

MONTHLY



MURRAY RIDGE COURIER

DEC 2024



Award recipients for 30 and 35 years of service and their appreciative supervisors at the Agency In-service. School Supervisor **Stacie Starr**, Teacher **Julie Maurer** (35 years), School Supervisor **Bre Hedges**, Teacher **Kristi Zgrabik** (30 years), HR Secretary **Kim Logar** (30 years), Director of Human Resources **Laura Yates**, Director of Vocational and Transportation Services **Jeff Miller**, Vocational Placement Specialist **Lisa Reed** (30 years), Adult Program Specialist **Lisa Lee** (30 years), and Habilitation Manager **John Syrowski**

2024 Agency In-Service

This past October 25th, Murray Ridge staff gathered at Lorain County Community College for our Annual Agency In-Service. This event is a great opportunity for our staff to get together and acknowledge one another's accomplishments throughout the year!



Celebrating All of Our Staff's Hard Work

Our agency staff is spread across multiple locations throughout Lorain County, so it's a rare opportunity for all of us to come together in a single space. At our annual Agency In-Service Day, our staff, along with some special guests, was able to gather at the Spitzer Conference Center and the Stocker Arts Center at the Lorain County Community College where they enjoyed a group lunch, informational programs, a special guest keynote speaker, awards presentations, and more. Thank you, Murray Ridge Staff, for all of your hard work throughout 2024!





IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering Terri Stembal

In October, we lost a very dear member of our Murray Ridge family, Terri Stembal. Terri served as the Administrative Assistant to Superintendent, Amber Fisher. Prior to that position, she worked as a Secretary in the SSA Department, where she played a key role in fielding communication with our constituents during the COVID pandemic.

Terri had a huge heart, and a smile that would light up any room. She was a joy to work with and her work was very appreciated. She would go out of her way to help others and she would do it with a smile. Terri loved to decorate for the holidays and her office was always welcoming and very festive. One of Terri's favorite phrases that she would often say at the end of work day was, "Peace out, Girl Scout." Terri loved her family; her son Evan, her mother Anna, and her granddaughter Ivy were the joys of her life. We will always cherish the times we had with her. She will be missed by her co-workers and friends here at the Ridge.

C.A.R.E.S. AWARD PRESENTED TO CHEF LINDSAY

C.A.R.E.S stands for Community, Awareness, Recognition, Education, and Service. We were pleased to announce at this year's Agency In-Service Day that the 2024 C.A.R.E.S. Award goes to **Lindsay Gerard Bonilla**.

Lindsay wears many hats – mom, wife, baker, cook and the queen of side hustles, but to us she is just Chef Lindsay, the smiling face that teaches the adult individuals we serve about cooking and baking basics. Lindsay is a graduate of LCCC's Culinary Program and continues her culinary journey at the campus instructing cooking classes. We met Chef Lindsay last year when we started our cooking and baking classes at the college. These classes were funded through a bequest of Myrtle Buxton, a woman who received our C.A.R.E.S. Award posthumously years ago.

When our advocacy team was first deciding how to use the 'Myrtle funds', it could have never imagined how successful these classes would be. Every class has had a waitlist; and individuals, families, and providers often reach out to see when the next class will be. The monthly classes are a fan favorite, and our individuals continue to rave about their experiences. Since it was a hit, Lindsay was gracious enough to add a second class per month. This has allowed individuals to attend sessions during the week, as well as on the weekend. Everyone has praised Lorain County Community College, and especially Chef Lindsay,

for this opportunity.

Lindsay goes above and beyond to assist our individuals with learning new skills in the kitchen. Whether it be refrigerating your chocolate chip cookie dough prior to putting it in the oven because melted butter ruins a cookie, or adding just the right amount of spice to your meatballs – she not only gives tips and tricks, but also teaches our individuals amazing life lessons. Her step by step directions are easy to follow and allow the participants to take the lead while in the kitchen. She is patient when reviewing steps and ensures that the participants have a good understanding of the entire process. She answers every question asked – whether it has to do with cooking or not.



C.A.R.E.S. Award recipient **Lindsay Gerard Bonilla** and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**

Here are some testimonials about Lindsay's approach from those in her classes and their caregivers:

Lindsay is attentive and quick and does an amazing job preparing everything ahead of time. She is very helpful and encourages individuals to do the activities on their own. She is very knowledgeable about what she is doing, she makes it fun and explains steps in full detail.

Lindsay is very down to earth and explains things well. She is great, patient and bubbly.

Chef Lindsay is very patient and understanding. She is also very helpful and kind. She makes the class very interactive so everyone is learning throughout the class.

Our individuals absolutely love the cooking classes that Chef Lindsay provides! She is very patient, kind and respectful to all of the individuals in her classes and makes them fun for all! They really learned a lot of skills from her that they have been able to use at home and at our Day Hab center.

— **Sue White**, Ability Works Day Program

FUN AT MURRAY RIDGE
HALLOWEEN



Our Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center participants recently visited some local Halloween displays. One of their favorites is the Death Row Penitentiary, the seasonally transformed home of the Rodriguez family. Seated left to right are Fred Biller, Abby Kisner, Yaletti Arroyo, and Austin Athey.



Rayen Seagers, out enjoying the pumpkin patch created by our outstanding OT Department.



Oh, come on. It's all just a bunch of hocus pocus. Our OT Team looking 'f' as the Sanderson sisters at the School's annual Halloween party. Left to right, Occupational Therapists Nicole Geen, Jamie Novak, and Trish Myers.



Having a blast at the Trunk-or-Treat, left to right Teacher Kristen Marunski and Classroom Aide Bri Krieg.



Our students came dressed and ready for some candy. Left to right, Jansen Plumb, Brady Bella, Evey Rodgers, Ja'Quan Warren, Ja'Laysia Brown, Nicholas Green, Jonas Bennett. Seated in front, Patrick Boey and Jenny Sislowksi.



Sariah Lugo dressed to the nines as her favorite Harry Potter character.

Years of Service Awards

5 Years of Service

- Diana Biber
- Dave Biggs
- Sarah Campbell
- Barb Conrad
- Heather Davis
- Kristen Godfrey
- Michelle Konicek
- Mark McIlwaine
- Joshua Mercado
- Barb Pentito
- Jennifer Ryan
- Eva Torres
- Karen Van Demark
- Cindy Washio

5 Years (continued)

- Laura Yates

10 Years of Service

- Paul Doseck
- Theresa Godhard
- Charles Hearn
- Nancy Hollins
- Carol Wallace
- Lissa Lopez
- Erin Leverknight
- Christine Mazze
- Kim Rothgery

15 Years of Service

- Doug Johnson
- Glenda Nelson

20 Years of Service

- Tracy Dunlap
- Rich Garcia
- Ken Lewis
- Karen McKenzie
- Stacy Rosecrans
- Jim Ward
- Darrylin Wargo
- Laura Witkowski

25 Years of Service

- Doug Elmiger
- Karen Gomez
- Martha Hoyt
- Michelle Miller
- Bonnie Minnich

30 Years of Service

- Linda Clark
- Valerie Deptula
- Lisa Lee
- Kim Logar
- Karen Pavelschak
- Lisa Reed
- Beth Wissinger
- Micky Woods
- Kristi Zgrabik

35 Years of Service

- Sandhya Desai
- Amber Fisher
- Julie Maurer

30 Years of Service

Congratulations to the staff members pictured below for 30 years of service!



Habilitation Manager **John Syrowski**, Adult Program Specialist **Lisa Lee** (30 Year Award Recipient), and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**



HR Director **Laura Yates**, HR Secretary **Kim Logar** (30 Year Award Recipient), and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**



Director of Vocational and Transportation Services **Jeff Miller**, Vocational Placement Specialist **Lisa Reed** (30 Year Award Recipient), and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**



School Supervisor **Bre Hedges**, Teacher **Kristi Zgrabik** (30 Year Award Recipient), and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**



Meister Group Home Aide **Linda Clark** (30 Year Award Recipient)



Investigative Agent Supervisor **Valerie Deptula** (30 Year Award Recipient), and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**

35 YEARS OF SERVICE RECIPIENTS



School Supervisor **Stacie Starr**, Teacher **Julie Maurer** (35 Year Award Recipient), and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**



Service and Support Administrator **Sandhya Desal** (35 Year Award Recipient) and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**



Superintendent **Amber Fisher** (35 Year Award Recipient) and LCBDD Board President **Bev Gedid**

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD PRESENTED

The most recent recipient of our Exceptional Service Award was Kim Fuller, a Service and Support Administrator. Kim was nominated by Mira McDermott and family. They say that, "Kim is very friendly, approachable, available, knowledgeable, and always on top of things." Mira said, "Kim always goes above and beyond to make sure we are comfortable with new information and always asks if there is anything more that she could do for us. Our family is very appreciative of Kim and her service to our daughter, Hannah." Great job, Kim! We are extremely proud of your hard work and dedication.



Superintendent **Amber Fisher** and Service and Support Administrator **Kim Fuller**

Nominations Sought for Exceptional Service Awards

Do you know a Murray Ridge employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication and have significantly contributed to the well-being of people with developmental disabilities? Nominate that employee for an Exceptional Service Award! If you are a community member; consumer; or parent, guardian, sibling or other relative of a Murray Ridge program participant, submit your nomination to kevin@murrayridgecenter.org or call Jen Ryan at 440-329-3734.

Please include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the employee.

All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for consideration. The Board presents Exceptional Service Awards on a quarterly basis.

Weather-Related Announcements Reminder

Murray Ridge program closing information will be available on TV station Fox 8, on the Fox 8 website (fox8.com), and on radio stations WEOL 930 AM and WOBL 1320 AM, as it has been in the past.

There will be two separate listings for Murray Ridge Center:

- Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers
- Murray Ridge School

Fox 8 displays information on the status of our School and Adult Activities Centers as described below:

- On fox8.com, the information is listed under the "Closings" tab. These listings are in alphabetical order by the name of the facility, and both facilities appear sequentially in the "M" section as "Murray Ridge School" and "Murray Ridge Adult Activities Centers."
- On Channel 8, information about the status of our School and Adult Activities Centers scrolls from left to right in the Closings information at the very bottom of the television screen. These listings are in alphabetical order by the name of the facility, and both facilities appear sequentially in the "M" section as "Murray Ridge School" and "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers."

NOTE: It appears that Fox 8 no longer has a mechanism for signing up for text alerts on Murray Ridge School/Murray Ridge Adult Activities Centers. If you have signed up for text alerts in the past, we cannot advise you to rely on text alerts this season; please instead access the 'Closings' tab on the Fox 8 website (or one of the radio/television options described above).

Parents and caregivers of school students should disregard the "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers" listing, and follow only the listing for "Murray Ridge School." Conversely, adult consumers who attend our Opportunity and Vocational Centers and their parents/caregivers should disregard the "Murray Ridge School" listing, and follow only the listing for "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers."

If "Open - No Transportation" follows the announcement for "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers," parents/caregivers are welcome to transport adult consumers to their day service sites. Regular programming will be provided. Consumers should be dropped off no earlier than 8:30 a.m. and must be picked up by 3:45 p.m.

In the event of bad weather, the decision to transport individuals to Murray Ridge Center will be based on the ability of our buses to travel safely on city and county roads. Regardless of whether or not transportation is available through Murray Ridge Center, if our Opportunity and Vocational Centers are open, but there is an individual concern about the weather, adult consumers should feel free to stay home. Likewise, parents/caregivers of Murray Ridge School students who have individual concerns regarding the weather should feel free to keep their children at home, even if school is in session.

Please be aware that transportation to enclave sites is generally available even if transportation to the Opportunity and Vocational Centers is cancelled. Murray Ridge Center does not broadcast the status of enclave transportation on the television or radio. Consumers should assume that enclave transportation will be available unless they receive a phone call from a member of our Supported Employment Department.

First Student bus company can be reached at 288-2222.

Boardroom Briefing

The Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities convened at 6:30 p.m. on November, 25, 2024

Director of Educational Services Dann Swift gave a report on the Murray Ridge School Wellness Committee. The Board passed a resolution authorizing for public release a draft of its 2025 Strategic Plan, and gave notice of a public forum on this report to be held on December 12, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. at the Board's Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Rd., Elyria, Ohio; a copy of the Draft 2025 Strategic Plan can be accessed at www.murrayridgecenter.org or by calling (440) 329-3734. The Board approved a resolution to request that the County Auditor certify the availability of funds needed to pay the non-federal share of Medicaid services in 2025. Superintendent Fisher reported on resolutions to be presented at the 2025 Delegate Assembly of the Ohio Association of County Boards Serving People with Developmental Disabilities. Board Member and Vice President Keith Boey was presented with the 2024 Volunteer of the Year Award.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The 2024 Marilyn Hupfer Volunteer of the Year Award was given to **Keith Boey**, LCBDD Board Member. In January, Keith will have completed three and a half consecutive terms on the Board, for a total of fourteen years of continuous service. During his tenure on the Board, Keith served in the leadership role of Vice President for many years. He has also been the liaison to the Family Support Parent Committee, and has spent many evenings over the years attending Family Support Committee meetings, where he is a welcomed member of the team. Board President **Bev Gedid** summed it up well when she said, "Keith is perfect for the 2024 Volunteer of the Year Award!! His many years of serving on the Board are a testament to his commitment and knowledge. He is a wonderful advocate for our consumers and their families and guardians. Thank you, Keith for all of your service, and best of luck in your future endeavors."



LCBDD Board President **Bev Gedid**, LCBDD Vice President **Keith Boey**, and Superintendent **Amber Fisher**

Now Hiring!

FEATURED positions



Direct Support Professional (Home Setting)

We have openings available for full-time, part-time, and PRN (as-needed) positions to care for residents of our Meister Road Home. Hours vary based on position and/or assignment.

Licensed Practical Nurse

We have openings for part-time, full-time, and PRN Licensed Practical Nurses.

Lifeguard (Full-time 9-month)

We have an opening for a full-time (9-month) Lifeguard that will function also as a classroom aide at Murray Ridge School.

Service & Support Administrator

This is a full time position in our Service and Support Administration Department.

School Aide

We have openings for PRN (as-needed) and Full-time (9-month) School Aides at Murray Ridge School.

Intervention Specialist (Teacher)

We have openings for full-time and PRN (as-needed) teachers at Murray Ridge School.

Adult Program Instructor

This is a full time position in our Adult Services Department, likely assigned to Supported Employment.

All candidates:

To see our current openings and to apply, go to the Murray Ridge website (www.murrayridgecenter.org) and click "Join Our Team"

Must have valid Ohio drivers license, good driving record, and High School Diploma/GED. Must pass background check, drug test, and physical.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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Photo of the Month: On your marks, get set, and Trot! Our staff and students had a blast at the annual Turkey Trot. Pictured, left to right: Physical Therapist **Leanne Ritter**, **Chakrika Bommisetty**, **Ivy Moore**, Personal Aide **Vanessa Moye**, Teacher **Kristi Zgrabik**, and **Josiah Tripp**

Contact Us

Phone :
440.329.3734

Address :
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

Be sure to follow us on Facebook!

