



ABLE Magazine

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MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT

BRIAN W. GREEN

Superintendent Brian Green reflects on the past year and discusses new programs offered to the people and families we serve.

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Our Mission is to empower people with developmental disabilities to live, work and play as full members of our community.

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Superintendent's Corner

After taking a little over a year off from publishing ABLE Magazine, it is great to be back! The past year has been full of growth as we have implemented several new initiatives to offer greater support to the people and families we serve.

You may have heard that last fall, we opted to place a temporary pause on collections for one of our property tax levies for 2024. This means homeowners across the county will save an average of \$33.98 annually per home valued at \$100,000, and will reduce the amount collected in 2024 by approximately \$4 million. We are grateful to be doing well financially while also meeting the needs of those we support, and that we are in a position to make this choice.

Since support systems are crucial to our clients living meaningful and successful lives, our focus has expanded as we now offer programs that reach their family members as well. In 2023 we introduced programs such as Moms’/Dads’ Night Out, Sibshops and The Future Is Now. We are blessed to offer these opportunities and recognize how important it is to create community and support for family members of those we serve. We have received positive feedback on these programs and plan to continue them.

To continue offering the best services possible, our Service and Support Administrator Department has implemented the "Change Initiative," a unique approach to "Continuous Review & Monitoring," whereby our SSAs (case managers) seek to help service providers find solutions to challenges.

It is a privilege to serve the people of Miami County through our services as your county board of developmental disabilities. Thank you for your support. I look forward to our continued years of service and growth in the Miami County.



Brian W. Green
Superintendent

Community Comes Together to Support Matthew



Logan Holland from Dynamite Services smiles with Matthew during the construction phase



Gene Steinke with H2O to go takes a break for a photo with Matthew before filling the pool



Matthew Moon, a 10-year-old boy who lives in Troy with his grandma, Amy, was born with a rare condition called Harlequin Ichthyosis. The condition causes his skin to grow tight and split due to the rapid daily growth of new layers.

Despite his circumstances, Matthew has always loved the water. But visiting public pools was challenging as chlorine agitates his skin and eyes, and the curious stares of others made him feel uncomfortable. In addition, Matthew's body struggles with temperature regulation so pool water needs to be on the warmer side.

"I had a great idea to get a pool and after talking to our SSA (case worker Audrey Cade), she made it happen," Amy said. While Amy had the space for a pool, the ground needed to be leveled and prepared, and she did not have the assistance needed to build and install an above-ground pool.

Audrey took Amy's great idea and enlisted the help of Riverside's Community Awareness & Opportunities team, which shared Matthew's story on social media. Within an hour, Dynamite Services reached out to offer their help. Within days, their team and the kind folks at H2O to Go, Four Star Rentals and DPF Alternatives donated materials, volunteered their time and set everything up. From clearing the area, leveling the ground, building the pool and filling it, they made it happen in no time!

"It's a salt pool which is more comfortable on Matthew's skin," Amy said. "We have been swimming in it most days. We race each other in the pool and Matthew practices his physical therapy exercises in it. We are so grateful. I tear up when I think about it. The team who installed our pool was very sweet and did a fantastic job. Matthew loves the pool and does not want to come out."

When Matthew is not in the pool, he enjoys playing Minecraft, building things and being a member of the Cub Scouts.

<< The finished product! Matthew and his grandmother are now able to enjoy a special pool for him on a daily basis, thanks to the generosity and hard work of several community members and businesses.

Special Olympics Volunteer Spotlight

Chase Green



Chase has volunteered with Special Olympics Powerlifting for 5 years. His favorite thing about volunteering is witnessing the athletes' resilience. He says, "Despite facing numerous daily challenges, they consistently arrive at each practice with smiles on their faces, uplifting one another regardless of what they've endured. Their determination and positive spirits are a powerful source of motivation for me. Volunteering for Special Olympics has profoundly transformed my perspective on life and has made me a better person. Being around such incredible athletes and fellow volunteers has been truly inspiring."

Joan Green



Joan recently volunteered to help athletes go to the State games for volleyball. Joan's favorite part of volunteering is getting to know the athlete's interest. She shares, "I get to know their interests in everything from Pokemon, favorite foods and of course volleyball." For those considering volunteering with Special Olympics, she said, "It is very worthwhile to be a part of a community that is so supportive and kind."

Jacklyn Vietor



Jacklyn has volunteered with Special Olympics basketball and volleyball for 9 months. Her favorite part of volunteering is watching the personal achievements of the athletes. It's great to see the same group of athletes on a regular basis and watch them improve in their sport and confidence, said, Jacklyn. "I definitely recommend volunteering with Special Olympics. Even if you are not an athlete (which I am not), there is so much benefit to being involved and cheering others on."

*Thank you!
Volunteers!*

Connections to Our Community

Special Olympics Athletes Speak at Local Event



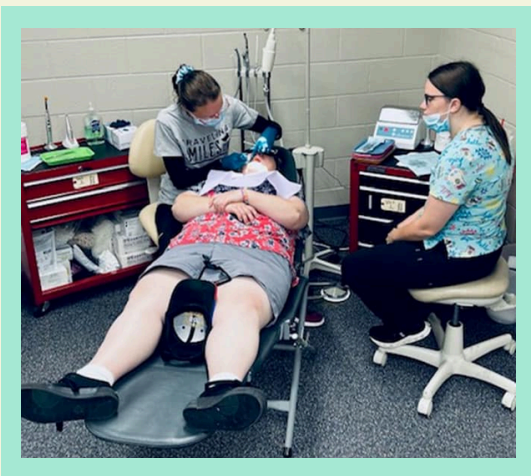
Miami County Special Olympics was invited to be a part of a local grand opening event for the new Sheetz location in Huber Heights. Sheetz is a corporate sponsor of Special Olympics Ohio, and they asked for local athletes to join them in the celebration. At the event, Miami County athletes Tristan Yingst and Angela Hess spoke about their experiences as athletes before accepting a check for Special Olympics Ohio alongside our own Community Connections Manager and Local Coordinator Patrick Kilbane and Regional Director Paul Fellingner from Special Olympics Ohio. Way to go, Tristan and Angela!

Chevrolet of Troy – Fundraiser for Miami County Special Olympics

Chevrolet of Troy recently held a giveaway for a Chevy Blazer in the month of June, with proceeds benefiting Miami County Special Olympics. The event ran June 1-30, and people could participate in their drawing for \$20 per ticket. On July 1, the owner of Chevrolet of Troy drew the name of a winner, who won a free 3-year lease on a brand new Chevy Blazer! Proceeds from the ticket sales will be donated to Miami County Special Olympics! Thank you to Chevrolet of Troy for the support!



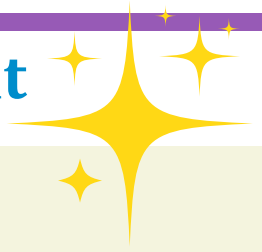
Miami County Dental Clinic – Traveling Smiles Update



The Miami County Dental Clinic is once again bringing its Traveling Smiles program to us each week during the summer. For many people with developmental disabilities, accessing dental care is a challenge based on insurance, funding and for some, the need for extra time due to sensory or medical complications. The ability for those we serve to have access to cleanings and exams from the Miami County Dental Clinic has been life-changing. Riverside SSA Jennifer Morris has helped coordinate the service with the clinic, and had this to say:

“The passion Dr. Keira Ankrom has for what she does is spectacular. The Miami County Dental Clinic has hit the jackpot with her, and our clients experienced that this week! It has been more than 10 years since one of the clients received any dental care treatment, believing he required sedation for even a cleaning. Thankfully his SSA worked with his guardian and team to give it a try! Dr. Keira was gentle and patient and talked her way through the entire process and he successfully had a full dental cleaning!”

Direct Support Professional Spotlight



Name: **Jason Shaffer**

Company: **Life Bridge Remote**

Reason for Nomination: CEO Jason Shaffer flew in from Michigan to install equipment and ensure everything was working properly in a client's home. He has great communication, is professional, cares about his clients, and provides quality service and support.

Name: **Amanda Voisard**
Independent Provider

Reason for Nomination: Amanda has known Nathan and his family for many years. Although she works a limited number of hours with him, she continues to make him a weekly priority in her schedule. She knows his routines and preferences and makes sure to honor them. She is even willing to work additional hours so that his parents can do special things like attend a family wedding.



Donations from the Heart of our Community



Charlene Wolfe (left) and Mary Myers (right) from the West Milton VFW Post 8211 Auxiliary, held their 34th annual fundraiser to support us back in March. They were excited to drop off \$7,000 to us recently to support local athletes.

We are also grateful for Franklin Lodge #14 who presented Melissa Nichols, our Community Awareness and Opportunities Director, a \$1,000 check to support our athletes as well.



Penny Hoekstra's husband Jack recently passed and she wanted his golf clubs and supplies to be put to good use. Jack and Penny have a long history with us, as they both helped start the Miami County Aktion Club with the Kiwanis Club of Troy, they both volunteered in the past, and Jack also worked for us many years ago! We are grateful to her for donating Jack's supplies to us. Thank you, Penny!

Special Olympics Attend State Summer Games

Several Miami County Special Olympics athletes, coaches and volunteers attended the Special Olympics Ohio State Summer Games, June 28-30 at The Ohio State University. Included in the trip were 11 powerlifters and 8 volleyball players, in addition to the supporting coaches and volunteers. Our powerlifters were a POWERHOUSE, bringing home 6 gold, 12 silver, 7 bronze, 5-4th place and 1-5th place medals.

Our volleyball team also did extremely well, taking home the SILVER in their division! They played two amazing teams, beating the first and losing in a close one to the second.

From opening ceremonies in Ohio Stadium (the 'Shoe) to making friends, competing their best and receiving awards, all of Miami County's athletes had an amazing time and will cherish memories of this trip for a lifetime.

We are grateful to the Troy Foundation for their generous support with an \$8,000 grant, which made this trip possible.



Focused on Family Support

For the people we serve to have great support, we know how important it is to also support family members in their lives. In 2023 and earlier this year, we began hosting events offering encouragement to other members of the family. These events have been very successful and are designed to connect and support those who live closely with individuals who have developmental disabilities.



>>
Moms' and Dads' Night Out bi-monthly events are a hit with parents who want to connect.

<<
Sibshops monthly events offer a fun way for siblings of kids with disabilities a way to have focused time and attention on them.

>>
The Future Is Now 4-week series provides a safe and encouraging way for parents & caregivers to plan for their loved one's long-term future.



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Inside this Issue

Summer 2024

Check out the exciting things we've been up to, see who has supported us along the way and get a peek at what's ahead!