



MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

# The View From The RIDGE

Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities  
Fall Quarterly

## LCBDD Board Member Ryan Egberston: A Profile of Persistence

FALL 2022



LCBDD Board Member **Ryan Egbertson** posing with his custom built pickup truck

While **Ryan Egbertson** might be accustomed to being told “no,” he has never accepted it as an answer. His persistence has already taken him far in his 27 years, and we’re proud to have him as a member of the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

“I always wanted to work, even when I was

young,” recalls Ryan, who loves working outdoors and in physically demanding jobs.

After high school, Ryan was certified as a commercial plumber. However, he was repeatedly told that he would have to work in an office setting because of his disability. Instead of accepting that answer and compromising his goals, Ryan worked diligently to find a way around these barriers.

After some searching, he was able to work with an organization called AgrAbility, which helped him acquire customized equipment that allowed him to work in the kinds of jobs he wanted.

After a few years of operating this custom equipment, Ryan became determined to be able to drive a vehicle again. After several companies told him they couldn’t help him, he started working with Columbus Mobility, a company that customizes vehicles. “While my truck was being built, they were working on a motorcycle for a guy who

doesn’t have arms,” Ryan recalls. Columbus Mobility set Ryan up with a Chevrolet Silverado that had a joystick, and the truck was further customized by engineers in Switzerland and Israel.

Today, Ryan works for a local tree service company as an operations manager. He’s also a certified ADA inspector who sits on three different boards in Ohio, and Ryan takes great care and effort to ensure buildings are accessible for individuals with disabilities.

“The ADA has been around for 30 years and we’re still having these problems,” Ryan explains. “I should be able to go out to dinner with my girlfriend without having problems.”

Ryan’s unique experience and impressive energy makes him an invaluable member of our board. “There’s no such thing as a normal life,” Ryan says. “Ensuring that we can all do what we want to do is my main purpose with this work.”



Ryan Egbertson with LCBDD  
Board President Bev Gedid



# First Day of School!



Lisa Koney walking Kenneth Kingsley, Alexis Throckmorton, and Mia Williams to their first day of classes.



Paulina Lilly was full of smiles as Susan Rundell helped her off the bus!

Thursday, August 23rd was the first day of classes for the 2022-2023 Murray Ridge School year! We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new students and staff members, as well as those returning for another great year of learning. Have a wonderful year, everyone!



Vanessa Medina helps Brayden Altobelli off the bus.

## Murray Ridge School

### More Than 50 Years of Excellence

For more than a half-century, our school has provided a positive and nurturing environment that enables students to develop functional skills in an environment that fosters self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment. In addition to a solid life-skills curriculum supplemented by academics, art, adaptive physical education, music, science, and more, students' classroom learning is enhanced by community experiences and volunteer opportunities.

## WELCOME, 2022 MRS PRESCHOOLERS!



Occupational Therapist Trisch Myers working with Chakrika Bommisetty



Preschoolers Owen Skinner, Brodie Reynolds, and Claire Demyan

Tuesday, September 6th, was the first day of preschool! Murray Ridge School offers an inclusive and integrated preschool program four days a week for both typically developing children and those with developmental disabilities ages three to five.



Preschooler Hadley Victor



Drive for show, putt for dough! **Bill Lacko** is about to put one in the hole.



## Regional Golf Tournament

The Special Olympics Ohio Regional Golf tournament was held Sunday, August 10 at the Mallard Creek Golf Club in Columbia Station, Ohio! The Raiders had five athletes, and they competed with their unified partners in an alternate shot (taking turns) format. The team of Bill Lacko and Merle Simmons won the Gold Medal in its division, and the teams of Annie Cirilo with Joe Croftcheck and Benji Lewis with Tracey Lewis each earned Bronze medals. And last but not least, the teams of John Ahart with Tonya Guitar and Steve Slutzker with Shawn Hatcher each earned fourth place finishes.

## Murray Ridge Raiders Softball Season Recap

This season, we had 20 athletes attend softball tryouts in July at Amherst Middle School. The Division II Scarlet Team consisted of 14 players from Supported Employment, all three OVCs, and four other adult day providers, while the Grey Team was a non-divisional, developmental team with 12 members, six of whom also played on the Scarlet Team. This multi-team arrangement allowed every player at the tryouts to be placed on a team without any cuts! Better still, four of those athletes were on a competitive team for the first time in their Special Olympics careers!

The Grey Team, with Head Coach **Rick Rovere**, played a total of four games and had a season record of two wins and two losses. All of the players showed growth in both skills and confidence throughout the season.



Ryan Brown making the play!



Megan Craig, Ryan Brown, Hector Lozano, Coach Russ Moyer, Tom Dammeyer, Tim Dammeyer, Diana Clement, Daniel Montgomery, Ryan Busher, Jeremy Foster, Katie Weaver and volunteer/score keeper Kris Miller.

Murray Ridge Center invites all Lorain County adults with developmental disabilities to participate in our Special Olympics Program. If you'd like to learn more about our upcoming Special Olympics Ohio activities and events and how to participate in them, please contact Shawn Hatcher at 440-284-2720 or at [shatcher@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:shatcher@murrayridgecenter.org)

Head Coach **Russel Moyer's** Scarlet Team had an undefeated, albeit abbreviated, season with the weather canceling half of the six scheduled games. However, the three that it did play were victories by ten or more runs each game! Scarlet's season ended on August 24th at a Regional Tournament Semi-final game against Medina. The Raiders defense hung on as long as it could, turning two impressive double plays, but the Raiders unfortunately fell to Medina 17-7 in 5 innings.

In the Softball Skills season, ten athletes began practicing in July, five of whom attended the Regional Skills competition in Canton on August 28th. Those competitors earned four gold medals and one bronze medal in their respective divisions. About two weeks later, on Saturday, September 10th, **Kenny Martin** brought home a gold medal at the State Softball Skills Competition!

Next up is basketball! Basketball tryouts were held Monday, October 3rd, at Murray Ridge School, and we're looking forward to a great season of basketball games and skills competitions.

**Want to see more pictures?** Be sure to visit our Facebook page!



# Murray Ridge School News



To tune in to the **Murray Ridge School News**, go to the Murray Ridge School Facebook page each Wednesday and follow the link on the news feed!

Students from **Kristin Dickerhoff** and **Taylor Blascak**'s class have officially started a weekly news show every Wednesday morning at 9:30 AM! During the show, students present Murray Ridge School news, current events, weather, and sports updates, as well as interviews with special guests. This is a great way for students to build confidence, practice public speaking, and collaborate on a fun and unique project. Great job, everyone!



Murray Ridge School News, signing off! Left to right: **Jenny Sislowksi**, Teacher **Taylor Blascak**, Teacher **Kristin Dickerhoff**, **Nicholas Green**, **Ja'Laysia Brown**, **Alexis Throckmorton**, and Personal Aide **Amy Marrero**, with **Jayden Nagy** and **Ja'quan Warren** in the back

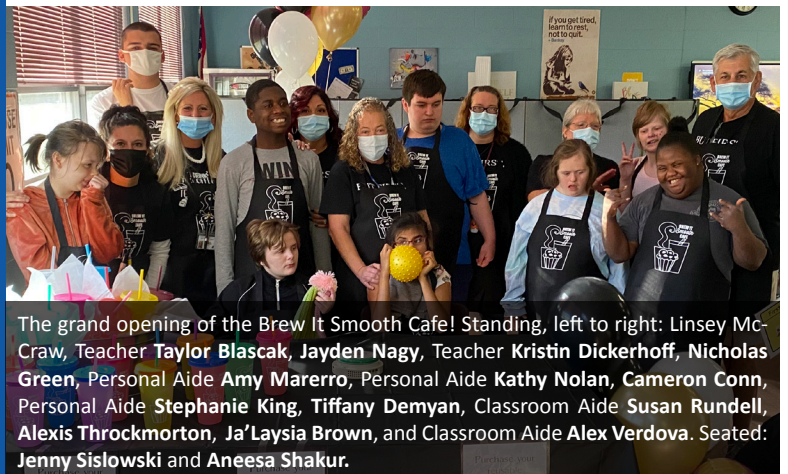


During a special visit, cashier **Ja'quan Warren** shook hands with **Mayor Frank Whitfield** after completing his transaction

The "**Brew it Smooth Cafe**" opened for staff and students on October 13 with the necessary supplies covered by a fully funded Donors Choose project (as well as the donation of cold brew machines by former Murray Ridge speech therapist **Dena Smith**)

## Big Things Brewing at Murray Ridge School!

Teachers **Kristin Dickerhoff** and **Taylor Blascak**, with the help of their awesome therapy team, **Jenn Hakko** (SLP) and **Jamie Novak** (OT), have helped students open a fully functional cafe within the school building! A lot of work went into the project, including designing the cafe, creating a logo, deciding on what to serve, researching how to run a cafe, and practicing customer service skills, as well as having some fun testing some smoothie recipes, cold brew coffees, and yummy treats! We are lucky to have such a fabulous team, and the students will gain many life skills working the cafe together.



The grand opening of the **Brew It Smooth Cafe**! Standing, left to right: **Linsey McCraw**, Teacher **Taylor Blascak**, **Jayden Nagy**, Teacher **Kristin Dickerhoff**, **Nicholas Green**, Personal Aide **Amy Marrero**, Personal Aide **Kathy Nolan**, **Cameron Conn**, Personal Aide **Stephanie King**, **Tiffany Demyan**, Classroom Aide **Susan Rundell**, **Alexis Throckmorton**, **Ja'Laysia Brown**, and Classroom Aide **Alex Verdova**. Seated: **Jenny Sislowksi** and **Aneesa Shakur**.



## October is Down's Syndrome Awareness Month



Did you know that each year in the United States, about 6,000 babies are born with Down syndrome? That's about one in every 700 babies born in this country. Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring chromosomal condition, and it is estimated that today in the United States there are more than 400,000 people living with Down syndrome. Since the 1980s, American families touched by Down syndrome have observed October as National Down Syndrome Awareness Month: a time to recognize that those born with Down syndrome can indeed live happy, long and productive lives. This October, please join us in celebrating our friends and neighbors with Down syndrome. To learn more, visit the National Down Syndrome Society website at [ndss.org](http://ndss.org).

## EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD PRESENTED

The most recent recipient of our Exceptional Service Award was **Lisa Reed**, a Vocational Placement Specialist in our Supported Employment Department. Lisa was nominated by the Lacko family, who told us that her care and assistance was indispensable in helping brothers Bill and Mark navigate the sudden and extensive changes at their workplaces that were brought about by the pandemic. The Lacko family likened Lisa's help to a light that "shone brightly through the dense cloud of COVID-19." We congratulate Lisa for her great work with the Lacko family, especially under the difficult circumstances presented by the pandemic.

Do you know a Murray Ridge staff member who has gone "above and beyond"? If so, submit your nomination to Kevin Naughton, Community Education & Volunteer Director at (440) 329-3734 or at [kevin@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:kevin@murrayridgecenter.org).



Superintendent **Amber Fisher**, Vocational Placement Specialist **Lisa Reed**, and Board Member **Rebecca Cornman**



It has been an honor for Bill and Mark to work with Lisa.

-The Lacko Family



Back row, left to right: **Steve Slutzker**, **Bridget Boardman** (coordinator for Your Turn Consignment), **Tiffany Harris**, and **Becky Sue Burianek**. Front Row, left to right: **Alyssa DeAngelis**, **Lori Rhodehamel**, **Alex Shearer**, and **Michael Telloni**.

## Thank You!



Recently, **Your Turn Consignment Sale**, a seasonal pop-up consignment business run by **Bridget Boardman**, selected us as the recipient of proceeds from its September fundraising sale! In addition to providing a generous donation, Bridget invited groups of our adult program participants to volunteer at her sale, where they were able to practice some vocational skills like stocking, customer service, money handling, and more. Inclusive events like these are great for bringing our Lorain County community closer together and fostering self-advocacy by our program participants!

## October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Murray Ridge Center was once again pleased to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month, an annual awareness campaign that takes place each October. We're proud to salute the Lorain County citizens with developmental disabilities who are part of the local workforce, and the local businesses that provide jobs for these individuals. Through our Supported Employment Program, Murray Ridge Center continues to focus on finding and placing individuals in positions where they can grow and excel in today's job market.



# MURRAY RIDGE OUT ON PARADE!

## SHEFFIELD LAKE Community Days Parade

On July 14th, Murray Ridge Center staff, individuals with developmental disabilities, and their family members proudly represented Murray Ridge Center in Sheffield Lake's annual Community Days Parade. For some added fun, we decided to give our section of the parade a circus theme, and participants representing Murray Ridge dressed up in colorful clown wigs, red noses, and other fun outfits. Along the parade route, our attendees were even asked to stop and take photos with enthusiastic and supportive parade-goers, which you can see on our Facebook page!



Left to right: Jeremy Foster, Ryan Brown, Megan Craig, Brione Monk, Victor Elder, Alicia Lawrence, Jennifer Dutton (staff), and Pam McClain



Left to right: Echoing Hills Staff Member Angie Stapleton, Murray Ridge Center Administrative Secretary and Parade Committee Member Jennifer Ryan, Echoing Hills Staff Member 'Nay Curry, Jeremy Foster, Charles Garn, Roberta Gorr, Corin Cobb (waving), Elena Reinhold (kneeling), Dan White, Sally Gordon, Echoing Hills Staff Member Cassie Strauderman, and Mark Vanek



Sally Gordon and Elena Reinhold waiting for the parade to start



## North Ridgeville Corn Festival Parade

Sunday, August 14th, was the annual North Ridgeville Corn Festival's Parade! We had a great turnout, and our participants added an extra layer of fun by wearing cowboy hats and bandanas. And better still, the judges loved our group's enthusiasm and awarded us "Best Commercial Unit" in the parade! Thank you and great work to everyone involved!

Parades and other public events like these are great opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to be represented in our communities, and to further our agency's goal of promoting community inclusion and acceptance.

Check out our Facebook page for more parade pictures!



Back row, left to right (standing): OOVV Secretary **Tina Tucker**, SSA **Hope Meyers**, **Saundra Kilgore**, **Jeremy Foster**, **Tiffany Harris**, **Sarah Ward**, Adult Program Instructor **Diania Landin**, **Maria Poling**, **Kevin Plata**, **Andrea Stewart**, **Steve Slutzker**, and **Janet Kleve**. Front row, left to right (kneeling): **Alicia Lawrence**, **Elena Reinhold**, SSA and Parade Committee member **Jaclina Rush**, Developmental Specialist **Kathy Bevaque**.



## 2022 WOOLLYBEAR FESTIVAL & PARADE

Murray Ridge Center was proud to once again take part in the annual Woollybear Festival Parade in Vermilion, Ohio! Thank you to everyone involved for making this a fun, inclusive event!



### Dressed for a Fest!

Our more than 20 representatives came to the parade decked out in orange and brown, sporting fun woollybear antennae made by our Adult Program participants at our Elyria Opportunity and Vocational Center.

## Now Hiring!

## FEATURED positions



### Direct Support Professionals (Home Setting)

We have openings available for permanent and PRN (as-needed) positions to care for residents of our Meister Road Home. Hours vary based on position and/or assignment.

### Service and Support Administrator (SSA)

We have openings for full-time Service and Support Administrators. Hours are generally during the day.

### SSA Data/Account Clerk

We are looking for a full-time SSA Data/Account Clerk. Hours are generally during the day.

### Direct Support Professionals (Adult Program Setting)

We have openings available for permanent and PRN (as-needed) positions to care for participants in our Adult Program. Hours are generally during the day.

### We are looking for PRN (as-needed) and 9 month full-time and part-time Speech and Language Pathologists!

### Custodial/Maintenance Positions

We are looking for full-time and PRN (as-needed) custodial staff and a full-time Maintenance Technician. Hours are generally during the day.

**We provide the training.  
You provide the ♥**

To see our current openings and to apply, go to the Murray Ridge website and click on "Opportunities"

**All candidates:**

Must have valid Ohio drivers license, good driving record, and High School Diploma/GED.  
Must pass background check, drug test, and physical.

Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center  
1091 Infirmary Road  
Elyria, OH 44035

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**Photo of the Fall: Brenden Stull, Matthew Schoerverth, Scott Issak, and Michael Elliot with the Honorable Judge James Walther at the Lorain County Fair!**

## Contact Us

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