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February 13, 2013
Volume 7, Issue 4

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Administration Update

1. Budget Information, State of the State, and More

Governor John Kasich will deliver the *State of the State* address in Lima, on Feb. 19, from 6:30-7p.m., at the Veterans Memorial Civic & Convention Center. Lima is in Allen County. The event will be streamed online at <http://www.ohiochannel.org/>

Bringing government to the people once again, Governor John Kasich will present the annual *State of the State* address on February 19 in Lima, two weeks after submitting the state's budget proposal on February 4. The timing will allow the Governor to discuss some areas addressed in the budget proposal, as well as reflect on progress and change during 2012. The proposed budget is named '*Ohio's Jobs Budget 2.0*' and focuses on jobs ... the momentum needed to continue Ohio's real progress ... and the transformational changes needed to reach the state's potential in several key areas.



OHIO'S JOBS BUDGET 2.0

JOBS. MOMENTUM. TRANSFORMATION.

Budget documents and fact sheets are at <http://JobsBudget.Ohio.Gov>

Ohio's Jobs Budget 2.0 has been developed in collaboration with state agencies and utilizing broad stakeholder input, with the intent of transforming the state through major government reforms and fiscally responsible investments.

Various Budget Areas Pertaining to People with Disabilities

Education

As noted in *Pipeline EXTRA! February 4, 2013*, several areas in the Governor's proposed budget affect individuals with developmental disabilities, and the statewide support system comprising the Ohio DD community. These areas include a ten-fold increase in funding for students with developmental disabilities, as part of a school funding plan named "*Achievement Everywhere.*" The plan calls for \$90 million in new funds to be provided to school districts to assist in the instruction of special education students. More here: [Jobs Budget 2.0 enhances community developmental disability services.](#)

In addition, the state will be challenging the expectations for educating children with disabilities. For the first time (this March), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) will issue a performance-based test for those students. According to ODE Assistant Director for Diverse Learners, Wendy Stoica, "We brought in parents, teachers, and administrators to look at the common core standards that Ohio had adopted in 2010 for English/language arts and math, and then the revised standards Ohio adopted in science and social studies. For the first time, Ohio created what we're calling Ohio Content Standards-Extended," thus extending the measurements to students that have a significant cognitive disability.

[Several states have developed extended standards in the past, but Ohio is one of the first states to align those standards to the new common core standards.](#)



Traditionally, Ohio has assessed students with disabilities by using a portfolio of documentation collected by teachers, illustrating how a child is progressing. That work has never been aligned with a defined standard within the education system. Governor Kasich has stated that the new plan would ensure that school superintendents, "... cannot take funding meant for students with disabilities and direct those dollars to a building not serving those kids." The administration will provide printouts to building principals so they are aware of their exact population and what funding is meant for them. Governor Kasich observed,

"We believe that if you can target things at the building level, there's a much better chance of actually getting those dollars to those students rather than being gobbled up in administrative costs, or perhaps even shifted to a school where the type of student they have is not being served."

Medicaid Expansion

The proposed Medicaid expansion would extend coverage eligibility for 366,000 adult Ohioans in January 2014, and shift 91,000 currently-eligible individuals off of the program – who would then be directed to seek coverage through the federal Health Insurance Exchange created per the Affordable Care Act. According to Office of Health Transformation (OHT) Director Greg Moody, while these enrollment changes are expected to produce a \$500 million increase in Medicaid spending in Fiscal Year 2014 and \$1.9 billion in FY 2015, the state's share is expected to decrease by \$23 million in FY 2014 and by \$68 million in FY 2015, due to savings from those who leave the program and the federal government's coverage of newly-eligible individuals. Director Moody stated,

"We continue our efforts to reward better care and not just more care ... we launch more efforts to fight fraud and abuse ... and we require greater responsibility in the program."

Shortly after the decision to move forward with Medicaid eligibility expansion, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) announced that, on behalf of the Office of Health Transformation, Department of Job and Family Services, and the Office of Medical Assistance, it has entered into a contract with a company to modernize the eligibility process for health and human services programs. The new system would allow Ohioans to apply for services in a more streamlined fashion, and give state and local partners new tools to better manage their operations.

OHT Director Moody labeled the contract a 'key step' in Ohio's efforts to bring the state's eligibility systems and processes up to date, allowing, "... more Ohioans to apply for these services online, rather than by standing in line."

Children's Health Care and Medical Managed Care

Ohio Medicaid Director John McCarthy reports that approximately 37,000 Ohio children currently eligible for Medicaid in Ohio due to a disability will be enrolled into managed care effective July 1, 2013. This will not affect children who are enrolled on a Medicaid-funded waiver; children who reside in institutional settings; children who receive both Medicare and Medicaid benefits; or, those eligible for Medicaid by spending down their income or resources.

Each eligible child will be enrolled in a Medicaid Managed Care plan, and families may choose from five such plans to determine which one is right for their child. The Office of Medical Assistance (OMA) will provide updates regarding enrollment and transition, and is working with families, advocates, managed care plans, providers, and other stakeholders to ensure a smooth implementation. For more information: Bureau of Managed Care at BMHC@jfs.ohio.gov

Additional information regarding the proposed biennial budget is at <http://jobsbudget.ohio.gov/> and at <http://www.healthtransformation.ohio.gov>

Update on Telemedicine

Among the many priorities now facing Ohio's legislators is a measure regarding telemedicine services, which was introduced late in the last General Assembly. That bill, [House Bill 609](#), would have required Medicaid and private insurers to cover telemedicine services, in an effort to increase access to health care services in rural areas while driving down costs. These services augment the state's health care delivery system -- aided by interactive audio, video, and other

telecommunications technology. Frequency and quality of physician-to-patient care for individuals residing in more rural and less populated areas of the state can be improved in this way, as noted in [Pipeline Volume 7 Issue 2, January 16, 2013](#) – ‘Expanding Ohio’s Tele-psychiatry Project, Statewide.’ The intent of [House Bill 609](#) will be revisited in new legislation during the 130th General Assembly, now underway.



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2. *Employment First* Initiative Continues Momentum

The DODD Biennial Budget, as represented within the proposed *Ohio’s Jobs Budget 2.0*, adds \$2 million for a newly-created *Employment First* line item. These efforts are designed to ensure that community employment is the *preferred outcome* for working-age individuals with developmental disabilities, and support Governor Kasich’s efforts to eliminate employment barriers. The long-term vision for *Employment First* is that all working-age Ohioans with developmental disabilities will have access to services and supports for the purpose of achieving community employment in an integrated setting.

To support that vision, there are several planned employment-related policy changes currently under review and development. These changes include plans to make permanent the Governor’s *Employment First Taskforce*; improve data collection; ask that County Boards of DD create their own *Employment First* policies; and create a presumption that all individuals with developmental disabilities can obtain community employment unless a discovery process determines that is not the best option.

With continued improvements in state policies, Ohio’s local communities will be better able to continue transforming services and expectations, and foster more opportunities for community employment outcomes. Last year, the state made a key revision to ensure youth with developmental disabilities can prepare adequately and early enough in their educational career to make plans for their employment-related choices after school. Proposed changes for this year encourage the same consistent expectation for those who are already working age adults.

As more and more adult services priorities include community employment as a preferred outcome, more and more individuals will be empowered to identify their own interests and seek jobs that match their skills — and enable them to participate more fully in their communities when possible.



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Pipeline Profile

3. Division of Information Technology Garneres Honors

Tech Columbus Spotlights Innovation

One of DODD’s agency priorities is, “Improved Information Technology (IT) systems to enable shared services within state government and with our external partners.” Apparently our IT Division is paying attention to exactly that, as they were recognized with two significant awards last week by [Tech Columbus](#). The organization is a catalyst for technology-driven economic

growth in Central Ohio with a focus on accelerating and rewarding innovation. IT Systems Deputy Director Bryant Young earned the *Executive of the Year* award in the ‘organization with 250+ employees’ category, and the DODD Information Technology/Data Warehouse team earned an *Innovation Award* in the *Non-Profit Service Delivery* category.



Back in the Office to Share the Awards

Bryant Young (right) and Jason Lawless display the Tech Columbus Awards presented to DODD on February 7.



See photos of the Data Warehouse Team and all other awardees at [Tech Columbus](#)

The two awards were presented at the annual Tech Columbus Business Innovation Awards event on February 7, and Young was on-hand. He expressed the excitement in being nominated among so many outstanding organizations and businesses, and then being selected for the awards from such strong competition. He stated,

“I recognize this as a great honor to represent the entire Central Ohio IT community and the opportunity to shed light on the great accomplishments occurring in the public sector.”

DODD Director John Martin recently observed the overall importance of improving the gathering and usage of data - and information in general - to guide agency decision-making. Finding new ways to use available data and the ability to access it easily are key. He notes,

“We know that we can make better decisions more often when we have current, reliable data to support our decision-making. That understanding drives our approach to technology leadership and system upgrades.”

Director Martin adds, “Bryant has been a key part of that process by driving innovative approaches in the areas of process, foundation, and business changes that employ cutting edge technologies to further DODD goals and objectives.”

Over the past two years, DODD has optimized equipment and systems operation both through the usage of technology advances such as the improved capacity and efficiencies of virtual desktops, as well as developed new products such as the Data Warehouse that provide a consistent flow of new information, plus improved management and sharing capabilities.

Next on the IT Radar

A DODD application for smartphones will launch in March! More about that in the February 27 issue of *Pipeline*.

More about the Tech Columbus awards at <http://www.techcolumbusinnovationawards.org/>



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Community Highlights

4. Programs Offer Successful Employment & Training Opportunities

Several examples of community-based programs offering new employment and training opportunities are cropping up around the state. We share a few here ...

Dakota's Restaurant, Scioto County

Through the Community Employment program at the Scioto County Board of Developmental Disabilities (SCBDD) in Portsmouth, participant Tony Fisher worked with staff to learn the skills he needed to get the job that he wanted. Laurie Green, community employment team leader at the SCBDD's Vocation Station, comments,

"We work with individuals to learn what jobs and interests they have. We look beyond their disabilities and focus on giving them the skills to work at the job they want."

The Community Employment program services for individuals include working with employers to develop and identify job opportunities; assisting and training individuals through preparation of resumes and filling out applications; providing job shadowing opportunities and on-site training; and assisting employers with modifying or eliminating barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

Dakota's general manager, Taylor Springer, observes that Fisher serves as a motivator for others. "Not only does he do his job well, but he sets an example for the whole staff."



Photo courtesy Shawn Jordan, SCBDD

Tony Fisher has become a part of the Dakota's Restaurant team.

Fisher motivates others through hard work and customer service. Ask him what he likes best about his new job at Dakota's and he'll tell you ...

"I always wanted to work in a restaurant. I get to be around all kinds of people and make them smile."



For more information: Shawn Jordan SJordan@scdd.k12.oh.us

Higher Grounds Coffee Shop at Mercy Willard Hospital

Christie Lane Industries, the employment arm of the Huron County Board of DD, held a Grand Opening event last week for *Higher Grounds Coffee Shop* at Mercy Willard Hospital. The shop will be operated by individuals receiving services from Christie Lane, along with a full-time manager. Individuals employed there will earn minimum wage, including training time as well as work hours. The coffee shop will be open 6:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, and feature Caribou coffee products, fruit smoothies, and pastries. Plans also include the hospital displaying original artwork for sale from Christie Lane's *Artist's Open Studio*.

For more information: Dr. Dee Zeffiro-Krenisky, Superintendent, at drdee@accnorwalk.com



Photo courtesy, Yokum Communications

They're standing on Higher Grounds. Julie Moffit (left), manager of the new Higher Grounds Coffee Shop, gets the morning started with employee, Dusty Wilhelm.



Individuals employed there will earn minimum wage, including training time and work hours.

ViaQuest, New Center in Grove City

Activity and employment centers operated by ViaQuest offer life skills training, employment, and socialization opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities across Ohio. And, the number of opportunities has just increased with the Grand Opening this month of a new Grove City location. The February 1 event was hosted by employees and staff, representing nearly 20 current employees soon to be joined by several new individuals who are ready to locate to the new Gantz Road offices.

Vocational programs offer minimum wage positions in furniture assembly, general office work, office supply warehousing, and janitorial services. Transportation services are available. Rich Johnson, president and CEO of ViaQuest commented at the Grand Opening, "We are excited to offer another location for the enrichment of adults with developmental disabilities, and the new Grove City location provides much-needed employment opportunities."



Now that's a true
Customer Service smile!

Danielle Ford (facing camera) speaks with Ryan Miller, ViaQuest Director of Program Development, and a parent touring the building, interested in employment options for her 22 year-old daughter. Danielle had just finished cleaning the kitchen area, and it was spotless.



Community Support

The Grove City Chamber of Commerce, Mayor, and other officials showed support on opening day, at the Grand Opening.

Front row (l. to r.) Grove City Chamber member Brian Montgomery; ViaQuest program participant David Steller; State Representative Cheryl Grossman; ViaQuest CEO Rich Johnson; OPRA Director of Government Relations Jeff Davis; Grove City Mayor Richard L. "Ike" Stage.



For more information: Ryan Miller, ViaQuest, (614) 339-0810, ryan.miller@viaquestinc.com



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RSC Name Change

5. RSC to be 'Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities'

The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) is transitioning to a new name. According to RSC Executive Director, Kevin Miller, the new agency name will be the *Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency* and will more accurately reflect the organization's mission and goals. The new name is part of the budget bill, *Ohio's Jobs Budget 2.0*, and will become effective shortly after the budget is passed in late June.

In an [online video](#) Director Miller notes,

"The name change and proposed additional funding will enable us to continue to revolutionize the way we operate. Our mission and goals have not changed, but the additional resources will allow us greater focus on accomplishing agency priorities – it's a natural next step."

In considering the name change, RSC studied survey information that indicated individuals who are eligible for RSC vocational and employment services often were confused by the name, and the word ‘rehabilitation’ was not indicative of the agency’s efforts. Miller stated, “RSC is often confused with the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, or we are thought of as a drug, alcohol, or other rehabilitation agency. In addition, our needs assessment clearly shows that people know little about RSC, and even less about the services that we provide -- based in no small part on our name.”

Among the many opportunities RSC provides for Ohioans with disabilities are efforts involving Governor Kasich’s *Employment First initiative*, for which DODD is the lead Cabinet-level agency.* DODD and RSC partner in many ways to serve individuals with disabilities, focusing on community-based vocational and employment options, and engaging the broader developmental disabilities community throughout the state to provide critical services.

**The Employment First Executive Order calls for the Departments of Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health, Education, and Job and Family Services, and the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission to increase meaningful employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.
More information at www.dodd.ohio.gov and <http://www.rsc.ohio.gov/>*


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[March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#)

6. Excitement Builds for DD Awareness & Advocacy Event

Plan to Attend - March 5, 2013, Ohio Statehouse

A new partnership blending the annual *March Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Kickoff* and statewide *Legislative Advocacy Day* activities, previously held separately, into a combined event on March 5th at the Ohio Statehouse, will celebrate the 2013 DD Awareness Month theme “*Look Beyond.*” The *Developmental Disabilities Awareness & Advocacy* event program will begin at 9:45 a.m. and end at noon* in the Statehouse Atrium, and *participation is open to everyone* -- however, people who wish to meet with their legislators must register in advance so that Advocacy meetings can be scheduled and coordinated.

[Click Here to register now.](#)

[Deadline to apply online for appointments with legislators is Friday, February 15.](#)



Theme materials are available at www.publicimagesnetwork.org

DODD, Ohio Public Images, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, Ohio SIBS, The Arc of Ohio, and other stakeholders invite advocates, family members, and professionals from across Ohio to attend the event. Last year the Awareness venue welcomed more than 500 people from 36 counties, and all indications are that this year’s combined event will be an even more effective way to tell the stories of progress and change in the state’s DD community.



At last year's Legislative Advocacy Day ...
Even Mark's tie can be heard!
Mark Seifarth, former DODD Legislative Liaison, current member of Ohio DD Council, and Legislative Affairs Specialist at the National Council on Disability in Washington D.C., sports a colorful Noah's Ark tie, and relates it to the subject at-hand, noting,

"We're all in the same boat. Let's work together to have our voices heard."



We are happy to report that you will probably see Mark at this year's event – And maybe even the same tie.

Speakers will include DODD Director John Martin, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) Executive Director Kevin Miller, several self advocates, state legislators, and service providers. Governor John Kasich has been invited, and his appearance is pending availability. The Awareness program will be in the Atrium, and headquarters for individuals meeting with legislators will be nearby in the Statehouse 'Museum Gallery' area, allowing for registration, and an accessible and continuous flow between venues.

Something New

In addition to the Awareness program, Advocacy appointments with legislators, and information tables staffed by various stakeholders in Ohio's DD community, attendees also may participate in the "Look Beyond Video Diary," where they'll be able to share their personal story on-camera for others to see and hear. The Arc of Ohio is spearheading the video project.

Contact for the DD Awareness activities in the Statehouse Atrium is Sherry Steinman at sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov; for Legislative Advocacy appointments and registration contact Linda Martens at lmartens@ohiosibs.com; and for the "Look Beyond Video Diary," contact David Lewis at dlewis@rrcol.com.

The 2013 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month theme, "Look Beyond," developed by Ohio Public Images, invites people to see the potential in everyone, encouraging all to look beyond a first glance or a pre-conceived notion.

**NOTE: Some appointments with legislators may be scheduled in the early afternoon.*



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Postscripts

Goodwill Columbus Workshop, 'Life After School and Beyond,' March 9

Goodwill Columbus will host a "Life After School and Beyond" workshop at 1331 Edgehill Rd. on March 9, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The annual spring workshop for family members of individuals with developmental disabilities includes sessions on: Government/County Funding with presenter Anne

Russell of Franklin County DD; Jobs/ Employment with Meg Griffing of COVA and Lutrell Jolly of Goodwill; Leaving an Inheritance with presenter David Zwyer, Community Fund Management Foundation; a parent and participant panel including Marilyn Messina, and her son Michael Messina; and, "Who will care for my loved one when I no longer can?" with Stacy Martz, PhD, Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of Southwest Ohio. For more information or to register, contact Pat Karshner, (614)885-2291; pkarshner@columbus.rr.com.

'We Connect Now' Website Serves College Students with Disabilities

The "We Connect Now" website was created by a college student with the goal of connecting and integrating college students with disabilities as a virtual community with a voice on issues emphasizing access to higher education and employment. The website is a resource that has been linked to by colleges, universities, and groups serving people with disabilities in all 50 states and at least 10 foreign countries. More at <http://weconnectnow.wordpress.com/> or contact site developer Gabriela McCall Delgado at weconnectnow2008@gmail.com.

'Different Needz' Foundation Now Accepting Grant Applications

The Different Needz Foundation announces that its 2013 grant application period is now open until March 15. The Foundation is accepting applications for monetary grants for individuals with disabilities, their families, and related organizations that are in need of medical services or equipment. *Qualifying applications must be received no later than March 15.* Grant applications are available from at www.differentneedzfoundation.org, or call (216) 904-5151. The grant awards will be announced in May 2013. The Different Needz Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Attn. County Boards with Schools! - Grants Available to Retrofit Buses

The Clean Diesel School Bus Fund is accepting applications *through March 1st* for grants to retrofit school buses with emission control equipment or pre-heaters to help reduce idling and save fuel. Application information is available at <http://epa.ohio.gov/oeef> on the "Clean School Bus Grants" tab. These grants are a way to reduce the exposure of students, drivers, and maintenance personnel to the harmful pollutants in diesel exhaust. Contact Carolyn.watkins@epa.state.oh.us. More information at <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/oeef/schoolbus.aspx>

Ohio SIBS Looking Forward – Weekend Retreat, April 5-7

Ohio SIBS announces a "Looking Forward Weekend Retreat," April 5-7, 2013 at YMCA Camp Wilson in Bellefontaine, OH. Transition following high school is a critical time for students with disabilities, and this retreat offers a unique chance to highlight the importance of the sibling relationship. The weekend is designed to show siblings of students with disabilities how they can help their brothers or sisters become more independent, engaged in the community, and ready for employment. Students with disabilities who are ages 17 - 22 are eligible, and the accompanying siblings should be ages 16 to 25. *Registration deadline is March 15.* For more information and registration, go to <http://www.ohiosibs.com/> or contact Tom Fish at Thomas.Fish@osumc.edu.

SAVE THE DATE! The Arc of Ohio 'Day at Cedar Point' – May 22

Details for this annual event will be available soon, but The Arc of Ohio says, "Mark your calendars now, and schedule transportation! Our ticket booth will be open at 9:30 a.m. on May 22, with admission to the park at 10:00 a.m. We had close to 10,000 people attending in 2012. Let's make this year even bigger!"

Youth Leadership Forum, July 15-18

The annual *Youth Leadership Forum* creates a no-cost, life-changing leadership experience for current high school juniors and seniors from across Ohio, with any type of disability. This year it will be held

July 15-18 at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus, and *deadline for application is March 31*. Individuals currently receiving services via the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, and those currently applying for services are especially encouraged to apply for this opportunity at [YLF application](#) or contact donna.foster@rsc.ohio.gov

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, remember the hotline number is there to be used for reporting concerns in these situations.

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

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