



ABLE Magazine

Advocate with | **B**elieve in | **L**isten to | **E**mpower us!

70

Years of Caring
1952 - 2022

A Look Back with Rosemary Saunders

MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT

BRIAN W. GREEN

Superintendent Brian Green shares updates on current and upcoming activities as we continue celebrating our 70th Anniversary.

Spring 2022

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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

Our first three months of 2022 have been full of energy and excitement. Not only is Riverside returning to many normal interactions after two years of physical distance due to COVID-19, we also had the good fortune of beginning the celebration of our 70th Anniversary. In March, we were also happy to celebrate another terrific Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, just as we do every year. This year's celebration featured a variety of stories and features in local and social media, as well as some generous acknowledgements from several elected officials. You can read more about these great things in our summary on page 5.

Also in our first quarter of 2022, we were excited to kick off a partnership with a company called Blitz Media, which specializes in coaching service provider agencies on effective hiring and retention practices for caregivers, or Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), in our field. I've shared in previous ABLE Magazine issues about the shortage of DSPs in our field, so Riverside opted to invest in Blitz Media's program to offer free consultation to our provider partners. I am pleased to share that after just two interactive training and workshop sessions, providers are already seeing improvements. In fact, at the second session one provider shared they had already hired three new DSPs, and another shared they had hired 10! We certainly have more work to do to fill the caregiving needs of the people we support in Miami County, but we are pleased with the progress made so far. In the meantime, we are continuing to make monthly visits and deliveries to our current DSPs to show them how much we appreciate them.

As we continue our work this year, we look forward to sharing our gratitude with other groups as well. In April, we made deliveries to more than 60 dedicated volunteers for National Volunteer Appreciation Week, and in May we are looking forward to hosting a family-friendly Touch A Truck event. This event will feature more than 20 vehicles from a police car and fire truck to a cement truck and a helicopter, all able to be viewed up close. In addition, we will have food and games for all ages to enjoy. This event is our way of showing the community how grateful we are for 70 years of support. We hope to see you there.

Thank you once again for partnering with us in our mission to empower people with developmental disabilities to live, work and play as full members of our community.



Brian W. Green
Superintendent

70th Anniversary Feature: An Interview with Rosemary Saunders



Rosemary Saunders

Connection to Riverside:

I was a Riverside Board member from 1976-1983, and I was the parent of child with a disability.

When and how did you first come into contact with Riverside?

My son, Edward Kauffman, was born September 7, 1969. The hospital listed him as premature because he only weighed 5 lbs. 5-1/2 oz. He was just a small baby, but healthy and we both came home in three days. A home health nurse came to our home a few times. I believe the nurse was the one that contacted Riverside, because soon after that Lilian Schnabel, from Riverside, came as an early intervention contact to share information and exercises to develop coordination and strength as well as some exercises that encouraged crawling. Eddie, as we called him then, did well and was progressing about the same as most toddlers. By the time he was 2 years, 10 months old, he was able to start going to Riverside. At that time, he was the

youngest to attend Riverside. Early Intervention for babies had not yet begun but, there was a preschool class. The only stipulation was that the child be potty-trained. Eddie was, so the bus stopped at our house and picked him up. There were no laws about baby seats or seat belts on busses then, so one of the older girls held him on her lap.

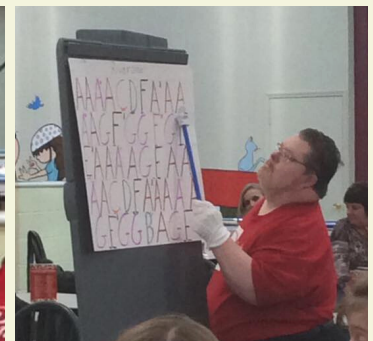
What did you do in your role as a board member?

When I was asked to join the board, the Riverside building was just the long building fronting on Troy Sidney Road. It had a large multi-purpose room at the north end, a main office near the entrance, classrooms running the length of the building, and an adult workshop on the south and back of the building. It was during the eight years I served as a board member that Riverside's enrollment was increasing and we were able to expand the building to the size it is currently. We were very proud of the new facility, which included a full-size gymnasium, music room, additional classrooms and even a room set up as an apartment to instruct people planning to live on their own. It had a small kitchen, bath, laundry area with washer and dryer, living room, and a bedroom. For a while, the "model apartment" was used to teach independent living skills. There have been many changes to the building over the years and that area no longer exists since many people are now actually living on their own.

Another issue that came before the board toward the end of my tenure, was hiring a music therapist. There was much discussion about it. I spoke up very in favor of creating that position. I knew it would be so valuable in speech, rhythm and even self-esteem for all age groups. I believe my comments helped convince other board members and we voted to hire staff for that purpose. That position was filled, which led to singing choirs, a rhythm band, tone chimes, bell choir and many years of Christmas programs and plays, which included everyone enrolled in Riverside.

What services did your son have through the years?

Ed was involved in many activities during his school years. He participated in Special Olympics, played basketball, was a cheerleader, and participated in track. He was in 4-H photography for 10 years and was in the Junior and Senior Handbell Choirs for over over 30 years. He and his long-time girlfriend really enjoyed being members of the "Bell Choir" and performing at many community events. Ed especially loved that at some of the Bell Choir performances, he would be allowed to direct the last song – his favorite, "Down by the Riverside."



Ed's Bell Choir participation continued after he transitioned from school to the work program at RT Industries. He enjoyed his time at RTI learning many different jobs. He seemed to enjoy all the jobs, as I do not remember him ever complaining about any of them. He liked learning new things. After many years at RTI, legislation changed and as Ed was getting older, he chose to change from working on jobs to a day program of leisure activities and community outings. He liked that, also!



Rosemary Saunders and her son, Edward Kauffman

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How were you both involved?

I was always involved with Ed's teachers, at parent-teacher conferences, and later at his IEP meetings. When Ed turned 16, there was new legislation that gave students in special education programs like Riverside the choice to go to classes in their home school district. I asked Ed if he wanted to go to the same school that his brother, Jarrod, went to or continue at Riverside. He said Riverside, because that's where his friends were, and he already knew and liked his teachers. It was at this point I realized that Ed should be included in his IEP meetings. Up until now, it was more like parent-teacher meetings. But, if he had his own opinion of where he wanted to go to school, he should also have a say in how we planned for what is important to him, and for him. So, I started being sure he was included in all of those meetings. It was about that same time when other students and adults began participating in their own IEP meetings. I believe it is so important for them to be there, even if their understanding of the meeting is limited.

What were some of the biggest challenges you and your son faced?

As Ed got older, he had hearing and vision loss, both first identified by screenings at Riverside. It was a challenge for him to learn to wear hearing aids but he was able to accept using them when he realized he could hear so much better with them in. Later, when he needed glasses, he thought he could not wear them over his ears because of his hearing aids, but he soon learned to wear them both.

Also, Ed had a problem learning to read. He recognized important words on signs and people's names and learned to sign his name. But reading was just hard for him. It frustrated him when I tried to teach him. So, we connected with the Adult Literacy Program through the library. A gentleman named Mr. Drew volunteered to work with him. They met and practiced reading adult stories (not children's stories) for a few years. Ed learned to read a little and really liked Mr. Drew, calling him his friend.

What changes did you witness throughout the years?

Children with disabilities are going to public schools, with the individualized supports they need to help them learn.

What achievements are you most proud of?

When my son was going to preschool at Riverside, I, and four other mothers, wanted to know what the staff were teaching our children each day. Because our children were too young to tell us what they were learning, we asked if we could volunteer in the class, one mom each day of the week. We were able to do that and learn what they were working on, so we could reinforce that at home. It was soon after we started this, that Riverside began a more formal volunteer program.

What advice would you give to a parent of a child with a disability?

Be involved with those teaching your child, so you can reinforce the teaching at home. Also, give your child some meaningful chores they can do at home. It is so valuable for them to know they are a needed part of the family.

Is there anything else you would like to share?



Rosemary, Ed and his nieces, Emily and Catie



Ed passed away on April 3, 2020, because of Covid-19. He was 50 years old and had been a healthy, active person all his life. He was a member and volunteer with The Arc of Ohio/Miami County. He helped that organization with fundraisers like The Strawberry Festival, and Quarter Auctions. He also participated in the Strikes and Spares Bowling League and volunteered to help with preparing the scorekeeper envelopes for each week, and set-up of the award dinners. He loved to bowl and sponsored. and was captain of, his own team. He also served as an ex-officio member of the CRSI Board of Directors. I continue as a volunteer of "The Arc" helping with the bowling league. And I am still a member of CRSI Board of Directors. I feel it is important to continue being involved with groups that advocate for people with disabilities. I am very proud to have been Ed's mother.

He was a such a well-respected member of the community, that when the Riverside Board of Directors learned of his passing, they honored him with a moment of silence at the beginning of their next meeting.

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. This year, in recognition of this special month, Miami County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Riverside) was privileged to share the stories of some of the people we serve and the people who care for them. Several of our stories appeared in the Miami Valley Today newspaper, and some have appeared on Facebook, with more to follow as we celebrate our 70th Anniversary year.



Also in honor of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we highlighted a few of Riverside's employees with Employee Spotlights on Facebook. Look for more of those on Facebook throughout the year, too!



Dwayne Hall
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Job Title: Employment Navigator
Years at Riverside: 22 years
Years in DD Field: 30 years

First Job: Construction helper for my uncle's general contracting business

Favorite: Food: Pizza/anything spicy
Movie: Caddyshack, A Few Good Men

Favorite work accomplishment: Each time someone gets a job and succeeds when they've been told by others that they can't

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Brian Green
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Job Title: Superintendent
Years at Riverside: 22 years
Years in DD Field: 22 years

First Job: checkout clerk K-Mart

Favorite: Food: Soz tenderloin & baked potatoes
Book: Project Hall Mary - Andy Weir

Favorite work accomplishment: Putting together a wonderful team

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Dawn Spittler
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Job Title: Medicinal Manager
Years at Riverside: 20 years
Years in DD Field: 20 years

First Job: Admin Assistant for Troy Cable TV

Favorite: Food: Pizza
Movie: The Proposal, Book: The Bible

Favorite work accomplishment: Helping Others

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Gerret Hayslip
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Job Title: Service & Support Administrator
Years at Riverside: <1 year
Years in DD Field: 7 years

First Job: Buffalo Wild Wings

Favorite: Food: Pizza w/jalapenos
Movie: Jurassic Park, Book: Big Fish

Favorite work accomplishment: Getting my job at Riverside

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More very special moments for Riverside were the recognition and commendations from our surrounding communities. We were honored to receive proclamations from Troy Mayor Robin Oda, Pleasant Hill Mayor Judy Barga, the Village of Covington and letters of commendation from Congressman Warren Davidson, State Senator Steve Huffman and State Representative Jena Powell. These acknowledgements are special because they highlight our connection to the community and give us a chance to say thank you to our local leaders.



We thank our communities for their support! We could not do it without you!

Special Olympics Update



Special Olympics Swimmers

Our Miami County Special Olympics swimmers were highlighted in the "Miami Valley Today" newspaper for their their performances at the State Tournament on March 5. Justine Hoffmann won gold in 25-meter freestyle. Caleb Karnehm won gold in 100-meter breaststroke and 100-meter freestyle. Johnathan Stewart won gold in 25-meter backstroke and 50-meter freestyle. Stephen Stewart won gold in 25-meter freestyle and silver in 25-meter backstroke. Ethan Via won silver in 25-meter freestyle. Eli Woodward-Roeth won bronze in 25-meter freestyle. To read the full story, check out the article in the Miami Valley Today. Congrats to all!



March 19 Powerlifting Tournament Recap

The Special Olympics Powerlifting Tournament brought lots of fun and excitement back to our gym. Athletes from Champaign, Clark, Mercer and Miami Counties competed in bench and deadlift events before a big crowd of supporters. Congratulations to all Miami County athletes who took home numerous medals! Here is the breakdown of their performances:

- Eli Woodward-Roeth: 35lb bench (1st), 85lb deadlift (1st)
- Ethan Via: 55lb bench (1st), 145lb deadlift (2nd)
- Nolan Rocke: 45lb bench (2nd), 135lb deadlift (3rd)
- Noah Rocke: 55lb deadlift (3rd)
- Joseph Epley: 80lb bench (2nd), 125lb deadlift (2nd)
- Justine Hoffmann: 125lb deadlift (3rd)
- Nick Weaver: 35lb bench (3rd), 155lb deadlift (3rd)
- Cooper Brown: 95lb bench (3rd), 185lb deadlift (3rd)
- Don Stanfield: 175lb bench (1st), 315lb deadlift (2nd)
- Tristan Yingst: 145lb bench (2nd), 320lb deadlift (1st)
- Austin Gosline: 185lb bench (2nd), 275lb deadlift (2nd)

Congratulations, athletes! Awesome performances!



Don't Miss ...

Riverside to Host "TOUCH A TRUCK" to Thank Community for 70 Years of Caring

This Touch a Truck event is our way to say thank you to the community as we celebrate our 70th anniversary. Details about the event are in the flyer at right.

At this event, you will see vehicles up-close and in action at this family-friendly event on May 14 from 10am-1pm (sensory friendly hour from 10-11am)! Enjoy games, hot dogs, drinks and more, and vote for your favorite vehicle!

We are expecting to have firetrucks, ambulances, construction vehicles, military vehicles, utility vehicles, tow trucks and even helicopters. One of them just might be your favorite! We hope to see you there!

TOUCH A TRUCK

VIEW THE **VEHICLES** USED AROUND MIAMI COUNTY

FREE EVENT!

SAT. MAY 14
10:00AM - 1:00PM
(SENSORY FRIENDLY 10-11AM)
@ RIVERSIDE/MIAMI COUNTY BOARD OF DD
1625 TROY SIDNEY RD., TROY

See vehicles up-close and in action at this family-friendly Touch a Truck event! Enjoy games, hot dogs, drinks and more, and vote for your favorite vehicle!

CHECK OUT VEHICLES FROM:
Piqua Police | Tipp City Police | Troy Police | Troy Fire | Miami County Sheriff | Miami County Transit | Pleasant Hill VFW | RT Industries | US Postal Service | CTS Telecommunications | BLESS, LLC | Premier Health | Kasey's Outdoor Services | Susie's Big Dipper | AES Ohio | Troy-Miami County Public Library | Newton Local Schools | BD Transportation | Ernst Concrete | Power 107.1FM | and special appearance by Doc Hudson & Tow Mater

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Riverside
Miami County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Does My Child Need Early Intervention?

Find answers to your questions by scanning this QR code or typing into your browser the URL below. Remember: the earlier the intervention, the better the outcome for your child!

Help Me Grow Ages and Stages Questionnaire



www.helpmegrow.org/ASQ

A Big Thank You to Power 107.1!

Shown here is GM/Executive Director Scott Hornberger from Power 107.1 WTJN and Riverside's Community Awareness & Opportunities Director Melissa Nichols. Lifestyle Furniture and Mattress of Troy and Tim Priddy RE/MAX Professionals, in partnership with WTJN, donated \$300 in their first quarter week of giving to Miami County Special Olympics! Thank you, donors!



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Inside this Issue

Spring 2022

Riverside is celebrating its 70th Anniversary this year!

Reflect on our history, learn about our current activities and join us as we celebrate throughout 2022!