

WEEKLY FOCUS

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

September 26, 2014

The mission of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

Workforce Integration Task Force Holds Public Meeting



The Workforce Integration Task Force (WIT) held its first meeting this past Wednesday in Central Office.

As noted in the last Weekly Focus, Governor John Kasich initiated the creation of a task force to gather data and make recommendations about better integrating individuals who are deaf and/or blind into the workforce. The resulting Workforce Integration Task Force (WIT), created as part of the off year budget process (known as the Mid-Biennial Review or MBR), held its first public meeting this week here at Central Office.

At the meeting on Wednesday, Task Force members heard a presentation from Proctor and Gamble (P&G) Representative, Kelly Schlafman on their reverse mentoring program involving individuals with disabilities. Discussion, ensued around employment and wage data and other relevant information collected by staff from OOD and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). Task Force members then began focusing on the scope and type of recommendations to be included in the final report due January 1, 2015.

The Task Force recognizes that there are clearly challenges facing individuals who are deaf and/or blind, ranging from the lack of soft skills necessary to successfully network and interview for a job, to a lack of experience

in conducting an effective job search in today's high technology and online world. It can also be challenging to find transportation to interviews and work, and/or overcome misperceptions among employers about the abilities of individuals with disabilities.

Members are confident that there are strategies and tools that can help individuals overcome these challenges. Increased and focused training can help individuals develop the skills they need to compete for jobs in today's fast paced and competitive market. Increased awareness and engagement with employers can break down barriers, and cut through misconceptions that too often prevent talented job seekers from being successful. State agencies can work together more effectively in providing services and educating the business community along with state and local governments. Also, information can be provided to individuals and their families with how they can contribute to and participate in a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

The benefits to Ohio are clear: a stronger economy, a more effective and stable workforce, and greater financial security and independence for more Ohioans.

I was once again impressed with the experience and background of the Task Force members. They asked great questions, offered insightful comments and recommendations, and showed their passion and commitment to helping individuals with disabilities find meaningful employment and independence. Their backgrounds and experience in the deaf and blind communities, their knowledge of employers, service providers and non-profits, and their understanding of the task before them, makes them well suited to producing a report that will have an impact here in Ohio.

The Columbus Dispatch ([link](#)), Gongwer News Service ([link](#)), and Hannah News Service ([link](#)) all covered the meeting producing positive stories about the important work of the Task Force. Note: Gongwer and Hannah require a subscription to read the articles.

Consumer Advisory Committee Members Meet



From left to right back row: Randall Jones, Russell Turos, Derrick Martin, and Nate Jones. From left to right middle row: Dr. Carolyn Peters, Vice-Chair; Kiana Hill, Darlene Clinkscale, M. Vanessa Eubanks, Chair; Victoria Baker-Willford, Greg Powers, and Mike Snapp. Front row: Donzel Shepherd.

The Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) members met this past Saturday at Central Office. BVR Deputy Director, Susan Pugh provided information on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), OOD's Business Relations Initiatives, Cost Per Employment Outcome, and How to Select a Provider Fact Sheet. CAC members will assist OOD with the VR Needs Assessment and Version Two of the Fee Schedule. Their next meeting is scheduled November 15, 2014 in Columbus.

Total Statewide:
3,861

* Job Ready Status Individuals have received Vocational Rehabilitation services and are ready and seeking employment.

For more information or questions on stories in this publication, please call the Office of Communications at 614.438.1476.

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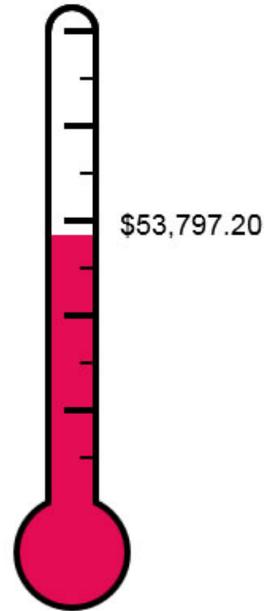


CCC is halfway done!

Target: \$93,750

As of yesterday, OOD has raised a total of \$57,749.20 for the Combined Charitable Campaign (CCC) from more than 249 pledge card donors. OOD's goal is to raise \$93,750 indicating that we are halfway there. During this past week, OOD held a Breakfast Sale and Silent Auction which generated a combined total of \$1,097.00! A special thanks to OOD staff for this tremendous effort and to those who have volunteered, donated, contributed, and organized these past events as well as their involvement in events still to come.

If you have yet to complete an ePledge form, please visit www.ohio.gov/ohioccc to access the online donation portal or contact CCC Co-Chairs, Andrew Meador (614.438.1237) or Brad Reynolds (614.438.1499) for a paper pledge form. They are available to answer any questions you may have or help you with the donation process. Great job, everyone! Remember this is your CCC!



Individuals in Job Ready Status by County

