



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE... FOR A LIFETIME

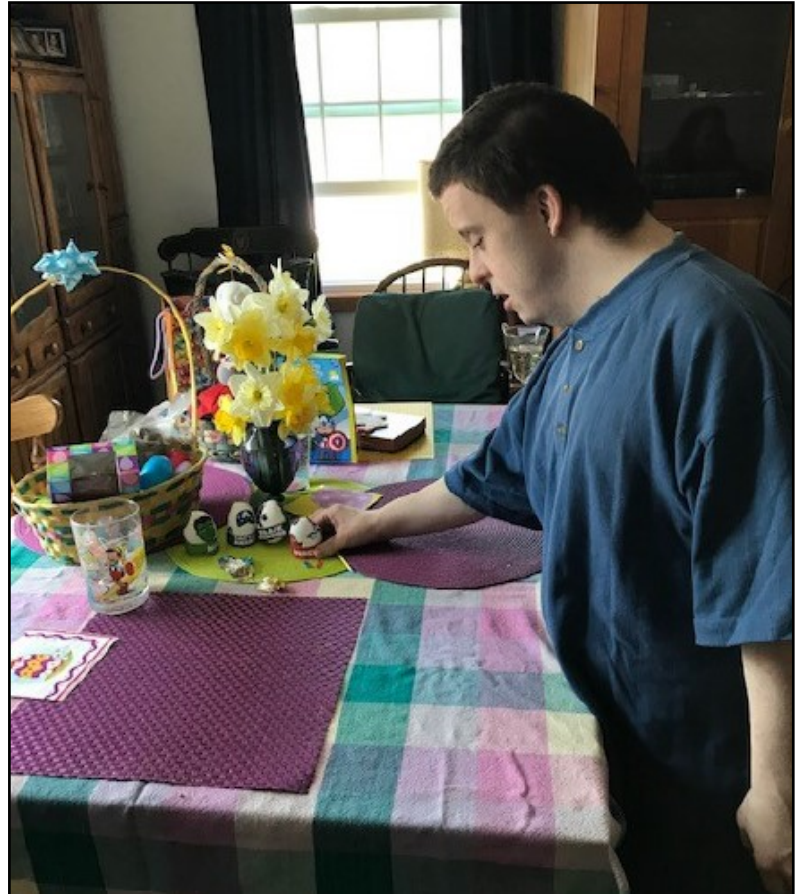
The Murray Ridge Courier

May 2021

OOVC Program Participant Gets Special Easter Surprise

Finian "Gus" McKee receives Virtual Adult Day Services (VADS) via Zoom from the **Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC)**. Gus enjoys VADS sessions on physical fitness, socialization/communication and community awareness, and leisure/recreational activities. Each week, activity aides collate educational and skill-based materials that Adult Program Instructor **Lisa Lee** gathers to be used for upcoming sessions. These materials are packaged in sealed totes and dropped off outside the home of each VADS participant.

For the Easter holiday, some fun Easter-themed activities and materials were sent home for individuals to enjoy with their family and friends. Lisa and the activity aides made sure that these materials and activities reflected the individuals' interests and desired outcomes. For Gus, Superheroes really spark excitement. Pictured (right) is Gus at home setting up his Superhero-themed Easter centerpiece. Gus's dad, Richard, said that Gus was "super" excited about using the Superhero motif to display his Easter eggs, and that it was so much easier than using the traditional egg dyeing method.



"Gus" McKee enjoying his special Easter surprise

Murray Ridge School Teacher Recognized by Fox 8 News



The recent Teacher Appreciation Week (May 3-7) was a perfect time to recognize and thank all the teachers at **Murray Ridge School** for what they do! Special thanks and congratulations went to Murray Ridge School Teacher **Ryanne Gelp** for being recognized by Fox 8 News.

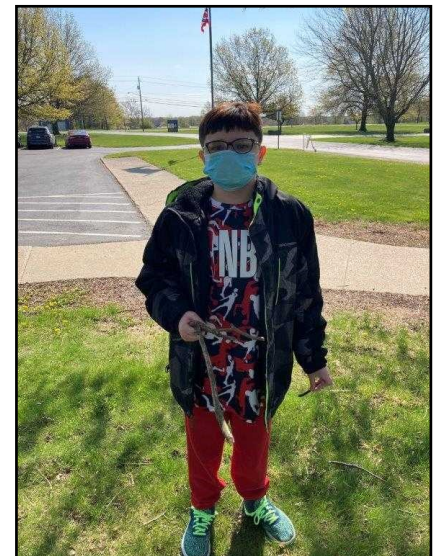
According to her nomination, "Ryanne is an Intervention Specialist at Murray Ridge School. She teaches students with special needs in grades 3-5. She is always available to help in every aspect of her job. She goes above and beyond her duties. She adds glitter to all of her kids, not just the twinkle in their eye, but literally you will leave her class with glitter on you. She's just super amazing."

Murray Ridge School Students Celebrate 'Earth Day'



Murray Ridge School Teacher **Julie Maurer's** class did an Earth Day craft and also assisted with cleaning up the school grounds. The students cleaned up sticks and debris and enjoyed some time outdoors.

Pictured are:
-Right-**Tyrese Whitfield**
-Left-**Kyle Offenber**
-Below
left-**Jacksuel Albarran**
-Below right-**Josiah Smith**
-Bottom -Earth Day class projects on display at Murray Ridge School.



Drivers Needed

Murray Ridge Center is looking for drivers to transport Murray Ridge Adult Program participants between their homes and community employment sites. No CDL required! You do need a valid Ohio driver's license and a good driving record. We provide the vehicles and training. Hours are generally during the day, on an as-needed basis.

Applications are available on our website at: <http://www.murrayridgecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Employment-Application.pdf>

Staff Participates in CFK Lorain County Resource Fair



Congratulations to **Connecting for Kids (CFK)** on another great Lorain County Resource Fair held recently at Lorain County Community College! Representatives from Murray Ridge's **Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department** and **Early Intervention (EI) Program** took part and reported that the event went really well! EI Supervisor **Heather Knoble** said staff loved the location and having the event outside this year. "There was so much more room for people to walk, especially with wagons, strollers, and wheelchairs - and it was a much better setting to be able to talk to people. Sometimes it's loud indoors and hard to hear. Being outdoors gave us the opportunity to engage with each person that came up to the table rather than having some people just pass by." Pictured above are Heather Knoble (standing) and **Lisa Neely** from SSA (seated).

VADS Program Salutes Essential Workers

Adult Program Instructor **Ken Lewis** has focused on essential worker awareness and appreciation as part of the Virtual Adult Day Services (VADS) program on Community Awareness. The VADS participants have learned about those people who have kept our community going through the pandemic, including: doctors, nurses, first responders, truck drivers, package deliverers, mail carriers, grocery store staff, fast food and restaurant workers, etc. And, as part of the session, Ken has inspired others to give out thank you notes to essential workers for the work they do. Also during this series, participants have learned of a number of "essential workers" right within our Murray Ridge community.

SSA Department Sponsors Provider 'Meet'N'Greets'

The Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department recently began an ongoing series of virtual Independent **Provider Meet 'N' Greets**. These events, which take place the last Thursday of each month at 9:30-10:30 a.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m. are a great opportunity for providers to connect with each other on common issues or concerns, help support new providers, and receive updates from Murray Ridge Center. We want to answer your questions! Join us for a virtual Q&A event where you will have the opportunity to talk with Lorain County Board of DD staff and other providers in the county. Contact ProviderSupport@murrayridgecenter.org with any questions!

Register in advance for these meetings at: <https://zoom.us/join/https://zoom.us/join/https://zoom.us/join/tJArfumvqT8sE9RwaBakiYP38bftwuKxU61d>

Exceptional Service Award Nominations Sought

Following a 'pandemic pause,' this year we've resumed our **Exceptional Service Award** program. 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 cvasco@murrayridgecenter.org

Register now!

YOU ARE INVITED!

To Share, Learn, and Grow



We want to have a conversation with you! Pick one of the available dates and join us on Zoom to give feedback, get your questions answered, and hear from other providers in Lorain County.

Register now!

The last Thursday of every month from
9:30-10:30 AM or 5:30-6:30 PM

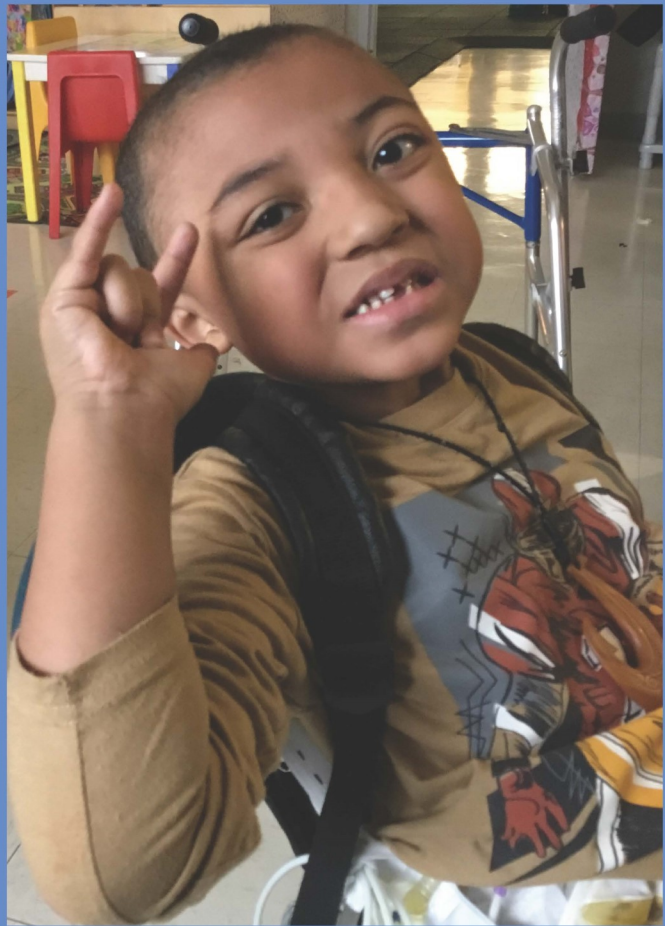
MURRAY RIDGE PRESCHOOL

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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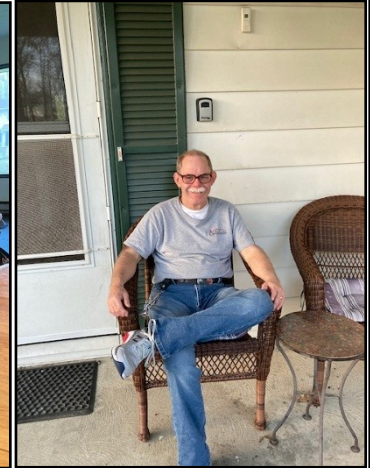
Consumer Profile — Meet James Flanagan

James is a loyal, generous and compassionate man. He has a curious mind and loves to tease and joke around with his family and friends. James's family and friends are very important to him. He is close with his brother and niece who live in Minnesota. It is very important to James that he talk to them often. James also has a girlfriend that he enjoys spending time with. James relies on his family and girlfriend for friendship, love, advice, and their confidence and support.

James has an I.O. (Individual Options) Waiver and is supported by his **Murray Ridge Service and Support Administrator (SSA)**, Scott McIver. Scott helps James with the development of his Individual

Service Plan (ISP), which lists the services and supports that help James live his life to the fullest.

Scott also monitors James's services and keeps his ISP up-to-date to help him reach his goals as his life changes.



James enjoying himself at home



James lives with three other gentlemen in a small group setting in North Ridgeville. James receives supports in his home from **Triad Residential Solutions**. Triad is an agency that supports people in doing their daily life tasks like taking care of their personal needs, completing household chores, cooking meals, shopping, scheduling medical appointments, paying bills, and taking medications. James likes to do things on his own as much as possible but he will rely on Triad to help him out when he needs it. When at home, James enjoys playing guitar, watching all sports, cooking and sitting in his chair on the porch.

James enjoys getting out into his community as much as possible. He likes going places with his girlfriend, and also likes bowling, movies, festivals and going out to eat - he doesn't care where! James has his own car, and being able to be safe and drive himself to the places he wants to go to is very important to him. James enjoys exploring his community and is known to be adventurous!



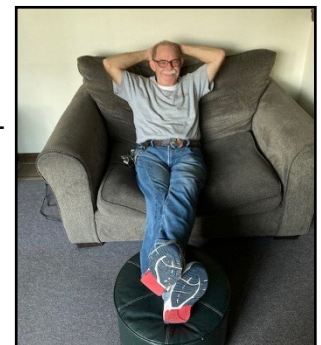
James on the job



James shown at Alpha Care

During the week, James attends **Alpha Care Adult Day Center**. According to its website, Alpha Care offers a variety of services that include "education, life skills, art & expression, community inclusion, and vocational training." At Alpha Care, individuals choose how they want to spend their days. James has been going to Alpha Care for about 10 years! He enjoys working at janitorial and organizing jobs that are available. James also enjoys kicking back and hanging out with his friends - whether that is just being at Alpha Care with friends or going out to eat, going bowling or going out for a walk. Being at Alpha Care and having his daily routine is very important to him!

James is living life on his terms and is full of love for his family, friends and life!



Lounging in his easy chair

Murray Ridge Teacher, ChickQuest Program Spotligthted

Congratulations to Murray Ridge School Teacher Samantha Polczynski for having her work teaching the popular ChickQuest program recognized in a lengthy feature story on the website of GrowNextGen – a statewide organization funded by the Ohio Soybean Council and Ohio soybean farmers that provides teachers with free, high-quality STEM units and lessons focused on agriculture. From monitoring living eggs to observing fluffy chicks, ChickQuest's lively activities pique curiosity, encourage collaboration and communication, and provide young scientists with unforgettable experiences. "Ms. Sam" would like to thank GrowNextGen and the Ohio Soybean Council for supplying the training and more than \$400 in materials, and she would also like to thank Sally Hennessy from the Ohio State University Extension Office for her support.

Polczynski was trained in a ChickQuest workshop in 2019. According to Polczynski, "My classroom had been learning about the life cycle and had opportunities to watch caterpillars transform into butterflies. I wanted to purchase tadpoles and watch them grow into frogs, but could not get the timing right with school curriculum and weather conditions. In my search for other options, I stumbled upon ChickQuest. It sounded like a much more involved program and would be a new challenge for me and my students. I decided to attend the training, and it was enlightening. I learned so much myself! Our team won the egg catcher challenge and I was blown away with the supplies we received following class.

"ChickQuest provides so many engaging activities and scientific hands-on learning. It also requires serious conversations about the life cycle, following directions, and being mindful of safety. Throughout the fun experiments, the students are listening and learning about scientific procedures and risks involved with our experiment. We have discussed the importance of numbering (not naming) the eggs and understanding that it is unlikely all eggs will hatch.



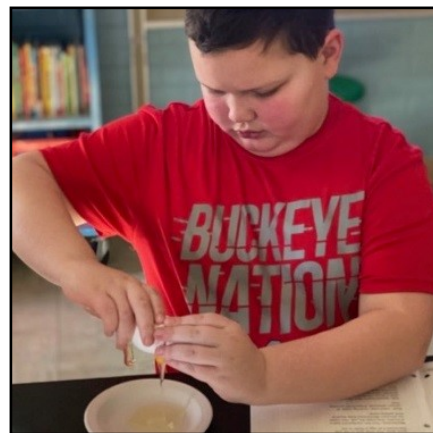
Dorian Dye

"My students do best with learning that involves hands-on problem solving and sensory-based experiences. If it's a mess, it's a success! In past lessons, students have particularly been interested in learning about the parts of the egg and that the egg yolk and albumen is NOT the undeveloped chick. Testing the strength of the eggs is an activity that always surprises! The students were incredibly engaged in the material and eagerly welcomed 6 out of 10 chicks, all which were placed at a local farm.

"This will be my second time teaching with the modified materials using Zoom. This year, we plan to record the lessons and post them on YouTube for easy access. I am coordinating with Angel Escobar, a teacher in Cleveland City School District, to provide sign language interpretation for the videos.

"Transitioning to remote learning was an initial challenge, as our students need and greatly benefit from direct instruction. Using the technology resources available, I took advantage of Zoom and was forced to think outside of a new box. Based on our ability to successfully utilize technology and navigate the new world of remote learning, I have remained as a designated remote teacher during the 20/21 school year, teaching students who opted for continued remote learning education.

"Like many teachers, I was fearful of how COVID would impact my students and their families and my ability to meet the educational needs of my students. Our classroom is built on 'rising to the challenge' and it was my turn to demonstrate that as the classroom leader. COVID did not stop our class. If anything, it has highlighted our ability to adapt, modify, and problem solve. I have seen my students grow in unexpected ways that may not have occurred without the sudden change we have all experienced."



Mikey Elsleger



A Message on Vaccine Hesitancy From the Cleveland Clinic

Vaccination is a crucial step in putting this pandemic behind us, but only if enough people receive the vaccine. Addressing vaccine hesitancy is a challenge we need to face to reach herd immunity.

It's been more than a year since we first learned about COVID-19. No one could have predicted how the virus would impact our lives and the world as we knew it. There is certainly a reason to be hopeful with the development, authorization and increased availability of safe vaccines, but only if enough people get vaccinated.

In order for us to reach herd immunity, 70% to 85% of the population will need to be vaccinated first. Addressing vaccine misinformation and uncertainty is now a hurdle we'll need to clear before the pandemic can officially end.

Addressing vaccine hesitancy

Given the speed of the development of these COVID-19 vaccines, it's understandable that you have questions about whether or not there's been enough research to ensure that they are safe.

Please be assured that all of the vaccines went through rigorous clinical trials to determine safety and effectiveness, including patient follow-up and approval from the FDA. Independent panels of vaccine experts have also closely scrutinized the data from those trials and deemed the vaccines to be safe and effective for emergency use. Similar independent panels in several other countries are in agreement.

If you look at the number of cases where a large part of the population has already been vaccinated, you will see how beneficial and lifesaving the vaccines are. Getting vaccinated helps protect you and those around you, including those who are most at risk and those who can't be vaccinated (or haven't been eligible yet, like children).

If you have more questions about the vaccine, talk with your



trusted healthcare provider or look to reliable sources like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization.

After you are vaccinated, please follow basic safety precautions like masking, distancing and hand washing. Doing so will help protect those around you who haven't been vaccinated yet.

Thank you for choosing hope

Many of you have already received the vaccine and in doing so, are helping to control the pandemic. We encourage you to share your vaccination experience with friends and family. Doing so may ease someone else's worries or fears about it.

If you haven't already, please get the vaccine at any available provider. It is our best hope to put this pandemic behind us.

BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on April 26, 2021

The Board passed multiple resolutions related to Murray Ridge Adult Services (MRAS); these decisions were necessary because the federal Medicaid agency (CMS) will not allow county boards to provide Medicaid-funded direct services (like Adult Services) to Medicaid waiver recipients after March of 2024, and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities has taken the position that this year the Lorain County Board of DD must significantly reduce the number of waiver recipients to whom it directly provides Adult Services. Individuals currently impacted by the decisions related to MRAS have been contacted. As of May 01, 2021, those who are newly enrolled on Medicaid waivers will not be able to (continue to) receive MRAS, upon waiver enrollment. Parts of the Elyria Opportunity & Vocational Center will be leased to private providers of Adult Day Support/Vocational Habilitation. Agency calendars for 07/01/2021 – 06/30/2022 were approved. The Board also approved a sponsorship of the upcoming Synergy Conference, to occur on October 6-7, 2021. The Board passed a resolution authorizing for public release a draft of the 2020 Strategic Plan Progress Report, and gave notice of a public forum on this report to be held on May 17, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. on the Zoom internet application: zoom.us/j/98798946092?pwd=eIVubUc0ZnFtNIU1VmFZOTNKCfV1dz09 Passcode: 052021, or by phone at 1 267 831 0333 (Meeting ID: 987 9894 6092, Passcode: 052021)

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

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News You Can Use

Lorain County Public Health Says: "Let's Put COVID-19 In Our Rearview Mirror"

The sooner we get vaccinated, the sooner we can put COVID-19 in our rearview mirror.

If you haven't been fully vaccinated, now is the time to make a plan to get a COVID-19 vaccine in May 2021. Schedule your vaccine appointment at [LorainCountyHealth.com/signup](https://loraincountyhealth.com/signup) or call 211 for assistance with scheduling.

Lorain County Public Health also continues to reduce barriers to vaccine clinics with our partners. Free rides are available via shuttles and Paratransit. Call 211 for transportation assistance.

For more information on COVID-19, go to: loraincountyhealth.com.

Keep healthy, Lorain County.



**Lorain County
Public Health**

For the Health of Us All