

CHANGES ARE COMING!

HCBDD Strategic Plan Focuses on Transition, Possible Service Expansion

The Huron County Board of DD is ringing in 2016 with a new strategic plan in place to guide the organization's actions over the next three years.

High points of the 2016-2018 plan include the transition of Christie Lane Industries (CLI) from county-board operated program to independent provider of adult day services to comply with state and federal rules, a continued commitment to enhancing the person-centered planning process for individuals served, support for Artists' Open Studio to become a certified independent service provider, and the possible expansion of current services offered to children aged three through five who qualify.

In the case of CLI's transition to independent provider status, the decision came down to a matter of when, rather than if it would take place, as county boards across the state of Ohio who operated their own day services programs have been government-mandated to take the same action. After much research and discussion, HCBDD made the choice to begin the separation at the beginning of 2016 so that the least amount of disruption would be caused for individuals and their families.

"Our focus is always on the people we serve, first and foremost," Superintendent Kari Smith stated. "We want to ensure that they really have the ability to choose among the different providers of service out there, and that they can find the right fit for their specific needs and desires. Our strategic planning goal to continue to enhance the person-centered planning process, which is developed with the help of the service and support administrators (SSAs), ties in nicely with that. The relationships between individuals and their SSAs will become even more important as we move forward."

Artists' Open Studio, which is currently supported in part through annual funding from HCBDD, will be assisted to explore the steps needed to obtain certification as an independent provider of day services, with the goal of eventually becoming completely self-sustaining. Various funding sources and options will be investigated, per Smith.

Some of Huron County's youngest members were a focal point during the strategic planning process as well. "We will be looking closely at the possibility of offering more services to children with disabilities between the ages of three and five," Smith said. "Studies have shown that increasing therapies and other critical services during that stage of development can result in more rapid improvement, and can help children to overcome some of their early delays."

HCBDD's management team members are required to report their progress toward strategic planning goals to the superintendent three times annually; Smith shares updates with the Board twice per year to ensure that all authors of the plan are kept informed.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, February 15

Program Closed Presidents' Day

Tuesday, February 16

Board Meeting 6:00 PM

Friday, March 11

Staff Inservice Day

Tuesday, March 15

Board Meeting 6:00PM

Friday, March 25 through Monday, March 28

Program Closed Happy Easter!

WINTER 2016

The Common Voice

THE CHRISTIE LANE SCHOOL & INDUSTRIES NEWSLETTER

HELP ME GROW...ON THE GO!



FALL FESTIVAL

The Fall festival, held at the end of September, gave little ones and their families a chance to meet Norwalk firefighters and enjoy some crafts, games, snacks, and face-painting.

NOVEMBER TURKEY TROT

The November Turkey Trot brought children and their families out to walk laps, connect with other families, and win a turkey and pie for their Thanksgiving dinners.



CHRISTMAS PARTY

More than 100 attended the annual Christmas party to have pictures taken with Santa, frost cookies, make ornaments, play games, and have a "snowball fight" with cotton balls! Each child took home a Christmas coloring book, crayons, and pretend reindeer food.

BELL-RINGING COMPETITION

Staff from Help Me Grow and the Huron County Sheriff's Department joined together again in a December bell-ringing competition, with all donations collected to benefit The Salvation Army. Which team won? It depends on which team you're asking...



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Public Support Needed, Much Appreciated

After months of planning and preparation—and, as always, anxious waiting—it was both wonderful and humbling to gather with staff at the Norwalk Eagle's on Election Night 2015 and hear the resounding “yes” to our services from such a large percentage of Huron County's voters.

You may have heard the phrase, more than once, that “we can't do what we do without you.” I'd like to take this opportunity to assure you that the Huron County Board of DD is grateful for your partnership and support, and realize that we are accountable to everyone who demonstrated it on November 3rd.

For that reason, we at the Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities are fully committed to sharing information with members of the public as our stakeholders, and as partners in our mission “to inspire people with developmental disabilities to contribute to the communities that are important to them and to achieve the life they want.” We will face many challenges in the coming months as we strive to comply with state and federal government rules that are mandating changes throughout Ohio for county boards of DD, and we will work hard to communicate with you about the process as the transformation happens. While change can sometimes look like an obstacle, it can also present great opportunity for growth—and, in the long run, that's what we all want for the people we support.

Kari Smith



ZOMBIE INDUSTRIES A SUCCESS!

Christie Lane Industries hosted the 3rd Annual Trick or Treat for Hunger to benefit area food banks on October 28, 2015. Participants were required to be in costume and bring a non-perishable food item for admission.

About 460 attendees trick-or-treated their way through the workshop, then enjoyed apple cider and donuts provided by the Christie Lane Aktion Club, a group affiliated with the Kiwanis. A Peanuts-themed room was set up this year for younger children who might have found some of the other “haunted” areas of the workshop—transformed into Zombie Industries for the evening—a little too scary.

According to Jen Swicker, CLI production manager, 512 pounds of food was collected, then delivered by staff to the



Willard area food bank, North Fairfield food pantry, and the Norwalk Salvation Army. “As always, everyone worked hard to set up this event, and everyone involved had a great time,” Swicker said. “We appreciate the families who came out and made such generous donations to the area food banks, and the staff and people we support who came together to make it all happen.”



LONG-TIME STAFF NAMED COMMUNITY OUTREACH SPECIALIST

Former Service and Support Administrator Barbara Wrabel, a staff member at the Huron County Board of DD since 1996, recently accepted the newly-created position of Community Outreach Specialist. Her duties include intake, assessment and eligibility for HCBDD services for individuals aged three and up, as well as public relations and marketing for the Board's programs and services.

Barbara holds a bachelor's degree in communications from Bowling Green State University, and a master's degree in social work from Ohio State University. Her prior professional experiences include marketing communications, journalism, and desktop publishing and design.

“I was an SSA for many years, and built great long-term relationships with individuals and their families,” Barbara said. “While I miss those day-to-day connections, I feel that my new position taps my education, experience and abilities in a unique way. I can honestly say that I wake up every morning looking forward to the new challenges that day will bring; I love having the opportunity to be a part of getting the organization's message out to the public, while still being able to interact one-on-one with the people we support. It's absolutely the best of both worlds for me, and I'm grateful for that.”

