



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

February 2021

Murray Ridge Conducts Specialized Vaccine Clinic



Richard Urban receiving his COVID-19 vaccine from a nurse from Lorain County Public Health (LCPH)



Mila Radanovich receiving her COVID-19 vaccine from an LCPH nurse, as her mother, Michelle, offers her support



Ken Martin receiving his vaccine from an LCPH nurse



Tracy Ellis, who was transported to the clinic by Murray Ridge Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist Jacina Rush, gives a 'thumbs-up' after getting his vaccination.

In collaboration with **Lorain County Public Health**, on February 4th Murray Ridge Center hosted a vaccine clinic at Murray Ridge School for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) who also have conditions that qualify them for a COVID-19 vaccine under Ohio's Phase 1B. The **Murray Ridge Service & Support Administration (SSA) Department** assessed individuals for eligibility, scheduled those individuals who were eligible and interested for a time slot at the clinic, and assisted individuals with completing consent forms in advance. Most individuals were transported to the clinic by family members and caregivers, and some were transported to and from the event by Murray Ridge staff. **Murray Ridge Management Team members and other Agency staff** ran the event by providing parking directions, guiding the flow of clinic attendees within the building, assisting individuals with completing required forms, and being available for questions after individuals had received their vaccines. On-site monitoring of the event was also provided by the **Lorain County Sheriff's Department**. Nearly 300 eligible individuals were vaccinated at the clinic, and many in attendance commented that the event ran very smoothly and was well organized. Special thanks go to **SSA Director Heather Gurchik** for her leadership in coordinating all aspects of this very successful endeavor.



Nadia Irizarry (right) and Chad Kothe (far right), waiting the mandatory 15-minutes after receiving their vaccinations

Socially-distanced wait stations were set up in the Murray Ridge School gymnasium.



Superintendent Amber Fisher (far right) giving Tyler Rudolchick a reminder of the date for his second COVID-19 shot

The Moderna vaccine given at the clinic requires a follow-up shot in four weeks.



While not all people with developmental disabilities (DD) are currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, and not all caregivers of people with DD are currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine (**see chart on p. 2**), we are assured that eventually all Ohioans old enough to receive a COVID-19 vaccination will have an opportunity to do so. When it is your turn, make it a point to learn the facts about the vaccine from a reliable source like the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

COVID-19 VACCINE ELIGIBILITY,


AS IT RELATES TO PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Because the number of people who want a COVID-19 vaccination is significantly greater than the number of doses of COVID-19 vaccine available at this time, a phased approach is currently being taken to vaccine administration. Each state has the ability to identify the groups that will be eligible to receive the vaccine in Phase 1; Ohio has identified the groups of people who will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in Phases "1A" and "1B." It is noteworthy that there have been some recent changes to the specification of Group 1B. The best source for the current definition of Ohio's 1A/1B groups (including the week when people in a group were/will be eligible to begin getting vaccinated) is the Ohio Department of Health. Go to: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-program>.

Groups of <u>people with developmental disabilities</u> that are/are not in Ohio's Phase 1A or Phase 1B for COVID-19 vaccination		Groups of <u>caregivers of people with developmental disabilities</u> that are/are not in Ohio's Phase 1A or Phase 1B for COVID-19 vaccination	
People with developmental disabilities who live in congregate care settings *	Part of Phase 1A	Caregivers of people with developmental disabilities who live in congregate care settings	Part of Phase 1A
People with developmental disabilities who <u>also</u> have cerebral palsy; spina bifida; severe congenital heart disease requiring hospitalization within the past year; severe type 1 diabetes requiring hospitalization within the past year; inherited metabolic disorders including phenylketonuria; severe neurological disorders including epilepsy, hydrocephaly, and microcephaly; severe genetic disorders including Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Turner syndrome, and muscular dystrophy; severe lung disease, including asthma requiring hospitalization within the past year, and cystic fibrosis; sickle cell anemia; alpha and beta thalassemia; and solid organ transplants*	Part of Phase 1B, if not part of Phase 1A <u>Note:</u> People with a health condition included in 1B who are not eligible for services from a county board of DD, are not eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine until the week of 2/15/2021.	Adults in K-12 school buildings, like Murray Ridge School, who regularly interact with students (provided that the school will provide in-person education, including through a hybrid model, by 03/01/2021)	Part of Phase 1B; vaccination eligibility for people in this category will begin with regard to those who work in some, but not all schools beginning the week of 2/1/2021.
People with developmental disabilities who are 65 years of age or older	Part of Phase 1B, as are all other Ohioans in this age category	Caregivers who are 65 years of age or older	Part of Phase 1B, as are all other Ohioans in this age category
People with developmental disabilities not in any of the above categories (unless included in Phase 1A or 1B due to having a job in a classification included in 1A or 1B)	Not included in Phase 1A or 1B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Services Staff • Other Providers of Support (like HPC or Supported Living) to People with DD who do NOT Live in Congregate Care Settings • Family Caregivers 	Not included in Phase 1A or 1B

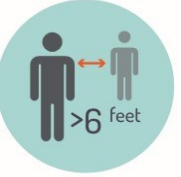


*No person younger than 18 may receive the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine; no person younger than 16 may receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccine Facts from the CDC





Facts about COVID-19 vaccines

Vaccines (shots) are one of the tools we have to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.




To stop this pandemic, we need to use all of our prevention tools. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect your health and prevent disease. Vaccines work with your body's natural defenses so **your body will be ready to fight the virus**, if you are exposed (also called immunity). Other steps, like wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth and staying at least 6 feet away from other people you don't live with, also help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Studies show that COVID-19 **vaccines are very effective** at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. These vaccines cannot give you the disease itself.



The vaccines are safe. The U.S. vaccine safety system makes sure that all vaccines are as safe as possible. All the COVID-19 vaccines that are being used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years. A system in place across the entire country that allows CDC to watch for safety issues and make sure the vaccines stay safe.

Different types of COVID-19 vaccines will be available. Most of these vaccines are given in two shots, one at a time and spaced apart. The first shot gets your body ready. The second shot is given at least three weeks later to make sure you have full protection. If you are told you need two shots, make sure that you get both of them. The vaccines may work in slightly different ways, but all types of the vaccines will help protect you.



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

Additional Vaccine Information from the CDC

- The vaccines may cause side effects in some people, like sore muscles, feeling tired, or mild fever. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects last no longer than a day or two. **Having these types of side effects does NOT mean that you have COVID-19.** If you have questions about your health after your shot, call your doctor, nurse or clinic. As with any medicine, it is rare but possible to have a serious reaction, such as not being able to breathe. It is very unlikely that this will happen, but if it does, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
- **When you get the vaccine, you AND your healthcare worker will both need to wear masks.** CDC recommends that during the pandemic, people wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth when in contact with others outside their household, when in healthcare facilities, and when receiving any vaccine, including a COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Even after you get your vaccine,** you will need to keep wearing a mask that covers your nose AND mouth, washing your hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from other people you don't live with. This gives you and others the best protection from catching the virus. Right now, experts don't know how long the vaccine will protect you, so it's a good idea to continue following the guidelines from the CDC and your health department. **We also know not everyone will be able to get vaccinated right away, so it's still important to protect yourself from others.**

Murray Ridge Launches New Referral Portal

Murray Ridge Center has implemented the **iData Referral Portal** which is designed to significantly improve the provider search process for eligible individuals served in Lorain County. This system, which is coordinated by the agency's Service and Support Administration Department (SSA), went live in December 2020.

The new Referral Portal:

- Will make it easier for individuals to find providers.
- Allows SSAs to send out an individual profile through email blast to certified providers wishing to provide services to individuals in Lorain County.
- Makes it easier for providers to review, track and manage referrals.
- Will also make it easier for providers to directly promote their services to individuals who need services.

By logging onto **<https://lorainddproviders.org/>** providers will be able to connect with current individuals looking for services in Lorain County. If you are a certified provider and would like to have access to this search portal please contact mpintner@murrayridgecenter.org. Individuals who receive waiver services in Lorain County also have the ability in the new portal to post a profile on the provider search portal to get connected to providers who are looking to serve their needs.

A link to the new portal is located on the home page of the agency's murrayridgecenter.org website, below the Event Calendar. For more information, contact **Megan Pintner** of the SSA Department at (440) 324-2366 or at mpintner@murrayridgecenter.org

Coming In March — DD Awareness Month To Be Observed

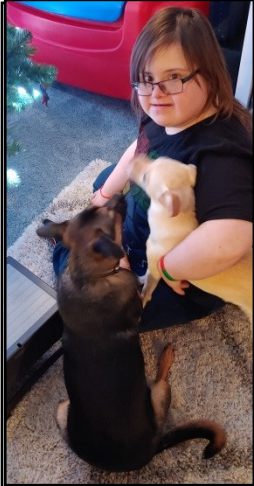
March will be Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month - a time for all of us to celebrate the unique and vital contributions individuals with developmental disabilities make in our communities.

DD Awareness Day

Registration is now open for the **2021 Developmental Disability Awareness and Advocacy Day**, which will take place virtually over Zoom on Tuesday, March 2. Pre-registration is free but required to attend. The day will include remarks from several statewide DD advocates leading up to constituent meetings with lawmakers in which people and families are invited to discuss policy issues affecting their lives. There will be no in-person attendance due to COVID-19. This year's general session and all legislative meetings will take place online via Zoom. To register, go to https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_eSRvoPSORP-5gJBWkVPG6g?fbclid=IwAR2xQC5



Consumer Profile — Meet Amanda Juska

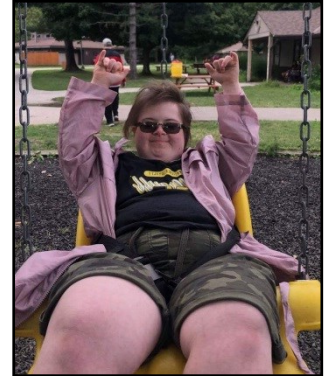


Amanda enjoying time with her brown dog 'Moose' and her sister's dog

Amanda is a fun-loving young woman with an infectious smile! Amanda lives in Elyria with her father and stepmother. She has a great support system of family and friends which includes her sisters Jenn (who is her guardian), Rachael, and Becky. Spending time with her family and friends - and her dog, Moose - makes Amanda happy! Amanda loves dancing, hanging out with her friends and family, watching hockey, and playing softball.

Amanda has a Level One Waiver and is supported by her **Murray Ridge Service and Support Administrator (SSA)**, Emily Ambrosio. Emily helps Amanda with the development of her Individual Service Plan (ISP) which lists the services and supports that assist Amanda with living her life the way she chooses. Emily also monitors her services and keeps her plan up-to-date as Amanda's goals and ambitions change. Recently, Emily helped Amanda use her waiver to get a tablet that she uses to continue her education. She uses her tablet every day.

One of Amanda's dreams is to go to Disney World. She loves everything that has to do with Disney! Her sister Jenn plans on taking her once the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided.



Having fun at the playground



Proudly displaying her "Buddy Walk" medallion

During the week, Amanda attends **River Rock Adult Day Program**. River Rock is part of the **Achievement Centers for Children/Camp Cheerful** program which began in 1947 as Ohio's first camp with recreation programs for children with disabilities. River Rock is located at Camp Cheerful in the Cleveland Metropolitan Park System in Strongsville.

According to its website, "The River Rock Adult Day Program offers a unique outdoor environment surrounded by nature and provides engaging social, recreational and educational activities for adults with special needs and disabilities. River Rock offers meaningful activities and features such as: Gardening and Landscaping, Nature Trails and Education, Horsemanship Activities, Cooking and Housekeeping Skills, Arts and Crafts, Daily Exercise and Sports, and Community Activities and Field Trips."



Amanda enjoys playing softball.



It's easy to see that Amanda has fun while living life on her own terms.



While at River Rock, Amanda enjoys going on nature hikes, swimming, doing Jazzercise, watching movies, doing arts and crafts, and being in the barn with the horses. Amanda also participates in a softball league through Camp Cheerful and takes part in the Buddy Walk every year! She has also attended overnight weekend camps and summer camps at Camp Cheerful.

Amanda is a kind and loyal young woman who is happiest when surrounded by family and friends and living her life on her own terms!

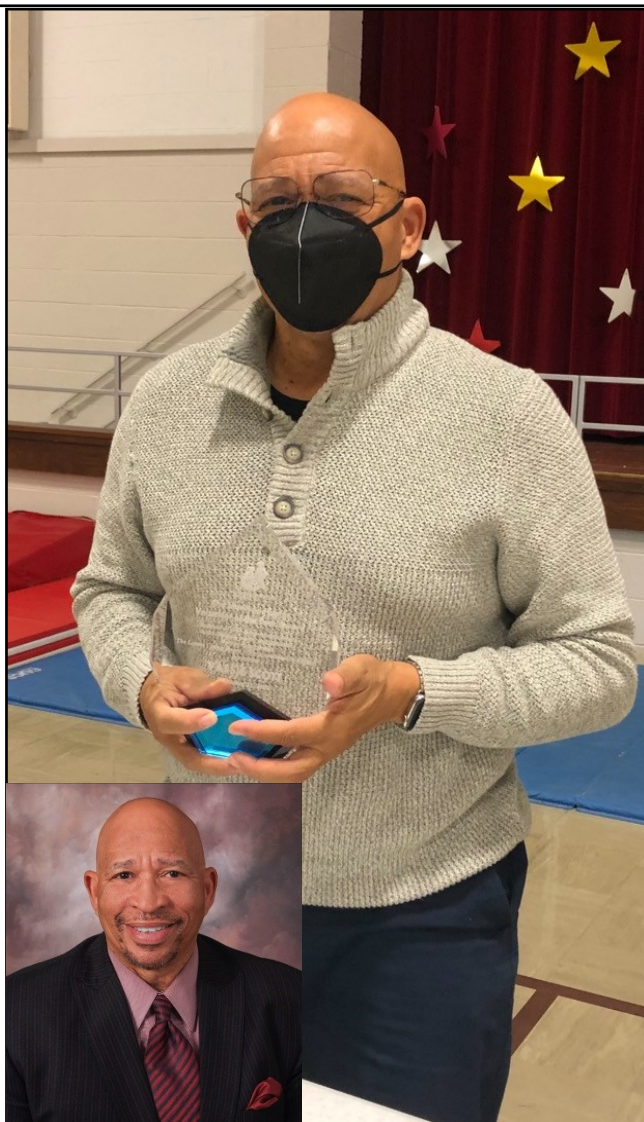
Vassie Scott Receives Volunteer of the Year Award

Congratulations to former Board President **Vassie Scott** for receiving Murray Ridge Center's **Marilynn Hupfer Volunteer of the Year Award** - awarded each year to a member of the community who has dedicated him or herself to helping others.

Scott served on the board since 2009, and became president in January 2020. Just three months later, in March 2020, COVID-19 began changing how all of us live and work, and our organization faced some unprecedented challenges. "I have to say that Vassie was just the person to help lead Murray Ridge through the unprecedented year that was 2020," said **Superintendent Amber Fisher**.

Scott's commitment to Murray Ridge and those the agency serves comes not only from a strong desire to serve the community – but a personal connection as well. His son, **Marcus**, attended Murray Ridge School and has attended the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center for 20 years.

Various agency staff and fellow board members praised Scott for the work he has done while on the board, as well as his commitment to his son and others with developmental disabilities, and his commitment to Murray Ridge Center. Board Member **Bev Gedid** said, "His vast knowledge, life experience, steadfast leadership and great sense of humor have been invaluable as we work towards providing the consumers, their families/caregivers . . . the very best quality services."



Self-Advocacy Video Series Continues

MY LIFE, MY RIGHTS
KNOWING MY RIGHTS
Video Training Series

Final Event!
February 18, 2021 from 1-2 PM
Decision Making

Join the Lorain County Board of DD as we wrap up the Knowing My Rights series. Check the Murray Ridge Facebook page on our website for the Zoom link. Interested in hosting a discussion on one of these topics? Contact Jaclina Rush at (440) 324-2366 or jrush@murrayridgecenter.org to set up a program!

View past topics on the Murray Ridge Center website <http://www.murrayridgecenter.org>

Sponsored by: Lorain County Board of DD with the support of the Myrtle Endowment Fund of the Community Foundation of Lorain County.

Second Harvest Foodbank Launches 2021 Harvest for Hunger Food Drive

Second Harvest Foodbank of North Central Ohio has helped countless Lorain County residents during the pandemic by providing much needed nutritious food. Now, that organization is asking for help from the community in supporting **Harvest for Hunger**.

Harvest for Hunger is the annual community-wide campaign that raises food and funds to stock food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters throughout our region. Second Harvest partners with three other regional food banks to run this campaign through 21 counties, bringing together all of north central and northeast Ohio to raise awareness, funds and food to help families struggling with hunger. Harvest for Hunger is one of the largest campaigns of its kind in the nation, raising more than \$2,500,000 and 400,000 pounds of food last year. This year, Harvest for Hunger will run during February, March, and April 2021.

For more information on how you can get involved, contact Second Harvest by phone at (440) 960-2265, x 302, or via email at sbartosch@secondharvestfoodbank.org.

Feeling stressed or anxious about the COVID-19 pandemic?

Use these tips to reduce your stress and anxiety:



Limit or avoid news coverage if it causes you more stress and anxiety.



Focus on positive things in your life that you can control.



Keep stress under control by exercising, eating healthy, reading, or by trying relaxation techniques such as yoga.



Talk about your experiences and feelings to loved ones and friends, if you find it helpful.



Connect with others who may be experiencing stress about the pandemic.



Take time to renew your spirit through meditation, prayer, or helping others in need.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Distress Helpline (DDH) provides counseling and support before, during, and after disasters. Contact the DDH at 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357)

In Lorain County, Ohio, you also can call the local mental health hotline at 1-800-888-6161 or text 4HOPE to 741741. For non-emergency services, call the Navigator at 440-240-7025, or visit mhsaio.org.

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) • 1-800-487-4889 (TTY) • <https://www.samhsa.gov>

PEP20-01-01-015

BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on January 25, 2021

At its annual Organizational Meeting, held immediately prior to the regular meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, the Board elected the following officers for 2021: Beverly Gedid, President; Keith Boey, Vice-President; and Cathie Leimbach, Secretary. Newly elected President Bev Gedid made committee appointments before adjourning the Organizational Meeting. At its regular meeting, the Board unanimously approved a resolution to provide educational services to children ages 6-21 in the 2021/2022 school year, and discussed a Murray Ridge School summer camp program for 2021. Superintendent Fisher provided an overview of 2020 agency spending, as compared to the 2020 and 2021 budgets and 2019 spending; the impact on Agency programs and expenditures of the COVID-19 epidemic, unanticipated at the time of the development of the 2020 budget, was highlighted. Dr. Fisher also provided an update on the outlook for the year ahead. The 2021 meeting calendar was established by the Board. Newly appointed Board member Tom Williams was welcomed, and outgoing Board member Vassie Scott was recognized for his dedicated service on the Board since 2009.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

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News You Can Use

CDC Says It's Not Too Late for A Flu Shot

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the spread of respiratory illnesses, like flu, this winter is more important than ever. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** has worked with vaccine manufacturers to have extra flu vaccine available and a record number of flu vaccine doses has been distributed in the U.S.

There's still time to get a flu vaccine. Use the **VaccineFinder (vaccinefinder.org)** to find out where to get vaccinated near you.



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