



ABLE Magazine

Advocate with | Believe in | Listen to | Empower us!



Years of Caring
1952 - 2022



MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT

BRIAN W. GREEN

Superintendent Brian Green shares Riverside's vision for 2022 and reflects on our 70 years of service.

Winter 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.

ABLE Magazine is published quarterly by the Miami County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Riverside).

Article suggestions and address changes should be submitted to:

Miami County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Riverside)
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Troy, Ohio 45373
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Superintendent's Corner

As we begin 2022, I am filled with hope for a great year of work on our mission. It is our 70th anniversary year, and as we look back over our beginnings and reflect on our changes, it inspires me to want to continue progress in empowering the people we serve to live, work and play as full members of our community.

Last year, we spent time examining our progress on our 2019-2021 strategic plan and outlining goals for the next three years. We felt strongly that we are already on the right track with determining our organization's "5 Areas of Focus," so we kept those and worked to outline the important objectives we aim to achieve in each area moving forward. Those five areas include: Person-Centered Focus, Relationships, Excellence and Sustainability, Inclusion, and Innovation. I hope you will visit our website to check out our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, and possibly become a part of helping us fulfill those objectives by joining us, whether that be as a community supporter, volunteer, direct support professional or DSP, or maybe even an employee as positions become available. If you're reading this magazine, however, we already consider you an important part of the Riverside family.

Our 70th anniversary year will also give you many opportunities to help us celebrate our past. We have several things planned for this year, including sharing feature stories about the people we serve in March for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, Facebook features in April to celebrate our dedicated volunteers, a family-friendly Touch A Truck event in our parking lot on May 14, additional feature stories about past employees and family members in ABLE Magazine, and much more. We invite anyone with a current or past connection to Riverside to reach out to share their stories and photos with us. Our history is one that is deeply woven into the lives of families throughout Miami County, and we want to be sure that everyone who has been a part of our history is able to share in this celebration. Feel free to call us at 937-440-3000 or email us at info@riversidedd.org to share your story. We look forward to a year of inspiring stories, fun celebrations and lifted spirits.

Thank you for being a part of our history, and especially, our future.



Brian W. Green
Superintendent

70th Anniversary Feature: An Interview with Blair Brubaker



Blair Brubaker

Connection to Riverside:

I volunteered at Riverside after high school in the 1970s. After graduating from college, I was hired in 1981, which launched a 36-year career serving adults with disabilities in Miami County.

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

After high school, I worked in a variety of jobs, including factory work, construction and for Brubaker Interiors, my father's business. One day, my father asked me to deliver a truck load of carpet samples to Riverside (students carried the samples from room to room with them to sit on). I was given a tour of the facility and was so impressed with what I observed that I began to volunteer. After several weeks of volunteering and hearing my enthusiasm, my parents asked me if I had found my passion at Riverside. I had. The hope of securing a position at Riverside motivated me to enter college, to graduate and to later receive my Master's Degree to qualify for leadership positions there.

What was your first position, and what positions did you hold throughout your career?

I was hired in 1981 as a Habilitation Program Specialist. I became a Vocational Evaluator in 1985 and was hired to coordinate that department in 1987. In 1993, I became the Adult Services Director of Riverside and RT Industries and finished my career as the CEO of RT Industries from 2013-2017.

How did working in the DD field affect your life?

My experiences at Riverside made me even more aware of the need to listen to/observe people to try to get a better perspective of what someone needs and desires, what each person's support system looks like and to perhaps find alternative ways to get things done. To be patient, detail oriented, to problem solve and to be accountable is key and to engage the team when necessary.

What did you enjoy most about working in the DD field?

Meeting and getting to know the people we served.

What were some of the biggest challenges in your work?

Transitioning Adult Services from a County Board operated system to a privatized entity was a challenge. My experience in the field, leadership within the County Board, funding and operational rules/guidelines and the many associations at the state and regional levels all contributed greatly and provided support and roadmaps for the process.

What changes did you witness throughout your career?

Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities and funding (primarily Medicaid) rule changes. We also went the extra mile by being accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, whose standards evolved constantly. Another change was the specialization of positions in the field, which allowed staff to really focus on key aspects of service provision as opposed to handling a wide variety of topics in a person's life. Transitioning the Non-Profit Board of RT Industries to becoming an independent board was another positive experience. Throughout my career, there was the increase in emphasis assisting the person served to take more of a role developing his/her service and support plan. What didn't change was the motivating factor that drew people to work at Riverside: the desire to be a positive force in the life of someone who shared many more attributes with themselves, as opposed to differences.



Left: Blair gives a tour of RT Industries to a community group.

Right: Blair serves food to employees during a Staff Appreciation Breakfast.



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What achievements are you most proud of?

I'm not a proud person nor am I naturally outgoing. My career forced me to develop relationships with other leaders within Riverside and to develop alliances regionally and on the state level, eventually assuming association leadership roles. I always considered myself an advocate for the people we served. That came naturally. Assuming supervisory and later leadership responsibilities let me advocate for staff/employees too. All of the relationships developed gave me great pleasure and support. Riverside took a very measured, step-by-step approach to privatization that benefitted everyone involved and which I believe was transparent to the people served. It was great to be a part of that process.

What do you feel you learned by working with people with disabilities?

How important it is to listen. Not to take anything for granted. How much a team can accomplish. How important relationships are. How hard people work to accomplish things we may take for granted ... I could go on and on.

What advice would you give to someone considering a career in the developmental disabilities field?

Do it! Perhaps volunteer to get an idea of the many facets of the field. The possibilities are almost endless.



Blair Brubaker accepts an award from Brian Green upon Blair's retirement in 2017 after 36 years of service.

How It All Began



Many years ago, children with developmental disabilities did not have many options, if any at all, to receive a formal education. In the early 1950s, however, things began to change. In 1952 in Miami County, through the efforts of what was formerly known as the Council for Retarded* Children of Miami County and several interested parents, a program began to provide training classes for children with developmental disabilities who resided in the county.



A summer class for eight children was held in Forest Elementary School in Troy. In October, a larger class was started in the Spring Street School in Piqua. The children were transported in a council-owned station wagon.

From 1953 to 1961, the school grew in size. By 1962, HB 778 placed the legal authority for the operation and administration of the program under the Miami County Child Welfare Board, and through grants from the Miami County Commissioners and the Miami County Council for Retarded* Children, the original Riverside School was constructed at 1625 Troy Sidney Road in Troy. Since that original building was erected, both the building and the scope of services offered by Riverside have undergone several transformations. In the upcoming issues of ABLÉ we will share that history with you. Stay tuned to future issues of ABLÉ Magazine to discover how we became the vibrant person-centered and community-based organization we are today.

**References using the word "retarded" were removed from Ohio state laws and agency names in 2015 after law makers acknowledged many found the term offensive. Note that agencies like ours are also no longer referred to as "MRDD."*

Help Us Celebrate by Sharing!

We are excited to share our 70th Anniversary with you this year! Throughout 2022, we intend to share stories, photos, facts and trivia from Riverside's past. We invite you -- our friends, allies and neighbors -- to share stories, photos, trivia, tales of big Special Olympics wins, things you saw and things you did with Riverside over the years. Please contact us at Info@riversidedd.org.

Connections to Our Community

Local Businesses Donate to Miami County Special Olympics



On December 15, 2021, Riverside Superintendent Brian Green and Community Awareness and Opportunities Director Melissa Nichols had the pleasure of accepting generous donations from Power 107.1, Dave's Services Heating and Cooling and Tim Priddy REMAX/Victory Realty. These businesses chose to support Miami County Special Olympics, and opted to direct their donations through their underwriting relationship with Power 107.1 to us for the fourth quarter of 2021. Their generosity resulted in many on-air mentions, helping to educate the community about the services we offer through our Special Olympics Program. We are extremely fortunate to have such generous business leaders in our community who seek ways to show us their support.

Aktion Club Update: Serving Our Community

Aktion Club of Miami County members participated in the Giving Tree project (organized by our friends at Troy Christian Church), and are shown here at a festive wrapping party for their "adopted" child. They were cheered on by members attending via Zoom. The event was so satisfying to the members that they hope to make "adopting a child for Christmas" an annual tradition!

For their next project, the Aktion Club invites you to join in!



The Darke County Aktion Club recently challenged neighboring Aktion Clubs to see which chapter can collect the most food for those in need during the month of February! From February 1-28, Aktion Club of Miami County will collect non-perishable food and personal care items (shampoo, toothpaste, diapers, paper towels, etc.) at several locations. Riverside, at 1625 Troy Sidney Rd., is a drop-off point during normal business hours (M-F, 8am-4:30pm.) Other locations include Troy and Fish and Game (2618 Lefevre Rd., Troy) and the Pleasant Hill VFW (7578 Fenner Rd., Pleasant Hill).

Thank you in advance for your contributions. Follow us on Facebook for updates throughout the month!

Staying Active and Connected!

Fresh Air, Sunshine and Exercise

The Community Connections Team has been busy keeping up with several regular outings and activities such as Bingo, Aktion Club, Breakfast Chit Chats and Miami County Park Nature Hikes like those pictured here. Registration has been underway since the first week of January, but there are still slots open for some January and February activities.



Food, Friends and Conversation: Breakfast Chit Chat

Food and conversation are two of our favorites pastimes. right? Community Connections Facilitator Julie Williams coordinates bi-weekly gatherings of people we serve at local Troy restaurants, as everyone enjoys breakfast and some chit chat.



Friday Workouts and Special Olympics Swim

Everyone can benefit from regular exercise, and we have several folks showing us how it's done! Check out our regular participants in Friday Workouts at Complete Fitness in Tipp City, as well as the dedicated swimmers who recently competed at a regional Special Olympics tournament -- each one placing in the top three for their events! Congrats to all and keep up the great work!



Showing Our Gratitude

Holiday Cookie and Fruit Deliveries

In past years, we have enlisted the help of our employees to bake homemade treats, assembling dozens of boxes to deliver around the community. Last year, we omitted treats due to COVID and instead sent cards to our community supporters. This year, we wanted to return to our delivery of treats, but in light of the pandemic, opted to have them baked and packaged for us by Dobo's Delights in Piqua.



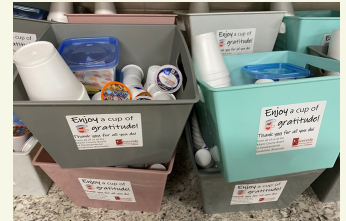
We also purchased fruit baskets from the Miami East FFA club for deliveries to organizations that tend to appreciate healthier snacks. Our stops included 53 community businesses and organizations, as well as 38 stops to Direct Support Professionals (DSPs, or caregivers) in 24-hour homes and local provider agency offices.

The treats were well-received and those who delivered them enjoyed some happy moments as the bearers of sweet happiness.



DSP Appreciation

Since March 2020, we have worked intentionally to show our gratitude to DSPs and encourage them in their critical work of caring for those we serve. Each month, we aim to demonstrate our appreciation by making a delivery of some sort to help lift their spirits, fill their tummies or pass the time. Deliveries have included pizza kits, cookie ingredients, craft kits and much more. In January, we delivered single serve drink makers and a variety basket of drink mixes. While we can never thank these DSPs enough for their dedication to the people they support, we hope to convey our sincere appreciation for all that they do.



While Riverside does not directly employ DSPs, our Provider Relations Coordinator, Jan Wintrow, can answer questions and help you find the right fit. Contact her today at 937-440-3090 or jan.wintrow@riversidedd.org.

DSPs WANTED

All DSPs help people live, learn, work and play in their communities.

Residential DSP responsibilities may include:

- Supporting individuals to live as independently as possible;
- Helping to ensure individuals are healthy and safe at home;
- Supporting individuals in their daily life activities such as cooking, cleaning, dressing, and bathing;
- Assist individuals with money management, transportation, and finding and accessing community activities

Day Support DSP responsibilities may include:

- Take individuals into the community for volunteer and recreational activities;
- Teach independence skills and how to be safe in the community;
- Assist individuals to try new things and be more involved in the activities and hobbies of their choice;
- Support individuals in forming relationships with others in the community

Employment DSP responsibilities may include:

- Assisting individuals in identifying their talents, interests, goals, and abilities, and support them to find a job;
- Work with local businesses to connect potential employers with potential employees with disabilities;
- Provide on-site training and coaching to assist individuals at their jobs

 **Riverside**
Miami County Board of
Developmental Disabilities
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Troy, Ohio 45373

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The cover of the Winter 2022 issue of ABLÉ Magazine features a blue header with the Riverside logo and the text 'ABLE Magazine' and 'Advocate with | Believe in | Listen to | Empower us!'. Below the header is a collage of images: a large '70' with 'Years of Caring 1952-2022' written across it, a person in a wheelchair being assisted, and a group of staff members in white shirts and caps. The bottom section of the cover lists the contents: 'MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT' by Brian W. Green, 'An Interview with Blair Brubaker | 3-4', 'Connections to Community | 5', and 'Showing Our Gratitude | 7'.

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Inside this Issue

Winter 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!