Organizations join efforts and funding options to make
New standing wheelchair a reality for local man

Thanks to the combined efforts of The Arc of Ohio, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, and the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Stark County resident Richard McCully has an updated standing wheelchair that will give him greater independence not only on the job as a cashier at a local grocery store, but also in his daily life.

McCully, who has spina bifida, received his replacement wheelchair on November 28 when representatives from The Standing Company in Saginaw, Michigan, and the supporting agencies, visited McCully on the job at Giant Eagle on Raff Road in Canton. His new chair, valued at $13,000, was on display.

Arc of Ohio representatives Connie Calhoun, board president (left) and Dave Lewis, chief financial officer (right) were on hand to see Richard McCully receive his new standing wheelchair in November. The Arc of Ohio served as the Medicaid provider to pay for the new wheelchair.

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Superintendent’s Message:  
**Good relationships keep us happy**

**What keeps us happy and healthy as we go through life?**

In 1938, the Harvard Study of Adult Development began to try to answer this question. The study has tracked the lives of 724 men, divided into two groups. The first group began the study when they were sophomores at Harvard College. The second group was made up of boys from Boston’s poorest neighborhoods, boys who were chosen for the study specifically because they were from some of the most troubled and disadvantaged families in Boston of the 1930s. Most lived in tenements, many without hot and cold running water.

When they entered the study, all of these teenagers were interviewed. They were given medical exams. Researchers went to their homes and interviewed their parents. Then these teenagers grew up into adults who entered all walks of life. They became factory workers, lawyers, bricklayers, and doctors; one even the President of the United States. Some developed alcoholism. A few developed schizophrenia. Some climbed the social ladder from the bottom all the way to the very top, and some made that journey in the opposite direction.

Dr. Robert Waldinger, Harvard Psychiatrist, is the fourth research director of this ongoing study into adult development. About 60 of the original 724 men are still alive, participating in the study, most of them in their 90s. The research is now studying the more than 2,000 children of these men. What are the lessons that come from the tens of thousands of pages of information that was generated on these lives?

The clearest message that we get from this 80-year study is this: **Good relationships keep us happier and healthier. Social connections are really good for us,** and that loneliness kills. **It’s not the number of friends we have,** and it’s not whether or not we are in a committed relationship, **but it is the quality of our close relationships that matter.** **Even having just one close relationship has been found to be enough.**

During employee orientation classes, I speak of this study and its lessons, not so much for us, but to highlight the importance of relationships for the 4,000 people with disabilities we serve. **We know that 39% of people with disabilities either sometimes, or often, feel lonely according to the most recent results (2014-15) of the National Core Indicators project. The National Core Indicators (NCI) program is a voluntary effort by state developmental disability agencies to track how people served and their families feel about the services they receive.**

Recently, SSA Katie Bowman and I visited Mary (not real name), who is her significant other. They are known to have bickered throughout their relationship and clearly have had more than their share of ups and downs. When Katie and I sat down in their living room, I viewed Mary and John’s relationship in likely the context they live. They need and rely on each other. Mary’s health condition continues to worsen and a nursing or intermediate care facility has been recommended. Mary is adamantly against it. During our visit, I believe I saw why. John is one of the people Mary counts on and there is nowhere else she would rather be. Within the Harvard research study, some of the couples now in their eighties could bicker with each other day in and day out, but as long as they felt that they could really count on the other when the going got tough, those arguments didn’t take a toll on their memories. I believe this is where Mary and John seem to be as well.

The wisdom of this study is as old as the hills: **good, close relationships are good for our health and well-being.** But over and over, over these 80 years, this study has shown that the people who fared the best are the people who leaned into relationships, with family, with friends, and with community. So what about us? What about people served? What might leaning into relationships even look like for all of us? Let us find out in 2018.

**Message relies heavily on information and content from [http://www.adultdevelopmentstudy.org/](http://www.adultdevelopmentstudy.org/)**

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**County Commissioners reappoint Harmon, Heege to serve on Stark DD board**

The Stark County commissioners recently announced that Carlene Harmon and Maria Heege have been reappointed to the governing board for Stark DD beginning in January 2018. This will be Harmon’s third term on the board. Heege, who joined the board in September of 2016, begins her first full term.

They join current board members Roger Gines, Carmelita Smith, Rebecca Stallman and Daniel Sutter. The commissioners will also have one additional open position to fill on the board as a result of Todd Frank’s departure at the end of December. We thank Mr. Frank for his service to Stark DD during the past four years.

The governing board is made up of seven community members and oversees the services provided by Stark DD. The board members receive no compensation and volunteer their time. Board members are appointed to four-year terms by the Stark County Commissioners and the Stark County Probate Judge. Learn more about the Stark DD governing board on our website.

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**Stark DD Board Members**

[Images of board members: Todd Frank, Roger Gines, Carlene Harmon, Maria Heege, Tamara Smith, Rebecca Stallman, Daniel Sutter]

Learn more about the Stark DD Board at [www.starkdd.org/Abouttheboard](http://www.starkdd.org/Abouttheboard)
Richard McCully and Tammi Swint, Service and Support Administrator from Stark DD, worked more than four months with state and local organizations to get a new standing wheelchair for him to use. The standing wheelchair makes it easier and less painful while on the job as a cashier at Giant Eagle. “I feel at peace because I can look at Richard and see that he is not in pain anymore,” said Swint.

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was paid for, in part, through his Medicaid waiver.

McCully has worked at Giant Eagle for eight months, but said he had considered quitting earlier in the year because his previous standing wheelchair was causing him pain.

“Richard was working his schedule consistently, but complained of being in pain,” said Tammi Swint, Stark DD Service and Support Administrator. “His 15 year old chair was outdated and needed replaced.”

After looking into several different models, Richard decided to stay with The Standing Wheelchair Company for his new chair. As a returning customer, the company reduced the price of the wheelchair so he could stay within his budget.

The Opportunities for Ohioans, who was assisting Richard with job development and coaching, initially reviewed Richard’s need for a new standing wheelchair and agreed to fund $3,000 towards the purchase. But this only paid for part of his chair, so Richard and his team needed to figure out how to use this Medicaid waiver to pay for the rest.

To use federal Medicaid dollars from an Ohio waiver to pay for goods and services, a company must be a Medicaid vendor. The Standing Company, however, was not on the list of Ohio vendors.

Swint then reached out to The Arc of Ohio, a medicaid provider, who took the responsibility of paying for the standing wheelchair outright.

The Arc was then able to bill Medicaid for reimbursement.

“It was very complicated. We had a lot of doors shut in our face,” said Swint. “Now, I feel at peace because I can look at Richard and see that he is not in pain anymore.”

For Richard, standing at the cash register and helping customers without pain motivates him to work harder at a job he loves.

“My job means to me being independent,” Richard said. “I can do anything I set my mind to.”

Beginning January, 1, 2018 the nurses serving in the Stark DD Adult Service program will incrementally transition to take over the Registered Nurse Quality Assessment (RNQA) responsibilities from the Northeast Ohio Network (NEON).

NEON has completed the Stark County RNQA reviews from 2003 - 2017.

The purpose of the RNQA is to monitor medical administration by the law and rules governing the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) since 2003. In addition, it is an initiative in Stark DD’s 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

Each of the nurses has successfully met all requirements and received RN Trainer certification through the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. The nurses will be located in the Health Services Office at Whipple-Dale Center.

The purpose of the RNQA is to monitor medication administration in waiver settings where medications are administered and nursing delegation is not required. The RNQA review looks for areas of concern that need to be addressed to improve safety in the setting.

The RNQA tool, as prescribed by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, will be used to assess the current process, identify areas of concern and the underlying contributing factors.

If needed, the nurse and the provider will develop a plan of improvement that promotes safe practice standards. If deficiencies are unresolved the RNQA is referred to the Compliance team for further review.

Completing the RNQA requires the nurse to make on site visits, to the residential waiver settings and adult service programs serving up to 16 persons, while the individuals are present. During the visit, the nurse will review the current Medication Administration Records (MARS), medication orders and observe a medication pass and performance of a health related activity by the direct care staff.

“We try to keep the on site visits to no more than one hour to minimize disruption of the daily routine,” said Diana Lashley, Manager of Health and Therapy Services.

Prior to the on site visit the nurse communicates with the agency administrator, home manager or independent provider to review policy, procedures and documentation for medication administration.

Watch Richard demonstrate his new standing wheelchair on our Stark DD YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PLJ8HHU3vc
New year, new website

Find our updated website at http://www.starkdd.org

One focus area in Stark DD’s 2017-2020 Strategic Plan is to provide information and share expertise about services and programs available for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

In November, Stark DD rolled out a new and improved website. Still accessed at www.starkdd.org, the updated site not only boasts a new look and content, but is also mobile friendly for both tablets and phones.

Last updated in 2012, the new Stark DD website has a greater emphasis on the mandated roles of the board: funding, coordinating, and monitoring the supports needed by children and adults with disabilities.

Visitors to the site will also find more provider information as the board initiates a broader role in provider oversight and support. Families can also learn more about local providers through the new Gold Star Standard program launched in 2017.

When activated, alerts and closing information will now appear as a message in a yellow area at the top of each page.

Students at Rebecca Stallman Southgate School participated in a photo shoot with the Prentke Romich Company (PRC) in December. The Wooster-based company came to school to photograph students using the company’s communication devices and software.

For 50 years, Prentke Romich Company has paved the way in the development of speech-generating devices (SGD’s) and alternative communication.

Many students at Southgate pose an incredibly unique communication challenge. The adaptability of the systems used by PRC have allowed the staff to adjust each device to very specific, individual needs. PRC has been our solution for years. Southgate School has 25 students who are currently using PRC devices, with eight more devices soon to be funded.

Students will potentially appear on the company’s website (https://www.prentrom.com/) as well as their product catalogue.

Beginning January 1, 2018, the Service and Support Administration and Investigative Services department will be called Community Services and Supports. Staff job titles and responsibilities are not affected by this change.

The change will address the wide variety of services performed by the staff in this department. These services include:

• Service and Support Administration
• Transition Services
• Community Integration and Support
• Investigative Services
• Payment Authorization
• Provider Support

“Families will not see a difference. Our department has added community provider supports to assure quality service providers. This name more encompasses all that we do,” said Emily Martinez, director.

Community Services and Supports Management Team: (front, left to right) Jessica Hoffarth, Justin Madison, Katrina Smith, (back, left to right) Josh Young, Emily Martinez, Ed Lewis, Amy Anderson, Rose Morgan, Paula Kovach, Tom Vaughn and Mary Lou Chizmar.
“This is me. This is us.” video series is Telling stories that matter

As part of the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Ohio County Boards of DD, the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities has documented local stories in a video series “This is me. This is us.”

Through the series viewers have gotten to know several people through their unique stories, as well as how Stark DD and other community partners work together to provide a lifetime of support.

“The goal of the project was to create videos that tell a unique story as well as help the public understand that Stark DD helps people by funding, coordinating and monitoring services,” said Josh Young, Service and Support Administration Supervisor. “Whether it’s a child in school, someone employed in the community or a person with significant needs, these videos demonstrate how Stark DD is always there to help.”

The final installments for 2017 include “This is me. This is us...Matthew Lashley” and “This is me. This is us...David and Jeff.”

Previously released are: “This is me. This is us...Lily Croston;” “This is me. This is us...Tinessa Daniels;” “This is me. This is us...Nick Doyle;” “This is me. This is us...Amy and Brian Dunnivan;” “This is me. This is us...Aaron Williams;” “This is me. This is us...Carlos Elder;” “This is me. This is us...Anna Brady;” and “This is me. This is us...Eric Foit.”

The video series can be accessed through the Stark DD YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/user/StarkCountyDD.

The students from the Stark DD preschool and school age programs celebrated the holidays with performances on December 20, 2017. Elementary students at RS Southgate School presented “A Penguin’s Christmas” musical, while preschoolers at Taft Elementary and Eastgate Early Childhood and Family Center sang and danced to holiday music.

THE RACE

By: Gina Hunt

You’re in a race and you want to win, but here comes that word disabled again. Run on, run kick disability to the curb. Don’t let that word stop you. Run, run, run to the finish line it’s straight ahead. So run like you stole it, just get ahead, and always put disability way behind.

ABOUT THE POET

My name is Gina Hunt. I attend the Stark DD workshop. While I’ve had many jobs over the years at the workshop, I’m so much more than that. I love working with children, arts and crafts and working on my poetry. I have a disability, but I will not let it stop me or define me. My motto is: don’t ever let your disability hold you back.
Education

Guardianship Training Session
March 22, 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. Registrations are required. Call 330-437-3720 or e-mail volunteeguardians@gmail.com

2018 Annual Conference for Families and Educators of Diverse Learners & Avenue of Answers
April 14 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at R.G. Drage Career Technical Center, 2800 Richville Dr. SE, Massillon, Presented by State Support Team 9. Find out more at http://www.sst9.org/Trainings/2018.04.14_SaveTheDate_Parent_Educator_Conf.pdf. Registration is required.

Autism Awareness Day Workshop
April 21 from 7:45 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Cohen Room at Whipple-Dale Centre, 2950 Whipple Ave. NW. Presented by the Autism Society of Greater Akron. Speaker: “Brain Mapping and Autism Spectrum Disorders.” Jacquelyn N. Kraps, Ph.D., Vice President/Chief Clinical Officer, The Counseling Center of Wayne and Holmes Counties.

Community

Grape Possibilities Wine Tasting & Auction
January 18, 6:30 p.m. at the McKinley room, Canton Memorial Civic Center. Presented by the Arc of Ohio - Stark County. Tickets are $60 for the main event Regular Ticket, or $85 for the Platinum Ticket. Call 234-571-5689 for ticket information.

Monthly Committee Meetings
Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities January 18, 3 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton. Personnel committee meeting at 3 p.m. and Finance committee meeting at 4 p.m.

Monthly Board Meeting
Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; January 30, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton. Organizational meeting.

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/

Adult Social Night
January 11 from 7 p.m.-9 p.m. at the St. George Serbian Center, 4667 Applegrove St. NW, North Canton.

Adult Social Night
February 14 from 7 p.m.-9 p.m. at the Massillon Knights of Columbus, 968 Cherry Rd. NW, Massillon. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

Adult Social Night
March 15 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
April 26 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.

All in the Family
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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.
• Ohio Self Determination Association member (OSDA)
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Roger Gines, Recording Secretary
Carlene Harmon
Maria Heege
Carmelita Smith
Rebecca Stallman

Superintendent
William Green

Visit us on the internet at www.starkdd.org

Follow us on:

Mission:
Supporting people with disabilities and their families.

Holiday wishes from Stark DD students

All in the Family
Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities