

WEEKLY FOCUS

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

April 11, 2014

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.

Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan Public Forums

The last of the Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan Public Forums were held this week in the Cleveland and Cincinnati areas (following forums in Columbus, Athens and Toledo last week). These forums are a great



BVR Deputy Director Susan Pugh (second from right) listens while OOD Commissioner Jack Licate, Ph.D. (right) addresses participants at the Cleveland public forum.

opportunity to hear from our partners and service providers and the individuals we serve. We appreciate everyone who took the time to attend a forum and offer feedback. I am also grateful for all of the hard work that went into scheduling, attending and staffing these meetings. Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) Deputy Director Susan Pugh and her staff did an excellent job in presenting the State Plan overview and listening to the concerns and ideas of the public at all of the forums across the state. The feedback received will be incorporated into the State Plan as the process moves forward.

Business Enterprise Program Grand Opening in Montgomery County



Welcome to the Café!

Thursday morning saw the Grand Opening of the newly renovated Café Montgomery in downtown Dayton. Assistant Executive Director Bill Bishilany, Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) Deputy

Director Mindy Duncan, and BSVI Assistant Deputy Director Aneesa Locke-Hines attended the ribbon cutting ceremony along with Business Enterprise Specialist Tonia Koo and Area Manager Jarett Roush. All three Montgomery Board of County Commissioners, Dan Foley, Deborah A. Lieberman and Judy Dodge, were able to attend; and representatives from Coca-Cola and Sysco were also on hand for the celebration.

As noted in last week's *Weekly Focus*, this Café in the Montgomery County Administration Building in Dayton is part of a longstanding partnership between Montgomery County and the Business Enterprise Program (BEP). The renovated space now offers grab and go options, a salad bar, green/sustainable packaging products, along with several menu options such as sandwiches, Panini's, etc. for both breakfast and lunch. The Café proudly serves Starbucks coffee and offers a full line of coffee and specialty drinks.



BE Area Manager Jarett Roush is interviewed by Channel 2, WDTN, at the Café Montgomery Grand Opening.

This great facility highlights the important work of the Business Enterprise Program and illustrates how BEP is adapting to changing circumstances to provide quality services while creating employment and independence for the blind and visually impaired.

DSW Distribution Center Tour and Kick-Off

On Tuesday I was excited to be able to attend a Kick-Off event for the Project SEARCH partnership with the DSW Distribution Center (DSW) and the Franklin and Fairfield County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. DSW is committed to moving forward with this intensive training program that will lead to some of these participants ultimately being hired at their Columbus distribution center. Other trainees will obtain marketable skills in the Distribution/Logistics industry where there are many employment opportunities. Columbus is a major national hub of dozens of distribution centers for retail, packaging, pharmaceutical, and E-commerce companies.

It was great to hear from DSW about their commitment and determination to see this project come to fruition and succeed. It is exciting to see state and local government working together with the private sector to provide employment and independence for individuals with disabilities. I am appreciative of the work of our partners at the Franklin and Fairfield County Boards of Developmental Disabilities on this project.

We were able to tour the DSW Distribution Center on Fifth Avenue here in Columbus and get a sense of how DSW plans to integrate individuals with disabilities into their workforce and how the Project SEARCH program model will help them achieve their goals.

I look forward to sharing future success with you as this exciting project moves forward.



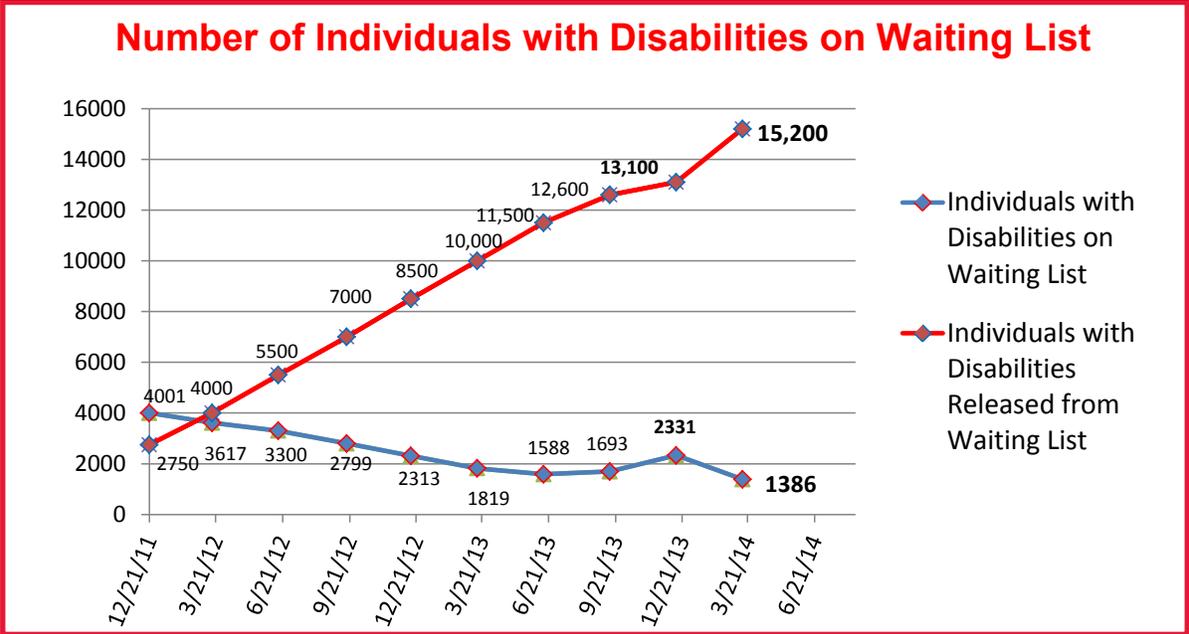
Attending the DSW Kick-Off event were (back, left) Steve Reade, DSW Director of Distribution; Kurt Schmitter, Director of Workforce Development (Franklin County Board of DD); Bob Gaston, Director of Adult Services (Fairfield County Board of DD); Director Miller; John Pekar, Superintendent (Fairfield County Board of DD); and Erny Carmon, DSW Outbound Area Manager; and (front, left) Jeff Girad, DSW VP of Operations; Melisha Stiffler, DSW HR Generalist; and Susie Rutkowski, Co-Director/Founder – Project SEARCH.

DDD Announces Quarterly Award Recipients

The Division of Disability Determination announced their Quarterly Award winners for the second quarter last week. These individuals were recognized for their superior performance, customer focus, innovation/creativity, and teamwork/leadership skills.

Congratulations to each individual and to a job well done!

Keith Adams (DCA3)
Ashley Bass (DCA2)
Matt Bass (DCA3)
Stephanie Biller (AP1)
Mindy Birch (DC Supervisor)
Andrea Burnham (DCA2)
Kevin Byers (DCA3)
Kurt Dickman (DCA3)
Laura Dockham (DCA3)
Cheryl Faison (DC Supervisor)
Krista Fowler (DC Supervisor)
Julie Keel (DC Supervisor)
Melissa Leeper (DCA2)
LeeAnn Martin (DC Supervisor)
Jill McQuaide (AP1)
Teresa Mercurio (DCA3)
Sally Miska (DC Supervisor)
Ray Myers (DCA3)
Jennifer Nelson (DCA3)
Jeff Overdorff (DCA2)
Efrain Perez (DCA3)
Jennifer Popp (DCA3)
Ernest Randall (DCDA)
Ashley Rogers (DCA2)
Cheri Sayavong (DC Supervisor)
Susan Smith (DCA3)
Mica Sparks (DCA2)
Becky Sprang (DCA2)
Erica Toki (DPS)
Patrick Wander (DCA2)
David Warner (DCA2)



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

Produced by the Office of Communications, April 11, 2014.

