

WEEKLY FOCUS

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

April 25, 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.

Successful Career Path Starts At Home

My 15 year old autistic son recently announced he wanted to be an alligator hunter inspired by his favorite History Channel show Swamp People. It would have been easy to reply: "That's great son, you can do anything you put your mind to!" I believe that would have done him a great disservice. Instead, I had an honest conversation with him (as I hope many other parents would) about his skills and interests and those of a "swamper."

As our career conversations have continued he has slowly begun to realize that, like many of us, swamping may not be for him. We discussed a "back-up plan" process that involves looking at current in-demand jobs and career fields on the horizon when he graduates high school and/or college and thinking about areas that fit his strengths and interests.

I strongly believe that as parents and policy makers we must begin having realistic conversations about employment and career paths earlier in our child's development. This applies to parents of children and adults with disabilities, as well as those that do not have a disability.

We are not serving our children by sheltering them from the reality of the job market and employment. The truth is, we can no longer offer a perspective of simply free and unlimited choice but instead must teach and guide them toward informed choice and good decision making.

Obviously, this is easy to say, yet sometimes very hard to do. After all, as a parent, we want our kids to follow their dreams. However, we also don't want to set them up for failure.

When my son recently tried out for the high school golf team and made varsity, he informed me he wanted to be a pro golfer like his idol, Tiger Woods.

"OK, we can work on that," I said, "but let's discuss a back-up plan just in case."

Business Enterprise Program Featured in ConnectED Newsletter

Many Ohioans encounter the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) as they travel along the Interstate Highway system and stop for a snack at the vending machines. Others may utilize the vending and food operation options at state and local government buildings. But BEP is also active on college and university campuses across Ohio.



ConnectED/Spring 2014

To highlight this connection between food service, entrepreneurship and higher education, the Board of Regents featured an article in ConnectED, a quarterly e-newsletter designed to connect Ohio's public universities to the business community.

The article describes the BEP program and highlights one program's success, the University of Cincinnati (UC). BEP has been involved in vending services at UC for decades and operates approximately 120 machines across 68 vending sites on multiple campuses. The article also features a quote from UC operator Dave Bargassa about what the program has meant to him and the opportunities it has given him to own his own business.

You can read the ConnectED story online [here](#).

2014 Operation Feed Campaign



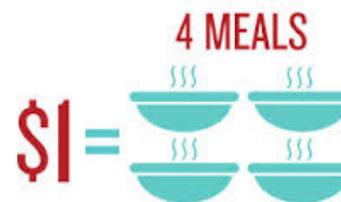
OOD will once again be participating in Operation Feed; a food drive that supports the Mid-Ohio Foodbank allowing them to keep the shelves stocked at food pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters throughout Central and Eastern Ohio (staff in the field offices will

host events to raise funds for a charity or food bank in their area). The Campaign kicked off this week with a Book Fair at the 400 Learning Center. The OOD Operation Feed committee has many more exciting and challenging events planned for this year's campaign so stay tuned for upcoming event announcements.

For those who are short on time or who will not be around for the events, you can always make a secure online donation for Team OOD at: <http://fooddrive.midohiofoodbank.org/goto/TeamRSC>. If you have any

questions about how to pledge or would like to help out with any event, please contact Ray Rhone, DDD Professional Relations Officer, at 614-438-1904 or email at Raymond.Rhone@ssa.gov.

Thank you for your support in the fight against hunger!



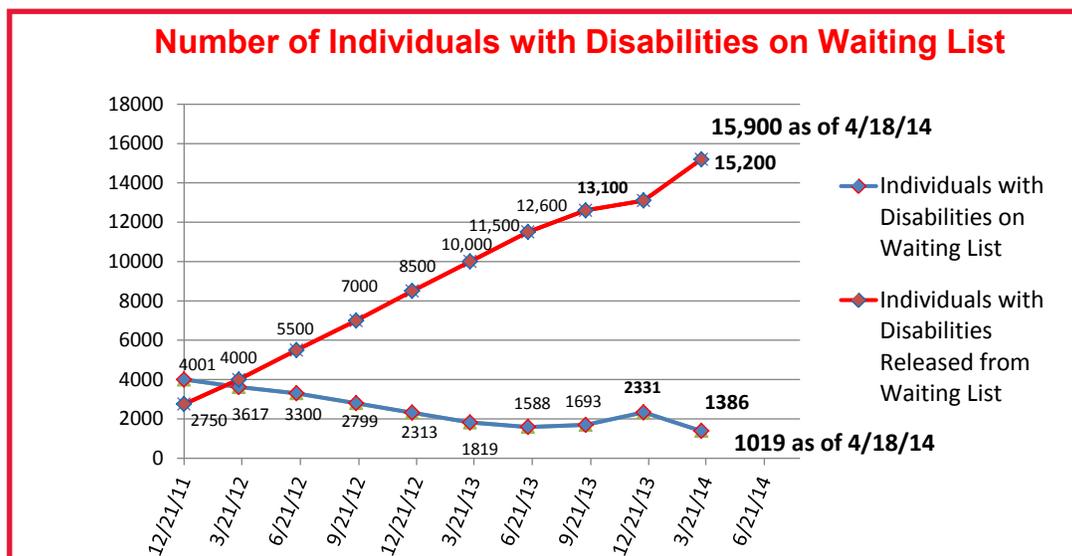
Changes Coming to Aware

Based on the recent challenges with AWARE, we have been reviewing industry best practices in order to ensure that AWARE is as stable as possible and to minimize both internal security risks and the probability of external hacking activities. With these and other considerations in mind, we are implementing two important changes, beginning with the next AWARE release on **Thursday, May 1:**

Accessibility: Moving forward AWARE will be accessible from **6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday-Saturday** with the exception of **Thursday – which will be 6:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** due to maintenance that is performed throughout the OOD Environment.

Session Timeout: Sessions will time out after 2 hours. Currently, AWARE Sessions time out after 8 hours. Two hours are well above industry standards of 20 minutes (i.e. OAKS, banks, etc.).

Further reminders and information will be forthcoming next week as we prepare for these changes.



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

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