

WEEKLY FOCUS

Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

April 10, 2015

The mission of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes.

Making Community Employment a Reality

Last year, Kenneth, or “Kenny”, Stischok was looking for an opportunity. He was looking for a job that would provide a stable income, a place in the community, and an increased fulfillment of independence and flexibility. To explore his options, he contacted the Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDD) and connected with the Pathways to Employment program.



Kenny Stischok was hired as a permanent employee at Walmart in London, OH.

Kenny was referred to OOD by MCBDD as part of the Employment First Program, a partnership we have with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. His previous work experience included being a lobby attendant and dishwasher. One challenge Kenny faced in the application process, was that he had not worked previously in the community for almost 20 years. Many employers look at recent work experience to reference a job seeker’s skills and talents, in a previous role. Like many job seekers who have not been active in the workforce for quite some time, Kenny too faced this initial barrier when applying to open positions.

Kenny met with his Employment First counselor and began developing his Individual Plan for Employment (IPE); which is OOD’s game plan for finding him a job. Kenny worked on developing a resume, identifying job goals and career interests, practicing interviewing skills, and completing applications for employment.

Through this process it became clear that community employment was his goal, but Kenny decided he wanted to work part-time.

Late last year, Kenny was hired at the Walmart in London, Ohio for a seasonal position in customer service. In the first week of January, he was released from employment due to the seasonal nature of that position. He was told, however, that he had done a good job and Walmart would call him back when business improved.

With the assistance of his team, which included MCBDD, a home provider, his guardian, a vocational service provider, and OOD, Kenny restarted his job search. Walmart, however, soon offered him a position as a permanent employee in customer service based on the hard work and good service he provided during his seasonal work. With the assistance of job coaching (and Walmart which allowed this support during training), he was able to complete the required computer training for Walmart employees.

After not being in the workforce for 20 years, Kenny’s dream of working in a competitive community environment has become a reality and he is grateful to everyone who helped him along the way.

Workforce Integration Task Force (WIT) Next Steps

Last year the Workforce Integration Task Force (WIT), co-chaired by myself and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director Cynthia Dungey, gathered and analyzed data, regarding income levels and employment barriers for individuals who are deaf, blind, or deafblind and made recommendations on how to further integrate these individuals into the workforce.

This week an interagency staff work group, met to review the recommendations and explore the next steps. We look forward to continuing this partnership with state and local agencies, service providers, area non-profits, and the business community, to strengthen Ohio's workforce and increase opportunities for Ohioans who are deaf, blind, or deafblind.

Wheelersburg Office Now Open!

This week the OOD office in Scioto County finalized the move from Portsmouth to Wheelersburg. The office in Wheelersburg covers Lawrence, Pickaway, Pike, Scioto, Vinton, and parts of Ross County. The new address is:

8940 Ohio River Road

Wheelersburg, OH 45694

The phone number remains the same: 740-354-7951.

Please be sure to update your records to reflect this change in location. Thanks to all the hard work on the part of staff that went into making this move a success.

Individuals in Job Ready Status by County



Total Statewide:
3,720

* Job Ready Status Individuals have received Vocational Rehabilitation services and are ready and seeking employment.

For more information or questions on stories in this publication, please call the Office of Communications at 614.438.1474.

Produced by the Office of Communications, April 10, 2015.

