

Weekly Focus **Ohio**

October 4, 2013

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

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.

It Is Official: RSC is now OOD!

The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission has changed its name to **Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)** effective October 1, 2013.

Why change the name?

Simply put, people did not know who we were and how we might be able to assist them. To that point, we have data that backs up this notion:

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

Reinforcement of the belief that people did not know who RSC is was glaring in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment that was completed by The Ohio State University in 2012. It shows that of the population we are to serve, less than 15% were taking advantage of our services. We believe that our former name was a barrier to them receiving services because they didn't know who RSC was and they did not know the mission of the agency.

The Ohio Poll

Further expansion of the fact that people did not know who RSC was and the mission of the agency is backed up by the results of polling recently completed by the University of Cincinnati. In this scientific poll, 827 Ohioans were questioned to determine their awareness about RSC, the services provided by RSC, and whether someone they know might benefit from these services.

The poll results were not surprising. Ohio residents were asked the following question, "In general, do you know what RSC does?" Twelve percent of Ohio residents say they know what RSC does, while 88 percent of residents say they do not know. This number is misleading because of those who replied that they knew what the agency did, about only two-thirds of those responses were actually correct.

The name change will neither diminish the mission of the agency of assisting individuals with disabilities to live independently, gain meaningful employment or receive disability benefits through the Social Security Administration, nor include operational changes. Additionally, the Commissioners will remain as a part of the agency and will continue to independently approve the statewide Vocational Rehabilitation Plan, membership to the Consumer Advisory Committee and make recommendations to the Statewide Independent Living Plan.

No longer will this agency be confused with the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections or thought of as a drug, alcohol or other drug rehabilitation agency. Changing the name to **Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency (OOD)** more accurately reflects the mission and goal of the agency.

A special thank you goes to everyone for their support during this transition and we are confident that this effort is going to reap benefits for individuals with disabilities in Ohio.

2013 OOD DisAbility Jobs Summit Is Here

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities is excited to be hosting our second Ohio DisAbility Jobs Summit: *Smart for Business, Smart for People, Smart for Ohio's Bottom Line* on October 8-9 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

October 8-9, 2013

DisAbility Jobs Summit

Smart for business *Smart for people* *Smart for Ohio's bottom line*

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
John R. Kasich, Governor
Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

We have put together a program that is diverse and informative designed to educate consumers, employers, service providers and OOD professionals. Our special guest speakers include many dignitaries and our keynote speaker is Paul E. Harrington, Ph.D., who is the director of the Center for Labor Markets and Policy at Drexel University in Philadelphia.

More than 700 participants have registered and are planning to attend the *Summit*. I look forward to seeing all of you there!

ATTENTION INDIVIDUALS WITH A DISABILITY -

If you still wish to attend the *DisAbility Jobs Summit* and have a personal care assistant (PCA), you may register to attend at no cost to your PCA. Online registration is closed; however, please click the following link: <http://ood.ohio.gov/ood-home/employers/disability-jobs-summit> to fill out a paper registration form that may be faxed to Chris Glover at 614-985-7828 or e-mailed to Chris.Glover@ood.ohio.gov. You must pay with a check at the time of arrival at the *Summit*. If you have questions, please call Aneesa Locke-Hines at 614-438-1278.

Ohio BLN Named the Affiliate of the Month



The United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN) has chosen the Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN) as the USBLN Affiliate of the Month for October 2013.

The USBLN cites the OHBLN in their recognition for their strong business-led board and for reaching out to businesses to help equip them with the tools that they need to tap into the skills, talent and buying power of persons with disability by advancing disability inclusion in the workplace, marketplace and supply chain.

Additionally, OOD congratulates OHBLN President Chris Moranda on her election to the USBLN as the Affiliate Ex Officio member on their Board of Directors.

Congratulations to Chris, the OHBLN and everyone involved in working to improve the business climate in Ohio for individuals with disabilities.

VR Achieves Goal!

I am pleased to report the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program has exceeded last year's performance in terms of our employment outcomes.

In addition to releasing an additional 5,600 individuals with significant disabilities off of the Waiting List, the VR program wrote well over 10,000 new plans in FFY 2013, ensuring these individuals with disabilities received services they need to help them get and keep a job.

These efforts culminated in successful employment for over 3,700 individuals, an increase of more than 5% over last year's performance. Your efforts have also resulted in a second consecutive year of OOD meeting our federal standards and indicators, which is an essential foundation for a strong VR program in Ohio.

On behalf of the people that we serve, I want to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and commitment this year in helping us to achieve these program goals!

DDD Goes Above and Beyond

The OOD Division of Disability Determination (DDD) achieved magnificent success this year once again.

As DDD Deputy Director Erik Williamson told staff earlier this week, "You completed enough determinations to again fill Ohio Stadium twice, or fill Ohio Stadium, Miami University's stadium, Ohio University's stadium, Bowling Green's stadium and Kent State's stadium, and it still wouldn't be enough to seat the Ohioans you served this year."

The lists of accomplishments from DDD this year are numerous and noteworthy:

- DDD went over their overall goal of 205,756 and made determinations for 206,137 Ohioans who came to us for service or 100.2% of goal.
- DDD did this with 99.1% accuracy as measured by SSA based on their most recent data.
- The time you took to process the determinations dropped from 88.5 days last year to 85.3 days this fiscal year.
- Productivity per Work Year rose from 371.9 at the start of the fiscal year to 387.5!
- Our overall agency pending dropped from 46,632 to 38,084. DDD is researching to determine the last time overall agency pending was under 40k in Ohio.
- DDD exceeded their initial goal, their Continuing Disability Review (CDR) goal, and their overall goal. The only goal missed was the reconsideration goal; but interestingly, we did 3,643 more reconsiderations than came to their doors this year. The receipt estimates from the Office of Disability on reconsiderations was higher than what was actually received, so DDD produced more than came to the DDD.

- DDD continues to have the lowest cost per case in the Chicago Region at \$383.
- DDD did this with a budget that dropped from \$81M to \$76M, or approximately 6% less resources, and last year's budget was roughly 8% less than the year before that.
- The allowance rate climbed from 30.4% to 32.6%, similar to the Regional average of 32.3%.
- DDD Week's Work Pending (measure of how much work is complete based on the average number of cases we produce per week) dropped from 11.3 to 9.6.
- Once again the Ohio DDD made more determinations than the entire Boston Region, more than the entire Kansas City Region, more than the entire Denver Region, and more than the entire Seattle Region.

The entire DDD team deserves accolades for their outstanding efforts this year. Based in no small part on your efforts, Ohio is a leader that other states are trying to emulate.

Spreading the Word of Employment First Held in Springfield

An event co-hosted by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and OOD was held at the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce this week with a large crowd on hand to learn more about the Ohio Employment First initiative.

This series of events allows DODD and OOD to jointly announce the partnership to provide practical job support for 1,500 working-age adults with developmental disabilities throughout Ohio. The partnership is made possible through funding in the 2014/2015 state budget signed in June by Governor John Kasich and it supports assisting individuals in obtaining employment in their communities outside of sheltered workshops or segregated programs.



Director Miller (left) explains the Employment First initiative in Springfield.

Employment First was launched by Governor Kasich in 2012 to increase job opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and required state agencies to align policies and programs to support community employment. With this partnership, DODD and OOD have teamed up to create a job counseling/job placement support network for individuals with developmental disabilities in all Ohio counties. DODD will provide funding for counselors employed by OOD and each of those counselors will serve only individuals with developmental disabilities in sheltered work settings to find integrated employment in the community.

Lean Process Examining Process

OOD is focused on being more responsive to employers to meet their workforce needs, which in turn will result in increased employment opportunities and successful outcomes for our job seekers.



The Lean Ohio work team included Business Relations Manager Jon Hackathorn (seated) and Katie Scheetz (PCA and CCD Program Coordinator).

Why is this critical? Ohio's success rate for getting individuals with disabilities into a sustained employment situation has been declining and is currently 40% for those we serve. Employers are in need of dependable, qualified workers; the per employee replacement cost is \$5,000. Individuals with disabilities are dependable with a low rate of turnover. Federal 503 Compliance Rules will require federal contractors to reach a seven percent target for employing individuals with disabilities across all job categories and we have the talent pool to help them be successful in meeting their target.

In an effort to set the foundation for how we accomplish this, the Lean Ohio Team, from the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Office of Efficiency and Results, facilitated a design session to focus on how OOD responds from the time an employer has an available job to the time an employer is notified of the number of OOD job seekers that applied for the position; and when applicable, the follow-up with the employer, post interview and hiring of job seekers we serve.

Including OOD Business Relations Manager Jon Hackathorn, the work team consisted of our employer customers, Chris Moranda from Ohio Health and Jeanne Farmer from Manpower, Commission Chair Jacqueline Romer-Sensky, and OOD staff representing staff at all levels. I want to thank each team member for the hard work and time they committed to charting the course for moving forward. Over the next six months, OOD will be working with our partners and customers to further define and implement this model.

Lakewood Office in our Thoughts and Prayers

The entire OOD family was deeply saddened by a tragic event that occurred in the OOD Lakewood office this week. Cheryl Valentine, a 27 year employee of the agency, passed away suddenly while at the office.

We struggle collectively to put this loss into perspective. It is impossible to quantify the lives she touched in her years as a vocational rehabilitation counselor. We know that she was more than just an employee of the agency; she was a friend to many and an advocate for those individuals with disabilities she worked diligently to assist.

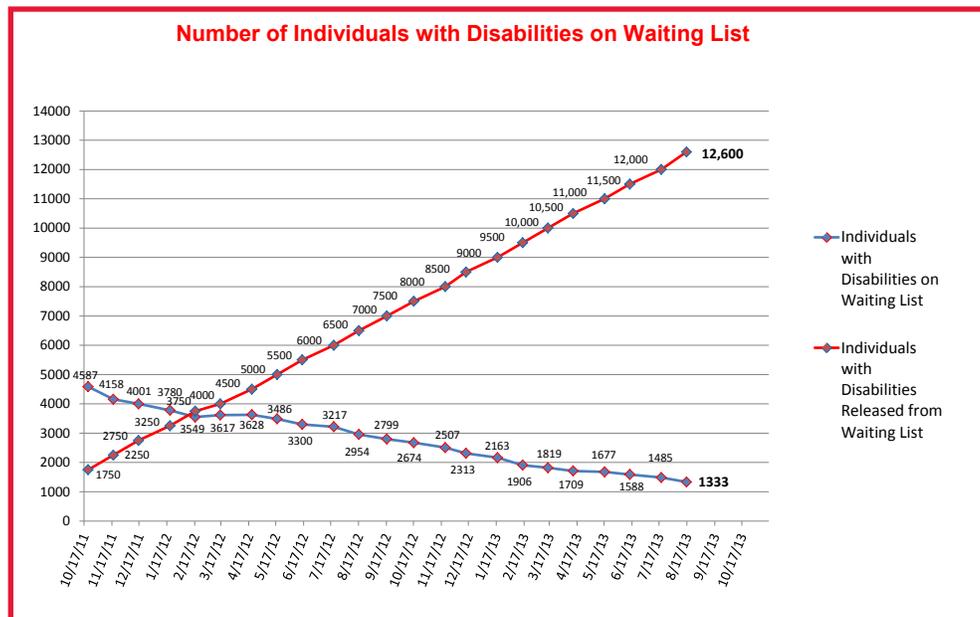
We send our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.

CCC Momentum Continues

The Combined Charitable Campaign (CCC) is still going strong! OOD has raised over \$55,000 which takes us to 69% of our overall goal. The amount of payroll deduction pledges has also increased to 69% of our goal. That is truly astonishing and heart-warming to see the generosity of our staff through this very worthwhile campaign. Fundraising events continue to bring in additional cash donations.

DDD hosted the 2nd Cornhole Tournament this week with Todd Gould, DCA2 and Ryan Townley, DCA2 taking 1st place. A bake sale at the 400 building was a huge hit as well. These events helped raise over \$300. A Fun Run was also held this week at the 400 building and brought in nearly \$50 to add towards our goal. The Mansfield VR office set up a Sundae Bar for all to enjoy with a cash donation.

Don't be left out! Continue to be on the look-out for more information about upcoming events and please join in! We cannot thank everyone enough for participating in the campaign, either through the events or through making a pledge or both. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Heidi Block, ext. 1967 or Roschelle Holcomb, ext. 1966.



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

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