



INSPIRE. EMPOWER. SUPPORT.

Report

WINTER 2022



A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY

2021 Building Bridges Awards Banquet

Each year, with the exception of 2020, the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities collects nominations from community members and county board staff in an effort to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations that help make our mission to *Inspire, Empower* and *Support* possible. It is no surprise that we received the highest amount of nomination submissions to date, all 49 were full of inspiration. On the evening of October 14 at Mesenburg Plaza Place, the last two years of collaboration, creative solutions, success stories and personal achievements were finally celebrated. Winners received beautiful engraved glass trophies and fun Erie Countyopoly board games. *Read more about our award winners on Page 2.*



1. Board member Tracey Susana and Opening Doors Award winner Angie Holmes **2.** Employer of the Year nominees, the Commons of Providence **3.** Steve Lippert Advocacy Award Winner Lisa Cooper with Mikey Huddleston (DSP) **4.** 2021 Building Bridges Awards Winners from L to R: Mikey Huddleston (Life Out Loud Direct Support Professional) and Lisa Cooper (Life Out Loud, CEO), Steve Lippert Advocacy Award; Brandon Carr, Betty Rinderle Award for Success; Michael Eirons (Mickey Mart), Employer of the Year; Sarah Milliman, CEO (Riverview Industries), Above and Beyond Award; Leslie Drury (Perkins Local Schools), Above and Beyond Award; and Angie Holmes (Ohio State Extension), Opening Doors Award.



Building Bridges Award Winners

Above and Beyond Award: Leslie Drury | Leslie is a middle school Access Teacher for Perkins Local Schools. Her nomination states, "Leslie goes above and beyond to find activities for kids that will make an impact on them beyond the classroom." One of these activities include the development of The Perk Me Up Cafe, a coffee service that allows student to take orders, make, measure, follow instructions and deliver to staff members.

Above and Beyond Award: Riverview Industries Inc. | Riverview Industries Inc. is a provider agency located in Oak Harbor; they received two nominations complimenting their Above and Beyond service delivery. When describing a situation with an individual who receives supports, a nominator said, "They were an integral part of all the details; establishing new medical providers, enrolling in rental assistance programs, finding housing, setting up her home with personal items and groceries." and "The staff at RVI worked closely and tirelessly with the SSA to help this person transition to her own apartment. The road to get this person out of the Developmental Center was not easy and many roadblocks came up. RVI met every single challenge."



Betty Rinderle Award for Success: Brandon Carr | Brandon has quite a story. His nominator writes that he has had to overcome "a physical assault, a sheltered workshop history and challenges with understanding his rights and responsibilities." Over the last 5 years, life has changed dramatically for Brandon, "he is working in the community (Mickey Mart), learning to cook and ride public transportation, has a Cedar Point pass, attended a Self-Determination conference, has his own cell phone, is planning his first vacation and has home staff to help him learn more about accessing the community independently."



Employer of the Year: Mickey Mart | Mickey Mart is a previous Employer of the Year award recipient and was nominated not once, but twice this year. One nominator said, "They have a targeted position that meets the needs of those seeking employment... but it also enables the employee to have a balanced life. Being part of the community, being a proud working member is something that cannot be imitated." Another nomination described Mickey Mart as "a supportive employer who demonstrates kindness and respect to their employees. They make sure their employees have what they need to succeed."

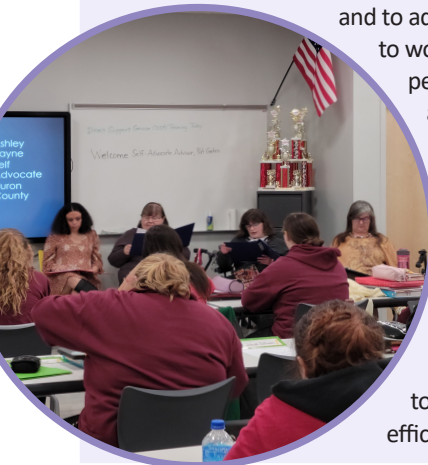
Opening Doors: Angie Holmes | Angie Holmes is the 4-H Youth Developer for the OSU Extension. She developed the Animal and Me Show which is held at the Erie County Fair. The show allows "youth with special needs the opportunity to achieve success in the show ring through a partnership with a 4-H member and his/her animal project." In the past three years, Angie has been contacted over 16 times from contacts wanting to start a similar program in their county. Angie has presented at conferences, conventions and even won awards for this wonderful program.

Steve Lippert Advocacy Award: Life Out Loud, Lisa Cooper | Lisa and her provider agency were also nominated twice. One nominator said, "...it is great to have Lisa by our side, blazing a trail of positivity and smiles, and finding that perfect fit of skills and activities carved out" for her son's needs. Another says, "Her (Lisa) work with Life Out Loud provides hands-on life skills and experiences embedded into fun getaways and trips, building long-lasting friendships."



SELF-ADVOCATES PRESENT AT EHOVE

The Erie County Board of DD and The Huron County Board of DD teamed up with the Education and Family Careers program at EHOVE Career Center to provide training to a group of high school students who hope to embark in a service career. This program will allow these students a basic background in becoming a Direct Support Professional (DSP), STNA, teacher's aid or a multitude of other service careers. Carly Sabo and Melanie Feizkhah from Erie County along with Ashley Payne and Deb Dietrich from Huron County spoke to the group about how they have become strong Self Advocates. This training will allow the students to receive certification that will help them get a job as a DSP. The purpose of the presentation was to talk about Self Advocacy, why it is important and how they became empowered to speak up. Not only did the advocates have the opportunity to tell the students how they have learned to speak up for their needs and to advocate for themselves and their friends, but they also got to talk to them about some career options to work in the DD Field. With the DSP shortage they felt they needed to do their part to encourage more people to take this career path. It was amazing to watch how the students engaged in what the advocates had to say. We even overheard one of the advocates ask a student what career path she was planning to pursue. The student said she was planning on working with kids, but after listening to the program she was seriously thinking of changing her mind. Part of being a Self Advocate is educating people in order to make a change that will improve the system for everyone. I would like to give a shout out to this amazing group of Self Advocates that made this presentation successful.



The presentation from the Self Advocates was just one part of this program. Throughout the year they will also hear about incident reporting, rights of an individual, empathy-based care, universal precautions, and implementation of individual service plans and service outcomes all in an effort to give the students a well-rounded background, and provide training so that they can quickly and efficiently move into a job working for a provider agency or becoming an independent contractor.

FOR EVENTS & UPDATES FOLLOW US



Did you know?

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities recently earned a three-year state accreditation award from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. A comprehensive review was conducted by a team of surveyors from DODD and reviewed all areas of county board operations, including personnel administration, services and support, early intervention and efficiency and effectiveness of services. Documentation analysis, individual interviews, human resource files, agency strategic plan and advocacy efforts are other areas also included in the very rigorous and thorough review. We are beyond pleased to have earned a three year period of accreditation. This recognition indicates that ECBDD exceeded the standards established by the state, it is the highest level that DODD awards county boards.

Ohio | Department of Developmental Disabilities

A big welcome to our newest Board member, Katelyn Miller! Katelyn is a Licensed Independent Social Worker and the Direct Services Supervisor for Lorain County Children Services. She brings a wealth of knowledge and passion and we look forward to her service.



Carrie's Corner

Our mission is to inspire, empower and support individuals and their families. The Erie County Board of DD is a vital resource for Erie County. We fund and connect people to the services they need to reach their goals. We also collaborate with local public and private agencies and organizations to foster a community that is welcoming to people of all abilities.

So far in 2021:

- We have supported approximately 800 children and individuals with varying abilities across Erie County.
- We have 104 adults competitively employed in our community.
- We administer 184 waivers, which draw federal dollars to match our local dollars, to support individuals to live in their community.
- We have approximately 112 agency and independent providers who partner with us to provide services and supports.
- We were awarded a three-year accreditation through the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, which is the longest accreditation

term granted to county boards. This is a direct reflection of the steadfast work our staff is doing to remain compliant with state standards and provide the best quality of service.

As we look forward, we want to:

- Ensure our system is sustainable into the future by maximizing our revenue streams and continuing sound prudent budgeting.
- Continue to listen to those we serve to build meaningful relationships and connect them with the supports that will help them achieve their goals.
- Partner with our providers to build a culture in the direct services professional community that is committed to achieving the best outcomes for those we serve.
- Build a work culture that supports service excellence and fosters practices that reflect our core values.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support in helping us achieve our mission!





Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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BOARD MEMBERS: David Danhoff, *President*
John Hoty, *Vice President* | Stacie Schmid, *Secretary*
Mark Harrington | Eric Kibler | Katelyn Miller | Tracey Susana

Mission: To inspire, empower and support individuals and their families.

Vision: Individuals will achieve personal success.

Values: Integrity and Trust | Mutual Respect | Equality
Collaboration and Teamwork | Personal Responsibility



DRIVE THRU SANTA

This year we hosted our first ever Drive-Thru Santa event on December 4th. We were so excited to provide some Christmas cheer to over 550 children from our community. We also had the pleasure of partnering with OHgo, the Sandusky and Perkins Township Fire departments and Perkins Township Police and Erie County Sheriff's department.



COMING UP NEXT:

March is DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

Keep an eye on our website & social media for ways to celebrate with us!