

The View From The *Ridge*



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE FOR A LIFETIME

Murray Ridge School Celebrates the Class of 2019

Friends, family members, caregivers and agency staff celebrated senior students during their recent transition ceremony at Murray Ridge School.

In addition to performances of "Lean on Me" and "This Little Heart of Mine" by the Murray Ridge Choraleers, speeches were delivered by Director of Educational Services Dann Swift, Superintendent Amber Fisher, Keynote Speaker Dr. Jim Chapple of Ashland University, and Gregg Heiden from the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center.

The 18th Annual David Elsasser Spirit Award was presented to Lorenzo Cooke by Kathy Oblak, Mother of David Elsasser, a previous student at Murray Ridge School who passed away.

In addition to congratulating the Class of 2019, Superintendent Fisher offered, "Congratulations to the parents, caregivers and family members who have provided today's honorees with limitless love and support, helped them to celebrate each milestone, and instilled in them the confidence necessary for continued growth."



From left: Desiree Aponte, Corde Barnwell, Lorenzo Cooke, Loryn Caso, Hannah Duta, and Kief Maldonado.



Murray Ridge Raiders State Champion Modified Volleyball Squad



Congratulations to the 47 athletes who represented Murray Ridge Center at the recent Special Olympics State Summer Games held in Columbus on June 28-30. The athletes competed in Bocce, Volleyball (Modified and Traditional), Soccer, Tennis, and Track and brought back one State Championship, several medals and other honors.

Pictured is the State Champion Modified Volleyball Squad: Front Row (l-r): **Coach Rick Rovere, Kim Herman** (holding trophy), **Chad Kothe, Megan Craig, Jeffrey Torres, Douglas McCartney and Ryan Brown.** Back Row (l-r), **Joe Bellottie, Eric Johnson** (partially obscured by trophy), **Coach Jen Coleman, Kurt Caris.**

More Commencement Memories



Above left: Lorenzo Cooke received the David Elsasser Spirit Award. Right: Kief Maldonado poses with Superintendent Amber Fisher (standing, left) and Supervisor Stacie Starr. Below left: Hannah Duta and Stacie Starr pose in a selfie. Below right, the Murray Ridge Choraleers prepare for their stirring commencement performance.



MURRAY RIDGE TO SPONSOR COUNTY-WIDE SELF-ADVOCACY EVENT

Find Your Voice

**Learn about speaking up for yourself
so that others listen!**

Join Murray Ridge for an evening of inspiration, food, fun and prizes.

Listen to Guest Speakers talk about advocacy and employment.

Listen to local self advocates talk about their experiences.

Hear inspiring stories about how others are achieving their goals and dreams.

ENJOY A FREE TACO BAR AND DESSERT.

WIN A T-SHIRT! WIN A TRIP TO STIR TRAINING! TAKE HOME A BUCKET OF FUN!

Who: Adult Lorain County Residents with Developmental Disabilities

When: Thursday, August 22 from 6-8 p.m. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Spitzer Center at Lorain County Community College

1005 N. Abbe Rd, Elyria Ohio 44035

**SPEAK UP!
SPEAK OUT!**



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Registration is required.
*Please contact Corry Ritzert at
440-324-2366 to register.*

Avon Duck Tape Parade Kicks Off Summer Season

A group from the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (LOVC) recently participated in the Avon Heritage Duck Tape Festival Parade. The festive decorations of the Murray Ridge float certainly captured the tasty theme of this year's parade, 'Sweet 16.'

Murray Ridge also received the parade's Legend Award trophy given to a group who has participated in five or more Avon Heritage Duck Tape Festival parades. From those groups eligible, a winner is chosen by the parade committee and/or judges. Committee members indicated that they've always been pleased that Murray Ridge Center chooses to participate in the parade each year.



Shown at this year's Duck Tape Parade are (from left): Rovinson Villafane, Gregory Weller, Zuleyka Perez, Hector Lozano, Amanda Spreng, John Armstrong, Katie Kellogg, Robert McFadden, and Tracy Horn.

Thank You, Mega Championship Wrestling



Several weeks ago, Mega Championship Wrestling held its 9th Annual 'Breaking Down Barriers' fundraiser for Murray Ridge Center and raised more than \$1,600 to assist Murray Ridge in helping residents of Lorain County with developmental disabilities and their families. Murray Ridge staff member – and former Mega Championship Wrestling star – Jim 'Mad Dog' Nagy presented the generous donation at a recent board meeting, noting that these popular family-friendly wrestling events have raised almost \$15,000 since they began back in 2011. Pictured (from left) are: **Jim Nagy**, Nagy's son, **Andrew**, and Board President **Robert Gajdos**.



Work at the Ridge!

Check out our website,
murrayridgecenter.org
to see our open positions!

Arabian Nights and Birthday Greetings

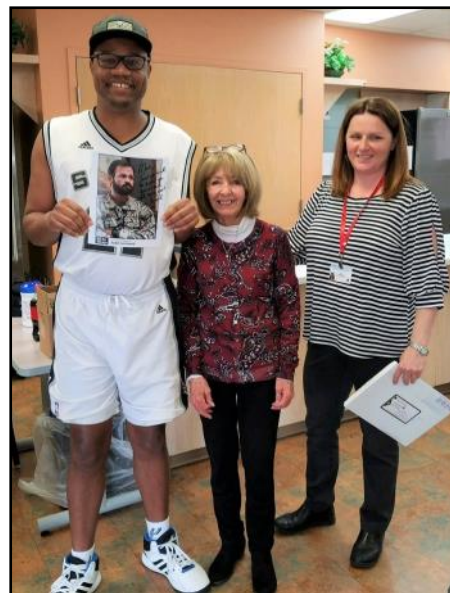
Prom Memory



LEFT: "Arabian Nights" was the theme of this year's Murray Ridge School Prom. Getting into the spirit of the evening was student **Brandon Rivera**.

RIGHT: Mark Oliveras from the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) was recently surprised by a special birthday message and gift from actor Judd Lormand who stars as Lt. Commander Eric Blackburn on one of Mark's favorite TV shows, SEALTeam. Mark received a SEAL Team hat, an autographed photo and a handwritten note from the actor. Pictured with Mark are EOVC staff members **Mary Shimer** (center) and **Judy Hartung** who helped arrange the special surprise and presented the gift to Mark.

Seal Team Fan



Exceptional Service Award Presented to OOVC Staff Member

Congratulations to Adult Program Instructor **Tammy Stanley** of the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC) for receiving the latest Exceptional Service Award. The family member nominating her wrote that she, "goes above and beyond to communicate with my family and make my aunt feel loved. . . (Tammy) cares, she shows her love for the clients, and she is always thinking about how to make her clients feel special."

Nominations Sought for Exceptional Service Awards

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. Please include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the employee. 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



From left: Superintendent Amber Fisher, Tammy Stanley, and Murray Ridge Board Member Dan White.

Lorain County Commissioner Visits Murray Ridge



Thank you to Lorain County Commissioner Sharon Sweda for recently visiting Murray Ridge School and the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center. Not only did she make quick friends of some of our pre-school students, but she was also able to see first-hand some of our adult consumers hard at work.



More from the Special Olympics State Summer Games



LEFT: Pictured front left are Bocce Bronze Medalists **Pamela McClain** and **Charity Anderson**. Behind with caps are 4th place winners **Alexshawyn Averett** and **Tim Stewart**. Right are **Maria Poling** and **Wendy Smitkowski** who took 5th place honors. **RIGHT:** Cleveland Browns offensive lineman **Austin Corbett** (left) took in the action at the Special Olympics State Summer Games this past weekend, and posed for a photo with Murray Ridge Volleyball Coach and staff member **Rick Rovere**.

Planes, Plays and Princesses



RIGHT: The Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) recently raised \$300 to donate to Sharon's Signers, a sign language choir for people with disabilities which performs frequently at EOVC and which was also planning a trip to perform at Disney World. Shown (top right) is a scene from the group's most recent performance at EOVC -- 'Peter Pan.' Pictured below right is program participant **Jesse Frisch** (center) presenting the donation.



LEFT: Several program participants from the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center are shown during a tour of the Liberty Aviation Museum in Port Clinton. Saluting is **Mason Klusek** and posing in front of a vintage plane are (from left): **Carl Jeans**, **Daylan Bodiford**, **Robert Serrano** and **Bobby Farmer**.



The 2019 Lorain International Festival Princesses recently visited the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (LOVC). Each area of the facility was decorated to represent a different country, and the visiting princesses toured the facility, posed for pictures and joined in on a special LOVC Dance Party.

Pictured with the touring princesses are LOVC program participants **Alexshawn Averett** and **Julianne Sobol** (center).

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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murrayridgecenter.org

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