

WEEKLY FOCUS

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

It Takes a Team to Fulfill a Dream

Nathan came to OOD from a workshop at Matco to begin working towards community employment. He met with VR Counselor Sequoyah Williams who worked with him to develop job goals. Nathan wanted to work in landscaping and loved working outdoors. He decided to work with the Columbus Speech and Hearing Center to successfully complete a community-based work assessment. He began to work one-on-one with Job Developer Scott Jones from the Columbus Speech and Hearing Center. Sequoyah, Scott, and Support Services Coordinator Leigh Spohler of Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities held monthly meetings, exchanged emails, and held conference calls to assist Nathan in his job development.

“Nathan is very passionate and really wants to work. He likes to keep busy and we had to find him a job that would appeal to his personality and be aware of his limitations.”

– VR Counselor Sequoyah Williams

Sequoyah, Scott, and Leigh helped Nathan with job seeking skills training which included: selecting appropriate work and interview clothes, prepping for interviews, sharpening his soft skills, and job coaching. Scott was extremely hands on with Nathan and customized his plan to meet his job goals. Nathan performed a variety of job duties during his community-based work assessments in customer service and local restaurants in his area.

After several months of job searching, Nathan truly landed his dream job. He secured employment as a Customer Service Associate, in the Garden Center at the Georgesville Square Lowe’s. It was the perfect job for him. Not only is Nathan happy, but his Supervisor at Lowe’s, Miles Brown stated, “He comes to work on time and does a good job.”

Thanks to the support and guidance of Sequoyah, Scott, and Leigh, Nathan will soon approach his 90-day mark of maintaining his job. There are many factors that come together to make employment successful. Nathan lives in London, Ohio, for example, and his job is 20 miles away. Leigh was able to arrange transportation through Madison Ride, a community-based transportation program, to get him to and from work. Once Nathan’s case with OOD is closed successfully, Nathan will continue to have support in place with the Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

OOD values partnership and Nathan’s story is a great example. It’s great to see the relationships between OOD, a local provider, and a County Board of DD. Each of them brought their expertise and resources to help Nathan find meaningful employment. **Congratulations Nathan and we wish you the best at your dream job!**



Leigh Spohler, Support Services Coordinator, at Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Nathan Rouse, Customer Service Associate at Georgesville Square Lowe’s in Columbus, OH share in the excitement of Nathan landing his dream job.

Xavier University Celebrates 10 Years of Project SEARCH

This week, Xavier University, Great Oaks, Project SEARCH and OOD celebrated ten years of collaboration on campus. Xavier, the first university to have a Project SEARCH program, began this project in August of 2005 and OOD has been a partner since its inception.

The program has made a real impact:

- 94 students have participated in the program
- Average job placement rate for Xavier's program over 10 years is 85%

Congratulations to the class of 2015 who will graduate in May. Thanks to Xavier University, Great Oaks and Project SEARCH for being such great partners. Here is to ten more years of success!

Northwest State Community College Job Fair



OOD VR Counselors and OOD Job Seekers attended the Northwest State Community College Job Fair this week!

OOD participated in the Northwest State Community College Job Fair this week to provide information about the agency's services and support OOD consumers in attendance.

The event was sponsored by Northwest State, OhioMeansJobs, and iHeart Media. Dozens of area employers participated.

Youth Leadership Forum Panel – 2015 Multiple Perspectives Conference

Four former Youth Leadership Forum delegates joined in this week's 2015 Multiple Perspectives Conference at OSU entitled "Celebrate Our Progress - Write Our Future" <http://ada.osu.edu/conferences/2015Conf/2015conf.html>.



Staff and Delegates at the 2014 Youth Leadership Forum (YLF).

Led by Donna Foster, GCPD Program Administrator and Elizabeth Sammons, BSVI Program Administrator, the session called "The ABC's of YLF" covered the history of Ohio's summer learning experience for high school juniors and seniors of all disabilities, now in its 17th year. Panelists Rajai Saleh, Christi Vandergriff, Chris Maloy, and Megan Zanheis discussed their emergence into advocacy and the relief of knowing they were not alone in facing life's challenges as they laughed and cried their way through a week that changed their lives forever.

Reminder: YLF is still accepting last-minute applications for this summer's program (first week of August) at <http://www.gcpd.ohio.gov/YLF>

Division of Disability Determinations Quarterly Awards

The Division of Disability Determinations recently recognized its Quarterly Award recipients; staff recognized for their superior performance, their ability to be customer focused, innovative & creative, and for their teamwork & leadership skills. Congrats to all the recipients this quarter:

Kevin Byers (DCA3)

Jennifer Dew (DCDA)

Kelly Francis Love (DCA2)

Todd Gould (DCA3)

Rita Gram (DC Supervisor)

Derek Greer (DCA2)

Caitlin Ling (DCA2)

Lori Myers (DPS)

Paula Stoffel (DC Supervisor)

Heather Wright (DCA2)

Individuals in Job Ready Status by County



Total Statewide:
3,723

* 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 614.438.1474.

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