



## MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT

BRIAN W. GREEN

Superintendent Brian Green shares thoughts on Riverside's 2.5-mill renewal levy and plans for the remainder of 2020.

## Fall 2020

Working for a Living (cover story) | 3

DSP Recognition | 4-5

Staying Connected | 6-7



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Our Mission is to empower people with developmental disabilities to live, work and play as full members of our community.

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Article suggestions and address changes should be submitted to:

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# **Superintendent's Corner**

As I am writing this article, Riverside is in the midst of educating the community about our renewal levy, which is on the November 3, 2020 ballot. This levy is one of two local levies that provide roughly 70% of our revenue each year. The other levy is a 1.7-mill continuing levy that accounts for about 30% of our revenue; the levy on the ballot this fall is our 2.5-mill time-limited levy that must be renewed every 5 years. It accounts for approximately 40% of our income. The remainder (30%) of our revenue comes from state and federal sources.

Our efforts to educate the community about our services is not an activity we only perform every five years at levy time. We work hard to engage the Miami County community every single day, sharing about how their support makes a difference in the lives of the 1,000 people we serve. Through communications such as this newsletter, our website, our Facebook page and other means, we strive to tell stories throughout the year that illustrate just how important the community is in helping us achieve our mission.

Our last ABLE Magazine focused on Early Intervention services for children ages 0-3. This issue shares stories about people with disabilities successfully working in the community. All of our issues highlight the work of our service provider partners, who work directly with the people we mutually support, as their hands-on work is crucial to the vital services offered in our community. As in all of our communications, we recognize that we do not do this work alone. All property owners in Miami County have a part in our success through the generous and steadfast support they've always shown to us. We are always grateful for that support and hope for a positive outcome in the election.

As we look toward the end of 2020, we have plans to continue with our "open by appointment only" status of our building, with most employees working remotely to ensure the highest level of safety during this continued pandemic. We have, however, established parameters and set schedules for a limited number of in-person activities through our Community Connections Department. We realize how important mental and emotional health is to all of us, and we are working with individuals, their families, their direct support professionals and others to ensure that as we gradually return to in-person activities, we place the utmost importance on health and safety.

I wish everyone a safe and healthy remainder of the year, and look forward to a bright 2021 where we will certainly appreciate the ability to be together, however that may be.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian W. Green".

Brian W. Green  
Superintendent

## Working for a Living

Each October we celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This is a time when we focus on highlighting information and stories to educate the community about employment for people with disabilities. People are often surprised to learn that employing people with developmental disabilities not only helps improve morale and productivity ... it often leads to improvement in the bottom line. Check out examples below of some employees making a difference in their workplaces and communities.



Ellen Goldstein has been at Hartzell Propeller for 2 years, working as a Custodian and Production Associate. A hard worker, Ellen enjoys her job and spending time with her co-workers. Whether she's tidying up the work area to ensure their safety or on the assembly line, Ellen is sure to make her co-workers smile.



Justin Kessler works in Dietary Services at Upper Valley Medical Center. According to Justin, he loves doing his job, and he especially loves spending time with his co-workers. The feeling is mutual as Megan, Justin's supervisor, raves about his work ethic. "He has been the best. I wouldn't trade him for anything," she says.



Cindy Cupps works at Taco Bell in Troy and loves everything about it. As a lobby attendant, she helps keep others safe and makes sure everything is clean and sanitized. When she's not busy cleaning, Cindy helps her co-workers whenever she can.



From cleaning to assisting customers with carts at Kroger-Vandalia, Tori Penny does her best to ensure the health and happiness of those around her.



Billy Taylor has been a dedicated member of the I-75 Rest Area maintenance crew for 17 years through a partnership between RT Industries and the Ohio Department of Transportation. He performs janitorial tasks, mows, trims bushes, removes litter and snow and greets travelers. He is known for his great sense of humor, dedication and reliability. "Billy is an AMAZING employee, who absolutely loves his job, says Michelle Duley of RT Industries. "He greets everyone with a smile, a warm welcome and an impersonation of someone he enjoys working with. Billy brightens my day every time I have the pleasure of seeing him.



# Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week

September 13-19, 2020, was DSP Appreciation Week, celebrating the outstanding work of essential Direct Support Professionals in the developmental disabilities field. Miami County has some of the best DSPs in the state, and we wanted to make sure they all felt recognized and appreciated for all they do. To show our appreciation, we provided them with gifts and essentials for their work, including a water bottle, phone charger and hand sanitizer.



Left: Riverside's Provider Referral and Linkage Coordinator Janice Thebert smiles with DSP Lorie Armstrong at our drive-thru gift distribution on September 16.

Right: DSP Dawn Smith poses with her gifts in the Riverside parking lot during the gift distribution.



Right: DSPs received some tools for their workdays in their gift bags.



Below: Staff from HARDacre Farm, one of our provider partners who offer adult day services, smile with their gifts after a special delivery.

Below: We couldn't forget office staff at our provider partner agencies. For them, we created baskets of goodies and necessities that could be shared by those who work behind the scenes to support DSPs.





# Spotlight on Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)

Like other front line workers, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) work to ensure the health of the people they support. But unlike others on the front lines, their work is not as widely recognized. We want to change that, so we're showcasing local DSPs for their dedication to people with developmental disabilities.

A Production & Career Discovery Coordinator at RT Industries, Mary Jo Leonard has been a DSP for 9 years, following in her mom and aunt's footsteps. She coordinates services for people served through RTI's group employment, Adult Day Services (ADS) and Homemaker Personal Care (HPC). Mary Jo loves her job, sharing, "It's the most rewarding job. I enjoy seeing the look on the person's face when they master a new skill or when they're excited to move into employment."



As an independent DSP, Tammy Mayberry is certified directly through the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to provide services and is technically self-employed. She also works for American Liberty Financial. As a DSP, Tammy helps people with developmental disabilities live independently and manage their money. Along with job flexibility, she loves being a DSP because of the impact she has; she shares, "I love to see those I serve hit a personal goal. I enjoy seeing their face light up when they hear, 'Job well done.' It warms my heart."

Part of the team at Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley, Brandi Vogler-Bates serves as a Retention Specialist, providing job coaching and long-term employment support for the people GESMV serves, and no two days are the same for her. One day she'll observe someone in their job, the next she'll work alongside them as they learn a new task, and then the next she'll help someone communicate their goals with their supervisor. No matter what she does, Brandi loves her job; she shares, "I love everything! There's no better feeling than seeing those I serve succeed! Even though it can get stressful, becoming a DSP is one of the best choices I've ever made."



Rebecca Stearns has been a DSP for 13 years and currently serves as a House Manager with Basinger Life Enhancement Support Services - BLESS, LLC. When asked about her job, she shares, "I enjoy seeing the look on each person's face when they have a good time! I also love being part of an excellent team." When asked why she thinks others should become a DSP, Rebecca says, "If you want a career rich in rewards, this is the path for you. You get attached to those you serve and you become like a family."

Like Mary Jo, Natalie Waller followed in her family's footsteps; her brother Nathan worked for Riverside and her cousin Jay still works at Riverside as our Facilities Manager. After starting at Riverside, Natalie transitioned to the provider world and joined RT Industries, where she currently works as a Community Engagement Specialist. "There's never a dull moment. Before COVID-19, I really enjoyed seeing the people I support welcome me with open arms. Waiting for that big hug always brightened my day." Things might look differently now, but Natalie still loves her job. She shares, "It's a pleasure to help our individuals grow and make their own choices. They have my heart, and if you're considering being a DSP, they'll have yours too!"





## Finding the Silver Lining

COVID-19 may have disrupted normal operations for businesses, families and individuals around the world, but we're finding ways to work around the inconveniences. Check out the positive examples of how we've worked to bring light into this challenging time. Hang in there, everyone. We'll get through this together!



What's one of the greatest things an artist can accomplish? Having their artwork displayed for all to enjoy. Recently, Stefan Lemmon had the privilege of having his art displayed at Dayton Children's Hospital, and he was there for the installation. Congratulations, Stefan! Keep up the beautiful work!

Our 5th Annual Regional Advocacy Conference looked a little different this year, but it was packed with tons of inspiration and fun! We had an impressive and motivational panel of speakers who spoke about gaining independence, where to go for inspiration and how they found courage to speak up for themselves. We are proud to be a part of a very active and engaging regional advocacy group with our friends at Shelby, Darke, Auglaize, Preble, Logan and Champaign County Boards of Developmental Disabilities.



COVID-19 certainly didn't stop the love, as we were recently fortunate to receive donations from 3 local organizations. Pictured, Phyllis Lewis from Monroe Grange (left) drops off supplies for Early Intervention activity kits, in addition to a queen sized bed, mattress and box springs, new sheets and a supply of t-shirts for two men we serve, and 150 handmade masks to allow for us to provide another 2 masks per employee. We were also fortunate to receive a donation of \$1,128.79 from Franklin Lodge #14 F&AM to send Special Olympics athletes to tournaments, as well as a \$200 donation from Troy Fish & Game to pay for an end-of-season bowling party for people we serve. We are humbled and grateful for each organizations' generosity.

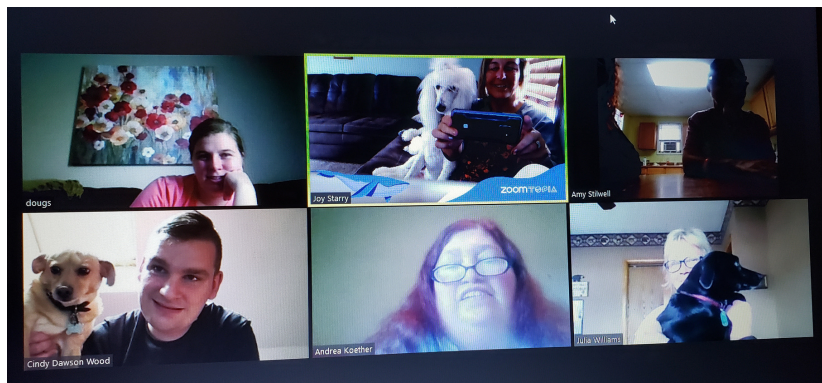


# Community Connections Updates

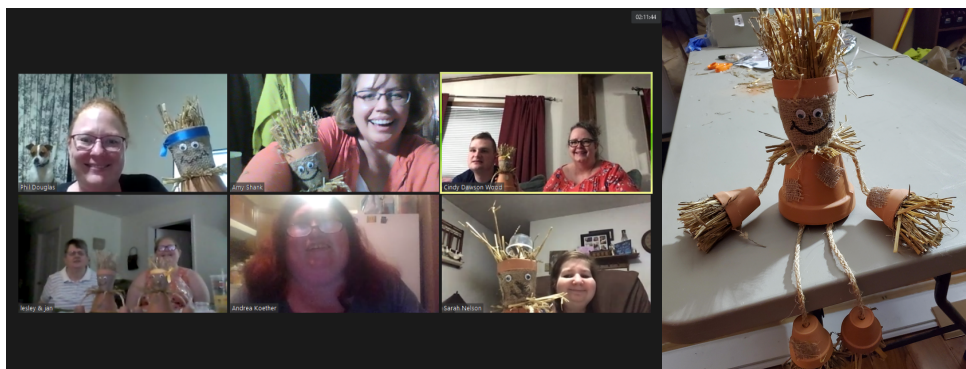
We're still working on ways to stay connected - safely - in this pandemic. From hikes at local parks, riding bikes in the community and connecting on Zoom, the Community Connections Department has continued to find creative ways to keep the people we serve engaged. After suspending all indoor activities since March, the Community Connections Department plans to return to some indoor activities this fall. With plans for smaller groups, increased precautions and ensured social distancing, the team plans to send a newsletter soon to all adults served, to get them out and returning to in-person social events, even if they are scaled back for a time. For more information about Community Connections activities, contact Krista Smith at [krista.smith@riversidedd.org](mailto:krista.smith@riversidedd.org) or 937-310-3260.



Tony Ferrell and Don Stanfield didn't let cabin fever set in during the pandemic. They've hit several hiking trails with Community Connections Facilitator Joy Starry to stretch their legs, enjoy some sunshine and fresh air, and just enjoy talking (especially about the Buckeyes).



Our Zoom parties have gone to the dogs, and sometimes other animals, through our Friday afternoon pet parties. Each Friday, individuals hop online to show off their furry friends and share details about them. It is fun to see reactions of pets as they hear each other on the videos, sometimes talking to each other!



Craft nights have been a big hit with those we support. Through the generosity of local volunteer Chrissi Douglas, we have created some really cute seasonal decorations. Here, Chrissi showed the group how to make a scarecrow from flower pots, straw, glue and other items. Chrissi and Community Connections Facilitator Amy Shank work hard behind the scenes to gather supplies, package them and make deliveries to those who sign up for the activity. It takes a little extra time to coordinate, but it's worth it to create smiles like these.

## Weekly Zoom Activities

### Monday Activity Group - 3pm

Various fun games like BINGO, trivia, indoor scavenger hunts and more

### Tuesday Chit-Chat - 3pm

Catch up with friends

### Wednesdays - 3:30 pm

Aktion Club - 1st & 2nd Wednesdays  
Advocacy - remaining Wednesdays

### Thursday Music Fun - 3pm

Listen and learn about a variety of music.

### Friday Sign Language Lesson - 1pm

### Friday Pet Party - 2:30pm

For log in information, contact Krista Smith at [krista.smith@riversidedd.org](mailto:krista.smith@riversidedd.org).



## Facts & Information

**NOV. 3, 2020**  
GENERAL ELECTION

### *About the Miami County Board of Developmental Disabilities Renewal Levy*



Renewal levy on  
Nov. 3 ballot.  
**NO NEW TAXES**  
are being requested.



Roughly **40%** of  
Riverside/Miami County  
Board of Developmental  
Disabilities' funding  
comes from this levy.



Currently supporting  
around 1,000 people  
throughout their  
**entire lifespan.**



Received a **3-year**  
**accreditation** from the  
State for excellent service.



Levy funds are used to provide these  
**vital services** including: *Case Management, Early  
Intervention for Children 0-3, \*In-Home Care, \*Adult Day  
Services, \*Employment Supports, \*Transportation, Health  
& Safety Assurance, Community Integration  
Services, Special Olympics Programming and More*