



JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD  
OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

256 John Scott Highway  
Steubenville, Ohio 43952  
[www.jcbdd.com](http://www.jcbdd.com)

Michael J. Zinno  
Superintendent

Early Intervention  
School Age Services  
(740) 264-5812  
(740) 264-0399 Fax

Community  
Employment  
(740) 266-3840  
(740) 266-3839 Fax

Service & Support  
Community  
Integration  
(740) 266-4291  
(740) 266-4293 Fax

Shaffer Plaza  
(740) 264-7111  
(740) 266-2924 Fax

Transportation  
(740) 266-2923  
(740) 264-5977 Fax

**Contact: Superintendent Michael Zinno**

**For Immediate Release**

### **All-Stars, Rural King to Play Unified Basketball Game**

STEUBENVILLE-Members of the Jefferson County All-Stars and the Steubenville Rural King will join together for a unified community basketball game on March 31.

The game is set for 6 p.m. at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreational Center in Steubenville and is free and open to the public. All-Stars athletes and business employees will play in mixed teams for a night of fun and fellowship to close National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, but organizer Steve Forte hopes to include more community activities in the future.

Forte, who serves as activities director for the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities and coordinator for the Special Olympics, said the JCBDD and Unified Sports of Ohio is hosting the event as a way to bolster inclusivity.

“There will be people from Rural King and we will have members of the Special Olympics team, and we will split the players into two groups. It’s billed as a unified community game with Special Olympics and Rural King, not Special Olympics versus Rural King,” he said. “It was a desire for us to connect with the community. We’re calling this a first-annual event and next year we’ll sprinkle unified games throughout the whole season.”

Forte said there was a time when the community was greatly involved with Special Olympics, but games ceased prior to the COVID pandemic and he was looking to reconnect through the unified games.

“It’s a way of pulling in supporters and hopefully sponsors. We want to re-establish community relationships because our athletes and students come from the community. This [game] is the forerunner of that and it will be a lot of fun.”

Meanwhile, Rural King officials were equally thrilled to be involved in the activity.

“We’re excited to participate and look forward to a fun-filled evening,” said Jean Pike, manager of the Steubenville store.

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a nationwide event to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities and address the barriers they may face. Additionally, Unified Sports is a Special Olympics program that allows people with and without intellectual and physical disabilities to play sports together.