



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE... FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

June 2020

Class of 2020 Drive-By Commencement Memories



A series of 'Drive-By Commencements' were held in late May and early June during which Murray Ridge School staff and Superintendent Amber Fisher visited the homes of the Class of 2020 to present certificates . . . and offer hearty congratulations! Class of 2020 members pictured are:

Left: **Brynne Diedrick**

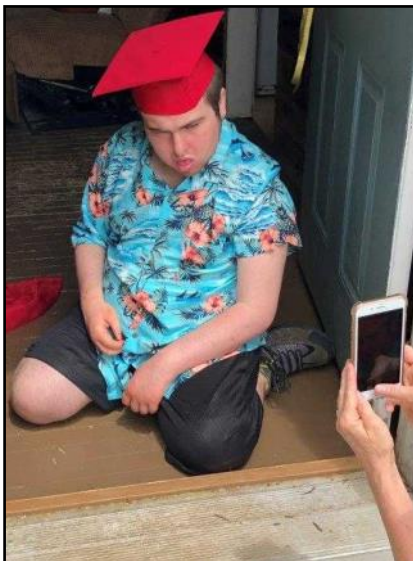
Below left: **Shawn Selmon**

Below center: **Matthew Mowcomber**

Below right: **Tiara Gilchrist**

Bottom left: **Addison Rodgers**

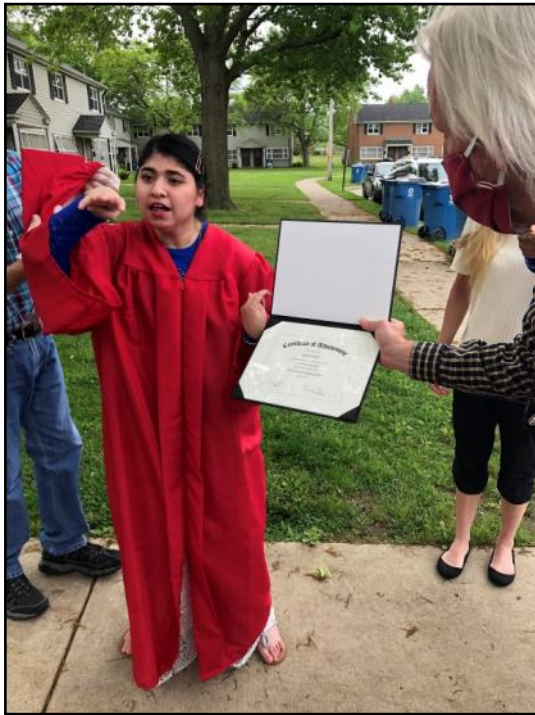
Bottom right: **Taysha Schultz**



**FOR MORE
MEMORIES
OF THIS
YEAR'S
DRIVE-BY
COMMENCE-
MENTS, SEE
PAGES 2-3**



More Drive-By Commencement Memories

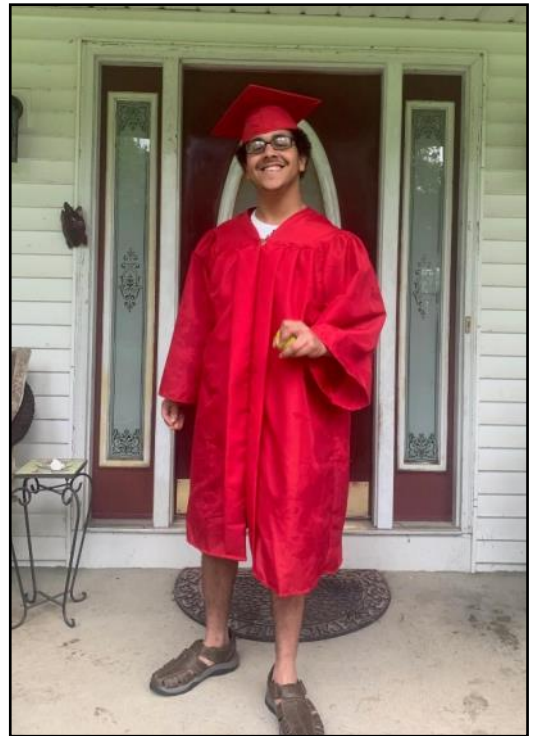


Left:
Shadab Sohail

Right:
Sam DiCello

Below Left:
Kyle Orozco

Below Right:
**Alyssa and
Matthew
Maraldo**



More Drive-By Commencement Memories



Above:
CJ Martin

Right:
Autumn Dillon

Left:
Dylan Hoyt



A Special 'Thank You' for Meister Staff



A "Heroes Work Here" yard sign was recently delivered to the agency's Meister Road Home in Lorrain as a special 'Thank You' to the staff there for their exceptional efforts providing care to the home's residents during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Presenting



Sam DiCello is friendly, happy, and musical. Sam participated in Boy Scouts and enjoyed attending Prom, going to the school dances, and taking part in Boy Scout camp. Sam's plan after graduation is to attend the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC) and continue living with his family.



Brynne Diedrick is a very beautiful, happy and friendly young lady. She can brighten up a room and bring a smile to anyone's face. She is a social butterfly and loves to play around and be a jokester by sneaking up on you and trying to scare you. She

worked hard at making beds and filling in for work. Brynne loves to give hugs to everyone, but has worked really hard this year on giving hand shakes, high fives and fist bumps. She did an awesome job with this.



Autumn Dillon is a happy and calm girl, who enjoys shaker bottles and stuffed animals. During her leisure time she enjoys laying on bean bags and strolls outside. Autumn was a member of The Crew at Murray Ridge School. One of Autumn's favorite memories at Murray Ridge School was participating in the many field trips with her classroom. Autumn plans to attend the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (LOVC) following graduation. "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams" — go get your dreams Autumn!



Tiara Gilchrist has attended Murray Ridge School for 19 years, since she started in our preschool program. She is a wonderful young woman who enjoyed many activities at school, but who particularly had a blast in Mr. E's music class, swimming, and in the library. Tiara transitioned to home based services where she was taught by Karen Gomez for the last several years, and focused on Ohio's curriculum and completing the Ohio Graduation Tests. Her interests include following many types of musicians and authors while reviewing their latest works. After graduation she plans to host a celebratory social distance party, including a parade, and participate in family outings. One of her favorite Murray Ridge activities has been the annual Murray Ridge Prom. We will miss Tiara's smile at the beginning of every class and her love of learning.



Dylan Hoyt has attended Murray Ridge School since preschool. He is a wonderful young man who has particularly enjoyed swimming and music classes, and who has met many new friends while attending school.

Some of his favorite activities were crafts and field trips. Dylan transitioned to home based services and was taught by many great teachers the last several years completing Ohio's vast curriculum. During this time he discovered the power of the Internet and how to know what the weather is anywhere in the world. He was always eager to complete any lesson if a video was included or the iPad was involved. His interests include spending time outdoors and watching any of Ohio's sports teams with family and friends. A graduation party to celebrate his accomplishments with his parents and two brothers is being planned.



Alyssa Maraldo is a polite and generous student who is always thinking of others. She enjoys spending time with her family and peers and staff at Murray Ridge School. During her leisure time she likes to read online books, cook meals at home and create art with the Happy Color app. She has enjoyed being a member of Girl Scouts at Murray Ridge. Alyssa is very thoughtful and a good listener. She is always checking in with others to see how they are doing. One of Alyssa's favorite memories at school was when she first started, how kind and welcoming everyone was. Alyssa has been accepted into a program at Firelands Community College and plans to attend school there. Her hard work in reaching her goals is something to be proud of! Congratulations Alyssa, we will miss you!



Matthew Maraldo is a sweet and gentle student who enjoys hearing a good story read aloud. He liked to participate in swimming and gym, and he enjoyed visiting with his peers and staff while in the hallway at Murray Ridge. During his leisure time he enjoys going on walks outside and taking long car rides. He is a member of boy scouts

and The Crew at Murray Ridge School. Matthew is a loving individual who is kind to those around him. Matthew's favorite memories at Murray Ridge School were spending time with the people who were there with him. Matthew plans to attend the Pathways Day Program upon graduation. Follow your dreams Matthew, you are one in a million!! We will miss you!

The Class of 2020



Christian "CJ" Martin is a beloved student who is always happy and friendly to those around him. He enjoys being in the company of all his peers and staff at Murray Ridge School. During his leisure time he enjoys riding his bike, spending time in his room and communicating with friends on Facebook. He is a member of Boy Scouts and The Crew at Murray Ridge School. CJ is a very hard worker who is always willing to help anyone at any given moment. One of CJ's favorite memories at Murray Ridge School was going to Prom with his girlfriend Paulina. CJ plans to attend and participate in a community day program upon graduation. The sky is the limit for this bright shining star! We will all miss you!



Matthew Mowcomber is described by his peers as friendly and brave. He enjoys music, going on field trips, interacting with others, and working in the community. Matthew's plan after graduation is to attend a day program.



Kyle Orozco is a kind and warm-hearted student who loves spending time with his family and provider, Miss Coco. He enjoys drinking Pepsi and having a good laugh watching some of his favorite shows on his iPad. During his leisure time he enjoys taking walks and spending time checking out movies at the library. He is a member of Boy Scouts and The Crew at Murray Ridge School. Kyle has fun learning about science topics and going to different museums. One of his favorite memories at Murray Ridge School was tap dancing in the talent show. Kyle plans to attend the Pathways Day Program upon graduation. Achieve your dreams Kyle! You will always be in our hearts, and you will be missed!



Addison Rodgers is a fun-loving student who enjoys going on field trips to different places in the community and appreciates mudding tractor videos. During his leisure time he enjoys listening to the reggae music of Bob Marley, being outside in nature and spending time with his tractor, 'Erma.' He is a member of Boy Scouts and The Crew at Murray Ridge School. Addison has excellent attention to detail and a great sense of humor. One of Addison's favorite memories at Murray Ridge School was going to summer camp in 2017 with Mr. Glenn, Miss Amanda and Miss Melissa, being outside playing basketball and playing with bubbles. Addison plans to attend the Lucy Idol Day Program following graduation. You are courageous and wonderful Addison! We will miss you!



Taysha Schultz is a sweet loving soul, who enjoys the company of her peers and her care givers. During her leisure time she enjoys swimming and napping. She is a member of girl scouts and The Crew at Murray Ridge School. One of Taysha favorite memories at Murray Ridge School was participating in the Murray Ridge 500. Taysha plans to attend the Lucy Idol Center once she graduates. The 'sky's the limit,' so reach for the sky, Taysha!



Shawn Selmon is a very kind and sensitive young man. He is very caring towards others and always willing to help. He works hard in and out of the classroom always putting forth his best effort and taking pride in his work. Shawn worked hard at the IGA and worked hard on his academics, making great strides with his understanding of money and purchasing items. Shawn is friends with everyone and considers himself quite the 'ladies' man.'



Shadab Sohail is a happy young lady. Shadab always entered the classroom with a smile on her face. Every morning and throughout the day, she always took the time to say 'hi' to others in and out of the classroom. Shadab enjoyed interacting and talking to others. Shadab always looks forward to and enjoys working together in a group with her peers. Everyday, Shadab liked the interaction of participating in classroom activities. Shadab's favorite classes were music and classroom interactions and discussions. Shadab is a strong minded young lady who knows what she wants and doesn't want and reinforces it with her actions. It was a privilege and delight to have you in school. May your new journey bring you happiness and success in your life.

Top 10 Tips for Parents

During the coronavirus outbreak

1

CHILDREN look to adults for guidance. Keeping your stress in check can help manage kids' worries and anxiety.

2

ENCOURAGE children to ask questions and talk about their fears. This provides parents the chance to give age-appropriate information.

3

TEACH children prevention strategies such as hand-washing and covering coughs. This reduces the risk of infection and gives children a sense of control, which can reduce anxiety.

4

ROUTINE and structure are your friends. Involve children in creating their daily or weekly routine that includes: hygiene, learning, reading, exercise, play, mindfulness, and nutrition

5

STAY CONNECTED. Help kids address isolation and social distancing by writing cards and letters, making crafts, and calling or FaceTiming friends and loved ones.

6

FAMILY TIME. Play board games, cards, checkers, and trivia games. This can help kids feel secure while keeping them connected. Involve kids in sanitizing these items after use.

7

USE THE WEB RESPONSIBLY. Monitor use of social media. There are many online resources for kids to learn. Plan which web sites are appropriate for your children.

8

SELF CARE. Teach children about wellness. Build in time daily for rest and mindfulness activities such as yoga or meditation. Model relaxation techniques like reading a book or a watching a movie.

9

BE ACCESSIBLE. Children need reassurance as the crisis progresses. Be honest and manage expectations. Let them know you are there and will help keep yourself and the family well.

10

DON'T PANIC. The community's response to COVID-19 is evolving daily. Know where to get help and information to help maintain the mental wellness of your children and family.



Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
National Association of School Psychologists and School Nurses - Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus) A Parent Resource - https://napshq.org/download.cfm?source=www.nasnp.org/3670/254-119-4x2f-833F-254d278d255a/UploadedImages/PDFs/02292020_NASNP_NASNP_COVID-19_parents_handout.pdf
American Academy of Pediatrics - <https://www.aap.org/health-topics/health-news/conditions/child-range/Pages/2019-November-Coronavirus.aspx>
American Psychological Association - <https://www.apa.org/topics/coronavirus/talking-about-stress>

An Early Intervention 'Virtual' Success Story

We hope you enjoy this testimonial from a local mom regarding Murray Ridge's Early Intervention (EI) Program.

"The stress of being a mom is real. When you have a child who is scaling behind a bit, after a child who is ahead of the charts, can be frustrating. You expect more and it's easier to lose patience. When our Developmental Specialist, Cindy, started to come around, I realized I'm not alone with this. All kids grow at their own pace. Cindy has given us the tools to work with Aiden and help him grow at his pace and allow me to gain the patience with him that he deserves.

We visit almost every two weeks and catch up with life, family, and of course, Aiden's progress. When the shut-down came along, Cindy didn't want to miss a beat with our family. She agreed to keep in contact virtually so we could still have the support we needed. We meaning support for Aiden and Me. When we meet virtually now, things are just as great. We try to do projects with the kids while chatting to keep them involved. I'm so glad she has been there for us, especially during this time of isolation. It really brings joy and happiness to our day!"

Beckey and Aiden Scarborough



Helping Keep Murray Ridge Connected to the Community During the Closure

Terri Stembal joined the Murray Ridge Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department as a Secretary in December of 2019. Little did she know that within only a few weeks she would find herself playing an important role in helping the community and Murray Ridge Center stay connected during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

When the State of Ohio's 'Stay at Home' order necessitated the closure of our Adult Day Centers and Murray Ridge School in mid-March, to maintain essential functions for those we serve it was determined that phone numbers for all agency programs (except the Meister Road Home) would be routed to a single line staffed by a receptionist during regular business hours. Volunteering to be the voice on the other end of that phone line was. . . Terri Stembal.

"I consider myself a team player who likes to do whatever is needed — plus, I was the new kid on the block. So, I thought it made sense for me to be here to answer the phones," Stembal said.

Dealing with a wide range of 'customer' issues is second nature for Stembal. She has an extensive background in customer service — and, in fact, won a national award for customer service several years ago from Home Depot, where she still currently works part-time. So dealing pleasantly and efficiently with the occasional call from a worried agency consumer or family member was second-nature to her.

"You have to roll with the punches and do whatever is needed, especially during such stressful times," she said. "Just keep a smile on your face and do all you can do to calm people down and steer them to the help they need."

Stembal said that her time at Murray Ridge makes her feel as if she's found her niche. "I have always admired Murray Ridge Center," she said. "I have an older sister with disabilities, and I often volunteered with Special Olympics. So when this job came up it felt like a perfect fit. Kind of like Cinderella with her glass slipper!," Stembal said.



Terri Stembal



BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on May 18, 2020:

The Board unanimously resolved that, due to the COVID-19 epidemic, Murray Ridge School will not offer a day camp in 2020. Dann Swift, Director of Educational Services, explained the plan to honor members of the Murray Ridge School class of 2020; the plan includes an outdoor, individualized ceremony at the home of each graduate. Superintendent Fisher described a proposed project of the Lorain County Children and Families Council, whereby research would be conducted to determine why some children, ages 0-3, who are eligible for Early Intervention services do not enroll in these services; the Board unanimously approved some funding for this research. Given that it will not be possible to safely serve as many individuals within the Murray Ridge Adult Opportunity and Vocational Centers as were served at these sites prior to the COVID-19 epidemic, the Board unanimously resolved that it would, under specific circumstances, cover the cost of Adult Day Support and Vocational Habilitation for eligible individuals who are not enrolled on Medicaid waivers, and do not live in Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities. It was also announced that the 2020 Murray Ridge Golf Classic will be cancelled.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

Standard Presort
U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 146
Elyria, OH 44035

Exceptional Service Award

Do you know a Murray Ridge staff member whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication and have significantly contributed to the well being of people with developmental disabilities? Nominate that staff member 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. Include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the staff member. 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 at cvasco@murrayridgecenter.org

News You Can Use

On June 3, **Connecting for Kids** held a 'Summer 2020 Virtual Resource Fair' where participants had an opportunity to meet more than 100 providers via Facebook to ask questions, learn about summer programs and find resources needed to get their family through the summer.

If you missed the June 3 event, there's still time to benefit from the information shared at the Virtual Resource Fair. Connecting for Kids is planning to keep the Virtual Resource Fair open through September 3!

Log onto connectingforkids.org/summer2020vrf/ for more details.



Connecting for Kids

You're not alone