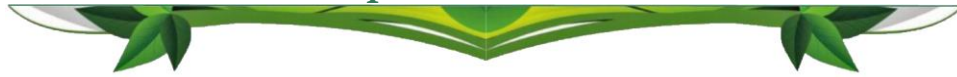


Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities



Superintendent's Report - April 2024

Community Awareness/PR Opportunities/Collaborations

We kicked off Developmental Disability Awareness month on March 1st with an event in our Footloose Friday Dance Series at Painesville Township Park. The Spring Fling dance was a huge hit, and DJ Billy J kept the dance floor packed all night long. All who attended enjoyed pizza, dessert, and refreshments while catching up with old friends. It was a great night! The next event will be Flower Power: A 70's Prom on May 3, 2024 from 6:00p-8:00p at Painesville Township Park.

On March 7, 2024, we had the wonderful opportunity to join our very own Ian Carter at The Commissioner's meeting to proclaim that March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in Lake County. Superintendent Elfie spoke in front of the commissioners and community members about 'Openings Doors in 2024' and all of the wonderful things our Commissioners and entire community do to help spread awareness and open new doors for individuals with developmental disabilities. Ian Carter, the guest of honor, shared about his life, and how LCBDD has opened doors for him including Special Olympics, classes at Auburn Career center through the Pathways to Careers program, utilizing Laketran to and from his job, and so many more! It was certainly a special event, and Ian left an impression on everyone who attended the meeting.

Leadership Lake County visited Broadmoor for their government day on March 14. The 2024 Signature Class of professionals participated in Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month by learning about LCBDD services presented by Assistant Superintendent Ann, toured the school, experienced the sensory room, and engaged in simulations with Recreation staff to better understand disabilities. Many of the Signature Class professionals shared that LCBDD/Deepwood is one of their favorite places to visit because of all of the wonderful things that happen on a daily basis in every single department, and they especially enjoyed seeing all of the awesome and special students who attend!

Make a Difference Day was an amazing day of service put on by 8th grade students from Mentor Schools on March 22. Memorial Middle School students engaged with individuals at the Vocational Guidance Center (VGC) by working on puzzles and crafts, participating in a disabilities simulation with LCBDD Recreation, and enjoying pizza and ice cream. Shore Middle School students engaged with individuals at Willoughby Branch by playing a variety of games in the "Fun Zone" including shuffleboard, Easter themed bingo, basketball, coloring, and enjoyed a yummy lunch with all of the attendees of the Willoughby Branch. It was an enriching day for all!

March DD Awareness month wrapped up with The Art Celebration Ceremony at Great Lakes Mall on March 28, 2024. LCBDD Board members, staff, and Lake County community members saw all of the art the individuals of Lake County worked so hard on displayed in the gallery. The event opened with speeches by Superintendent Elfie and Board President Judge Gibson, and was followed by Broadmoor Principal Liz and student artist Honorra who presented a touching speech about Nora's life and love of art, and how Broadmoor School has opened doors for her to reach new and amazing goals and accomplishments while fostering her creativity. Willoughby Branch's Director Johanna spoke about

'Opening Doors in 2024' and introduced artists Brendan, Mindy, and Chris whom discussed their love for art and how attending the Willoughby Branch and recreation activities helped them to make money, see their friends, and learn new things. Artist Anthony and his mom Christine spoke about the many ways LCBDD has Opened Doors for them such as providing Anthony with day programming at CJ Provider Services, which has enriched Anthony's life in so many ways. In addition, Christine has been able to become a provider and care for Anthony's needs through his Medicaid Waiver, which has helped their family immensely. Event goers enjoyed charcuterie cups and art themed cupcakes while they mingled with LCBDD's talented artists, their families, our wonderful board, community members, and many LCBDD staff members. It was truly a beautiful evening, and really showed how LCBDD/Deepwood Opens Doors for the individuals and families we serve in so many different ways.

March was a very active month for earned media in print publications with content also shared via digital platforms. This included multiple articles in *The News Herald* covering Auburn Career Center's grant program which includes Pathways to Careers, the Commissioners proclaiming March as DD Awareness Month, the Lake County Birthday Club's celebration of Easter and Birthdays with residents of the ICF, and a spotlight on Michael I's Living the Dream experience; *Today's Family Magazine* with a full page feature about the importance and benefit of EI services including securing the cover photo for the April issue, *The Gazette Newspaper* also featuring articles about DD Awareness month and the Birthday Club; and the *Lake County Tribune* sharing Michael I's Living the Dream story. A new online relationship with "Mentor Buzz E-Newsletter" secured four additional placements for engagement.

The preschool program started screening the new students for the upcoming school year to ensure that all preschool students have the needed supports in place before the new school year starts.

Broadmoor's Early Childhood Department met with Lake Metroparks and began planning programming for preschool classes for the 2024-2025 school year.

Twenty seven children qualified for Early Intervention services during the month of March.

Willoughby celebrated St. Patrick's Day by having a visit from our fantastic bagpiper John who came and played for us. He walked around the Willoughby Branch filling our building with the festive bag pipe sound!!

Special Events

VGC had an Irish fun-filled fabulous March with many activities and lots of fun! VGC continues to keep busy with our routine activities of walking, crafting, Exploring Horizons with Melany, the intern from Recreation and Music therapy with Fine Arts . We celebrated March with Read Across America, potato chip day, the Art Show at the mall and Dorleen's surprise soups. All wore their best Irish attire, danced the zig with our Food Service department who decorated our lunch bags with Irish trinkets along with enjoying Shepard's Pie! On the first day of spring, VGC had a Hot Dog Diggity Dog bar with all the toppings, which was a big hit and were dressed in baseball swag. Banjo Dave stopped in with his band, sang and played the old folklore songs.

VGC then wrapped up the month with Individuals walking over to A-Building for an Easter basket hunt and took pictures with the Easter Bunny!

The Recreation department and the EI/Preschool departments held their monthly Silly Fun Saturday event on March 23rd. Over 100 people attended Breakfast with the Easter Bunny.

The Early Intervention department held their first community EI playgroup. Willoughby Fine Arts held an adapted dance class at Broadmoor School with ten families in attendance.

To celebrate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, the preschool program hosted their VIP day. Each child was able to have one VIP (adult) come and have an ice cream social with them.

On March 19th, the Dancing Wheels Company came and offered a beautiful performance at Broadmoor School to honor Developmental Disabilities Awareness month. The event was sponsored by Deepwood Foundation.

Willoughby Branch showed their stage talent this month for DD Awareness Month and performed a play at Andrews Osbourne Academy called "We are all Different... Yet the Same". Over 20 individuals shared their speaking and singing talents on stage in front of an audience. A great time was had and really captured the true spirit of people as a community.

Four projects were submitted to United Way of Lake County for consideration to be matched / adopted by volunteer groups on their annual Day of Caring in June. Mentor Rotary has already stepped up agreeing to adopt Broadmoor School's project. We are waiting to hear about the other three projects for VGC, Willoughby Branch, and Recreation.

Staff Development

The SSA's, QIDP's and team leaders are attending DODD's office hours regarding the new OhioISP trainings which have been focusing on Technology, Employment First, Community Life Engagement and writing Outcomes.

Early Childhood staff members completed trainings on mental health and parenting, Autism screening, and best practices when working with children with Down Syndrome.

Featured Success Stories

Jamie Kamensky shares her family's journey in Early Intervention in April's addition of Today's Family Magazine. <https://www.todaysfamilymagazine.com/2024/03/26/485607/early-intervention-is-key-for-developmental-delays>

Two of our well-known artists from Willoughby Branch, Brendan R. and Mindy C. had the privilege of speaking to the audience at this year's Art Show, Opening Door in 2024 at the Great Lakes Mall. They both talked about their passion for art and we were surrounded by many artists' creativity and expression at the show. Thank you to all the artists' for sharing with us their special talents!!

Michael I. was able to live his dream to be a DJ on March 10, 2024 at Billy's – A Cappelli Martini Bar. Living The Dream with Michael was sponsored by the Deepwood Foundation. These opportunities continue to show the value of person-centered-planning and looking deeper into the hopes and dreams of each individual to learn what is important to them and how we can help to meet their goals. Many thanks to Deepwood Foundation and the many who attended and supported Michael's dream!