



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

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Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Santa Claus Comes to Town

Nine-year-old Oliver Clark, son of Willie and Alycia Clark of Steubenville, gets acquainted with Santa Claus during an inclusive event at the Steubenville YMCA on Dec. 13. Local kids and their families had an opportunity to take photos with St. Nick, enjoy snacks and activities and watch a holiday movie. The event was provided by Special Connections, which includes the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Crossroads Christian Church and the Special Needs Parents Support in the Ohio Valley Facebook Group.

Bright Promise Preschool Gets Gold Rating

The School of Bright Promise preschool program has gained a gold rating through the Step Up To Quality initiative.

Children’s Services Director Dr. Georgia Pavlic-Roseberry said the preschool earned the designation following a review from SUTQ officials and she was excited for the program.

“They changed the rating system from a one- to-five-star rating to a three-part system. So, it became a gold program. We’re proud of that,” Dr. Pavlic-Roseberry said. “It’s an opportunity to showcase our preschool program as it’s the one classroom



The School of Bright Promise preschool program recently earned a gold rating through the Step Up To Quality initiative. Pictured are, from left, aides Seneca Smith and Sheryl Eckroth and teacher Jenna Joyce.

(Continued as GOLD)

JCBDD Joins Partnership with OOD, GRIT Project

The Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities Community Services Program is teaming up with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and Future Plans—GRIT (Growing Rural Independence Together) Project to better support those they serve.

Representatives of the three organizations met in November to discuss preliminary ideas and share issues to benefit from their connection. JCBDD Community Navigator Cookie West was joined by Community Employment Specialists Renee Pastre-Hanlin and Elyzabeth Grimm, Linda Macy of OOD, and Deb Hill of the non-profit Future Plans-GRIT Project as they discussed a partnership to improve ways of assisting individuals.

They talked about adapting assessments for placing individuals in jobs and providing capacity-building and shadowing opportunities. Officials mentioned that they would review virtual assessments through the Future Plans-GRIT Project to make recommendations to help students with dyslexia and other challenges, plus they discussed how to support individuals based on their specific needs.

“We are committed to supporting transition youth students and actively exploring opportunities for collaboration,” remarked West. “This initiative unites a diverse array of organizations, creating vibrant opportunities

for networking and the exchange of resources. By enhancing our collective support for those we serve, we anticipate improved employment outcomes.”

Linda Macy, vocational rehabilitation counselor for OOD, said she primarily works with students in junior and senior high schools.

“Our goal is to prepare them for jobs and help them pursue certification so they can look for work,” Macy added. “We work with the BDD in contract services when they work with students. This [partnership] will add more layers of service and offer a different perspective of how to look at each individual and find employment they can stay with for a long time.”

Hill, who serves as Northeast Ohio regional director for Future Plans-GRIT Project, said the program was located in 32 Appalachian counties and promotes the development of sustainable living and building hope within communities.

“Our assessment provides knowledge of a person’s strengths and interests and where those fit within the workforce,” she noted. “We also provide one-on-one career coaching and a platform for career exploration. We work in schools and the adult population with challenges from 10th grade to 80 years old. We’re always interested in collaborating and helping to fill gaps and fill capacity. We

look at employers and schools and partner with Ohio Means Jobs, and we want to look at partnering and giving support without duplicating services but help to fill gaps in the process.”

Both Pastre-Hanlin and Grimm agreed the partnership would be a great benefit for the people they serve through their program.

“I think it will make an individual job plan that will better serve their interests, strengths and abilities,” Grimm concluded.

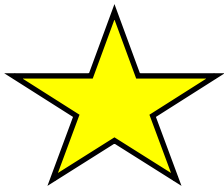
GOLD (Continued from Front)

in the building where we can serve typical preschoolers along with our students, which creates a pretty amazing dynamic.”

She said 11 students participate in the program, which operates weekdays for ages 3-5, and some more students will be added. It is led by preschool teacher Jenna Joyce along with two aides/assistant teachers, Sheryl Eckroth and Seneca Neff Smith.

Step Up To Quality was previously under the Ohio Department of Education’s umbrella but is now part of the state Department of Children and Youth. State officials observed the preschool last year and completed an assessment, plus they viewed staff qualifications as part of their review.

Getting to Know You...



**Jayden
McMillan**



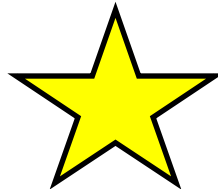
Jayden McMillan is just like every other boy his age. The 12-year-old says he enjoys playing videogames and sports when not attending the sixth-grade at the School of Bright Promise.

The son of Sade McMillan of Steubenville, Jayden said his favorite subject is math and he has many friends at school. In his spare time, he is with his family, which also includes his brother, Cortez.

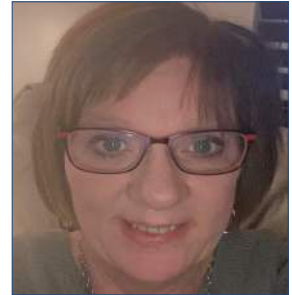
But Jayden has plenty of favorite things to do. “I like ‘Injustice 2,’” he said of his favorite videogame, and he also included the popular “Minecraft.”

Meanwhile, he enjoys both playing and watching basketball, saying he liked all teams and viewed games on television. He also counts YouTube as another form of entertainment and said he loves watching the movie “Despicable Me 4” and listening to the “Spiderman” song.

This Christmas, he planned to eat dinner and open presents, and he had one wish for Santa to put something under his tree: “I want an iPhone,” he said.



**Lori
Brandon**



Lori Brandon can be seen in the office at the School of Bright Promise, but she has been a fixture with the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities for the past 40 years.

She began working part-time at Shaffer Plaza as a teen and eventually became a full-time employee, moving on to the school in 1988 where she currently serves as administrative secretary.

“I love the kids. I have seen a lot of them start preschool and graduate from high school,” she added. “I’m very blessed to still be working.”

Brandon resides in Toronto with her husband, Brett, and their family includes son Adam, future daughter-in-law Samantha, stepson Paul and his wife, B.J., step-grandchildren Ethan and Faith and a fur grandbaby named Thor.

She added that spending time with her family is very important, while she also enjoys taking evening walks and attending sporting events. Brandon said she counts basketball, baseball and softball among her favorites. Additionally, she attends Riverview Global Methodist Church and is a member of the handbell choir in memory of her late brother, HN Ronald James Manning of the U.S. Navy.