



**TRUMBULL
COUNTY**

BOARD OF
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Their Journey, Their Needs, Our Support.



**October is National
Disabilities
Employment
Awareness Month!**

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

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Superintendent Update



While we are still adjusting to the new "normal" brought on by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, at Trumbull County Board of Disabilities, we are excited for fall and all it brings with it! I am also so thankful for the continued cooperation and patience of those we serve and their families as well as for our dedicated and hardworking staff who have embraced new challenges with positivity and resilience. Thank you!

We were so happy to welcome staff and students back to Fairhaven School! It was able to safely reopen because of the new health and safety protocols in place. If you are interested in reading more about Fairhaven School's Restart Plan, you can find it on our website. For Fairhaven School and Trumbull County Board of DD, we will continue to adhere to protocols and guidelines as outlined by the federal, state and county governments as they relate to COVID-19.

While a number of our annual fundraising events were canceled or postponed, the Fairhaven Foundation was still able to raise a significant amount of money this year. Sponsors and employees still donated even though the golf outing never happened. New grants helped fund art and food programs as well as masks for our direct support professionals who work with the individuals we serve. The Foundation, spearheaded by Executive Director Ryan McNaughton, did a tremendous job raising funds including more than \$30,000 for the Fairhaven Bulldog Backpack Program. We cannot thank our generous community enough!

Of course, we are also thankful for our organizational partnerships, and in this newsletter, we are highlighting one of our newest partnerships with Project MKC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Youngstown that is dedicated to serving the most vulnerable children in Northeast Ohio. Through our partnership with Project MKC, we are able to distribute essentials, like diapers, wipes, formula, baby food and more, to our clients and families in need.

With October being National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we want to highlight some achievements in this area, as well! Thanks to our Direct Link program, we were able to provide 18 young individuals on-the-job experience through the Summer Youth Program. Abigail Redmond-Hull also shares her experience working for Ponderosa and everything she has learned about food and customer service especially through the changing rules of the pandemic. She is one of many success stories thanks to Direct Link!

Additionally, we continue our focus on self-advocacy in this newsletter. This time, we asked a number of the individuals we serve about their experience with the COVID-19 pandemic and how they are adjusting. Their strength, resiliency and ability to see the silver lining are worth the read!

As always, thank you for your continued support!

Ed Stark

Superintendent

Edwardstark@tcbdd.org

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and this is a Commemorative Year!

This year marks not only the 75th observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), but also the 30th anniversary of the ADA. Both milestones are being commemorated with a range of events and activities centered on the theme "Increasing Access and Opportunity."

Fairhaven Bulldog Backpack Program

In late September, the Fairhaven Bulldog Backpack Program began distributing meals to more than 160 students who qualified for free and reduced lunches. This program, crafted by Fairhaven School Cafeteria Supervisor Lindsey Ison, will supply meals for students on weekends and holiday breaks throughout the school year.

To help kick off this program, Fairhaven Foundation Executive Director Ryan McNaughton has headed fundraising efforts that have raised more than \$30,000. It is the largest single fundraising effort in the foundation's 23-year history.

Transition Coordinator Jessica Mazei, School To Work Teacher Jill Puckett and Job Coach Denise Stamp will assist our CITE students in preparing backpacks for distribution. This program will provide job skills training to better prepare students for the transition from school to adulthood. Students will learn how to take product inventory, stock inventory and order products as well as packaging, delivery skills and sanitation. In addition, they will learn valuable soft skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership and problem solving. The entire Fairhaven Family is on board to help this program be successful and meet the needs of our students.

If you are interested in learning more about the Fairhaven Bulldog Backpack Program or want to make a donation, please contact Ryan McNaughton at 330-652-9800, ext. 223.



Direct Link Program Helps Abigail Redmond-Hull Find Employment at Ponderosa

Abigail Redmond-Hull, who prefers to go by Abbie, works at Ponderosa Steak House in Warren. She obtained her job in January 2020 through the Direct Link program operated by Trumbull County Board of Developmental Disabilities. As a worker in the salad bar area, she is responsible for keeping it clean and tidy and making sure the items are restocked when they get low. Since COVID-19 caused a change in restaurant rules, Abbie's job duties have also changed somewhat. She not only keeps up the salad bar area, but she also does some serving to customers.

Abbie certainly keeps busy during her four-hour shifts!

Abbie works two or three days a week at Ponderosa, and she loves her job, including the perk of discounts and free drinks while on shift. The staff at Ponderosa also love having her as a coworker. She does a wonderful job with whatever she is asked to do. The Ponderosa team could not say enough good things about how much they enjoy working with her and what a great worker and person Abbie is!

When Abbie is not working, she enjoys swimming, bowling and anything else that is "fun and exciting." She also enjoys spending time with her family. She lives at home with her parents and has one sister. Abbie is a graduate of Lakeview High School.

Abbie is another great success and placement in the community from the Direct Link Program, operated by TCBDD.



Project MKC

Trumbull County Board of DD (TCBDD) is proud to partner with Project MKC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Youngstown that is dedicated to serving the most vulnerable children in Northeast Ohio. The organization's mission is "to make the lives of children and their families a little brighter by focusing on their individual needs with the help of volunteers." Their programs provide daily essentials and positive emotional experiences to children and their families by boosting confidence and lifting spirits.

Through our partnership with Project MKC, TCBDD receives things such as (diapers, wipes, formula, baby food and more) to distribute to our clients and families. Project MKC is funded exclusively by donations, and 100% of donations go directly to their programming. To find out more about Project MKC or to make a donation, visit their website at www.projectmkc.org or like them on Facebook @ProjectMKC.



Living With Our New Normal by Anja Calior

It is very hard staying apart from one another, especially our loved ones, but I know that it's just to keep us safe. We just didn't realize how nice it was for us before the coronavirus outbreak. Now, we have to do things a little differently than before. I have been holed up in my room, as usual, but even if I wanted to go to the movies or out to eat somewhere or do something, I couldn't, and that makes me very sad.

I'm dealing with this the best way I know how, which is all we can do. I hope that it's over soon. I'm even worried about going back to work, because until they have found a cure, I may get sick. This virus is claiming many lives, and we still don't know how to combat it, which is scary. Hopefully, they will find a cure, and this will all be over soon.

Wearing a Mask in Public by Pam Dennison



Before the virus, I enjoyed going out and shopping in stores. Now that looks a little different. Because of coronavirus, I now have to wear a mask when I go out to stores. I have a blue disposable mask that I wear, but I also have a Pittsburgh Steelers mask that can be washed. My provider gave me the Steelers mask because I am a fan. I also wear it if I have to go to the doctor's office.

The people who wait on me at the stores are wearing masks and some other shoppers are too. It's kind of scary to see other people walking around with masks and to know that I am too, but I know it's safer to wear them, so we don't get or spread the virus. I think it is dangerous for other people who don't wear them. I will be happy when the virus is over, and I don't have to wear a mask anymore.



Unemployment and What I've Been Doing to Stay Busy During the Pandemic by Justin Galloway

My name is Justin Galloway, and I'm a 27-year-old man. I am a clerical assistant for Accessible Homes in Austintown, but with the current COVID-19 situation, I'm currently unemployed. I am lucky that I can still get my Social Security while I'm not working.

Since the pandemic started and the governor told everyone to stay at home, I've been doing more chores around the house. I clean my room and the bathroom and do the dishes daily. I have attended some Zoom meetings with Project Stir, Christopher Milo and some others. I listen to jazz music a lot. My favorite artists are Boney James, Norman Brown and Incognito.

I haven't left the house much since this all started, so I have not had to wear a mask, but I think it's a good idea to wear masks to help everyone stay safe. Before the stay-at-home order, I used to go on group outings with Fairhaven Industries. I really enjoyed that, and I miss it. I'm happy that I am still able to work on getting my driver's license throughout all of this.



My Quarantine Experience by Laura Stark

My experience with quarantine was hard and very long, but I kept myself occupied. I practiced my ukulele. I only know chords for now, but I'm learning songs. I'm also trying to draw almost every day and journal. I was just so proud of myself for being so tolerant. I couldn't believe that I was so patient during all of this craziness. Before the quarantine, I wasn't very good at being patient, so the stay-at-home order really was the perfect opportunity to practice.

I also turned 21 on my birthday in March while we were still stuck at home. It was a lot of fun! All of my family members sent me messages or a video to wish me a happy birthday. They're all so amazing, and it made me so happy! Yes, it was difficult not being able to go out and have a drink or celebrate for my birthday, but I got to spend time with the people I love, and that's what counts in the end!

Another good thing that came from this pandemic is that I met and have gotten to know a pretty special person. Overall, my quarantine experience was very productive. I just have to look at it from a positive view.