



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

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Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Jefferson County BDD

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*In This Special
Summer Edition:*

**Teens Gain Skills
in Summer Youth
Program*

**Prom Night
Celebration Marks
PALS Anniversary*



The Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities is winding down its 2023 Summer Youth Program with participants aged 14-20 gaining job skills by improving local facilities. They spent several weeks between June 6-Aug. 11 working at Friendship Park in Smithfield and Jefferson State Lake in Richmond as well as learning about socialization, teamwork and earning their keep. Among the participants pictured are, from left, Clarissa Whiteman, Patrick Kinney, Dakota Crawford, Ray Cooper, Amari Wilson, Jo-Jo Huzovic, Jaxson Handzus and Logan Briggs.

Teens Gain Skills in Summer Youth Program

A group of teens are gaining on-the-job experience with the 2023 Summer Youth Program through the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

The program is winding down on Aug. 11 and a total of 17 youth between the ages of 14-20 have worked at local parks over the past few months. The first session was held June 6-29 and included nine teens who worked three days a week painting shelter houses, a bridge and signposts and pressure washing restroom facilities and memorials at the entrance of Friendship Park in Smithfield, while latest eight-person crew was based at Jefferson State Park in Richmond since July 11 and spent four days a week clearing brush

and trimming along the trails, cleaning and painting dugouts at the baseball field, cleaning shelter houses and signs and painting fencing near the lake. The young workers were onsite five hours a day and earned minimum wage for their efforts.

JCBDD Community Employment Specialists Renee Pastre Hanlin and Angela Loppe Goodrich said the program has been held for the past decade and has enabled countless teens to learn skills and other responsibilities to prepare for the workforce.

“We have very hard-working students. We try to split them up and have them do 30-minute rotations so they are continually learning new skills,” said Hanlin. “The

purpose of the program is so students learn entry-level skills and work ethics and they learn to appropriately socialize. They also learn proper techniques and what it’s like to work as a team.”

She added that the program has yielded youth representing Toronto, Steubenville Big Red, Buckeye Local, Indian Creek and Edison Local Schools as well as Jefferson County Joint Vocational School, Jefferson County Christian School and Steubenville Catholic Central High School.

She and Goodrich agreed that it has spurred excitement and the teens enjoy returning, while

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several have been part of the program for up to four years.

“They love coming back and are already looking forward to doing it next year,” Hanlin continued.

The young workers said they hope to meet goals with the wages they make.

“We work, work, work,” said Jo-Jo Huzovic, a student at CCHS. “I want to buy a phone and a house.”

“I like painting,” added Toronto High School student Amari Wilson. “I want to get a phone and computer.”

JVS students Jaxson Handzus and Dakota Crawford respectively hoped to save for a house and new phone with their earnings.

“I get paid and want a new phone,” added recent JVS grad Clarissa Whiteman, noting what she liked most about the experience.

Ray Cooper, another JVS student and a first-year program participant, said there was a lot to enjoy about the program.

“[I like] being around friends and getting paid,” Cooper commented. “The supervisors are wonderful.”

For more information about the summer youth program, contact Hanlin or Goodrich at (740) 266-3839 or email rpas-tre@jcbdd.com or aloppe@jcbdd.com.

Prom Night Celebration Marks PALS Anniversary

Nearly 80 people from Jefferson, Harrison and Belmont counties Enjoy Evening “Under the Sea”

Patrons with the Cadiz PALS had their time to shine during a prom-themed event to mark the day program’s fourth anniversary.

About 80 people dolled up in their best finery to dine and dance at St. Florian Hall in Wintersville on Aug. 4. The night was dubbed “A Night Under the Sea: PALS Chrysalis Health” and featured a catered meal by Undo’s based at the facility as well as music from DJ Anthony Feaster and photographs taken by staff to remember the occasion.

Program Manager Maria Prentice said it gave participants a fun way to celebrate the Harrison County site’s milestone.

“This is the fourth year for PALS,” she said. “We usually celebrate every year with a picnic and invite county boards and family members, but this year we wanted to do something different. I had this vision since I started with PALS and I spoke with the individuals about it. They were excited about dressing up and we do open it to family members to see it.”

The Cadiz PALS serves residents in Harrison, Jefferson and Belmont counties and had members on hand while individuals with the Jefferson County PALS, which is now located in Mingo Junction, and the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities were also invited to the festivities. Attendants donned an array of formal wear from gowns to suits and a few even sported spiffy hats for their special night. Prentice said St. Florian was an ideal place to hold the event and she was pleased to see everyone enjoy themselves.

“I could not do this without my staff,” she added, saying more dances may be held in the future.”



Melissa Vargo and Jared Vojvodich make picture-perfect memories during the Cadiz PALS’ fourth anniversary celebration which was held at St. Florian Hall in Wintersville on Aug. 4. About 80 people from Jefferson, Harrison and Belmont counties attended the prom-themed event to mark the occasion.

Several participants agreed it was a fun evening.

“I love it. I love everything,” said Randall McMillen, of Cadiz, who attended with date Sally Moreland, also of Cadiz.

“I’m excited,” said Lisa Majewski of Steubenville. “I got butterflies in my stomach. I feel like I’m flying in the top of the skies somewhere.”

“I’m excited to get my hair done,” added Melissa Vargo of Mount Pleasant, adding that she would attend a dance every year.

“I like it,” said Sandra Baksa of East Springfield. “It’s different.”

JCBDD Superintendent Michael Zinno also attended the event and said hopes are to hold similar activities in the future.

PALS Chrysalis Health offers a variety of services for individuals from in-house activities and vocational skills to outdoor excursions on weekdays. Among them are home economics and life skills, trips for bowling and swimming and work-based experience performing janitorial duties for ODOT rest areas at Tappan and Piedmont Lakes, lawn maintenance at the Belmont County BDD and shredding services for the Harrison County Courthouse.