Anyone who wants to learn more about self-advocacy should mark their calendars for Friday, March 8 when the Montgomery and Greene County Boards of Developmental Disabilities host their third joint Self-Advocacy Conference at Wright State University’s Student Union.

This year’s event will be presented by the two counties’ self-advocacy groups, Voices Matter of Montgomery County and The Voices of Greene County, and cover the following topics:

- Self-Advocacy Basics
- The Provider Guide Plus online provider rating tool
- Safety Tips (co-presented with the City of Beavercreek Police Department)
- Assisting Technology and Remote Support

Remote support providers will be at the event to discuss their services and show how assistive technology can help promote greater independence.

The Conference is open to anyone who wishes to participate, and is offered free of charge. Those who plan to attend are asked to register themselves or their groups or individuals in advance via phone at 937-837-9214 or email at voicesmattermc@gmail.com.

**Self-Advocacy Conference**

**What:** Self-Advocacy Conference sponsored by the Montgomery and Greene County Boards of Developmental Disabilities and presented by the self-advocates of Voices Matter-Montgomery County and The Voices of Greene County

**Date:** Friday, March 8

**Time:** Registration: 9:30 - 10 a.m.  
Program Begins: 10 a.m.  
Lunch will NOT be provided

**Where:** Wright State University  
Student Union  
Apollo Room  
3640 Colonel Glenn Highway  
Dayton, OH 45435

**Cost:** Free and open to the public

**Questions:**  
Voices Matter of Montgomery County  
voicesmattermc@gmail.com

937-837-9214

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Page 2: MCBDDS’s Winter Carnival is just around the corner. Get the lowdown on this much-beloved event.

Page 4: Take Part in a DODD workshop designed to help families manage the stresses of caregiving.

Page 5: Looking for a new provider? Check out MCBDDS’s Provider Fairs on April 2 and 17.
After five years as Superintendent, Nancy Banks has announced plans to retire, effective June 15.

Banks led the agency through a period that included significant private provider network building and the mandated privatization of its adult day, employment and transportation services programs. The phase-out of these services, which began in 2015, was completed well ahead of the federal government’s deadlines.

Other accomplishments included building the agency’s person-centered planning and community integration capabilities, and securing three-year Accreditation awards from both the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and the Committee on Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities (CARF).

“Given all that we’ve accomplished, it seems like the right time for a new person to step in and lead the agency,” Banks said. “I’m grateful for the commitment of our staff and the support of the individuals and families served by MCBDDS during my tenure.”

The Board of MCBDDS has begun working with the Ohio Association of County Boards’ Board and Leadership Consultant to search for Banks’s replacement, and will consider qualified candidates.

“Nancy provided outstanding leadership during a critical time for this agency, and I am sure I speak for Board members past and present when I express my appreciation for her work,” said MCBDDS Board President Madeline Iseli. “We wish her all the best as she pursues her next adventures.”

Come one, come all: Winter Carnival March 9

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 9 when MCBDDS hosts its fifth annual and final Winter Carnival extravaganza!

This year’s event will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. at St. Rita Catholic Church, 5401 N. Main Street, Dayton, 45415, and will feature carnival games and prizes, music, dancing, and a gift basket raffle. Admission will be $5, and provides attendees with access to unlimited games. Carnival-style food will also be available for purchase.
Flooring replacements underway at Northview and Southview gymnasiums

Work to replace the flooring at MCBDDS’s Northview and Southview gymnasiums is currently underway.

Progress at Southview and Northview
At press time, contractors had completed the removal of old flooring at Southview Center, and disposed of the material according to regulations. MCBDDS plans to repaint the gym in mid-February and install new carpet in March.

Contractors are in the process of removing the flooring at the Northview Center gymnasium, which should take approximately one month. Once complete, a new hard-shell surface will be installed that is suitable for athletic activities.

Air quality testing
MCBDDS committed to re-testing the air quality in the gymnasiums of both buildings once the flooring was removed. These tests will ensure that the rooms are safe to occupy in both normal and worst-case operating conditions.

An independent contractor completed testing at Southview following the flooring removal, and found air quality results well within safe limits. Testing at Northview will be conducted when removal is complete.

Impact on Recreation activities
The MCBDDS Recreation Department is adjusting its activities as a result of the floor replacement work at Northview. The “Mustache Bash Dance” planned for Saturday, March 2 will be relocated to Liberty Center, 700 Liberty Lane, in West Carrollton, and other activities will be relocated as needed.

Early Intervention Open Gyms
Early Intervention/PACE program staff do not have a date for when Open Gym activities will resume at Southview, since renovations are not yet finished. Visit www.mcbdds.org for the latest information about Recreation and PACE events.

Grant from Brighter Tomorrow Foundation helps fund replacement of PACE gym equipment

Faced with the need to replace much of the gym equipment for its Parent and Child Enrichment (PACE) program, MCBDDS sought funding from the Brighter Tomorrow Foundation.

This Foundation gives grants to organizations that work to improve the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities. In January, the Foundation awarded MCBDDS’s PACE program $3,500, which will be used to purchase climbers, ride-on equipment, and other gym equipment for small children.
MVIO announces its first rental rate increase in more than 10 years

Miami Valley In-Ovations (MVIO), a nonprofit housing provider serving people with developmental disabilities, recently determined that a rent increase is needed to continue providing tenants with quality housing options.

The organization’s leaders made this decision after conducting a thorough accounting of the true costs of services. MVIO’s last rent increase was 10 years ago, in May of 2008. The 2019 rent increase of $50 per month per tenant will be used to pay for the organization’s operating and administrative expenses. When combined with other cost-saving measures, the additional funds from this increase will allow MVIO to continue to provide homes that improve tenants’ quality of life and enhance their communities.

“Our goal is to continue to provide competitive, quality housing options for individuals with developmental disabilities,” said Carri Paschal, MVIO general manager. “We want to be their housing provider of choice.”

Four-day workshop to help families with Stress Management

CBDDS will host a series of FREE training workshops titled “Stress Management for Families” at its Southview Center March 27 & 28 and April 24 & 25.

Delivered by representatives of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, the series is designed to help families unlock their strengths and learn skills and strategies to manage family stressors. Instructors will cover practical ways to manage pressure, and teach creative approaches to coping and caring for loved ones.

What to expect

Sessions offer opportunities for participants to discuss personal issues and work together to address common — and uncommon — family challenges. Moderators will work with small groups to help participants address real-life obstacles and find solutions that work for their family.

Registration requirements

This free training series is offered in three-hour segments over four days, with morning or evening sessions available. Morning sessions will be from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., with evening sessions from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Participants must register AND commit to attending all four sessions. When registering, participants must select one session from each day. To register, please visit https://bit.ly/2RdJ9cc.

Questions about the series and the registration process should be directed to Steve Beha at 614-466-4085 or steven.beha@dodd.ohio.gov.
New Program Locations in 2019

- **Bright Stars Adult Education Services**, currently a residential provider in Greene County, has opened a new program in Fairborn, and is accepting participants from Montgomery County. Offerings will include recreation, transportation and community integration, with an emphasis on education and music.

- **Empowered Community Services** will open a location in Springboro/Warren County, but plans to serve people from Montgomery County. They will offer community-based recreation, socialization and transportation services. Stay tuned for further information.

- **Unity Care Group**, a residential services provider, plans to open a day services program in Montgomery County. They are currently identifying locations. They will offer community-based recreation, socialization and transportation services. Stay tuned for further information.

- **ViaQuest** will open a third program for day and employment services in Montgomery County that will serve 15 people. Offerings will include community-based recreation, socialization and transportation services. Stay tuned for further information.

**MCBDDS to host two Provider Fairs: April 2 and 17**

People interested in learning more about provider services in Montgomery County are invited to attend one of two Provider Fairs hosted by MCBDDS in April: an All-Services Fair April 2, and an Assistive Technology Fair April 17. Both events will be held from 3 to 6 p.m. at Goodwill Easter Seals’ headquarters, 660 S. Main Street, Dayton.

Twenty-five providers are expected to participate, and will have representatives on hand to greet folks and answer questions. Need more information? Contact Mitch Snyder, MCBDDS Provider Development manager, at 937-837-9205.

**Provider Guide Plus: Have you added your rating?**

Last summer, Ohio rolled out a new online tool to help people evaluate and rate private providers of agency services. This tool, called ProviderGuidePlus, displays information about — and reviews of — certified agency day, employment, residential and transportation service providers operating in Ohio.

Individuals and family members of individuals who want to rate and review providers can do so by visiting www.providerguideplus.com. They can rate providers based on a 5-star scale, and these stars, along with comments written and submitted, are visible to viewers. People who submit reviews are not required to share their names. After a review is posted, providers have the opportunity to respond to it.

If you haven’t made time to submit a review, the state encourages you to do so now. Remember: Positive reviews are as helpful as critical ones to people searching for a new provider.
Improving the safety net for people with DD

**MCBDDS, MVIO and ViaQuest open new Adult Interim Care Home Feb. 1**

The February 1 opening of a **new Adult Interim Care Home (AICH)** in Montgomery County offers MCBDDS more ways to help those in crisis.

This facility provides people with developmental disabilities who are in need of emergency housing — whether it be due to the death of a parent or an unplanned housing crisis — a safe, supportive place to stay until their situation can be stabilized. When not at capacity, it can be used to provide short-term respite to families.

The AICH exists through a partnership between three organizations: the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDDS), which funded its construction; the Miami Valley In-Ovations Housing Corporation (MVIO), which owns it; and ViaQuest, a residential and day services provider that operates the facility.

The 6,000-square-foot, multi-unit duplex has the capacity to serve up to 8 people with more challenging needs than a typical Supported Living home. The setting can also accommodate people with accessibility needs. Each side of the duplex has four bedrooms, and tenants are responsible for the cost of their stay.

The new Adult Interim Care Home will offer emergency housing for people with developmental disabilities who are in crisis.

“Ultimately, the AICH serves as a safety net for people in their most vulnerable state, and also reduces the impact of crisis on other community resources, from emergency services to the homeless system,” said Kamarr Gage, MCBDDS’s director of Residential and Family Services. “By providing housing and staff that know how to work with people with different types of disabilities, we preserve community resources and keep people off of the streets.”

**Mustache Bash Dance to be relocated to Liberty Center**

With renovation work underway at Northview Center, MCBDDS’s Recreation Department will **relocate its Mustache Bash Dance** scheduled for March 2 to Liberty Center, 700 Liberty Lane, West Carrollton.

The Dance will be held on the same date, at the same time, from 6 to 10 p.m. People who are 18 or older are welcome to attend, and no one needs to register in advance, but the cost of admission is $1. Food and drinks will be sold at the event.

Staff support will not be provided for individuals at this event. Anyone needing assistance should bring their provider.

Should weather-related issues arise the day of the event, MCBDDS may choose to cancel it. To find out if the event will be held, you can:

- Visit the MCBDDS website homepage at [www.mcbdds.org](http://www.mcbdds.org) and look at the top of the page for Alert information
- Register for email and text message alerts at [www.mcbdds.org/list.aspx](http://www.mcbdds.org/list.aspx)
- Tune in to WDTN-TV/Channel 2, WHIO-TV/Channel 7, WKEF-TV/Channel 22 or WRGT-Fox 45 and watch their scrollable message alerts at the bottom of your TV screen.

Please note: The most reliable source of information will be the MCBDDS website, email and text message alerts.
New Governor signs Executive Order establishing Ohio as a “Disability Inclusion State”

In one of his first acts as Ohio’s new Governor, Mike DeWine issued an Executive Order establishing Ohio as a “Disability Inclusion State” and “Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities.”

The Order, number 2019-03D, states that the employment rate of individuals with disabilities “continues to remain unacceptably lower than that for individuals without disabilities,” and goes on to say that the Administration “is strongly committed to promoting diversity, ensuring fairness and non-discrimination in state government employment practices.”

As part of this Order, DeWine directed the appointment of a State ADA Coordinator, and mandated that all state agencies, departments, boards and commissions collect and evaluate data to measure progress toward hiring people with disabilities. He requires the development of a plan with goals for hiring individuals with disabilities who self-disclose. He is also requiring all state employees to participate in regular disability etiquette training and training in how technology can make work sites more accessible.

Governor DeWine signs Executive Order 2019-03D at his home in Yellow Springs on his first day in office. (Photo courtesy of Governor DeWine’s office)

Governor names Jeffrey Davis new director of Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

In January, Ohio’s new governor, Mike DeWine, appointed Jeffrey Davis the next Director of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. As a member of the Governor’s cabinet, Davis will advise him on issues related to funding and service delivery for people with disabilities and their families.

“Our system, if you boil it down, is very simple. It’s about that hands-on delivery of care,” he said in a recent interview. “That’s all that matters, is that direct care. Is it good? Can it be better?”

Davis recently served as Interim Executive Director and Director of Government Affairs for the Ohio Provider Resource Association, where he launched DSPOhio, a campaign designed to recruit more Direct Support Professionals to serve people with developmental disabilities. He also spent 16 years as Deputy Director of Constituent Services at the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities during the Voinovich and Taft administrations.

Davis said his priorities include addressing high turnover rates among the staff that provide support for people with disabilities, and helping people and their families navigate a complicated system.

“These people don’t know our system. All they want is somebody to hold their hand. If we’ve made it too hard as a government, then we’re going to start to pare it away.”

Jeffrey Davis (right) spoke with members of the MCBDDS Parents and Advocates Advisory Council in December 2015.
Mark Your Calendar for these Upcoming Events

Tired of staying in? Need to break the “cabin fever?” There are lots of exciting activities coming up in the months ahead. Registration requirements vary; see below for details.

**Dayton Region Transportation Plan for people with disabilities - Input Session**

**Thursday, February 28,** noon to 2 p.m. at the Dayton Metro Library/Miami Township Branch, 2718 Lyons Road, 45342.

Come and review the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission’s draft Transportation Plan for people with disabilities and the elderly. Unable to attend? Offer feedback at www.mvrpc.org/coordination-plan.

**Winter Carnival**

**Saturday, March 9,** 5 to 8 p.m. at St. Rita Catholic Church, 5401 North Main Street, Dayton, 45415.

Enjoy a variety of carnival games and prizes for the whole family. Admission is $5 for adults, free for children 6 and under, and offers unlimited games. Carnival-style food and drinks will be available for purchase.

**Dayton Area Self-Advocacy Conference**

**Friday, March 8,** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Wright State University Student Union, Apollo Room, 3640 Colonel Glenn Highway, Dayton. Learn essential self-advocacy skills.

Free, but registration requested. Call 937-837-9214.

**DD Hall of Fame/Erin Ritchey Awards Gala**

**Friday, April 26,** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at The Mandalay Banquet Center, 2700 East River Road, Dayton, 45439. Registration required; cost for meal. Call 937-837-9214 for details.

**Want to nominate someone for an award? Nominations open February 18. Visit www.mcbdds.org.**