

WEEKLY FOCUS

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

January 23, 2015

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

Ohio Business Leadership Network Retreat



The Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN) held its annual retreat to discuss the organization's strategic focus for 2015.

The Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN) held its annual retreat last week to discuss the organization's strategic focus for 2015. OHBLN is an affiliate of the United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN), a national organization that promotes the business imperative to include people with disabilities in the workforce using a business-to-business model.

This year's meeting reflected the tremendous growth and energy the OHBLN has seen in recent years. OHBLN has grown from just a handful of companies to over 50 members which culminated in the OHBLN being selected as the National Affiliate of the Year. Over 20 companies attended in-person or by phone including industry leaders such as: Timken Steel, Huntington Bank, OhioHealth, Bob Evans, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Procter & Gamble, Mount Carmel Health System, Walgreens Distribution and Fifth Third Bank.

The OHBLN shared the incredible success of the Central Ohio Workplace Initiative (COWI) and discussed expansion to Akron, Toledo and Cincinnati. Thus, to better reflect this expanded focus, the project's name was changed to "Workplace Initiative of Ohio"

The member driven organization has exciting plans for 2015, including a rebranding to spur more effective communications and marketing. I am grateful for their commitment and leadership and look forward to our continued partnership. Our mission remains to more effectively engage the business community and achieve quality employment and independence for those we serve.

100th Job Match

This month, we saw the 100th job match using the recently developed AWARE Matching Tool. This tool allows OOD to match job ready individuals with job openings. The goal is to move quickly and effectively in connecting job seekers with posted job openings that match their skills and job goals.

The tool, which began last May, is part of the Employer Module in AWARE and the process was developed by OOD staff members Nate Fernandes, Public Information Officer; Gaithri Raj, AWARE Business Issues Coordinator; and Craig Marsh, Program Administrator. The system was instrumental in the success of COWI reaching its goals, and will expand beyond this initiative in 2015.

Thank you to all the great staff that made reaching this milestone possible. I know we can accomplish even more as we build on experiences and lessons.

Commissioners Meet

Both the full Commission and the Program Planning Committee met earlier this week to be briefed by staff and discuss issues of importance to the agency. On Wednesday, the Program and Planning Committee received briefings from staff on the final report from the Workforce Integration Task Force, the impact of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and an update on the Independent Living and Older Blind program. The full Commission met later that afternoon and in addition to these items, discussed the Business Enterprise Program, the agency budget, and received briefings from staff on Business Relations, and from the Disability Determinations and Vocational Rehabilitation divisions.

There was a genuine sense of excitement from the Commissioners and staff throughout the meetings recognizing the progress we have made and the potential impact we can have on individuals with disabilities in Ohio. I share that sense of excitement as I know we are poised for great things in 2015.

Individuals in Job Ready Status by County



Total Statewide:
3,614

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

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