

WEEKLY FOCUS

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

September 19, 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 Announced



From Row Left to Right: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Director, Cynthia Dungey, Deborah Kendrick, Director Miller, and Sherill K. Williams. Back Row Left To Right: John Moore, Arlon Nash, and Steve Burbaker. [Not Pictured: Jamie McCartney and J.W. Smith]

As part of his continued focus on economic growth and increased employment for all Ohioans, Governor John Kasich initiated the creation of a task force to gather data and make recommendations about better integrating individuals who are deaf or blind into the workforce. The Workforce Integration Task Force, created as part of the Mid-Biennial Review (MBR) process at the request of the Governor, will hold its first public meeting next week on September 24, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. here at Central Office.

The nine member task force, co-chaired by myself and Cynthia C. Dungey, Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), will be gathering and analyzing data regarding income levels and employment barriers for individuals who are deaf or blind and making recommendations to the Governor by January 1, 2015.

Along with the agency directors, the Task Force is made up of seven members with diverse backgrounds and experiences including representatives from the deaf and blind communities. Task Force membership also includes representatives from the business community, non-profits, community leaders, and those with an academic background in disability issues.

Governor Kasich proposed the creation of the Task Force as part of the administration's second year budget reform package known as the MBR and it was included in House Bill (H.B.) 483. The provision creates the Task Force within OOD and tasks it with collecting data related to the income levels of individuals who are deaf or blind,

their employment status and geographic location, and identifying barriers to their employment. Upon the issuance of its report, the Task Force sunsets.

Staffs from both OOD and ODJFS have been working diligently to help gather and organize data, staff preliminary meetings, and support the task force to successfully carry out their work.

The work of the Task Force gives us an opportunity to expand awareness and break down barriers to employment for individuals who are deaf or blind. It brings an impressive group of people together to address potential solutions to unemployment and wage disparity. I look forward to working with the Task Force members and Director Dungey and I am confident the resulting report will be a valuable tool for policy makers.

Workforce Integration Task Force Members

Steve Brubaker

Steve Brubaker began his career at InfoCision Management Corporation in 1985. In his current role as Chief of Staff, he is a member of the Executive Team and is responsible for HR, internal and external communications, and manages InfoCision's legal and compliance departments. Brubaker is a member of a number of professional organizations, including the American Teleservices Association (ATA). He served on ATA's national board of directors for more than a decade and is active in the ATA Self-Regulatory Organization (SRO). In 2007 he was awarded the ATA's highest honor, the prestigious Fulcrum Award, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to the call center industry. Mr. Brubaker also received the Dr. Frank L. Simonetti Distinguished Business Alumni Award from The University of Akron in 2012 and the University of Akron Honors College Distinguished Alumni Award in 2014.

Deborah Keefer Kendrick

Deborah Keefer Kendrick is an award-winning journalist, poet, and technologist. Her newspaper column on disability rights has appeared in numerous newspapers since 1986, including the Cincinnati Enquirer, Columbus Dispatch, San Francisco Chronicle, among others. Kendrick also serves as senior features editor for AccessWorld, a technology news magazine for individuals who are blind or visually impaired published by the American Foundation for the Blind. Deborah has written the Jobs That Matter series of books for AFB Press, a series profiling a wide variety of blind and visually impaired individuals and the jobs they do. Her features, editorials, and reviews have also appeared in numerous regional and national publications including Woman's Day, Parenting, Marriage and Family, St. Anthony Messenger, and many others. She serves on a number of boards and councils, has three grown children, and lives in Cincinnati.

Jamie McCartney

Jamie McCartney has been a professional interpreter in Ohio for 21 years and is currently Coordinator for the ASL/ English Interpreting Program at Kent State University. McCartney holds a Doctorate in Secondary Education: Curriculum and Instruction and Bachelor's

and Master's Degree in Technical Education from the University of Akron. She has interpreted in a variety of settings and worked in a variety of venues, such as post-secondary, employment, VRS, medical, social services, Deaf-Blind, and platform interpreting. She has also interpreted for Sorenson Video Relay Service since 2005, previously holding the capacities of manager, director, and Video Interpreter. McCartney is a member of the Ohio Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (OCRID) and the national organization, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). She holds national certification from that organization: Certificate of Transliteration (CT), Certification of Interpretation (CI), and National Interpreter Certification- Master Level (NIC-M).

John L. Moore

John L. Moore is the CEO/Executive Director of Deaf Services Center, Inc. (DSC), a non-profit organization committed to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families throughout a 27 county service area. Moore earned a Bachelor of Science in Government and History from Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. and his Master's in Public Administration from Northeastern University in Boston. He has worked with local grass-root organizations as well as the public and private sector in his role and is currently the President of Community Shares of Mid-Ohio, the first individual with a disability in this role, where he works with 60 area non-profits. He has been involved in various deafness and disability organizations and has an extensive range of experience in dealing with organizations, agencies and interest groups on the state and local levels.

Arlon Nash

Arlon Nash teaches at Springfield High School in Springfield, Ohio. Nash graduated from Bowling Green State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration and holds a Master's Degree in Deaf Education from McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. He is a member of The American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) with Qualified Certification. He is currently co-leader for the Clark

County Deaf Community Organization and is involved as a leader in several organizations that promote leadership for the deaf and that support and cherish American Sign Language (ASL) as the first and native language for individuals who are deaf.

Dr. J. Webster Smith

J. Webster Smith (J.W.) was born blind on March 9, 1959 in Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Smith is a professor of Speech Communication in the School of Communication Studies at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Speech Communication from Indiana University, his Master of Arts degree in Speech Communication from Purdue University, and his PhD from Wayne State University. He is a member of the National Communication Association, Central States Communication Association, National Federation of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind of Ohio (where he served as president from 2008-2012), and the National Association of Blind Educators. In addition, Dr. Smith has served as a member of the Ohio State Library Consumer Advisory Committee, the State Consumer Advisory Committee of Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (formerly known as the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission), and on the Ohio

Governor's Council on People with Disabilities.

Sherill K. Williams

Sherill K. Williams has served as president and CEO of Prevent Blindness Ohio (PBO) since 1986. Prior to joining the staff of PBO, Williams served as national director of youth volunteers for the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and as executive director of the Fairfield County, Connecticut chapter of the March of Dimes. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Speech/Communication from the University of Minnesota and a Master's in Public Administration/Health Care administration from Pace University of New York. Williams is on the Advisory Board of GroundWorkGroup, and is a member of the Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organization's Standards of Excellence Advisory Committee. Additionally, she serves as an advisor for the Ann Ellis Fund of The Columbus Foundation and is a founding member of SOS (Save Our Sight) Coalition, Ohio Eye Care Coalition, Ohio Fireworks Safety Coalition and Ohio Aging Eye Public Private Partnership. She is a graduate of Leadership Columbus and served as a commissioner for the International Year of the Child Presidential National Commission in Washington, D.C.

Senior Staff Hold Two-Day Retreat



The Executive Team and Senior Staff giving presentations and participating in discussion.

Senior staff then reviewed all strategic initiatives and worked to prioritize and rank each item based on their importance in meeting the agency's goals and mission. Discussion was held throughout the retreat, as a group and one-on-one, which helped staff better understand these key initiatives and how they interact with and potentially impact other projects and initiatives across divisions. The goal was to build consensus and gain a better understanding of the strategic planning process.

As part of the two-day event, all Senior Staff also received White Belt Training from Steve Wall, Deputy Director, Office of LEANOhio.

In the coming weeks and months, managers will be developing and implementing plans to effectively communicate OOD's strategic focus, our priorities, and key initiatives to their staff and our partners. We will be updating and revising the strategic initiative reporting process, increasing communication efforts, and emphasizing accountability to build on the work of the retreat.

The OOD Executive Team, along with Senior Staff, held a two-day retreat this week at Spring Hollow Lodge near Sharon Woods Metro Park. The retreat was focused on prioritization of OOD initiatives and projects along with better alignment of those projects with OOD's overall goals and mission.

We reviewed many of the accomplishments of the past few years in order to better understand how far we have come as an agency and to recognize that what seems impossible at the time can, with hard work and dedication, become a benchmark for future success. We also discussed some of the key initiatives moving forward, the reasoning behind them, and how they fit into the larger goals of the agency.

The focus for the two days was J.A.C.E. Jobs, Accountability, Cost Effectiveness, and Efficiency.

CCC Effort Continues Positive Momentum



Chili Cook-Off Winners (from left to right): Jan Phillips (3rd place), Jim Stafford (2nd place), and Sarah Waldsmith (1st place).

As week number two of the Statewide Combined Charitable Campaign (CCC) comes to an end, OOD has momentum on our side. The response rate of employees in the first weeks of the campaign has been humbling according to OOD CCC Co-Chairs Andrew Meador, Disability Claims Adjudicator and Brad Reynolds, DDD Communications Manager.

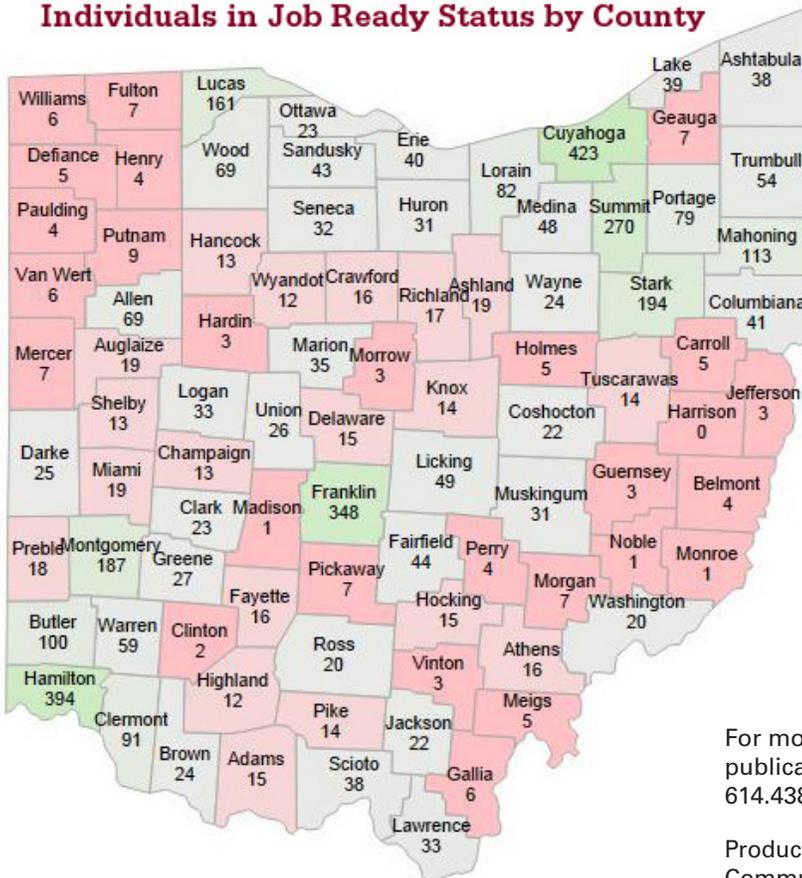
Thus far, OOD's employees have generously pledged an amazing \$37,272.35! What is even more impressive is that number represents a mere 13% response rate so far. So, while we have a long way to go to meet our agency goal of \$93,750, we know that we have a lot of people still to donate. If you have yet to donate, please visit www.ohio.gov/ohioccc to access the online donation portal or contact 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.

This week also bore witness to an annual DDD fundraising favorite: the Chili Cook-Off. With eight contestants making chili, the judging team had their work cut out for them to pick the best. After tasting, and tasting again, the judges picked their winner. Sarah Waldsmith with her "Green Bean Chili" took first place. Second place was awarded to Jim Stafford and third place went to Jan Phillips. The judges reported that all of the contestants made wonderful chili for this competition.

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Congratulations to all of the winners and thank you to all who took time to participate. This event raised \$274.35 for this year's CCC.

Individuals in Job Ready Status by County



Total Statewide:
3,934

* 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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