

Weekly Focus

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

The mission of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

Excellence in Service Award Ceremony A Success

Last May we kicked off the Excellence in Service Awards and I was pleased to participate in this year's award ceremony earlier this week. As I noted last year, it is important to recognize and reward individuals who strive for and achieve the highest standards in customer service and job performance. We all strive for excellence and these team members set the standard and inspire us.

Thanks again for the work of the selection committee who met to review all of the nominations. I also appreciate everyone that nominated an OOD employee for this recognition. I firmly believe that staff peer recognition is special and an important part of building a culture of excellence.

2014 Excellence in Service Awards Winners

DDD Unit 7D (Homeless)

- Tammy Polter, Supervisor
- Jennifer Koppelman, DCA 2
- Brad Dickson, DCA 2
- Sarah Beth Farmer, DCA 2
- Cyndal Glass, DCA 2
- Elizabeth Bando, DCA 3
- Ryan Townley, DCA 3
- Shannon Hopp, DCA 3
- David Wolfe, DCA 3
- Erin White, DCA 3
- Todd Gould, DCA 3
- Jennifer Popp, DCA 3



With Susan Pugh, BVR Deputy Director (back row, left) and Director Miller (back row, right) are the Lima BVR Team 2014 Excellence in Service Award winners (from left, back row) Traci Richard, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC); Michelle Steinke, VRC; Emily Millmine, VRC; Merriam Weaver, VRC; Joel Robinson, VRC; (from left, front row) Robert Krause, VRC; Kimberly Love, VRC; Mary Petaway, Account Examiner; Cheryl Lentz, VRC; Neily Iannantuono, Caseload Assistant; Kristin Rodabaugh, VRC; and (seated, from left) Lisa Johnstone, Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor with Mindy Duncan, BSVI Deputy Director

BVR/BSVI

- Tonya Dulin, CA in Toledo

Lima BVR Team

- Lisa Johnstone, Supervisor
- Bob Krause, VRC
- Cheryl Lentz, VRC
- Traci Richard, VRC
- Kristin Rodabaugh, VRC
- Michelle Steinke, VRC
- Merriam Weaver, VRC
- Neily Iannantuono, CA
- Mary Petaway, AE2
- Kimberly Love, OA3
- Emily Millmine, VRC
- Joel Robinson, VR

DPI

- Shelly Rhodes, AWARE Project Manager



(from left) Raivo Murnieks, Performance and Innovation Deputy Director, with 2014 Excellence in Service Award winner Shelly Rhodes, AWARE Project Manager, and Director Miller



(from left) Susan Pugh, BVR Deputy Director, with 2014 Excellence in Service Award winner Tonya Dulin, Caseload Assistant, Toledo Office, and Director Miller



With Erik Williamson, DDD Deputy Director (back row, left) and Director Miller (back row, right) are the DDD Unit 7D Homeless/Special Projects Unit 2014 Excellence in Service Award winners (from left, back row) Shannon Hopp, Disability Claims Adjudicator (DCA); Jennifer Popp, DCA; Ryan Townley, DCA; Brad Dickson, DCA; and (from left, front row) Cyndal Glass, DCA; Erin White, DCA; Jennifer Koppelman, DCA; David Wolfe DCA; Sarah Beth Farmer, DCA; Todd Gould, DCA. Not pictured: Elizabeth Bando, DCA; and Tammy Polter, Disability Claims Supervisor

Selection Committee

- Camille Ali – Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor, Cleveland
- Claire Cowley – Disability Claims Adjudicator, DDD/OCSEA
- Deb Ditty – Program Administrator, IT
- Roya Hood – Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, BVR/1199
- Mike Johnson – Disability Claims Supervisor, DDD
- Brad Reynolds – DDD Communications Manager, DDD
- Melinda Wingard – Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, BVR
- Jenny Jones – Finance Manager, Finance
- Diane Kurtz – Disability Claims Adjudicator, DDD

ILOB Training

On February 12, staff working with the Independent Living Older Blind (ILOB) program (11 ILOB Contractors and 12 OOD Staff including Counselors, Supervisors and Area Managers attended) met to discuss program changes, policy and procedure updates, and case review information. The small group engaged in discussions to determine how to best implement the proposed changes focusing on cost saving methods for our OOD Staff and ILOB Contracts in order to effectively continue serving consumers across the state. Updates on the monitoring process were also provided for our contracts.

The Independent Living Older Blind program works with individuals age 55 or older who have a Severe Vision Impairment that makes competitive employment difficult to maintain or increase their independence in the home and community.

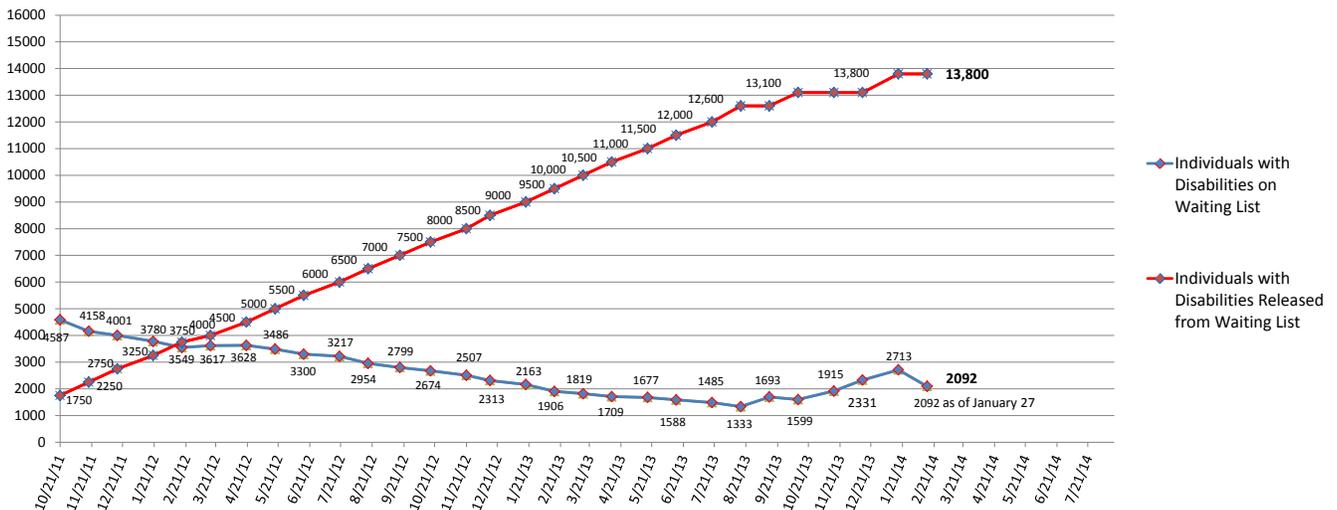


Rebecca Halstead, Rehabilitation Program Specialist, Contracts Unit, leads the ILOB training.

Employment First

OOD held its second quarterly Fee Schedule & Billing Training for new Employment First Providers (who recently were granted a waiver by OOD to provide vocational rehabilitation services to Employment First consumers). There were 29 participants in the training representing 19 new vendors that will be able to provide services. Jim Gears, Rehabilitation Program Specialist, conducted the training and the Employment First project managers, Julie Hance for OOD and Joe Kowalski from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), introduced themselves and gave an overview of the Employment First Program. The next training will take place in late spring/early summer.

Number of Individuals with Disabilities on Waiting List



For more information or questions on stories in this publication, please call the Office of Communications at 614.438.1476.

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