

# Employment First



## In Erie County

May/June 2016

Volume 2, Issue 3

### Ciara says 'YES' to Volunteering

Seventeen year old Ciara was honored in January with the 2016 Youth for Excellent Service (YES) Award for her ongoing commitment to volunteering at the Nehemiah Center.

For Ciara, volunteering has become an important part of her life. Working with the kids at the Nehe-

miah Center, Ciara is learning how to be a leader and what it means to give back. She prides herself on knowing the names of every child at the center and has become a mentor to the younger children. In fact Ciara is a founding member of the "Come Back Kid Program", donning the signature "red shirt".

For Ciara, volunteering is more than giving back. She is learning valuable skills that will help her enter the world of work. Like any 17 year old, she is nervous about employment. Her time as a volunteer is helping to build her confidence, ability to take direction, and sense of purpose. Her service is something to be admired!



#### Way to go Ciara!

Contact Jennifer Yingling via email at [Jyingling@ecbdd.org](mailto:Jyingling@ecbdd.org) to share your own story this year.

### OPI Excellence Awards - Two Recipients in Erie County

Ohio Public Images (OPI) is a non-profit organization that works to enhance awareness of people with developmental disabilities across Ohio.

On March 10th the Volunteer Center was honored above all nominations with the highest honor of Excellence as Employer of the Year. The Volunteer Center is a very small agency, employing only 4-5 people. For the last year, a first time job seeker has held a customized position at

the Volunteer Center that empowers her to learn about work, build her stamina, earn minimum wage, and be a part of the community! Many community employers are willing to learn about Employment First but the Volunteer Center was able to make it a reality!

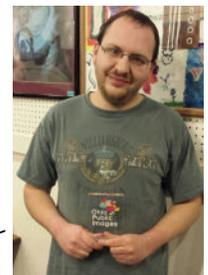


On this same day, area Advocate Harry Miller was honored with the Merit Award as Self-Advocate of the Year. Mr. Miller is an active advocate not only locally as a member of the Self-Advocates of Erie County, but also across the State of Ohio as a STIR Facilitator and Ohio Leader (serving on the Council of Ohio Leaders).

Harry often talks about the importance of self-advocacy in helping him to overcome shyness and other barriers.

Harry is a clear leader in our community, in the area of advocacy. He has a passion for sharing his advocacy knowledge and STIR expertise with others. He is very deserving of this honor.

This is the first time an ECBDD nomination has been selected for recognition by OPI. The ECBDD is very excited to see our community being highlighted across Ohio!



## Ohio Employment First - Path to Employment

[Employment First was signed into rule in 2012](#) by Governor Kasich.

A part of the rule includes defining different words or phrases.

A primary part of the Employment First rule is the introduction of the 'Path to Employment'.

The Path to Employment is four different locations that an individual can be found, on their journey to community employment. Below I will outline the first two spots using both the person friendly language seen on many path

sheets and the definition as written in the Employment First rule.

**Spot 1.** *I have a job, but would like a better one or to move up.*

**Rule-** *Individual is already engaged in community employment and needs support for job stabilization, job improvement or career advancement.*

Remember community employment means is integrated and pays at least minimum wage.

**Spot 2.** *I want to work, but I need help to find a job.*

**Rule -** *Individual expresses a desire to obtain community employment but is not currently employed and needs support to obtain employment or identify career options and employment opportunities.*

When you know and understand the path you can figure out where you best fall. This will help you know what steps to take to reach your employment goals.

## WIOA & Subminimum Wage Restrictions - Begin July 2016

On July 22, 2014 President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - WIOA. This act was passed to better support and ensure equal employment opportunity for all youth and adults.

A part of WIOA is to ensure people are more fairly compensated by reducing the practice of paying those with disabilities sub minimum wage. Starting July 22, 2016 an individual under the

age of 24 will first have the opportunity to find employment at the higher wage prior to entering into a shelter workshop or other piece rate/sub minimum wage setting.

Young adults will first pursue job opportunity through the use of career counseling and other employment services to help them explore, discover and obtain community employment services. This pro-

vision of WIOA only applies to those under 24. It does not apply to individuals already earning subminimum wage, even if they are under 24.

WIOA is a comprehensive Act that will impact many social service agencies across the US.

More information can be found online at [www.nawb.org/documents/Publications/WIOA\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.nawb.org/documents/Publications/WIOA_Overview.pdf)

## Upcoming Events and Training Opportunity

**Mental Health Awareness Month 05/17/2016 11am-12pm ECBDD**

May is Mental Health Awareness month. Join us and hear from Karen Russel of Firelands Counseling and Recovery as she talks about mental health, dual diagnosis and our community. Free to attend.

**Local Project STIR May & June program 3:30-6pm ECBDD**

Join local Project STIR teachers every Thursday in May and June to learn self-advocacy and self-determination skills and tools! Spaces limited, registration required, free to attend. Email [JYingling@eriecbdd.org](mailto:JYingling@eriecbdd.org) or call 419-502-4124 for more info.

## Upcoming EVENTS

**Reducing Barriers Through Advocacy 05/19/2016 5-7pm**

Join us at the ECBDD as we hear from Sandy Brickner as she shares information that will help parents define their role before, during, and after the IEP meeting. Attendees will hear communication and record keeping tips. Contact 440-653-3567 to register.

## Self-Advocates of Erie County - Join the Group!

The Self-Advocates of Erie County are a part of some really neat things this year. Check out the pictures of some of the events and activities members have had the chance to be a part of this year!



Pictures include - Garden of Advocacy, Grow Your Voice, Opening Event for 2016 Advocate Art Show, and meeting with Senator and Representative at the Statehouse. **Advocate meetings are the first Monday of the month 4-5:30pm at the ECBDD.**



There is still time to register for our local Project STIR. Contact Jennifer Yingling at [JYingling@eriecbdd.org](mailto:JYingling@eriecbdd.org) or call 419-502-4124 for more information!

## Ability Works - Summer Work

Ability Works is currently accepting high school students who are interested in participating in a summer work experience. There are 2 different programs. The first one, Career Exploration, is a 3 week program designed to educate students about the work opportunities

available. Students will be given tours of area businesses along with an educational curriculum. The second is Work Experience; students can choose from 1 of 7 sites to have 5 week paid, hands on work experience. Each program curriculum is implemented by teachers in surround-

ing school districts. While work is the focus, we hope that students enjoy the program by having fun learning with their peers!

For more information contact Celeste Hillman Marketing & Development Manager at Ability Works 419-626-1048 ext 3115 or [chillman@ability-works.com](mailto:chillman@ability-works.com)

## Family Corner - Family Information Network (FIN)

FIN group is a chance for families and guardians to get together, learn something new and support each other. In March we hosted Marvin Ranaldson, Director of STS. April featured our very own Community Engagement department.

Join us in May and hear from the Self-Advocates of Erie County learn

about all things advocacy! In June the ECBDD will present "Birth through life. What does this really mean?"



FIN meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month from 6-7:30pm at the ECBDD.

Contact Megan at [metzel@eriecbdd.org](mailto:metzel@eriecbdd.org) for more information or to be added to the FIN reminder list.

## Find us on Facebook!

Employment First of Erie County can still be found on Facebook! The previous page Employment First of Erie County is in the process of merging with the new Erie County Board of DD page. You can still find great list of upcoming events, trainings and other activities. Go to [facebook.com/ErieCountyBDD](https://facebook.com/ErieCountyBDD) and like the new county board page to get the same great information, stories and events!



## Employment First In Erie County

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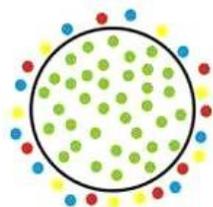


Employment is not a  
program. It's an outcome

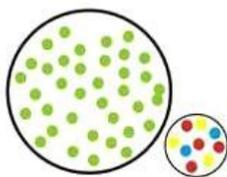
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### *From the Superintendent Carrie Beier*

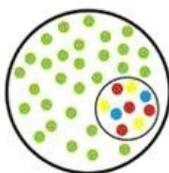
Our agency strives to empower people and their families while living, learning, working, and being a part of the community. We are committed to partnering to provide opportunities for employment and community integration for all individuals through person centered planning and supports. People will recognize possibilities, pursue opportunities, and achieve personal success as valued members within the community.



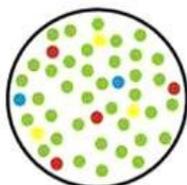
**Exclusion**



**Segregation**



**Integration**



**Inclusion**

Different Realities, Different Possibilities.  
Every person has a story. What's yours?