



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

November 2023

Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Issue 49

Jefferson County BDD

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Steubenville, Ohio
43952
www.jcbdd.com

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S.E.T. Enhances Experiences for Students

Jefferson County youth can learn of opportunities for their future as the Student Empowerment Tour ramps up for a fifth year, and now officials have some extra tools to enhance the experience.

S.E.T., as it is known, was established in 2018 and visits county schools to showcase options in post-secondary education and employment through immersive sessions with officials from the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities Employment Services, Eastern Gateway Community College's Enrollment Services, Career Services and Workforce Department and now the Jefferson County Community Action Council. The program is geared toward junior high and high school students with Individualized Education Plans, or IEP's, and gives them some extra support to transition into the community as they reach adulthood. Leaders said the addition of the CAC includes some high-tech offerings for students to pursue potential fields of interest.

"We are back for 2023-24," said JCBDD Employment and Community Navigator Cookie West. "It's exciting! We have created this team and we have great synergy. This year we are energized to add a new agency."

The S.E.T. team includes Renee Pastre-Hanlin and Angela Goodrich of JCBDD's Community Employment Services, and Chris Hoover, Leanna Lulla and Amelia Taggart of EGCC, and this year added Kelcea Danielson, CCMEP case manager for the JCCAC. West said Danielson and the CAC staff had collaborated with the Multi-Agency Transition Youth Team for the last three years and have provided a valuable connection. Having Danielson on board with S.E.T. also brings an exciting and modern resource to introduce students to potential careers and enhances the group's programming.

"The CCMEP program has virtual reality headsets that will add an incredible experience to the session offered to students, it will give stu-



The Student Empowerment Team (S.E.T.) program is now in its fifth year and is traveling to local schools to showcase options in post-secondary education and employment through immersive sessions. This year, the program includes the Jefferson County Community Action Council and is providing virtual headsets to give students a unique view of careers. Pictured is JCCAC representative Laurie Roth with a student during a demonstration at Indian Creek High School.

dents a "reality check" as they prepare, plan, perform and prosper into their future," she added. "We al-

"Our team is strongly convinced that with the right services and supports, all students can succeed in their next phases of life, whether in employment or post-secondary education."

**-Cookie West
JCBDD Employment and
Community Navigator**

ways look to evolve and make interactions relevant and current. Our goal is to bring fresh and interactive options to the students. We want them to have an opportunity to see what's out there and what it takes to obtain and retain employment and advance in 21st century workforce."

The S.E.T. team held a kickoff meeting in September to plan another

year of sessions and provide extra supports to students transition from high school into adulthood. Sessions were held at Edison Jr./Sr. High School on Oct. 5 and Indian Creek Middle School on Oct. 26 with more set for Buckeye Local on Nov. 2, Harding Middle School on Nov. 16 and Toronto on Nov. 30. West said another may be planned at Quest Alternative School in Steubenville.

"This interactive experience is suited for grades 7-12 transition students. We identify transition students as those who have IEP's due to physical, intellectual, sensory or mental health reasons," West explained. "Our team is strongly convinced that with the right services and supports, all students can succeed in their next phases of life, whether in employment or post-secondary education. We have been touring local school districts for about four years and we look forward to sharing and learning from them and bringing an experience that will make a lasting impression."

Individuals Now Have More Modern Housing

JCBDD Partners with Summit Housing Development Corp. to Acquire Newer Homes for 9 People across Jefferson County

People served through the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities now have more modern residences to call home.

JCBDD Service and Support Administration (SSA) Director Lynette Ekey said officials collaborated with Summit Housing Development Corp. (SHDC) and acquired homes throughout the Steubenville and Wintersville area to lodge nine people.

SHDC is a non-profit corporation that works in conjunction with multiple county developmental disability boards and currently owns over 190 homes in 14 counties, including Jefferson, Tuscarawas and Holmes. It was created to allow all county BDD's the ability to access Capital Assistance Funds disbursed by the State of Ohio. Ekey explained that the newer sites, which were acquired in April, provide more modern amenities to better accommodate adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities and give them a true sense of independence.

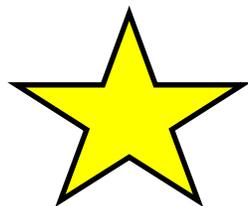
"We had four houses in the Pleasant Heights area that were older homes. We were involved with Summit Housing and found homes in different areas of Steubenville and Wintersville. Summit purchased them and made them more accessible," Ekey said. "We've moved residents from two of the older houses into newer ones and the others should be moved by the beginning of December."

The houses include some more living space for residents with individuals having their own bedrooms, in addition to remodeled bathrooms and kitchens and, more importantly, improved accessibility such as ramps.

She said the residents were all happy to be in their new digs and it was part of an overall plan to ensure they get a chance to integrate into the community.

"We have almost reached our goal of moving people into new homes. We're trying to spread them out and get them into a neighborhood environment," Ekey added. "We'd been looking for property since the beginning of the year and worked with Summit Housing on the process. Summit then worked to get them purchased and remodeled."

Other homes are located along Ohio 213 and near Bantam Ridge Road in Wintersville. In the meantime, three of the older homes that JCBDD owned for more than 30 years will be placed on the market.



Andi Starkey



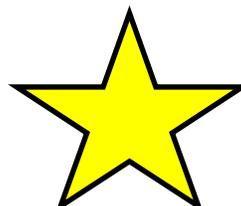
Andrea "Andi" Starkey has always helped others.

Whether it's serving as a speech language pathologist, or SLP, for the School of Bright Promise over the past 26 years or conducting mission work, Starkey has supported people in various facets.

She said she has completed mission work in the U.S. and Jamaica and had even taught Bible classes intermittently for children from the age of 3 to adult women since she was in the seventh grade. However, she has not done so currently.

Originally from Little Hocking, she now resides in Mingo Junction with her husband, Brant, with whom she celebrated a 30th wedding anniversary in May. They have three children together: Cami, who resides in North Carolina with husband Casey; a son, Brayden; and daughter Lyndi, who currently attends Kentucky Christian University. Her parents reside in Vienna, W.Va., and she has a sister in Texas while her dog, Marco, completes the family.

Starkey received her bachelor and master's degrees from Marshall University and in her spare time loves watching British period movies such as "Pride and Prejudice" and spending the weekends cheering on Lyndi during her collegiate volleyball games.



Elaine Hendershot



Elaine Hendershot enjoys the simple things in life.

Ask the Steubenville native what she likes and the list would be endless.

Hendershot has a history with the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities from her days of attending the School of Bright Promise, and she said she enjoyed her time there. Now she makes her home at Shaffer Plaza Apartments.

She also loves being out and about making friends and can be found at the PALS adult day program in Cadiz, where she likes working on projects such as creating one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces and getting her nails painted. She also seemed to light up when she heard music playing and said she likes music of all kinds, but she noted the Beach Boys were her favorite band.

Hendershot shared that summer was her favorite season, mostly because she loves the sun and sitting out on the patio to soak in the rays. She also enjoys seeing and smelling all the beautiful flowers.

She mentioned that she had a dog named Jake when she was younger and enjoys pet therapy days. Hendershot added that if she could only eat one thing for the rest of her life, it would be French fries.