps promote overall health.
- **Stay social and support your mental health.** Holidays tend to cause stress even when there's not a pandemic - be gentle with yourself and prioritize your mental health. Mental health is part of overall health. Support your mental health by connecting socially via internet or phone. Or, meet a friend in person with any necessary precautions in place.

We're all in this together. Especially as these unique holiday times draw closer, be kind and encouraging to others. If you have questions about COVID-19 or any other health topics, call Lorain County Public Health at (440) 322-6367.

### Let's Play Jeopardy!

A game of Jeopardy, including a discussion of topics covered in the game, was a recent featured offering in the agency's Virtual Adult Day Services' Community Awareness - News-2-You current events series.



The Jeopardy game was personalized to emphasize everything previously taught about COVID-19, with categories including: COVID Facts, Personal Safety, Public Safety, Holidays, and the Ohio Color Code System - all topics specifically pertaining to the virus.

Facilitator **Jennifer Hakko**, a speech and language pathologist at the Elyria Opportunity/

Vocational Center, had 15 enthusiastic participants for the recent Jeopardy game, which is fabulous for a virtual session! The group discussed some Jeopardy history and also discussed the recent passing of long-time Jeopardy host Alex Trebek.

## Meet Our Family!

Every time our immediate household leaves home, we wear our masks.

That includes when we go the grocery store, school, public places, and when we visit our extended family.

Just because they're family doesn't mean they can't give us COVID-19, or that we couldn't unknowingly spread it to them.



When we're together with our family we don't live with, we all wear masks because it shows that we care!

[coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov)



# News from Service and Support Administration (SSA)

The **Knowing My Rights** self-advocacy video project wants to come to a place near you!

Contact Jaclina Rush at [jrush@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:jrush@murrayridgecenter.org) to schedule small, in-person presentations, following all COVID protocols, on rights of persons with disabilities. The following topics are available: Vocational Training and Citizenship, Respect and Choices, Medical and Mental Health Rights, Nutrition and Wellness.

As always, please join us for any of our remaining virtual events live on Zoom! Locate the Zoom link on the Murray Ridge Center website calendar or anywhere you find this flyer (pictured right), such as Facebook.



## MY LIFE, MY RIGHTS KNOWING MY RIGHTS

### Video Training Series

Join the Lorain County Board of DD as we explore the rights of adults with developmental disabilities. Over the coming months, we will discuss topics on housing, daily choices, health, relationships and more! Check the Murray Ridge Facebook page or our website for the Zoom link. Contact Jaclina Rush at (440) 324-2366 or [jrush@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:jrush@murrayridgecenter.org) for more information.

#### Upcoming Event Dates

**January 7, 2021 from 1-2 PM**

*Advocating for Yourself*

**January 21, 2021 from 1-2 PM**

*Living Conditions*

**February 4, 2021 from 1-2 PM**

*Sexuality, Bullying, and Change*

**February 18, 2021 from 1-2 PM**

*Decision Making*

View past topics on the Murray Ridge Center website  
<http://www.murrayridgecenter.org/health-and-news-alerts/>

Contact: Jaclina Rush at  
(440) 324-2366 or  
[jrush@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:jrush@murrayridgecenter.org)

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To thank the **Direct Support Providers (DSPs)** of Lorain County, the Service and Support Administration Department is developing a video incorporating DSPs from many different backgrounds and organizations.

The video will highlight agency and independent providers and the number of years they have delivered services to Lorain County individuals with developmental disabilities. On behalf of the Lorain County Board of DD, thank you to all DSPs for your continued dedication!

For information on how to see the completed video, keep checking the Murray Ridge Center Facebook page.

Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center  
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Elyria, OH 44035

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Elyria, OH 44035



## News You Can Use

### Lorain County Health and Dentistry opens drive-thru COVID-19 testing site

In November, Lorain County Health & Dentistry opened its drive-thru novel coronavirus disease testing site. The former Lorain Glass building at 1205 Broadway is being used for drive-thru testing in winter months, instead of having outdoor curbside testing. The agency received \$150,000 from the city of Lorain through the federal Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act, known as the CARES Act. For appointments or more information, call (440) 240-1655, or email [info@lorainhealth-dentistry.org](mailto:info@lorainhealth-dentistry.org)



Lorain County  
Health & Dentistry

An Ohio Community Health Center