

# WEEKLY FOCUS

**Ohio** | Opportunities for Ohioans  
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

May 2, 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.*

## Good Luck to Russell Turos

As many of you know, Russell Turos, former Central office Administrative Receptionist, is leaving OOD for a fulltime position at the Franklin County Treasurer's office this week. As sad as we are to see Russell leave, it is exciting to see him move ahead in his career. It is also rewarding to see another example of programs and policies working to provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to reach their career goals.

Russell was referred by his Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Pamela Schneider, for the morning/afternoon Receptionist positions at the 150 building. After a successful interview, Russell began employment at OOD as the morning Receptionist on February 26, 2013.

The Receptionist positions are designed as an intermittent paid job training program to provide work experience to OOD consumers interested in working in a professional office setting or who can benefit in their job search by the experience.

After completing the intermittent Receptionist position, Russell was offered an intermittent position in the Business Enterprise Program where he learned how to process payments for the Business Enterprise vendors/operators and provided data entry for their monthly operating reports.

Building on this experience, Russell applied for and was offered a position as a Payment Processor/Cashier for the Franklin County Treasurer's Office. He begins his full time position on Monday, May 5, 2014.

Congratulations and good luck, Russ!



Director Miller (left) and  
Russell Turos

## Consumer Support Advocate Program Successes

It is worth noting that over the past three years, 31 consumers participating in the Receptionist and Consumer Support Advocate Programs have gone on to permanent employment. These positions paid an average wage of \$13.88 per hour, over \$2.00 per hour higher than our average closure. Former participants have moved on to work in organizations ranging from the Ohio Department of Veterans Services to the Ohio Department on Aging, from law firms to nationally-known retailers, and to employment as vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors and coordinators assisting consumers in obtaining employment.

## LeanOhio Work Continues



I have frequently highlighted OOD participation in LeanOhio training and events here in the

*Weekly Focus*. The reason for this is simple, when we operate more effectively and efficiently we can better help those we serve and reach more Ohioans with our services. The bottom line is helping more people.

With that in mind, I wanted to give you an update on the implementation of LeanOhio projects at the agency. In March we recognized 18 OOD employees for successfully completing their two-week Green Belt Certification training. Following the training, staff began actively utilizing the skills, knowledge and resources they received as part of four agency projects or improvement initiatives. All four project teams have support and guidance from their sponsors, mentors, and LeanOhio.

Below is a brief recap and status update on the four initiatives that began in March:

- **Disability Hearings** focuses on the process by which disability determination hearings are processed from the preparation to the completion point of a scheduled hearing. Team members engaged and

assembled stakeholders and, with the support of LeanOhio staff, have conducted process mapping of the current operation. Data and follow-up is being prepared to conduct future state processing mapping.

- **Agency Invoice Handling** focuses on the internal processing and payment of administrative and contract invoices (excluding VR case services and payment card purchases). Team members have assembled process owners and have conducted process mapping of the current operation. As with Disability Hearings, data and follow-up is being prepared to conduct future state processing mapping.
- **Case Balancing and Assignment** focuses on the balancing and assignment of BVR and BSVI cases. The recent case follow-up/cleanup activities are critical in ensuring proper design and implementation. Data is being gathered and analyzed, including a survey that was distributed to staff currently responsible for the assignment of cases to VR/BSVI counselors. Stakeholders for current state process mapping will be identified after review of the survey results.
- **Case Services Invoice Payments** focuses on the processing of VR case services invoices that are processed through the AWARE case management system. Team members have identified stakeholders to participate in current state processing mapping, that will be facilitated by LeanOhio and trained OOD staff next Monday, May 5.
- HR Manager Jan Roederer's **Onboarding Process for New Employees** project was implemented in April.

I am excited to see how these initiatives improve our operations and how process improvements will allow us to more effectively provide services to more Ohioans.

## Progress Made on Outstanding Vouchers

Thanks to the hard work of Account Examiner (AE2) staff and counselors we have been able to reduce our outstanding accounts payable over 90 days from \$290,000 to \$13,000 in just two months! Their diligence with "fiscal" fitness has helped maximize the agency's resources in reaching our budget goals.

Thanks to their efforts, the agency is able redirect those dollars back to additional direct services to individuals with disabilities.

## Northwest Area Meeting

Speaking of the hard work of staff, it was great to be able to stop by the Northwest Area Meeting this week



*Director Miller (standing) addresses the NW Area Meeting while (sitting, left to right) Christina Wendell, Chief Legal Counsel; Vicki Friesland, Policy Coordinator; Bill Bishilany, Assistant Executive Director; and Susan Pugh, BVR Deputy Director, await questions..*

in Fremont. The weather was a little dreary but it was great to see so many of the people who do the hard work on the ground every day. I was able to give a brief update and discuss issues of importance to area staff. The Executive Team was on hand to answer questions and then Division of Information & Technology Chief Information Officer Tim Nguyen gave an update on AWARE. Thanks to Northwest Area Manager Curt Morman and his team for the warm welcome.

## Operation Feed 2014



April was the kick-off for the Operation Feed Campaign, a food drive supporting the Mid-Ohio Foodbank. This critical campaign allows Mid-Ohio to keep the shelves stocked with food at pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters throughout Central and Eastern Ohio.

Thanks to all employees who shopped at the Operation Feed Book and Gift Fair at the 400 Building last week. We raised \$268 which equals 1,072 meals we are providing to families in need!

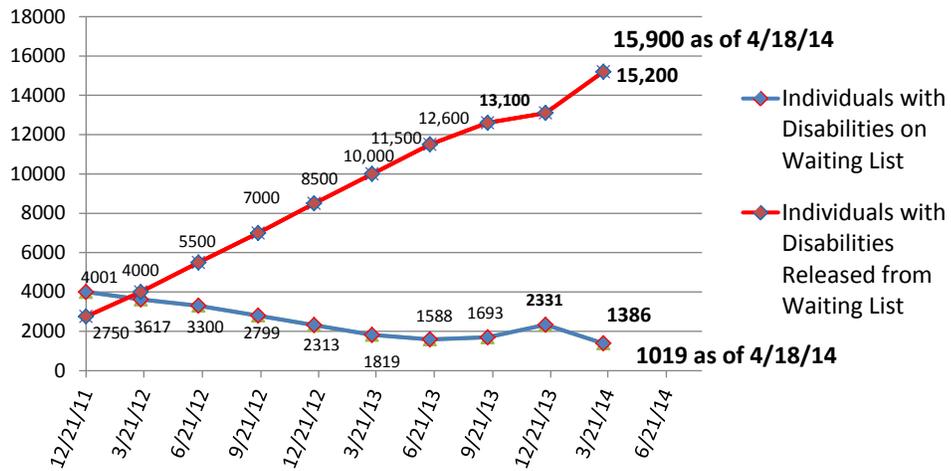
Here is how you can help:

- 1) Participate in OOD activities to raise critically needed funds.
- 2) Donate online at: [www.midohiofoodbank.org/donateOF](http://www.midohiofoodbank.org/donateOF)
- 3) Bring in these most needed foods: peanut butter, soup (with vegetables), canned fruit, chili with beans, tuna, canned meat, and canned vegetables

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](mailto:Raymond.Rhone@ssa.gov).



## 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.

Produced by the Office of Communications, May 2, 2014.

