



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

November 2019

Riddell, The Reserves Network Receive C.A.R.E.S. Award

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

The C.A.R.E.S. Award stands for Community . . . Awareness . . . Recognition . . . Education . . . and Service, and this year the award was given to **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 do important seasonal factory work 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.'

Here'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 our 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 have been 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." According to Riddell Human Resources Manager **Leigh Cullen**, "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 special relationship.



Accepting the C.A.R.E.S. Award at the recent In-service were (from left) Michelle Stiles and Chris Farinacci from The Reserves Network and Leigh Cullen, Human Resources Manager at Riddell.

(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.

**FOR MORE COVERAGE OF THE
MURRAY RIDGE 'IN-SERVICE DAY'
CHECK OUT PAGES 2-3**

Agency In-Service — 2019

The staff of Murray Ridge Center gathered at Lorain County Community College (LCCC) on October 18 to celebrate the men and women who work tirelessly each and every day in our school, Early Intervention Department, Adult Services programs, Residential Department, Service and Support Administration Department, and other administrative and support roles. We would like to thank our special guests at the event: Lorain County Commissioner **Sharon Sweda**, and Murray Ridge Board Members **Becky Cornman**, **Bev Gedid** and **Dan White**. In addition to the presentation of the agency's C.A.R.E.S. award (see story on page 1), here are some of the highlights of the day.

ANNUAL ADDRESS

Superintendent **Amber Fisher** delivered the annual address, asking each department to stand and be recognized as she highlighted the many successes Murray Ridge Center has had this past year. She also discussed the ongoing pursuit of additional community-based opportunities for those we serve and expanded promotion of self-advocacy by Lorain County residents with Developmental Disabilities.

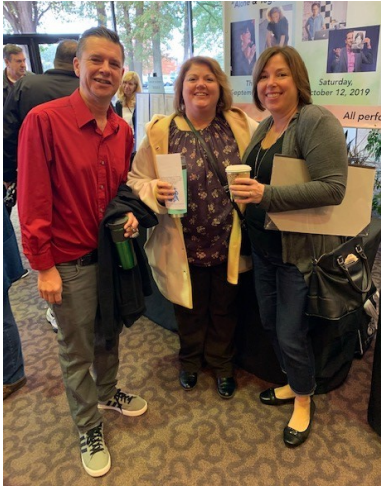
RECOGNITION OF STAFF

Special recognition was given to individuals who this year reached the milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of service to Murray Ridge. Also recognized were staff members who had perfect attendance from October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019. **Congratulations to our amazing Murray Ridge staff!**



Honorees and their supervisors pictured clockwise from top left: **Stacie Starr** and **Julie Maurer** (30 years); **Ron Hauch** (30 years) and **Christine Ash**; Board Member **Bev Gedid** and **Amber Fisher** (30 years); **Sandy Desai** (30 years) and **Nancy Hollins**; **Kathy Piskur** (35 years) with **Gregg Heiden** and **Amber Fisher**; and **Shelley Stipe** (30 years) and **Breana Hedges**.

Agency In-Service — 2019



LEFT COLUMN:

Top: **Ken Lewis, Tracey Lewis, and Terri Camp**

Second: **Terri Mahon, Shannon Tandarich, Ron Hause, and Dann Swift**

Third: **Dave Biggs, Katie Wade, Gary Gargus, and Debby Wright**

Bottom: **20-year staff and supervisors**

CENTER COLUMN:

Top: **Leslie Salo and Wilma Bollon**

Bottom: **Pam Sebastian and Greg Westgate**

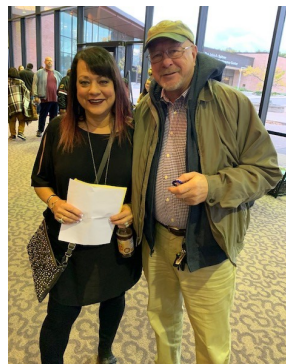
RIGHT COLUMN:

Top: **Mary Shimer and Jim Nagy**

Second: **R.I.C.H.E.S. Committee members Amanda Giovannazzo, Natalie Skiba, Walter Campbell, Kathy Justy and Jill Camp**

Third: **Kevin Eye, Tracey Carroll and Sherry Hardin**

Bottom: **25-year staff and supervisors**



Annual Transportation Safety Instruction

Murray Ridge Center wants you to be safe when travelling. These are guidelines that students, eligible adults, and their caregivers should be aware of when utilizing transportation services.

WAITING FOR THE BUS

- Wait for the bus at least 10 feet from the road.
- Dress properly - winter clothing, hats, mittens, and boots will help keep you warm in the winter.
- Watch for the bus' red lights.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and door opens before stepping into the roadway.
- Wait for the driver to signal to cross. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
- Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
- If you use a wheelchair, it must be equipped with a functioning seat belt. The wheels should lock as well.
- Store all belongings in a backpack so nothing gets dropped.

BUS SEAT SAFETY RULES

- Follow all of the driver's instructions.
- Speak softly so the driver will not be distracted. At railroad crossings, be quiet.
- Stay seated until your stop and keep the aisle clear.
- Never put head, arms, or hands out of the window.
- Never do anything to distract the driver.
- Keep aisles clear and free of tripping hazards.
- Never throw things on the bus or out the windows.
- Tell the driver or monitor if you are being bullied.
- If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.
- Do not eat on the bus, as this could present a choking hazard.

GETTING OFF THE BUS AT HOME

- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you.
- Wait for the signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
- Stay away from the bus' rear wheels at all times. If you drop something near the bus, leave it. If you leave something on the bus, never return to get it. The driver may not see you come back and start to move the bus. If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver before you pick it up so he/she knows where you are.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- When you enter or leave a vehicle, watch for slippery or uneven pavement and other hazards that could cause you to fall.
- Have your LCT ID, bus fare, ticket, or pass ready so you don't lose your balance while looking for it.
- Do not carry too many packages – always leave a free hand to grab a railing.
- Allow extra time to cross streets, especially in bad weather.
- If it's dark outside, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.
- Do not talk to strangers. If you are being bothered by someone, tell the driver immediately.
- If you use a stop assistance card, remember to show it to the driver as you board the bus.
- Most LCT stops are not sheltered. Dress appropriately for the winter weather, and utilize sunscreen in the summer.
- Whether you are in a bus, car, or van – **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT IF THE VEHICLE IS EQUIPPED WITH ONE!**



Consumer Profile: Meet Nicholas Zehe

Nicholas lives with his parents Doug and Darcy Zehe in Sheffield Village. Nicholas is an only child and loves spending time with his family. Nicholas is inquisitive and smart. He likes to learn, and has a lot of energy and a great sense of humor. He enjoys making friends and spending time in his community. At home, Nicholas spends time with his mom and dad watching sports; helps his dad in the yard; or entertains himself playing video games, watching videos or spending time in the kitchen.

Nicholas is supported by his Murray Ridge Center Service and Support Administrator, B.J. Winkelman. B.J. assists Nicholas with the development of his Individual Service Plan, monitors his service and helps keep his plan up to date as his needs and desires changes.

In July 2016, B.J. coordinated the purchase of a new cooling vest for Nicholas that allows him to participate in activities when the environment gets too warm. In addition, B.J. coordinated Nicholas' participation in several summer camps in the area which Nicholas really enjoyed and helped him to develop his independence and life skills.



Nicholas and his mom, Darcy.



Preparing to bowl during his Saturday bowling league.

Nicholas is supported in the community by Nick Dufresne and Melissa Gareau, his independent waiver providers. Nicholas and Nick spend a lot of time together. On Saturdays, they go bowling as Nicholas is on a bowling league. They also go out to eat, volunteer at a local church packing food for needy families, and volunteer at a local food bank. Melissa and Nicholas go to dances, movies, sporting events and seasonal activities. Nicholas' providers help him develop his socialization and independent living skills.

Nicholas loves spending time with his caregivers and his friends and is a very social person. He is an absolute sports junkie. He knows all the statistics and information about football, baseball, basketball and hockey! Nicholas also plays basketball for the Elyria Vipers.

During the week, Nicholas attends Cornucopia, a day program operated by the HELP Foundation.

Nicholas started with the HELP Foundation in July 2019. He loves going there and is thriving. One of the opportunities provided by HELP Cornucopia to its paid vocational trainees is working with professional culinary staff at its Sloane Avenue Vocational Training Center. One day a week, Nicholas works there preparing wraps, salads and other goodies for HELP Cornucopia Catering, which provides food for business and community events. The other days of the week, Nicholas walks neighborhood dogs, delivers Meals on Wheels and visits various places in the community such as the Library, the metro parks, and local businesses. Nicholas loves his boss, Quinn, and the other staff members and friends that he spends the week with.

In the last year, Nicholas has come so far at work and home. His family is proud of his increasing independence and self-advocacy. He continues to try many new things and is always up for a challenge.



Nicholas at an Indians game with his parents, Doug and Darcy.



Nicholas washing tomatoes at his vocational training site.



Preparing a delicious dish on the stove.

Exceptional Service Award Presented to Larry Donaldson



Pictured, from left, are: Ben Lewis's parents, **Ken** and **Kathi Lewis**, **Ben Lewis**, **Larry Donaldson**, Board Member **Dan White** and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**.

The latest recipient of Murray Ridge's quarterly Exceptional Service Award is **Larry Donaldson**, a driver in our Supported Employment Department.

The nomination letter reads, "Our son Ben is in Community Employment at Dunkin Donuts and has the most wonderful person, Larry Donaldson, driving him to and from his job. Larry always greets Ben with a smile and truly cares for Ben as a person. Larry always makes sure he is in the house before he pulls away. I couldn't think of another person more deserving of this award."

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 recognized 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.

Exceptional Service Award Nominations Sought

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. Include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the employee. All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for consideration. If you have any questions, contact Chris at (440) 329-3734 or cvasco@murrayridgecenter.org.

OOVC Holds 50th Anniversary Celebration For Two Consumers





The Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC) recently held a 50th Anniversary Celebration for two consumers, **Tom Zbydnowski** and **Mary Gressler**. Both have received services from Murray Ridge since 1969 when both attended Murray Ridge School.

The honorees were presented special plaques by Superintendent **Amber Fisher**, commemorating their years with Murray Ridge. Staff members shared a few fond memories, and family members and a residential provider attended the special event. Flower bouquets, cake and punch rounded out the special event.



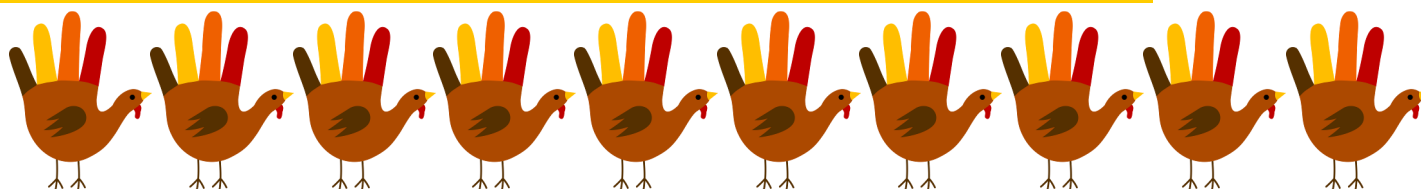
November 2019

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Activities & Events

- 11/6 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 11/11- **Agency closed for Veteran's Day holiday**
- 11/12 - Parent/Teacher Conferences, Murray Ridge School - Students Off
- 11/18 -Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 11/27 -**Murray Ridge School closed for day before Thanksgiving Day**
- 11/28 - **Agency closed for Thanksgiving Day**
- 11/29 -**Agency closed for day after Thanksgiving Day**



Two Consumers Recognized by Area Organizations

Congratulations to Special Olympian **Andrew Prihoda**, and **Brayden Altobelli**, a student at Murray Ridge School, for recently being recognized by two area organizations for their accomplishments.

Prihoda received a "Lifetime Champion Award" from Our Lady of the Wayside at its recent Champions in the Community Banquet held at the Punch Bowl Social Club in Cleveland. Among the other honorees at the event were local professional sports stars Carlos Carrasco (Indians), Larry Nance Jr. (Cavs) and Chris Hubbard (Browns). Prihoda is a multi-sport athlete with the Murray Ridge Raiders Special Olympics program and is currently preparing for another basketball season.

Altobelli, a participant at Youth Challenge, was recently named 'Participant of the Week' by that organization for serving as a role model to other participants. According to a Youth Challenge Facebook post, "Brayden has been involved in archery, fishing and geocaching this program season and he brings his infectious joy and smile to every program he attends!"

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

Visit our Web site
murrayridgecenter.org



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Featured Job Openings at the Ridge

Anyone looking for a rewarding career should consider working with or on behalf of local citizens with developmental disabilities at Murray Ridge.

Featured current openings include: **Group Home Aide PT; Group Home Aide/Housekeeper; Group Home Aide/Permanent Sub; PT LPNs; Attendance Analyst PT**

Minimum qualifications for all positions include: valid Ohio driver's license; good driving record; high school diploma/GED; and passing a drug test and physical.

Job descriptions for all current job openings can be viewed on the Murray Ridge Center website, murrayridgecenter.org. Just click on 'Employment Opportunities' then 'Join Our Team.'

News You Can Use . . .

Connecting for Kids November Programs

Speaker Series

How to Get Your Preschooler to Listen, Wednesday, Nov. 6, 6:30 p.m., Solon Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Late Language: When Repeat After Me Doesn't Work, Tuesday, Nov. 12, 6:30 p.m., Lakewood Public Library

Elementary Experiences

Social Series: Wrapping up Social Skills for the Holidays, Saturday, Nov. 16, 1 p.m. Lakewood Public Library

Connecting for Kids is an organization that provides education and support to families who have concerns about their child. For more information go to connectingforkids.org, email info@connectingforkids.org, or call/text (440) 570-5908.