

Murray Ridge School Celebrates the Class of 2016

On May 26, 2016, friends, family members, caregivers, and Murray Ridge Center staff bid farewell to twelve graduating seniors during its annual transition ceremony at Murray Ridge School.

Murray Ridge School Commencement 2016 began with a prelude by music teacher Lissa Lopez and a welcome by Director of Educational Services Dann Swift who introduced the transferring students: Mikayla Colburn, Malik Dillard, Samantha Everett, Delmenio Hollingsworth, Cianni Martin, Hannah McDermott, Emily Moore, Jonathan Mumford, Anthony Ramos, Kandice Smith, Johnathan Thompson, and Jalen Tiller.

The Murray Ridge Choraleers sang "What a Wonderful World," and then Superintendent Fisher took the podium to speak to the graduates and their families, caregivers, and teachers. "You have every reason to be proud of what you've accomplished so far, and to be excited about what lies ahead," she said. "And although you will be on a new path, and any change can be scary, be assured that many will be there to help you along the way. Today, we celebrate the successful completion of one stage of these young people's lives, and commit ourselves to the task of guiding them into adulthood, and enabling them to be not only as self-sufficient, but also as fulfilled as possible."

Mayor of Amherst Mark Costilow (right) spoke to the graduates and expressed his appreciation for Murray Ridge. "Murray Ridge has played a major role in my family's life," he said. "My daughter was born with Down syndrome. Our life with our daughter started the day her Early Intervention Supervisor, Bev Johnson, came to my door." Mayor Costilow continued with examples of how Early Intervention helped his daughter and his family.

Mayor Costilow concluded his speech with an inspirational reminder for the graduates and those in attendance. "One of



your teachers said this school is magical, and I'd have to agree. Be proud of who you are and what you've accomplished here. At the end of the day, it's your appreciation for life that truly matters."

Director of Vocational and Transportation Services Jeff Miller added his own encouraging words to each senior, quoting Jamie Paolinetti. "Limitations live only in our minds. But if we use our imaginations, our possibilities become limitless."

Following the keynote address, Board President Michelle Hunt and Board Members Kurt Koepf, Bob Gajdos, and Dan White presented each graduate with a diploma. Liaison staff member Nick Kish gave a touching tribute to Robert Norris, a senior

who passed away earlier this year. Finally, the fifteenth annual David Elasser Spirit Award was presented to Delmenio Hollingsworth by Kathy Oblak, mother of David Elsasser, a previous student at Murray Ridge School who passed away 14 years ago.

The ceremony ended with Dann Swift wishing the seniors best of luck in the future, and thanking them for their hard work and dedication as students at Murray Ridge School.

The festive afternoon concluded with a luncheon provided by the Murray Ridge Support Group for all graduates, their families and friends, and staff members.

Best of luck to our 2016 graduates!



Above: Delmenio Hollingsworth receives his diploma from Board President Michelle Hunt.

The Class of 2016



Mikayla Colburn loves to smile a lot and rock to music. She loves the ENO board and will smile, and laugh during various vizzle lessons. She also likes to spend time in a bean bag and listen to classical music. She really likes her classmates and enjoys interacting with them.

Malik Dillard has been attending Murray Ridge School since age 3 when he transitioned from our Early Intervention Program. He enjoys swim, music class, and meeting new friends. Malik's interests include following all of Cleveland's sports teams with a passion for the Cavaliers.



Samantha Everett has been a student at Murray Ridge for the last 16 years. Her favorite activities at school include visiting the sensory room, participating in dances, and socializing with her friends. She enjoys social media and reviewing many television programs as a hobby.

Delmenio (Del) Hollingsworth is a curious, thoughtful, fun-loving individual who enjoys the company of others. He likes to communicate using signs, verbalizations, and especially high fives! He likes to greet people with a handshake and a big hello! He also likes school dances and music.



Cianni Martin has a shining personality and amazing sense of humor. Cianni was a member of dancing wheels while at Murray Ridge and could frequently be seen practicing his dance moves throughout the school day. Cianni has many friends at Murray Ridge and enjoys playing basketball.

Hannah McDermott has a great personality. She loves to be involved with her peers and loves to joke around. Hannah was a part of the "Crew" working as a pizza greeter. She also worked at Rebman's Bowling Alley cleaning the vending machines and lockers.



Emily Moore has a shining personality. Her beautiful smile and laugh brightens everyone's day. She loves to dance and has been a part of the talent show in the past years. Emily was also involved in working at Rebman's Bowling Alley and delivered pizza on Thursdays with the "Crew."

Jon Mumford will be remembered by Murray Ridge staff and students for his amazing smile and fun personality. Jon enjoys swim class and exploring outside. He loves to be moving at school and enjoys running in gym class or performing very intricate moves on a therapy ball.





Anthony (Tony) Ramos is a kind and caring friend to all of those that know him. He enjoys listening to music on his radio, playing with his friends, dancing, and singing into his toy microphone that comes to school each day with him.

Kandice Smith has been attending Murray Ridge School for 13 years. She enjoys many activities such as music class, swim, and going to the library. Her interests include following many types of musicians and authors and reviewing their latest works!



Jalen Tiller is a sweet, laid back individual. He enjoys playing with strings. Jalen is particularly fond of chicken nuggets, tater tots, and chocolate! His favorite activities include going out into the community and giving lots of hugs and kisses!

Johnathan Thompson is a very happy young man. He knows many words and phrases and enjoys singing many songs, especially in music class. He loves to greet his classmates when they arrive in the morning. He likes participating in fieldtrips. He also likes to play on the class keyboard!



Above: Murray Ridge School staff (past and present) serve lunch. Upper right: Jalen Tiller with his mom and his identical twin brother. Bottom right: Pictures of each graduate were on display in the School's entryway; parents got to take the pictures home after graduation.

Island Paradise at Murray Ridge School Prom

On May 6, Murray Ridge School held its annual Prom.

This year's theme was Island Paradise! Prom was attended by more than 250 people, there to celebrate the graduating seniors in this year's class, who were all crowned kings and queens.

Staff spent weeks after school decorating the gymnasium for the big event, and attendees were astonished to see the transformation; handmade palm trees, tiki style decorations, and tropical flowers lined the halls and decorated the entire gym!

A delicious catered dinner was provided to all attendees. Additionally, a professional photographer was on-hand to take photos to mark the occasion, with a photo booth donated for candid shots. A DJ provided music and entertainment! These professionals donated their services to the school, and all funds for the Prom were raised through donations to the school, and by staff through bake sales, t-shirt sales, and various raffles and dining events held throughout the school year.

Thank you to all who helped make this year's Prom a huge success!



Above: Tiara Gilchrist shows her island style with her parents. Right: Gus McKee and his mom dance the night away! Below, left: Director of Education Dann Swift and Board President Michelle Hunt crown king Del Hollingsworth. Below, right: a replica volcano was one of the many impressive decorations!



Murray Ridge School Students Participate in the 36th Annual Lorain County Special Olympics

On May 13th, more than 500 athletes from Lorain and Cuyahoga counties participated in the 36th annual Special Olympics at Ely Stadium in Elyria in a wide range of activities, including the opening ceremony, races, softball throw, and standing long jump.

Seventeen groups, including Murray Ridge, competed in the games, and hundreds of parents, teachers, friends, and caregivers came out to show their support for the amazing athletes. Murray Ridge is a proud participant each year in this event where children with developmental disabilities can showcase their exceptional athletic ability.

We commend all the athletes that competed in the games, with special congratulations to our Murray Ridge School students who, once again, represented us well.



Above, left: Danny Bader smiles as he races down the track during his event. Above, right: Sierra Long takes a swing at a t-ball. Below, left: Deja Sherman participates in the "clap out" held each year at the school; students and staff line the halls and cheer on the athletes as they leave for the event. Bottom, right: Teacher Cheryl Swierz and MRS student Steven Fosdick are all smiles at Ely Stadium.



The Murray Ridge 500!

On May 20, Murray Ridge School students competed in the annual Murray Ridge 500. Students and staff enjoyed creating and racing their cars.

Pizza was provided to all the hungry participants, and students cooled off with popsicles throughout the event!

Congratulations to all our MRS racers! And thank you to Super Heroes to Kids in Ohio and all the parents, staff, and caregivers who came out to cheer on the participants!



Above, left: Runners take your mark!! Jaquan Warren, Brynne Diedrich, Sean McCaffrey, Danny Bader, teacher Megan Brown, Jason Yee, Sean Tidmore, and Deja Sherman prepare for their race. Above, right: Hannah McDermott, Zachary Grimmert, Gus McKee, Tyler Rudochic, and Devasia Sales show off their Wizard of Oz costumes. Below, left: The Pope (aka, Addison Rodgers) cruises around in his Pope-mobile.



Below, middle: Teacher Laura Baus hands out pizza to the hungry students and staff. Right, middle: Jonathan Thompson smiles as he opens the door to his phone booth!



Vermilion High School Students Create Superheroes!

The Peer Leadership class from Vermilion High School visited Murray Ridge School on May 18th to deliver superhero capes as part of a Victory Day project.

VHS students worked through the group Capes of Courage, a non-profit organization located in Akron, Ohio (<http://www.kidscapesofcourage.org>).

57 students created 60 capes for Murray Ridge students in the Preschool and Primary wing. These capes were personalized for each child with information that teachers from Murray Ridge School provided. Vermilion students personally handed out each child's cape during this time at Murray Ridge School.

Thank you to all the wonderful students from Vermilion High School for this amazing experience!



Upper right: Owen Richardson poses with a VHS student. Left: Jacob Gledding shows off his new cape. Bottom right: Students from Vermilion High School proudly show off the capes they made.



BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 1:15 p.m. on May 26, 2016:

Superintendent Fisher asked the Board for approval of a contract for legal services; Director of Business John Bonko presented the tax budget; the Board unanimously approved both. Superintendent Amber Fisher provided an update on the residential transition, including the recommendation regarding the next operator of the Academy Court home. In other news, the Murray Ridge Support Group will hold it's last dance for the summer on June 17; it's next meeting will be held on June 14, and no additional meetings will be held until September.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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June 2016

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	School Day Camp					
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	School Day Camp					
26	27	28	29	30		
	School Day Camp					

Activities & Events

- 6/1 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting , 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 6/8 - Last day of school for Murray Ridge School
- 6/13 - 7/8 - Murray Ridge School Day Camp
- 6/14 - Murray Ridge Support Group meeting, 4:15 p.m., Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center, 1095 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 6/15 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting , 12:00 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 6/17 - Murray Ridge Support Group Dance, 7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 6/18 - Avon Duck Tape Festival
- 6/22 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting , 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 6/24 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria