



News from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor

John L. Martin, Director

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1. Conversation Continues on Medicaid Expansion, Budget

Representative Barbara Sears has introduced legislation to provide Medicaid coverage to an estimated additional 275,000 Ohioans with incomes below 138% of the federal poverty level. Cost to expand the coverage would be paid entirely by federal dollars for the first three years under the Affordable Care Act. Representative Sears explained that passage of the legislation by the end of June would provide the six months needed to implement an expansion by January 1, 2014, when the federal money becomes available, and when most Americans are required to have health coverage.

Sears' proposed bill calls for coverage recipients' personal responsibility by requiring them to provide co-payments for certain services, promoting job training to move unemployed recipients into the work force, and providing drug treatment to those who abuse narcotics. In addition bi-partisan discussion on the subject of a broader Medicaid reform approach is currently underway.

The Senate Finance Committee heard testimony on Medicaid, health and human services, and education issues last Wednesday and heard additional public testimony last Friday. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the biennial budget today, and the full chamber is expected to vote on the bill tomorrow. Following these actions, the bill will be set for conference committee, wherein discussions will decide any issues regarding tax cuts, finalizing a school funding formula, and any possibility of expanding Medicaid.

**The Ohio Senate has scheduled a session for 9 a.m. tomorrow, June 6 – the new target date for Senate consideration of the FY14-15 budget.
([House Bill 59.](#))**

It is interesting to note that collectively, the fourteen states in which Medicaid expansion is still pending stand to lose a total of \$255 billion in federal funds between 2013 and 2022, if they reject it. According to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI), among the undecided states, Texas, Ohio, and Tennessee would lose the greatest amount of federal money during a 10-year period. The lost dollars projected are as follows: Texas: \$66 billion; Ohio:\$53 billion; Tennessee: \$23 billion.

For more budget information go to www.healthtransformation.ohio.gov

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2. Employment First Conference, Changing Expectations

Today is the second day of the inaugural Ohio Employment First Conference, “Changing Expectations,” at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Dublin. The event offers a platform for Employment First partners to build a solid foundation to support a positive shift in expectations, and stronger community employment outcomes, statewide. With more than 450 registered for Day One, it was ‘standing room only’ – a testament to the momentum building around the initiative, representing agencies and entities involved in education, employment, developmental disabilities, mental health, and related areas of interest.



Every Person. Every Talent. Every Opportunity.

The Vision of Employment First builds upon the Mission of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to continually improve the quality of life for Ohio’s citizens with developmental disabilities and their families.

DODD, the Ohio Employment First Advisory Committee, and other planning partners have brought nationally-known speakers to the table to address issues important to moving the initiative forward in communities throughout the state. Author [Dale DiLeo](#), President of the Training Resource Network, St. Augustine, FL, yesterday challenged attendees to understand that, “... System change comes with pain and discovery ...” and that “...It is up to you to see to it that Employment First is not just empty rhetoric, it’s a change with commitment.”

[David Hoff](#), Program Director, Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, today will discuss the subject from a different perspective, including approaches to employer engagement and community inclusion. The [printed program](#) and other event information is at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org.

In welcoming participants to the event, DODD Director John Martin stated,

“As our understanding of what individuals want and need to thrive has evolved, we now know that individuals with developmental disabilities not only want to live and work completely integrated into their communities – they also can safely bring their talents and perspectives to enrich communities, and positively influence everyone’s experience.”

DODD appreciates the leadership and contributions of the conference planning partners and taskforce agencies: the Ohio departments of Education, Job & Family Services, and Mental Health, and the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission. In addition to state agency cooperation, Employment First benefits from an Advisory Committee of leaders aligned with all aspects of support and service within the DD system, including self-advocates, educators, providers, and County Boards of DD.



A State Leadership Panel provided insight into efforts currently underway at their agencies to assure that Employment First provides real community-based work opportunities for people with disabilities in communities throughout the state. Left to right are Sue Zake, Director for Exceptional Children, Ohio Department of Education; Tracy Plouck, Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health; Kevin Miller, Director, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission; John Martin, Director, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD); and Kristen Helling, Employment First Project Manager, DODD.

At the conference a State Leadership Panel (see photo above) provided remarks in response to questions including, “What changes do you envision for your agency now and in the future to support the culture of Employment First ...to achieve the overall vision of Employment First?” These and other questions and answers will be posted online at www.ohioemploymentfirst.org.

“From our perspective, there will be a progressive movement to realize the promise of Employment First, including regulatory language and data collection to track progress and identify pockets of excellence.”

-DODD Director John Martin.

Employment First RFP Posted

Kristen Helling, DODD lead-person for the Employment First initiative notes, “The conference is an integral part of the Employment First approach that directs Ohio’s state agencies to work together to remove barriers to community employment for people with developmental disabilities.” She adds that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for facilitation of the *Local Leaders Community Planning Teams* for Employment First has been posted online at [this location](#).*

Interested RFP applicants should be interested in assisting community planning teams in developing professional action plans to improve local community employment outcomes for people with developmental disabilities. The RFP will be posted until June 14, 2013.

Kristen Helling may be contacted at (614) 284-8382, or kristen.helling@dodd.ohio.gov

**The specific link is: <http://procure.ohio.gov/proc/viewProcOpps.asp?oppID=10714&disclaimer=N>*

Additional information at <http://ohioemploymentfirst.org/>

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3. Perry County Projects Focused on Job Innovation

In a continuing effort to learn more about employment options for people with developmental disabilities in communities throughout the state, DODD Director John Martin and Deputy Director Monty Kerr toured the Perry County area last week and enjoyed a few surprises along the way. Hosting the team was Perry County Board of DD Superintendent David Couch, and several staff members and program participants, all of whom boarded a school bus to travel the winding roads of New Lexington, Shawnee, and Rendville, visiting people working, learning, and otherwise developing their talents.

The surprises? They included ... a few lessons in local history (the New York Knicks in Shawnee?) ... teenagers excited about being in school (it’s late May and they’re enthused?) ... and an environmental project with more employment potential than ever imagined at its outset – the bio-digester system.



**It looks like a greenhouse,
but actually ...**

**“It’s a cool consortium of energy,
environment, and engineering!
And best of all, it will create jobs.”**

–Gil Fulecki

**L. to R., Gil Fulecki, Bio-Digester project
coordinator; Dave Couch, PCBDD
Superintendent; State Rep. Bill Hayes;
and DODD Director John Martin stand
beside the Bio-Digester unit, gearing up
for an energy-producing summer.**



What's a bio-digester? It's best to find out by clicking here: [Bio-Digester](#). Or, you could ask Gil Fuleki, PCBDD's Bio-Digester Coordinator -- and you'll be handed an interesting and fairly complex system diagram depicting the anaerobic processing of food scraps, adding water and heat, and producing methane gas ... ultimately to heat the PERCO Garden Center. And, best of all, it's another job-producing project. Fuleki is a wealth of knowledge and gladly shares the long-term project vision,

"I was a job developer here before, and when it came time to develop this project, I saw it as a great way to get our people employed. It should employ from 3 – 20 people, down the road, and if it breaks even or brings in a few dollars, we'll feel that it's a win-win all the way around."

The Perry County Board of DD entered into the project about a year ago, involving several collaborative components, including ideas from engineers with Ohio University, dollars via a [Local Government Innovation Fund](#) (LGIF) grant, the support of enthusiastic Board members, and buy-in from other community allies. All of this cooperation and drive is expected to result later this year in a new way to help power various PCBDD facilities.

Work is nearly complete on the bio-digester, and, as State Representative Bill Hayes commented after joining the tour group at the site on State Route 345, "Dave (Couch) told me if they make a little money from this project that would be great. It's providing learning opportunities leading to community-based jobs that's most exciting."

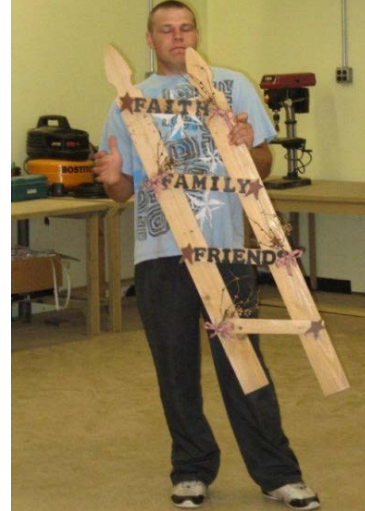
Couch adds, "We're also excited that there's a business from outside the county that has offered its scrap waste, (for use in the bio-digester) and we can sell the methane for a cheaper rate than a traditional energy supplier because we are not out to make a profit, just sustain those jobs."

In addition to this pilot project, the Academy of Leadership Abilities (ALA) – the school program that students were still very enthusiastic about in late May – wrapped up the school year with members of the eight-student group speaking to members of the PCBDD and the tour guests at Miller High School, including Southern Local Schools Superintendent Greg Holbert, and Perry County Juvenile Court Judge Luann Cooperrider.

Begun in January 2013, the pilot curriculum helps stimulate the potential of students both with and without disabilities, all in an inclusive setting, using unique motivational materials and peer involvement. More about this successful effort in a future issue of *Pipeline*.

"I didn't know any of this stuff before. With their (PERCO's) help I've come a long way. I plan to attend college, and continue to better myself. That's something that never would have happened if I had not become involved with PERCO."

–Brandon Abram



Brandon Abram is serious about sharing his new skills.

He's learned to pour decorative garden stone material, craft wood products, and – especially – to share his pride in workmanship. Tour attendees asked each other, “Does he run this place, or just work here?” Turns out it's a little of both, and he's looking to earn money in the competitive job market. Learn more about working in Perry County in the next *Pipeline Quarterly*, and at www.perrydd.org



Read more about Perry County in the next issue of *Pipeline Quarterly*, reporting on Spring 2013, publishing in late June.

Pipeline Quarterly is archived at <http://dodd.ohio.gov/pipeline/Pages/Pipeline-Quarterly>

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Pipeline Profile

4. Wallace Appointed Deputy Director, Human Resources

Antoinette (Toni) Wallace has been appointed DODD Deputy Director of Human Resources, continuing a 21-year career with the Department in the Division of Human Resources. In announcing the appointment, DODD Director John Martin stated, “Toni’s experience in the developmental disabilities field, working with both our Central Office and Developmental Center staff, made Toni an excellent choice for the Deputy Director position.” Following her appointment on May 24, Wallace noted enthusiastically,



“This position gives me the opportunity to continuously assess and improve HR processes, in addition to providing quality service to our internal and external customers. It’s an over-arching approach to assure that people are getting what they need, and that our decisions make sense.”

-Toni Wallace



In addition to the many HR projects and initiatives she will be overseeing as Deputy Director, Wallace explains that she is looking forward to continuing the Workforce Planning efforts that must be at the core of a strong HR system. She notes, “At DODD Central Office, and at each of our Developmental Centers, we need to be sure that our approach is consistent – do we have the right people in the right places, and in the right positions? From a human resources standpoint, and from a financial and technological standpoint, we need to keep this emphasis in mind.”

DODD Division of Human Resources encompasses five general areas: Workforce Planning; Payroll and Benefits; Labor Relations; EEO/Diversity Affairs; and, Personnel Services. Toni Wallace, who succeeds Laura Frazier as Deputy Director, adds that the agency-wide staff demographics are such that over the next five years, about 31% of the DODD workforce will be eligible for retirement. “We will need to keep up with our future staffing needs, to keep the organization moving forward smoothly and be good stewards of our financial resources.”

Toni Wallace can be reached at (614) 466-3139, email Antoinette.Wallace@dodd.ohio.gov

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5. Disability Housing Network Study Cites Issues

New study reveals that people with disabilities receiving Supplemental Security Income cannot afford housing anywhere in the U.S.

The [Technical Assistance Collaborative](#) (TAC), and the [Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities](#) (CCD) Housing Task Force have released a new study, *Priced Out in 2012*, which demonstrates that the national average rent for a modestly-priced apartment with one bedroom is greater than the entire monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payment of a person with a disability. The study sheds light on the serious problems experienced by the nation's most vulnerable citizens -- very low-income people with significant and long-term disabilities.

DHN Executive Director Jacalyn Slemmer, notes, “In Ohio, a person with a disability receives \$698 per month in SSI benefits. This income is equal to 19.6% of median income, and would require a person with a disability to pay 79% of their income to rent a one bedroom apartment!” She continues,

“This is major impediment to people living in community-based housing...far exceeding federal guidelines of 30% of a person’s income. On behalf of Ohioans with disabilities, the Disability Housing Network continues to partner with DODD, OACB, Ohio Housing Finance, and Ohio Development Services agencies to increase affordable, accessible housing opportunities.”



[To read the full report, Click Here.](#)

DHN provides support and assistance to County Boards of DD and other Housing Boards that develop and manage community-based homes for Ohioans with disabilities. Through member-driven initiatives, DHN delivers best-practice resources, and builds a collective voice for advocacy to strengthen and improve disability housing standards and practices in Ohio.

Additional information at <http://www.tacinc.org/> and <http://disabilityhousingnetwork.org/>

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6. OACB Conference A Venue for Viewpoints

The Ohio Association of County Boards Serving People with Developmental Disabilities (OACB) Spring Conference, May 23-24 in Columbus, offered several opportunities to learn more about statewide initiatives affecting Ohio's developmental disabilities community, as well as local examples of 'best practices' from around the state. Topics offered a broad range of information, including emerging trends in services such as remote monitoring, the P.L.A.Y. Project (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters) and Medicaid/Managed Care, among others, as well as updates on the state's budget.

DODD Director John Martin and several Department staff members participated in and presented at the Conference, and fielded questions from County Board staff from around the state. Representing the Division of Medicaid Development and Administration, Deputy Director Patrick Stephan and Lori Horvath presented an update on Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs), including current budget proposals, the 'voluntary conversion' process, the Transitions DD Waiver, and other waiver updates. [View the presentation here.](#)*

In addition to a discussion regarding the DODD Individual Options (I.O.) waiver amendment status, the Self Empowered Life Funding (SELF) waiver, soon to be wrapping up its first year of enrollment, was reviewed. DODD staff noted that online training via webinars has been utilized frequently throughout the year, as well as in-person local and regional training sessions.



Vendors at the OACB conference included the Warren County Board of DD, whose enterprising staff and participants have launched a Candy Bouquet business – a micro-enterprise through Production Services Unlimited, Inc., in partnership with the WCBDD.

< Kathy Frantz (left) and Debby Cooper celebrate another sale. This time it was a Father's Day basket.

[More at www.warrencountydd.com.](http://www.warrencountydd.com)

The OACB Spring Conference also informally introduced the agency's new Executive Director, Bridget Gargan, who will begin serving in the position on July 8. (See [Pipeline, May 22, 2013](#))

*Presentation link address: <http://test.mr.state.oh.us/documents/OACBPresentation52413.pdf>
More information at www.oacb.org.

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7. 2013 Disability Employment Awareness Month Theme Selected “Because We Are EQUAL to the Task”

While National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM, October) is months away, the U.S. Office of Disability Employment Policy has announced this year's theme in order to get the many related plans underway. “*Because We Are EQUAL to the Task*,” echoes the message of the agency's ongoing Campaign for Disability Employment, and underscores its efforts to promote positive employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

In announcing the theme, ODEP Assistant Secretary Kathy Martinez, commented, “I urge all employers to benefit from the skills of workers with disabilities by giving them - including our returning veterans - a chance to show that they, too, are equal to the task.”

Materials for NDEAM recognition soon will be available online: [Learn More About NDEAM](#). Ohio celebrates the month each year with a variety of local and state recognitions and events. As 2013 sees the second year of Ohio's Employment First initiative off to a strong start, there will be plenty of interesting opportunities to share.

More at www.dol.gov/odep

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PostScripts



An effort to revamp the icon that's long symbolized accessibility on everything from parking lot signs to bathrooms is gaining traction. New York City is in the process of adopting the new look.

More at: www.accessibleicon.org

An updated version of the blue and white accessibility (formerly ‘handicapped’) symbol soon will be used in New York. Rather than depict a static person in a wheelchair, the new icon displays an active, in-motion depiction of life with a physical disability. Backers of the new icon, spearheaded by a philosophy professor at Gordon College in Massachusetts, say they hope that adoption by the nation's largest city will lead to more widespread acceptance of the design. Some states require that the background be painted in a certain color of blue and that the figure be painted in white striping paint. Other states, such as Massachusetts, do not mandate a color scheme. More at www.accessibleicon.org.

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES Meets June 12-13

The Governor's Council on People with Disabilities will meet June 12, 2013, 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. and June 13, 2013, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, 400 East Campus View Boulevard, in Columbus. Parking is free and available in front of the building. If you need special accommodations, contact Donna Foster, at donna.foster@rsc.ohio.gov or at (614) 438-1394, by June 3.

NEXT FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, June 11

The next Family Advisory Council meeting will be June 11 at the Columbus Developmental Center, from 10 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.. The meeting will include group discussions and a revised format offering more opportunities to learn and share information with individuals and families from around the state. Contact Peggy Martin at peggy.martin@dodd.ohio.gov. FAC meetings are open to everyone with an interest in Ohio's DD community, and participation by individuals and families served is especially encouraged.

HEALTH CARE SUMMIT – June 10

A health care summit titled, “Making Health Care Reform Work for People with Developmental Disabilities” will be held on June 10th from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m., at the Fawcett Center, 2400 Olentangy River Road, in Columbus. There is no cost to attend. Individuals with developmental disabilities, family members and other advocates, insurers, policy makers, and researchers are invited to discuss practical ways for improving health care for individuals with developmental disabilities. The summit will include a presentation of focus group and survey findings, as well as facilitated roundtable discussions. Registration is limited! Click [Here](#) to sign up for the event. *Deadline to register is June 5th*. For more information, contact Barry Jamieson barry.jamieson@osumc.edu or (614) 366-0329 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE! Direct Support Professionals Event, September 11

The Ohio Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (OADSP) fourth annual DSP Recognition Event will be at the Xenos Complex in Columbus, on September 11. Rachel Simon, a writer, and sibling to a sister with DD, will be the keynote speaker. The energetic Scott Osterfeld will again MC the event. DODD Director John Martin will speak, and several additional presenters and surprises are planned. More than 400 DSPs attended last year. The event theme is *Direct Support Professionals Help Create Life Stories*, and DSP's will have an opportunity to share stories of the great work they do -- see [Directions for sharing videos](#). To register go to www.dspath.org. Contact: Amy Gerowitz, (513) 484-2772 agerowitz@me.com or event coordinator Lisa Barnes, (866) 862-2322 LisaB4DSPs@yahoo.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! DisAbility Jobs Summit, October 8-9

The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) has announced the dates for this year's *DisAbility Jobs Summit* – October 8 and 9, at the Columbus Convention Center. This event will include program tracks that will offer educational experiences for all attendees. Details will be forthcoming as the dates draw nearer. Until then, mark your calendars for the 2013 *DisAbility Jobs Summit*.

WALK NOW FOR AUTISM SPEAKS – October 13

Join ‘Autism Speaks’ on Sunday, October 13, at Huntington Park in Columbus, and walk to change the future for people with autism. *Walk Now for Autism Speaks* is a family-friendly event and helps to fund research that will lead to answers surrounding the many questions posed by Autism Spectrum Disorder. Previous years' participants say, “Whether you strive to join the new "Grand Club" (walkers that raise \$1,000 or more), sell lemonade, or create your own unique event, you can become a part of the solution!” Contact Columbus@autismspeaks.org or call (216) 524-2842.

[DODD Hotline for Reporting Abuse, Neglect, and other Possible Major Unusual Incidents \(MUIs\)](#)

To report abuse/neglect and other MUI's call toll-free **1-866-313-6733**. Note that MUIs are to be reported to the local County Board of DD, however, it is understood that there may be times an individual, staff member, or family member may feel it is a conflict, or that, potentially, a County Board may be involved in the allegation. In those instances the hotline number is there to be used for reporting.

Pipeline feedback ... direct from you to the state ...

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