

Spring 2011

# The Ability Connection

*Partnering with eligible individuals and their families to assure the availability of the services and supports needed to participate within their community as they choose.*

## 2011 Annual Dinner Assured to be a glee-ful Event



On Wednesday, April 13, 2011, the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities will hold its Annual Dinner at Veteran's Memorial Civic & Convention Center. This event is held to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments and contributions made by individuals, community leaders and businesses over the past year.



Robin Trocki

This year's speaker will be Robin Trocki from the television show "Glee" along with her sister Sharon Miller. Robin was born in 1956 with Down Syndrome and at that time her mother was advised that Robin would be best cared for in an institutional setting, as it was believed her skills and functionality could only be minimally developed. Mrs. Trocki refused this as the best course of action and raised Robin, along with three other children, in her own home. Robin responded quickly to the responsibilities of this life and surrounded by her siblings and family, she fought for her own space, readily adapted and consistently rose to the occasion.

After the death of her parents in 1991, Robin moved to Los Angeles to live with her sister, Sharon. Although this move would be one of the greatest challenges of Robin's life, she would mark it with character, dignity, perseverance and grace. With her bright enthusiasm and irresistible curiosity, Robin was quick to make friends at "ARC" in North Hollywood and "LA Goal" in Culver City. Her lifelong interest in music, art and acting was finally fostered and began to flourish in programs such as ARC's *Hand Bell Choir*, which performs throughout the year and is especially busy during the holiday season, and LA Goal's *Artists in Residence*, where Robin's work has been published in the book entitled "Disabled Fables."

Robin continued to demonstrate her irrepressible independence and for eighteen years, she continued to explore her artistic nature, while maintaining exemplary employment in the bakery department of Ralph's market. In 2009, she was presented with the "Voices Award" from the Downs Syndrome Association of Los Angeles in recognition of this tenacious achievement.

After auditioning for the part of Jean Sylvester, Coach Sue Sylvester's sister in Glee, Robin communicated her confidence and excitement to her sister by exclaiming "I got it! – I got the part!" And so she did. Robin is very grateful to be part of this incredible show. If you ask Robin she will tell you how nice everyone is on the set especially Jane Lynch (her little sister). She will also point out how cute the guys are.

That night, the Lima Senior Show Choir combined with some Marimor Adults and Students will also be performing.

An awards presentation will follow, which will honor and recognize the recipients of the following awards for their tremendous efforts in 2010: Allen County Board of DD's President's Award, Marimor Industries, Inc. President's Award, James R. Weinheimer Advocacy Award, Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Student of the Year, Help Me Grow Child of the Year, Good Neighbor Award, Community Employer Award, Volunteer Award and Parent Award.



# Superintendent's Corner

## Do You See What We See?

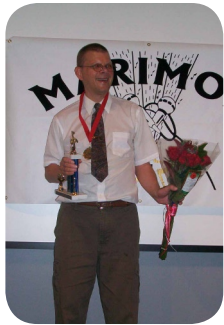
by Esther Baldrige



March is Disability Awareness Month. At the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities, we are celebrating the many abilities of the people we serve. Our theme is "Do You See What We See? . . . ABILITY"

Often we focus on what is lacking rather than what is present. By definition, the people served by our Board have a disability. Webster's defines disability as a "lack of ability; inability, legal incapacity, or inability to act." Sometimes, people define the people we serve by this single term. We want you to see what we see.

We see friends. We see co-workers. We see good students. We see good neighbors. We see members of our churches. We see talented people. We see caring people. We see loving people. We see athletes. We see volunteers. We see artists. We see sports fans. We see musicians.



Troy Mowery

Troy Mowery was seen as a musician at the United Way celebration. He and Angie Herzog joined with Reineke Lincoln Mercury Mazda, Inc. and Lima Memorial Health Partners to sing "Give the United Way", to the tune of "Under the Boardwalk." Troy was selected because he was the 2010 Marimor Idol. Also that night, Brittany Conley and Kylie Murphy represented students at Marimor School for their contributions to the United Way. They collected \$1,300 through a Penny Drive. They clearly were seen as caring people who are very generous.

When I attend Knutty Knitters, a knitting club that meets monthly, Lynn Melching and Robin Raming teach me how to improve my knitting skills. We also share with each other what's going on in our lives. I see them as teachers and as friends.

When I visit Marimor Industries, David Cunningham always greets me with a warm hug and tells me about his work at Taco Bell. He is very proud of the work he does there and so am I. David is a hard worker, a good friend and an all around great guy.

Becky Boutin is an accomplished graphic artist who designed our agency's logo. Bill Bowden is a serious artist whose work can be emotionally moving as well as captivating. Mari Lou Robnolte likes to draw houses and adds a touch of whimsy to her colorful creations. Ben Fledderjohann's art has a definite Disney influence. He is serious about his art which is extremely detailed and meticulous. Leslie Davis works in soft pastels, but will occasionally go to the wild side with bold colors. Michael Smith's expertise is portraits. He has an incredible talent for capturing expressions. These individuals are seen as artists by the community.

David Downard is a very hard worker who is skilled at working with his hands. If you need high quality work done quickly, David is your man. Bob Mayo bleeds blue and maize just like my husband Roy does. When Michigan loses, it's a very sad day for both men.



David Downard

## Ability Connection

**ACBDD**

Allen County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

[www.acbdd.org](http://www.acbdd.org)

Esther Baldrige, Superintendent

**ACBDD Board Members**

Gregory A. Miller, President

Veronica McLaurine, Vice-President

John R. Snyder, PhD, Recording Secretary

Martin Garlock

Gina L. Goodin

continued on page 3



## **Do You See What We See? continued**

Joe Vance is our most sought after speaker in our Speakers Bureau. What is interesting about Joe is that he can only verbally say “yes” and “no” due to his disability. However, his mind is excellent and the thoughts and information he shares through his computer confounds the wise. His life experiences are amazing and his message is poignant. In addition to presenting at disability awareness events, he is also a powerful trainer when the Building Partnerships Initiative is training law enforcement personnel.



Joe Vance

Simone Dinnerstein, an accomplished pianist, recently recorded a CD entitled “Bach: A Strange Beauty.” As she discussed her work, she referenced Sir Francis Bacon who said that anything that is beautiful has some strangeness in its proportion. This made her think of Johann Sebastian Bach and his music. She said, “Bach on the face of it is really interested in symmetry and patterns and math, but he’s constantly breaking away from those patterns and giving us unexpected harmonies or strange lengths of phrase or irregular rhythmic patterns. It’s all of those moments when he does that that makes the music so powerful and so beautiful.”

And so it is with people who have developmental disabilities. It is their uniqueness that makes them so beautiful. It is the diversity that provides color in our life . . . there is beauty in diversity. The unique contributions of people with developmental disabilities are a fundamental part of the Real American Strength of Lima and Allen County.

## **Autism Diagnosis Education Project**

The Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Allen County Help Me Grow in collaboration with Dr. Lopez of Wishing Well Pediatrics is participating in the Autism Diagnosis Education Project. This project was created by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Ohio Department of Health Bureau of Early Intervention Services to provide timely, standardized evaluations that lead to earlier and more reliable diagnosis of autism.



Parents with children under three years of age no longer need to leave Allen County to have their child evaluated for autism. An evaluation team consisting of Early Intervention Specialists, Help Me Grow Service Coordinators and Pediatrician, Dr. Lopez is now qualified to provide a reliable diagnosis of autism.

The evaluation process includes a child developmental assessment looking at all areas development including gross motor (how the child moves or walks), fine motor (how the child uses his eyes and hands together), communication, cognitive (what the child understands) and social emotional (how the child acts and reacts emotionally). If assessment results show a significant communication delay or social/emotional concern, the team will complete two additional assessments; the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule and the Routine Based Interview. Once all assessments are completed, results will be sent to Dr. Lopez.

Dr. Lopez will meet with the family and order any medical tests deemed necessary. Dr. Lopez will then review all results and make the final diagnosis.

Through out the entire process, Early Intervention Specialists and Help Me Grow Service Coordinators will be available to provide families with support, education and linkage to necessary services.

If anyone has a child under three and suspects he/she may have autism, please contact your pediatrician or the Help Me Grow office at 419.221.0014.



## Good Work Skills Start at an Early Age

Vocational Rehabilitation Public and Private Partnerships (VRP3), is a grant that allows our Board to function similarly to Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC). VRP3 in Allen County has offered individuals who are 18 and older who have differing abilities the chance to work in competitive employment. Beginning this spring the VRP3 program is happy to announce that we will be able to serve individuals who are 14-17 as well.



The first step for entry into the VRP3 program is a referral. Anyone can make a referral, including the individual them self. Initial assessments will help the individual figure out employment options. The individual will then meet with a job developer and have the opportunity to meet potential employers, practice interviewing skills and eventually become employed. This is such a great feeling for any individual, but for one who has a tough time just completing an application; it's an achievement like no other. Once the individual is employed they will have special assistance from a job coach who will help them learn the job and complete the job the right way. The job coach will work with the individual for a few weeks or longer if needed and then they slowly fade out allowing the individual to do the job independently. After the individual is employed for 90 days without the job coach, they are counted as a successful closure with the VRP3 program.

What is available for the young ones with limited work experience? Last year, the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities (ACBDD) Employment Services Department created a Summer Youth Work Experience. This was available for students who were 18-20 who had limited work experience. They worked during the summer months at 3 different work sites for 3 weeks per site for a total of 9 weeks. This was a great way for young people to find out what they can do and what they are interested in doing as a job. ACBDD Job Coach Jennifer Evans says, "I felt the program was an excellent opportunity for students to explore various vocational opportunities. It gave students a chance to try something new and learn what types of jobs they did and did not enjoy. The students also gained job interviewing skills and learned how to fill out applications. By the end of the program all of the students had resumes and were ready to begin looking for a permanent position." Along with that, ACBDD Job Coach Donna Lawrence says, "The 16 students were quick to identify which jobs they really enjoyed and which ones they only tolerated." This year we will be expanding this program to meet the needs of 14-17 year olds as well!

The VRP3 program provides an essential opportunity to anyone who is attempting to pursue community employment. We all could use a little help learning a job. The more help we have, the greater is our success with employment . . . and in the long run, we will have better communities with highly trained employees. For more information call Lisa Wilker at 419-221-0014.

## Kudos To:



Kylie Murphy

**Brittany Conley and Kylie Murphy** for representing the Marimor School ambassadors of the YUNG club at the United Way awards dinner. Our school "set the bar" for the other schools because we raised \$1,300 dollar in our fall penny drive.

**Fred Barker** for going to the office at his apartment complex to ask if a little boy could wait in the office to stay warm until someone came to pick him up. As a placement driver was dropping Fred off at home there was a little boy standing outside, the driver and Fred asked the little boy if he was waiting for someone and he said yes. It was very cold outside so Fred took action to try to help this little boy to stay warm.



Brittany Conley

## Bridging the Communication Gap: Individuals with Disabilities and Law Enforcement



Sergeant Scott Nolan, Allen County Sheriff's Office and Sergeant Paula Strickler, Lima Police Department hold up one of the communication booklets.

Can you believe with all the modern technology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that there is nothing on the market that law enforcement can use to communicate with victims of crime who have limitations with communication?

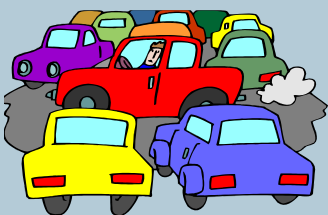
The *Building Partnerships Initiative* was put to the task to find a way to close this gap. A small committee was developed to include representatives from the Allen County Sheriff's Office, Lima Police Department, Crime Victim Services, and the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The committee reviewed several communication devices that could improve communication with individuals with speech and/or cognitive limitations. The goal was to find a device that was portable, easy to use, and affordable.

One of the greatest barriers was addressing the issue of cost. Several devices were researched but the cost range for each device was between \$500.00 to over \$8000.00. The solution was found after attending a technology fair held at the Civic Center in April 2010. The device consisted of a booklet filled with various picture icons that could easily be adapted to fit the needs of law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and social service staff providing services to individuals with disabilities. Monica Stevens, Regional Consultant and Augmentative Communications Specialist with Prentke Romich Company, explained how the picture icons could be used to associate with the identification of people, places, time, and events. Sergeant Paula Strickler, Lima Police Department and Sergeant Scott Nolan, Allen County Sheriff's Office, provided invaluable input in identifying pertinent picture icons that would be necessary when talking with a victim of crime. The picture icons placed in this communication booklet were designed to improve communication, increase the accuracy of police reports, and provide a means for individuals with limited communication skills to tell what happened to them.

The booklet itself is approximately 11" X 8" and is made of a flexible fabric material with plastic sleeves for easy care. The booklet is also waterproof. It opens up to reveal several pages and two fold-out pages on each end. A zippered pocket on the outside of the booklet will allow officers to carry black & white copies of all the icon pages that they can use to mark or highlight what icons the individual is pointing to. This copy can then be attached to the final police report. The *Building Partnerships Initiative* purchased the icon program to develop more enhanced communication booklets for detectives, prosecutors, or other identified purposes. The picture icons are arranged by subject matter and can be removed, changed and replaced as needed without disrupting the entire booklet.

The *Building Partnerships Initiative* was able to purchase enough booklets for each law enforcement cruiser in Allen and Putnam Counties. The partnership also purchased and provided five booklets to Hardin County for distribution. This booklet was presented to the Allen County Sheriff's Office, Lima Police Department and the Putnam County Sheriff's Department at the Lima Mayor's Press Conference on January 26, 2011 and was a feature news story on WLIO Lima. It is hoped this booklet will benefit the law enforcement community; as well as, other partners who provide services to persons with disabilities."

## ONE WAY



This is a reminder that everyone must continue to enter the campus at the Industries, and exit at the School. Flow of traffic is one-way going east, except around the Administration Building. The flow of traffic has increased on campus and there have been many near-misses. Please continue to follow the one-way traffic flow to keep things safe for our clients, staff and visitors.



Allen County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities  
2500 Ada Road  
Lima, OH 45801



**Supporting people through community partnerships and quality services**

## DATES TO REMEMBER

March, 2011	28 – ACBDD Board Meeting, 2500 Ada Road, 4:45 p.m
April, 2011	13 – Annual Dinner, Veteran’s Memorial Civic & Convention Center 22-25 – Spring Break, Marimor School 29 – Prom 30 – Adult Dance
May, 2011	20 – Graduation, Marimor School, 7:00 p.m. 23 – ACBDD Board Meeting, 2500 Ada Road, 4:45 p.m. 26 – Marimor School Celebration Assembly 1:00 30 – Memorial Day 31 – Last Day of School, Marimor School 31 – Preschool Graduations 10:00 & 1:00
June, 2011	10 - Closed for InService, Adult Services 27 - ACBDD Board Meeting, 2500 Ada Road, 4:45 p.m