



PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES
CREATING COMMUNITY

June 2016
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Expressions

Making the difference in meeting lifelong needs • www.portagedd.org

Portage County Board of
Developmental Disabilities
Dennis M. Coble
Administration Building
2606 Brady Lake Rd.
Ravenna, OH 44266-1657

Superintendent's Office:
330-297-7261

Board Office:
330-297-6209

Fax: 330-297-1202

Website: www.portagedd.org

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twitter

Business Office:
330-297-8991

Service & Support
Administration:
330-297-4100

Family Support
Services Program:
800-237-6828

Transportation:
330-297-6462

Adult Services:
Portage Industries
7008 State Rte. 88
Ravenna, OH 44266-9134
330-296-2839
Fax 330-297-8994

Children's Services:
Happy Day School
2500 Brady Lake Rd.
Ravenna, OH 44266-1698
330-678-2400
Fax 330-673-3714

PCBDD
Emergency Number
330-678-7559

PCBDD does not discriminate in
provision of services or employment
because of handicap, race, color,
creed, national origin, sex or age.

Speakers Share their Personal Stories of Success at Ohio Self Determination Meeting

In March, individuals from all over Ohio came together to "Share their stories". Portage County hosted the Ohio Self Determination Association Region 6 of Advocates and Self Advocates quarterly meeting. A panel of speakers including **Breanna Basar**, **Sharon Aquino**, **Kip Hastings**, **Brandon Boyette**, **Josh Horner** and **Andrea Harlow** spoke. They each shared their life stories, the barriers they have overcome, their accomplishments and their hopes and dreams for the future. **Megan Rothermel** was the key note speaker. She presented a slide show and told everyone of all that she has accomplished. Megan is a motivational speaker and has shared her story at various conferences throughout the US. The participants from other counties also opened up about their life experiences. Other individuals from Portage County assisted at the event by working the registration table, being greeters, introducing people and taking the microphone to others. Everyone shared lunch, made new friends and discussed their prospects for the future. The next regional meeting will be in July hosted by Mahoning. Anyone who is interested in attending future events can contact their SSA. Everyone agreed that it was a fantastic day!



Congratulations to the 2016 VisionQuest Graduates!



Graduates and teachers from left to right: Mrs. Melanie Lias, Carla, Mrs. Louise Milton, Seth, Carolyn, Jonathan, Hannah, Miss Elizabeth Sadlowski, and Tyler

Tyler and Carla

VisionQuest is a unique transitional program preparing students for employment and independent living through improving employment skills, community, involvement, and independent living skills. At the ceremony, **Carla** shared some words of encouragement for her fellow graduates and classmates:

Never Give Up

All the things you do
Everything you've done
The adventures that you dream of
I hope they come true
Everywhere people may look at you
Maybe they like me
So just say hello
Relationships with your friends can be
Both fun and frustrating
Just remember why they are your friends
Everyone...never give up on
Everything you want to do
Just do it
Even if you think you might fail
Try again



CONGRATS!
Graduate
YOU DID IT!



2015 Earl and Mary Lohr Community Service Award

A Plan for Today, a Vision for Tomorrow—is the guiding purpose of the 2015 Earl and Mary Lohr Community Service Award recipient *Residential Resources for the Developmentally Challenged, Inc.* (RRDC, Inc.)

The RRDC, Inc. was founded July 27, 2000, as the result of the founders' commitment to assist Portage County's eligible developmentally challenged persons to establish and effectively maintain community resident in licensed, independent or supported living settings. One of the original founders was Mary Lohr herself.

The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees and is a 501(C)(3) tax-exempt corporation foundation which mean all donations, bequests and memorials are tax-deductible.

Over the past fifteen years, the Board of Trustees in addition to housing assistance, they have supported individuals with adaptive equipment, home modifications, housekeeping equipment and supplies, rent/security and utility deposits, safety equipment and assisted licensed/certified residential agencies to expand their services.

This past fall the foundation purchased and remodeled or is in the process of remodeling three duplexes to provide housing for individuals to live on their own and the learning responsibilities of renting their own home.

Congratulations to the RRDC, Inc. Board of Trustees and their many volunteers for enhancing the lives of Portage County citizens with developmental disabilities.



In Memorium

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of **Jon Tetlow**. Jon was the Medicaid Services Manager at the Portage County Board of DD. Jon passed away at the Cleveland Clinic on May 19, 2016 after a short illness. Jon will be remembered as a devout family man who enjoyed doing everything with his family. He was fondly known as the "Minister of Fun" by his co-workers at PCBDD and he will be missed by all who had the opportunity to work with him.

Our condolences also go out to the family and friends of **Kelly Cochran** and **David Stytle** who recently passed away and **Dennis Dye** who passed in December.



Prom King and Queen Crowned

Coleman Adult Day Services Annual Senior Prom was held on May 12, 2016. Music was provided by D.J. Michael from Cipriano's Productions. Thanks to Michael Wells for the special glow in the dark bracelets he brought for everyone. We had a very nice turn out with everyone dressed in their Prom attire. This year **Kristen Hodges** was crowned Queen and **Tyler Young** was crowned King of the dance. All that attended enjoyed refreshments and dancing the night away.

Annual Parent Council Carnival Highlights



Ceremonial First Pitch Was Highlight of Game for Lucky Fan

Christine Adams threw the first pitch at the Akron Rubber Ducks Game on May 20, 2016. She was super excited and had a great time at the game!



The Annual Carnival was held at Happy Day School on April 16, 2016. Games, food and fun were enjoyed by all who attended.



Hats Off to the Graduate!

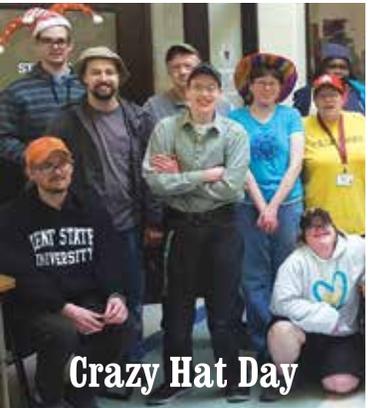
Congratulations to **Jessica Kelley!** Jessica graduated from Happy Day School on June 2, 2016. Pictured with Jessica are her parents, **Evan** and **Kristina**.



DODD Awareness Day Events at Portage Industries



Mismatch Day



Crazy Hat Day



Dance



Photo Booth Day



Crazy Hair Day



Logo Wear Day

The month of March was DD Awareness Month. To celebrate, Portage Industries Workshop had different themed days such as Crazy Hair Day, Mismatch Day, Crazy Hat Day, Logo Wear Day, and Photo Booth Day. Everyone had a great time participating and enjoyed seeing what crazy outfits people could come up with.



Portage County Teams Finish Season Strong

The Portage County Flashes and Thunder teams recently participated in the state playoffs. The Thunder defeated the Medina County Blue Streaks and the Lake County Cougars in the first two rounds and then bowed out of the playoffs in the third round in a close game to the Cuyahoga Mayfield Lancers. The Flashes came into the tournament as a big underdog but won two playoff games by defeating Murray Ridge #2 in the first round and the Stark DD Bulldogs in the second round. The Flashes fell to the Medina Flash in the regional championship game. All of the players, coaches and cheerleaders tried their hardest and represented Portage County in a great way.

Transportation Survey Request from: The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council; Services for Independent Living; Disability Rights Ohio; Government Resource Center

“People with Disabilities have repeatedly told us that access to transportation is a very large problem for them. We want to know more. Frankly, we need to know more. Is access a problem because there is not enough information, too few options, or is there some other reason?”

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, (<http://ddc.ohio.gov/>), Services for Independent Living, (<http://www.sil-oh.org/>), Disability Rights Ohio (<http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org>) and the Government Resource Center have developed a survey about the transportation system that serves people with disabilities in Ohio. This survey is open to everyone and will help these groups develop a better understanding of the real challenges people with disabilities face when dealing with transportation barriers.

If you are a person with a disability, a family member, a provider of transportation services or anyone with a stake in the transportation system in Ohio, we invite you to participate in this survey. Advocates often use the phrase, "Nothing about us, without us," as a rallying cry for inclusion and participation of people with disabilities. Now is your chance to participate!

The survey is offered online at each organization's website, or via the link below. Don't wait too long though, the survey will be open to the public until July 13, 2016. Go to https://osu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_57qqy0sKQCImKjP to get started now.

If you have any questions about this survey before or after you complete it, or encounter any technical problems, please contact **Colin Odden** at colin.odden@osumc.edu or at 1-614-685-9357.”



Ohio First in Nation to Launch STABLE Accounts

Program expanded to include out-of-state registrants

Published Monday, June 13, 2016 11:00 am/Ohio Association of County Boards

Ohio has become the first state in the U.S. to roll out a new form of savings account designed to help people with disabilities save for the future without losing public benefits. Ohio Treasurer **Josh Mandel** announced the opening of the first accounts at a press conference June 13 in Columbus.

The specialized accounts, called STABLE Accounts in Ohio, allow people with disabilities to save and invest up to \$14,000 per year without losing eligibility for programs such as Medicaid or Supplementary Security Income.

Money placed in STABLE accounts is tax-exempt if used for qualified expenses such as housing, education, assistive technology, and employment training.

For account details and eligibility requirements, visit www.stableaccount.com.

While the program is overseen by the Ohio Treasurer's office, the accounts have been made available to people with disabilities nationwide. Opening the program to out-of-state registrants widens the pool of participants and results in lower fees for all account holders, according to the Ohio Treasurer's office.

STABLE Accounts were first made available to the public on June 1. Since that date, roughly 160 accounts have been opened. Account holders outside Ohio opened about half of those accounts.

The specialized accounts are available thanks to the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2014. The ABLE Act authorized states to offer tax-advantaged savings accounts to qualified individuals so long as each state passed its own law allowing its treasurer to monitor and administer the new accounts.

Ohio's version of the ABLE Act was passed in 2015 thanks to widespread support from people with developmental disabilities, advocates, lawmakers, and the state treasurer's office.

Representatives from OACB and county boards of DD testified in favor of the Ohio ABLE Act at multiple points in the legislative process. At the request of lawmakers, OACB trustees, association staff, and county board superintendents formed an advisory group to help legislators remove obstacles to the act's implementation and make the accounts more user-friendly for people with developmental disabilities.

OACB would like to thank State Representatives **Jonathan Dever** and **Margy Conditt** and State Senators **Shannon Jones** and **John Eklund** for their sponsorship of the Ohio ABLE Act. The association and its partners would also like to thank Ohio Treasurer **Josh Mandel**, whose leadership has allowed Ohioans with disabilities to be among the first in the nation to have access to these beneficial financial planning tools.

STABLE Accounts Now Available

Pipeline Weekly - June 7, 2016

Ohio leads the country by being the first to offer STABLE Accounts for eligible individuals living with disabilities. STABLE Accounts have similar features to normal bank accounts, but are also investment accounts, similar to 529 college savings accounts or 401(k) retirement accounts.

These specialized accounts allow individuals with disabilities the opportunity to save and invest money without losing eligibility for public programs, like Medicaid, SSI or SSDI.

STABLE Accounts are made possible by the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience ("ABLE") Act passed by Congress in 2014. For more information: www.stableaccount.com.





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**DEVELOPMENTAL
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2606 Brady Lake Road
Ravenna, OH 44266-1657

Calendar of Events **June/July/August 2016**

July 4, 2016 – July 8, 2016	Summer Break	Programs Closed
July 11, 2016	Programs Resume	
July 26, 2016	Portage Industries, Inc. Golf Outing	Windmill Lakes Golf Club
August 17, 2016	Board Meeting	5:00 p.m. Dennis M. Coble Administration Building

Mission Statement

Our mission is to assist individuals in developing their abilities to achieve a life as active members of our community.