



All in the Family

Stark DD's yearlong celebration marks 50th anniversary of ALWAYS being THERE for people with disabilities



**ALWAYSSM
THERE**
50 YEARS STARK COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities announced the launch of Always There – a yearlong campaign to recognize the 50th anniversary of Ohio's County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, which also served as the theme for this year's Developmental Disabilities (DD) Awareness Month in March.

The Always There campaign marks the founding of Ohio's 88 county boards by the Ohio General Assembly in 1967. The theme reflects the continuity of support, promotion of opportunity, and history of partnership county boards have offered to people with developmental disabilities and their families throughout the past, in the present, and into the future.

"Reflecting upon our history and

Continued on page 4



What's Inside

2 From the Superintendent
Why Stark DD values CHOICE

5 Provider Gold Standard
Update and an invitation to give input

8 Autism Awareness
FAQs and data from the CDC



Mission
Supporting people with disabilities and their families.

Superintendent's Message:

CHOICE is a sacred right for everyone

Choice is defined as “an act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities.”

Tackling the attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities sometimes face is a root that we have been chopping at since the establishment of the county board of developmental disabilities system 50 years ago. Yes, there is movement and successes for people with disabilities living and working in our communities thanks to legislation and court decisions that have paved the way from institutional care to home and community based services.

Clearly, we believe people have the right to choose. However, there are smaller choices that happen every day that have just as much significance on life that include: when to wake, when to shower, what to eat, what to watch on television, where to go in the evening, and what time to go to bed.



Our core value is not specific about how these choices, big or small, should be offered. **There is still much work to be done to ensure people with disabilities are afforded the rights established by our forefathers for the “pursuit of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”**

A direct support professional shared with me a poignant story that each morning he would make coffee with cream and sugar (like he liked it) and offer it to the people he was supporting. Each day, one of the gentlemen repeatedly turned down his offer of coffee. One day, nearly a year later when the offer of coffee was made, the gentleman looked in the cup and said, “Black.” The light bulb went off and an “aha” moment was had. The support professional brought him a black cup of coffee and he drank it with delight from that day forward.

Maya Angelou said, “When we know better, we do better.” We all have moments like this that transform us. This is a profound lesson as we support, guide, and coach people with disabilities to make choices about what is important to them. We must simply ask. **It is too easy to miss the forest for the trees by making assumptions based upon what we like and think is best for a person, which may or may not be true.** How would you like your coffee? Do you like it black or with cream and sugar? We know intuitively that it begins by us asking, “What do you want?”

The heart of the person centered plan is about choices and that person's life. There are several ways that we find out what is important to them: we ask and

We value **CHOICE**

We believe people have the right to choose how they will live their lives, where they will live, and with whom. Opportunity, natural supports, and available resources enable people to realize their choices.

listen; we observe; and we ask others. For those with significant disabilities, who may be non-verbal, this is about “supportive decision making.” The person's circle of support work with them to share what makes them happy as well as the services needed so they will be safe and independent as possible. For others, it is about capturing their desires through their gestures and words and making them a reality by removing barriers and obstacles that may exist. **Choosing the manner that people want to spend their day is one of the most important choices that can be made.**

Choice is clearly a sacred right for everyone. It is fundamental to what we do and makes us who we are. These choices should not only be for the “big” things, but even more so for the “small” ones. Robert Brault mused, “Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.” Are these not the things that life is made of?

Meet the Team: Provider Compliance

Learn more about the Stark DD Service and Support Administration/Investigative Services at www.starkdd.org/ssais

Submitted by
Ed Lewis,
SSA Supervisor,
Provider Compliance

In January the Stark County Board of DD, through the Service and Support Administration/Investigative Services department, launched a specialized unit of trained professionals to begin conducting provider compliance reviews and monitoring in Stark County. This is yet another step the board is taking to assure quality service to all individuals served in the community.

Prior to the January launch, the team spent months undergoing extensive training in Columbus in preparation for their new roles. In addition to this training, each member of the team has at least five years of service in the Stark DD community.

Every provider in Ohio has to undergo a compliance review once every three years in order to maintain their certification. It is these reviews that Stark DD is conducting under the guidance of DODD.

However, Stark DD also believed that the board could do even more. That is why the team also includes a dedicated monitoring specialist. This person can make unannounced visits to places where service is provided and see

what is occurring on any given day, or night. This service, added to the work that SSAs are already completing, will give the board many eyes to see what level of service is being offered throughout our county.

Admittedly, not every visit will go perfectly, and when issues are uncovered they can be reported back to the compliance review team. This team can then conduct a Special Review, one that is in addition to the typical three

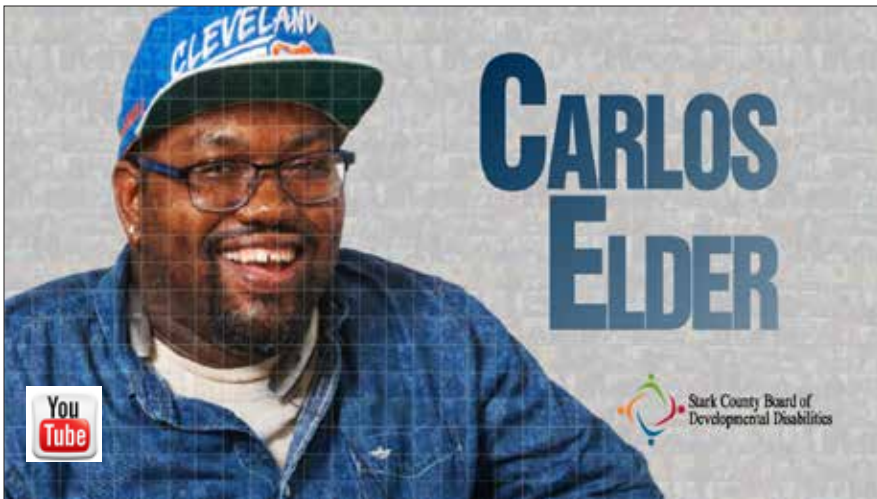
year review that is mandated by the State.

The board does all of this to continue to ensure a safe and quality environment for people with disabilities. The provider compliance team is out there every day checking in and training providers in areas that may need improvement. If an issue goes unresolved, the board will notify the State and the provider's certification can be suspended or even revoked. However, the true benefit to the board and the

families served is knowing there is constant contact with our community partners and keeping everyone safe, healthy, and happy.



*Clockwise from left:
Lindsay Nemetz,
Sandra Reed,
Edward Lewis, Kristin
Moon, Laura Binnig-
Norman*



Continued from page 1

looking toward our future is a wonderful way to mark the 50th anniversary of Ohio's county boards and DD Awareness Month, which is all about building awareness and understanding among the public about the lives of people with developmental disabilities," said Bill Green, Superintendent of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Through personal stories and historical items submitted by county boards and the people, families, and communities they serve, the Always There campaign will tell the collective story of developmental disabilities in Ohio and how the role and services of the county boards have evolved throughout the years.

Submitted stories and items will be archived and shared as part of the Always There History Project, which will be launched on the campaign's website - www.alwaysthereforohio.org - in March. In addition to the website, the campaign will be supported through social media channels, posters, billboards, and local and statewide events.

In preparation for the 50th anniversary, the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities is documenting local stories in a new video series "This is me. This is us." With monthly installments, viewers will get to know twelve people through their unique stories, as well as how Stark DD and other community partners work together to provide a lifetime of support. The video series can be accessed through the Stark DD YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/StarkCountyDD>.

Newly released in March is the video "This is me. This is us... [Carlos Elder.](#)" Previously released



are "This is me. This is us... [Eric Foit.](#)" and "This is me. This is us... [Anna Brady.](#)"

As part of DD Awareness Month, the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities encourages members of the community to submit their personal stories and historical items to the Always There History Project. Information about how to submit is available at www.alwaysthereforohio.org/submit.

Stark DD officially kicked off DD Awareness Month activities with a Free Movie Night, showing 'How to Dance in Ohio' on Thursday, March 16 in the Abbey Foltz Theater at GlenOak High School. The HBO documentary follows a group of young people from Columbus, Ohio, who have an array of developmental challenges, prepare for an iconic event—a spring formal dance.

The movie event was a collaboration with Plain Local School District's annual Flight Night, highlighting services for youth 14 - 22 years of age.



Two exhibition games between Stark DD Special Olympics men's and women's basketball teams and Stark DD staff highlighted the March Awareness month activities. In addition to the games, aspiring sports journalists conducted court-side interviews and commentary.

Initiative to establish Gold Standard Provider Criteria aims to Designate providers exceeding minimum standards

The Gold Standard was initiated in Hamilton County with a group of providers looking to create standards and training curriculum that were above minimum compliance. This was in an effort to promote quality in the community provider pool.

During the conflict free case management task force (a committee developed to address the end of Stark DD's provider role as mandated by the federal government) several providers requested that Stark DD develop a Gold Standard program to assure quality community providers in the Stark County community. Stark DD started this initiative by meeting with providers to develop tentative standards.

Not long after, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) asked counties to stop their own Gold Standard initiatives. This request was made so the department, in conjunction with Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA), and Ohio

Association of County Boards (OACB) could develop a consistent statewide approach through a six county pilot program. In January, the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities was selected to participate in this small pilot group to develop a statewide system to promote quality providers in the community.

Next Steps

The Stark DD Board will host family input meetings on April 19 at 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. at Whipple-Dale Centre. During these meetings parents will be able to address concerns about community providers, review the tentative standards proposed and give input and suggestions on standards that are important to them.

Following this, Stark DD will request approval from the state to move forward with implementing, verifying and then annually monitoring these standards and the providers that meet them.

Tell us what you think

Gold Standard Provider Criteria Development - Feedback Sessions

**Wednesday, April 19
10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW,
Canton.**

We would like to hear from you regarding what you would like the standards to be and respond to the preliminary Gold Standards developed by the provider community. Please RSVP to 330-477-5200 if you will be attending or if you would like someone to contact you to receive your feedback.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this important initiative to improve the services for people with disabilities in our community.



Find more information in our monthly Stark DD E-Newsletter

Stark DD launched an E-Newsletter in March to get information out to people with disabilities, families and the greater Stark County community. Within each brief story are live links connecting the reader to helpful websites, training registrations, or even an e-mail for a person who can offer assistance.

The E-Newsletter is delivered through e-mail, and may be shared and forwarded to anyone who might be interested in Stark DD news and events.

Sign up to receive our E-Newsletter by contacting Lisa Parramore, Communications Manager at parramore@starkdd.org or calling 330-479-3934.



March 8, 2017

DD Awareness

See more highlights, photos and video clips at <https://www>

Submitted by
Brad Hamilton
People First Adviser
West Stark Center

March is designated National Developmental Disabilities Awareness month, and to demonstrate their support, individuals from all over Ohio attended Developmental Disabilities Awareness & Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse on Wednesday, March 8, 2017.

DD Advocacy and Awareness Day is an annual event that takes place in Columbus, and is designed to educate and empower people with developmental disabilities, their families, and community members.

This year, hundreds of advocates listened to remarks from several prominent figures in the DD advocacy community, as well as surprise visits from Governor John Kasich and Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) Director John Martin.

Participants were challenged to help others understand that people with disabilities each have their own story to share, are uniquely gifted, work, go to school and participate in their communities, and must all



Zayne Harshaw, center, rocked the Statehouse during the 2017 DD Awareness & Advocacy Day in Columbus. Attending the event were (from left) Robert Klink, Brad Hamilton, Pearline Thomas and Sonja Dake.

work "Side by Side" to make a difference in their lives.

In addition, participants were entertained and inspired by blues guitarist Zayne Harshaw of the band **Blue Spectrum**. Diagnosed with autism at age four, Zayne dazzled the crowd with his skilled rendition of songs by Prince and Adele.

Many state representatives were also on hand for question and answer sessions with advocates from their respective counties.

An exciting day in downtown Columbus concluded with a tour of the Statehouse and lunch at a local bistro.

Attending the conference from Stark DD were Pearline Thomas (WSC), Robert Klink (JRC) and WSC People First advisor Brad Hamilton and staff member Sonja Dake.

Both Pearline and Robert were especially impressed by the performance from Zayne Harshaw. "I had a really, *really* nice time. It was a lot of fun," said Pearline.

ss & Advocacy Day

[facebook.com/OhioDDAwareness/](https://www.facebook.com/OhioDDAwareness/)



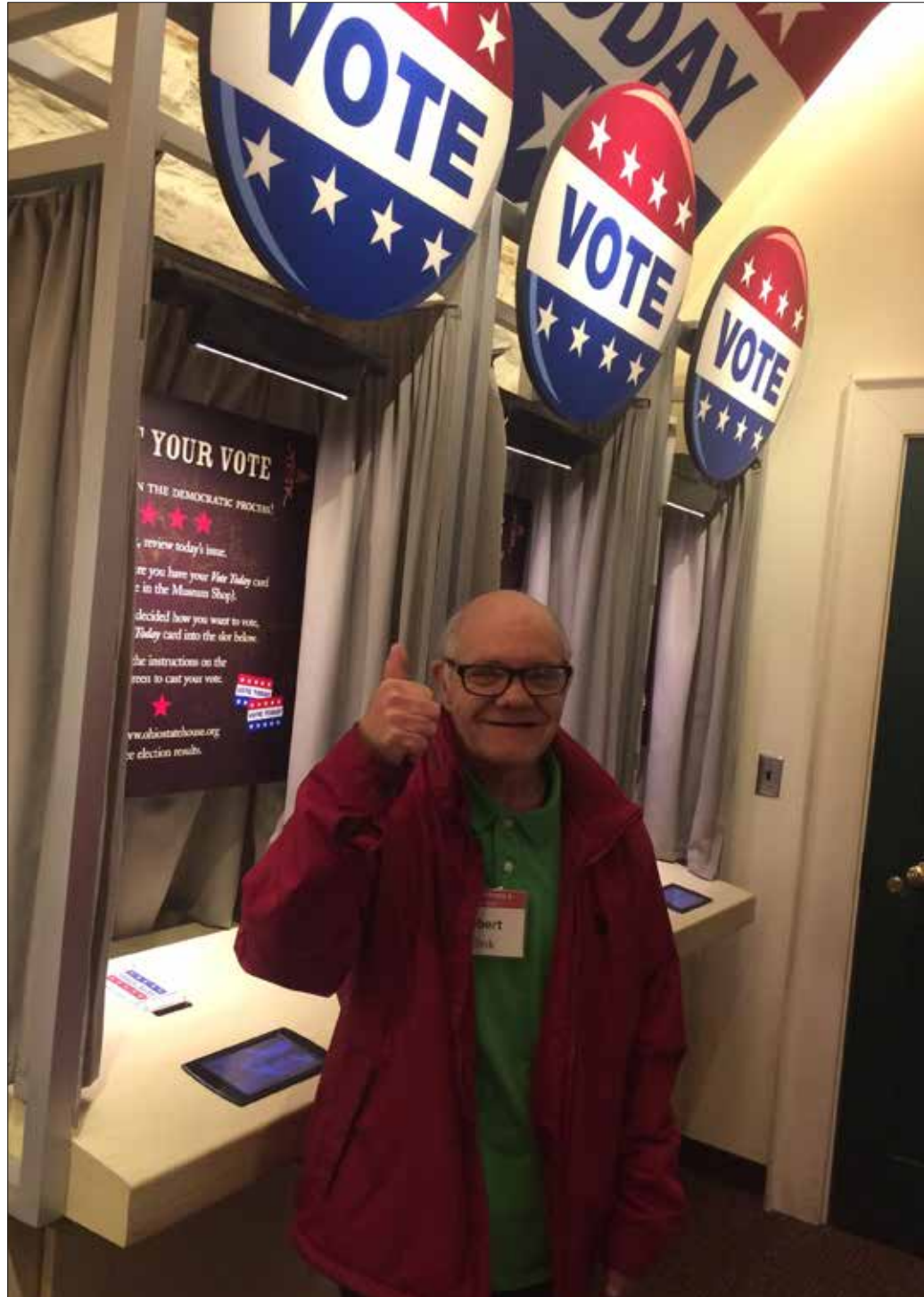
Ohio Governor John Kasich



DODD Director John Martin



Pearline Thomas (above) and Robert Klink (right)





Raising

Autism Awareness

Learn more from the Centers for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html>

April is Autism Awareness Month, and Stark DD wants to share the following helpful information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (CDC).

What it is

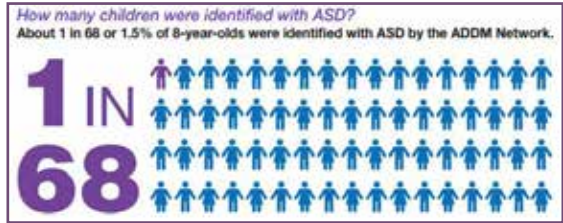
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. There is often nothing about how people with ASD look that sets them apart from other people, but people with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other people. The learning, thinking, and problem-solving abilities of people with ASD can range from gifted to severely challenged. Some people with ASD need a lot of help in their daily lives; others need less.

Diagnosis

A diagnosis of ASD now includes several conditions that used to be diagnosed separately: autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger syndrome. These conditions are now all called autism spectrum disorder.

Treatment

There is currently no cure for ASD. However, research shows that early intervention treatment services can improve a child's development. Early intervention services help children from birth to 3 years old (36 months) learn important skills. Services can include therapy to help the child talk, walk, and interact with others.



If You're Concerned

If you think your child might have ASD contact your child's doctor, and share your concerns.

At the same time, call your state's public early childhood system to request a free evaluation to find out if your child qualifies for intervention services. You do not need to wait for a doctor's referral or a medical diagnosis to make this call.

If your child is not yet 3 years old, contact your local early intervention system. In Stark County, call Stark County Early Intervention at 330-492-6900.

If your child is 3 years old or older, contact your local public school system. Even if your child is not yet old enough for kindergarten or enrolled in a public school, call and ask to speak with someone who can help you have your child evaluated.

Signs and Symptoms
A child with ASD might

- ✓ Avoid eye contact and want to be alone.
- ✓ Have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about his or her own feelings.
- ✓ Have delayed speech and language skills (for example, use words much later than siblings or peers or not use words to communicate).
- ✓ Repeat words or phrases over and over.
- ✓ Give unrelated answers to questions.
- ✓ Get upset by minor changes in routine (for example, getting a new toothbrush).
- ✓ Have obsessive interests (for example, having a very strong interest in trains that is difficult to interrupt).
- ✓ Flap his or her hands, rock his or her body, or spin in circles.

✓ Have unusual ways of playing with or using objects, such as spinning or lining them up repeatedly.

✓ Have unusual reactions to the way things sound, smell, taste, look, or feel.

A child with ASD might not

- ✓ Respond to his or her name by 12 months of age (for example, appear not to hear).
- ✓ Point at objects to show interest by 14 months of age (for example, point at an airplane flying over).
- ✓ Play "pretend" games by 18 months of age (for example, pretend to "feed" a doll).

To access downloadable checklists of developmental milestones for children from 2 months to 5 years of age, and to watch real-life examples of ASD symptoms, please visit www.cdc.gov/ActEarly.

Read a complete report at <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/documents/comm-report-autism-full-report.pdf>

Toastmasters give adults practice with public speaking, leadership

Submitted by

Deb White

echoingU

Classroom Coordinator

Eleven students from echoingU have become part of the Toastmasters of Green, participating in the organization's Youth Leadership Program and membership.

Toastmasters is an international organization, founded in 1905, with the mission of helping its members develop communication and leadership skills by learning how to speak publicly, conduct meetings, plan programs and work on committees.

The connection with the Toastmasters of Green club started last summer when echoingU staff invited one of the Toastmasters members to present to the students as part of the Public Speaking module.

After the presentation, Don Hurst, Local Director of Toastmasters of Green, recommended the echoingU students for the club's community-based Youth Leadership Program (YLP), which began in September.

The YLP is a workshop consisting of eight sessions that enable participants to develop communication and leadership skills through practical experience. Participants learn to: Evaluate present speaking ability; Organize and give speeches; Give impromptu talks; Control voice, vocabulary and gestures; and Give constructive feedback.

As part of the workshop, the students also learned proper procedures for meetings, elected two terms of officers and took on the task of conducting a meeting with very little assistance. Each student was also responsible for weekly assignments and preparing their speeches.

Two students, Weston and Ashley, also competed in the first-ever YLP Speech Competition in Mayfield, OH. They both did an excellent job, and Weston received trophies in both Humorous Speech and "Table Topics" (impromptu talks).

Hurst, mentor for the YLP said about one session, "We heard four speakers, four evaluations and a timer's report. Of the four speakers, NOT ONE read their speech from notes. One speaker even used visual aids! The timer gave a clear and accurate report. The evaluations were encouraging and provided excellent points of growth. One evaluation in particular was better than most that I've ever heard and would likely have won an evaluation contest! It was amazing!"

Lucy Rose (left) and Ashley Metz who are official, dues-paying members of the Toastmasters.



echoingU

1800 Raber Road
Uniontown, OH 44685
330.492.8800

<https://www.echoingu.org/>

MISSION

To enable young people with special needs to achieve their dreams, through experience-based learning, community integration, and social and professional networking.



Calendar

Find more events www.starkdd.org/calendar

Social

Toddler Playgroup

Each Friday, 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Eastgate Early Childhood and Family Center. Play groups are intended for children, birth through 5 years old. For a complete list of activities go to http://www.starkdd.org/data/sitebuilder/uploadedfiles/ei_newsletter_march_2017.pdf

Adult Social Night

April 13 from 7 p.m.- 9 p.m. at the St. George Cultural Center, 364 First St. SE, Massillon. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

Adult Social Night

May 11 from 7 p.m.- 9 p.m. at the St. George Serbian Center, 4667 Applegrove St. NW, North Canton. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

Adult Social Night

June 15 from 7 p.m.- 9 p.m. at the Massillon Knights of Columbus, 988 Cherry Rd. NW, Massillon. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

Recreation

Stark County Exceptional Olympics

May 12, 9 a.m. at Perry High School. Student athletes, elementary through high school from area districts, compete in both field and indoor style events.

Canton Challenger Baseball Opening Day

May 13, 9 a.m. at Barr Elementary School. Team sign up is still available by contacting League President Teri Hannen at tlhannen@sbcglobal.net. Regular league (ages 4-18, or 22 if still enrolled in high school) and Senior league (ages 16+).

Special Olympics North Canton Jaycees/Stark DD Invitational Track Meet

May 27, 9:45 a.m. at North Canton High School Stadium. Track and Field events and Bocce Competition will take place. Individual or Groups of volunteers needed. Contact Mike Sturdivant, North Canton Jaycees at 330-274-2272 to volunteer.

Education

Guardianship Training Session

May 25, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Goodwill Campus, 408 Ninth St. SW. Speakers will include representatives from Guardian Support Services and Stark County Board of DD. This free training is hosted by Guardian Support Services. Reservations are required. Call 330-437-3720 or email volunteerguardians@gmail.com

Family Information Series

May 8, 5:30 p.m. in the Cohen Room at Whipple-Dale Centre, 2950 Whipple Ave. NW. "Public Transportation Services and Options" SARTA Outreach Specialists will be on hand to answer your questions.

Community

Gold Standard Provider Criteria Development - Feedback Session

April 19, 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton. The public is invited to give feedback on the preliminary Gold standards developed by the provider community.

Monthly Board Meeting

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; April 25, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; May 23, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Volunteer Guardians Needed



Due to the growing needs in our community, we are looking for adults who would be interested in serving as voluntary guardians for people with disabilities living in Stark County who do not have family or supportive others to be qualified as guardians.

To learn more about how you can become a volunteer guardian for someone in our community, call Guardian Support Services at 330-437-3720 or visit their website at <http://www.guardiansupportservices.com>



**Stark DD High School
Commencement Ceremony**

May 25, 10:30 a.m. at Rebecca Stallman Southgate School gymnasium. *NOTE:* This ceremony will take place directly after the Jr/Sr High School Awards.

**Stark DD Early Childhood
Graduation Ceremonies**

June 1, Taft Preschool at Time to be announced; Eastgate Early Childhood Center at 11 a.m. in the school gymnasium.

Monthly Board Meeting

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; June 27, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Camp Jukebox

July 10 - 14, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at GentleBrook Center, 940 West Maple, Hartville. A performance arts camp for youth ages 10-21, with a public performance on July 14. For information contact Arts for All representative Norma Capocci at 330-499-0749.

Family Information Series

April 10, 2017

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. - Cohen Room, Whipple- Dale Centre

**FUTURE PLANNING STARTS NOW:
TRUSTS, STABLE ACCOUNTS, MEDICAID**

Amanda M. Buzo, Esq.

Executive Director

Community Fund Management Foundation

Amanda M. Buzo from Community Fund Management Foundation will review financial eligibility for many common government benefit programs, such as SSI, Medicaid, and Waiver. Amanda will also discuss how trusts and accounts, such as the new Ohio STABLE account, can work with government benefits to provide quality of life to a person with a disability.

For more information and to let us know you are coming:
Misty McGirr at 330-479-3632 or email at mcgirr@starkdd.org

All in the Family

**Published by the
Stark County Board of
Developmental Disabilities**

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**The Stark County Board of
Developmental Disabilities**

- Accredited by CARF, NAEYC, DODD
- Equal Opportunity in Employment, Access and Services. M/F/H.



**CITIZENS WHO CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PRESENTS**

**7th ANNUAL GOLF
OUTING**

**Glenmoor Country Club
Friday, May 19, 2017**

**REGISTER AT:
<http://birdeasepro.com/2017CitizensWhoCareGolfOuting>**

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Stark County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

All in the Family



**DD AWARENESS
& ADVOCACY DAY
IN COLUMBUS**

Mission:

Supporting people with disabilities and their families.