



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

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Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Jefferson County BDD

250 John Scott Highway
Steubenville, Ohio 43952
www.jcbdd.com

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Superintendent's Message: Quality Service Amid Challenges

The Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities has released its 2021 Annual Report and continues to provide the highest quality of services through exceedingly challenging times.

The JCBDD is honing its focus on how to better support our employees, individuals, families, provider network and community. We are excited to share our programs, achievements and challenges and a few of the highlights include the following:

--Maintaining a solid financial

status and increased cash reserves by 8.5 percent;

--Offering numerous in-kind trainings along with more than \$5,000 in training in 2021 to assist our provider network;

--Providing job training and coaching to a record 15 youth through the Summer Youth Employment Program;

--Funding a community home on Lacy Drive in Steubenville and discontinued a residence on Lawson Avenue in the same city;

--Providing hybrid (in-person

and remote learning) services through our early intervention and school-age programs despite COVID restrictions and a mask mandate;

--Establishing a more diverse transition program for students aged 14 and over at The School of Bright Promise;

--Making the Jeffco Center a community resource and hosting over 75 events;

(Continued as MESSAGE)

Inclusion Highlighted for DD Awareness Month

Inclusion and understanding are being highlighted with activities in observance of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month for March.

Alex "Cookie" West, community facilitator for the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities, said the "Through Our Eyes" campaign will continue this year and give everyone an opportunity to see the world through the eyes of a disabled individual.

"We are super excited this year about our two separate activities for the 'Through Our Eyes' campaign," West said. "We want to continue to bring awareness to the barriers that people with different abilities still face, and we know that when individuals have the opportunity to see through the eyes of a differently abled person it fosters empathy, kindness and compassion."

Activities slated include a simulation day for local schools and the community on March 16 featuring a packet of activities and questionnaire to gauge people's understanding of living with blindness, deafness, mobility issues and more, and the City of Murals Art Project in which students and members of the PALS Adult Activities Center in Steubenville team up to create original renderings for

display and judging at the main branch of the Public Library of Steubenville and Jefferson County.

For the latter, the artwork will be reviewed by community judges but residents will also be able to vote by casting a virtual vote March 23-26 on JCBDD's Facebook page. There are three divisions for elementary school (grades 3-4), junior middle school (grades 5-6) and middle school (grades 7-8), and each division will receive first- and second-place honors with one overall Community Choice winner. Winners will be announced on Wednesday, March 30.

"Our project objective is 'Connecting Community,' or bringing together a diverse group of individuals with different abilities to work together towards one common collaborative art piece. The student teams and PALS will collaborate together with the students drawing the design and PALS teammates coloring, painting or adding any creative additions to make their project unique," she explained. "Last year, we shared with local school districts suggested activities that their students could participate in and provided the same packets for the community at large [for simulation day]. Both students and community participants really enjoyed the

experience.

"This March 16, we are asking Jefferson County school districts and the community to participate in a countywide simulation day again. Each person can participate in an activity of their choosing and document their experience."

West noted that she attended the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Awareness and Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse where the 2022 theme is "Be The Change." Lt. Gov. Jon Husted and state Department of Developmental Disabilities Director Kim Hauck encouraged people with disabilities to share their stories.

"The more opportunities individuals with disabilities have to share their experiences, the more their community can see the value of accepting and supporting community integration. No community thrives unless all its members are valued," she commented. "We at the county Board of Developmental Disabilities believe annual events like these can foster an open mind and open heart and help us reshape the culture and how a person with different abilities are viewed and accepted in the community."

Anyone interested in receiving a simulation day packet may contact West at awest@jcbdd.com.



Viva Las Vegas!

Elvis was in the building to entertain residents of Shaffer Plaza during "Vegas Night" on Feb. 11. The evening included table games and faux slot machines for the fun feel of a real casino in the Jeffco Center Community Room and The King made an appearance to the delight of his audience. Pictured is impersonator Craig Newell with residents Shirley Robinson and Janet Kostelnik.

Message (Continued from Front)

--Completing an agency-wide minimum wage increase for direct care staff;

--Hosting our first-ever private provider meeting to discuss needs and services;

--Increasing community cohorts by 14 partners;

--Developing provider recruitment incentives and attracting four new providers to our network;

--Increasing organizational communication and employee engagement to attract and retain a quality workforce;

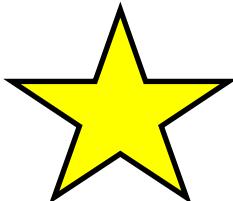
--Receiving a three-year CARF accreditation in community employment.

I want to thank every employee who continues to work diligently at providing high quality services and who have made the county board what it is today. That commitment, despite the challenges of 2021, has continued to move us forward. I am looking forward to 2022 and meeting the challenges ahead.

To review a copy of the annual report, go to our website at www.jcbdd.com.

-Michael Zinno
JCBDD Superintendent

Getting to Know You...



**Phyllis
Westfall**

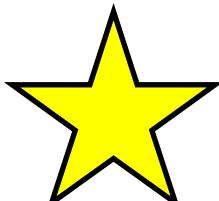


Phyllis Westfall recently capped off a 32-year career with the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities and is now on to the next act in her life.

Westfall, of Toronto, climbed the ranks at Shaffer Plaza Apartments before departing her role as a qualified intellectual disabilities professional (QIDP) on Feb. 28. She has always enjoyed helping people and her experience with JCBDD began while volunteering with the Jefferson County Special Olympics. She became a residential aide at the Steubenville site in 1990 and served for six years before becoming a home manager. She held that position for nearly a quarter-century while also raising her brood of six children and obtaining a bachelor's degree in legal studies from California University of Pennsylvania in 2013. She then was promoted to QIDP and continued in that role for the past four years.

After more than three decades with JCBDD, Westfall said she was prepared to move on.

"It's time. I was ready," she said, adding that she would miss the people she's served with along the way. "I loved working [at Shaffer Plaza]. I got to grow up with the clients and it's a big part of who I am. They kept me young and gave me a lot of wisdom when raising my own children."



**Jennifer
Burkey**



Anyone who knows Jennifer Burkey will tell you she loves three things—and they all revolve around caffeine.

"She likes coffee, coffee, coffee—and tea," her caregivers clarify, and each one is a serving of happiness.

From a cup of Tim Horton's to a mug of hot home brew, Burkey finds satisfaction in the littlest things.

The daughter of Steve and Kay Burkey of Toronto, she has one brother, Chris, who serves in the military. She has lived at Shaffer Plaza Apartments since 2008 and has settled in among the residents in the home environment.

But she does have other interests that keep her percolating. She likes to smile, get hugs, eat cheese and watch "Rugrats" on television.

She also likes to dine at Applebee's and color pictures, and like a "latte" of ladies, she definitely loves to get some pampering with haircuts and manicures.

Burkey even enjoys the great outdoors and has spent plenty of time sitting outside, taking walks and looking at the trees. Mostly, she loves visiting with her parents.

