

FCBDD welcomes new manager of provider support and review

After more than two decades of work at public child-welfare and disabilities agencies, Marla Battiste has read through thousands of service plans, reports and reviews. And she's still eager to pore over each and every one she receives.

"I've always been very detail-oriented," said Battiste, the new manager of provider support and review at the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Good documentation is often key to ensuring both high-quality support for people with developmental disabilities and compliance by the service provider, she said. "Unfortunately, providers often come looking for help when something's gone wrong. We want to make sure providers know about compliance before then."

Her new job title reflects that approach. Larry Macintosh, director of administrative and support services, recently changed it from "manager of provider compliance" to emphasize proactive support, assistance and reviews.

"Through her background and experience, Marla brings a lot of wisdom and maturity," he said. "I wanted her job to be helping providers get better, not just policing for problems."

Battiste joined FCBDD in mid-January after moving to central Ohio from Cleveland, where she spent the last several years overseeing quality review at the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. She replaces Tracey Crawford, who retired last fall.

Battiste said she enjoys being in a leadership role and helping to ensure that plans and services match the needs of the person served. "Seeing people leading happy and inclusive lives is so rewarding," she said. "It's been pretty amazing to see all the improvements over the years – and that's due to the advocates themselves."

She and her husband always enjoyed previous visits to Columbus and now are taking time to explore the city, its neighborhoods and restaurants before deciding on buying a home. "He loves it here," Battiste said with a smile. "He just misses the professional sports teams – the Guardians, Cavs and Browns."



Families invited to attend FCBDD Provider Fair in April

Organizers hope to see a big turnout for the return of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Provider Fair, an event that offers a unique opportunity for people with disabilities to connect with dozens of local service providers.

The fair is set for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 27 in the Lausche Building at the Ohio Expo Center (state fairgrounds).

Service Coordination supervisor Anne Watson said organizers and staff members are excited to again host the fair, which hadn't been held since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "The provider fair is always very well-attended," she said. "People are interested in learning about services, things that are new or services they might not know about."

FCBDD staff members will be on hand to offer assistance or information. Providers register to participate, but individuals and families do not need to sign up to attend.

"It's one massive, open building, and it can be a little overwhelming at first," Watson said. "But we'll have a lot of service coordinators volunteering to help."



Provider tables will feature color-coded balloons to let people know what types of Medicaid-waiver services they offer. Many community-resource groups also will have information tables.

For questions, people and families served by FCBDD can contact their service coordinator; Anne Watson at 614-342-5574 or anne.watson@fcbdd.org; or Anne Russell, 614-342-5550 or anne.russell@fcbdd.org. Providers should contact Joni Sparks at 614-342-5964 or joni.sparks@fcbdd.org.

Perspective: DD awareness and moving forward by Denise Blackburn-Smith

This past month was DD Awareness Month, and it is exciting to see how far things have come just since the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law in 1990. It's even more exciting to see that, in many ways, we continue in a positive direction.

I see us perched on the edge of ensuring that all people are treated with respect and dignity, no matter their cognitive and physical abilities and disabilities. But we still have a ways to go.

Recently I read a book about microaggressions, and it got me thinking about my experiences as a person with a developmental disability. I experience microaggressions periodically, and I've come to realize that those subtle and indirect forms of discrimination are sometimes harder to deal with than the outright aggression of the past.

For example, as a young person, I often had employers tell me upfront that they did not feel I could do a job. In some cases, they essentially said I wouldn't fit in, because people would not be comfortable with the way I walk. I once asked a prospective employer why he felt that way.

He replied that because *he* already didn't feel comfortable with the way I walk, he was certain his customers wouldn't, either. I was crushed, to say the least. There is not much I can do about the way I walk. Or the way others feel about my gait.

All of us want to be seen for our inner light, inner beauty and innate value. I recently spoke with a friend who is a person of color about being embraced based on our inner selves instead of our outer shells. We're perplexed when progress stalls and people experience discrimination due to their race, disability status, sexual orientation or identity, religion – all or any of that. When positive momentum stops it seems kind of scary, as if things could just slide backwards. I cannot bear to hold that thought for long. It's simply too heavy.

While I hope we don't return to a time when people could legally act on their prejudices and stereotypes, I do hope we can recognize the importance of positive public discourse. We must talk about *why* it's crucial for our diversity to be celebrated, *why* it's unacceptable for marginalized groups to be unemployed, underemployed and unrepresented in government, among other concerns.

We must continue to communicate openly and push forward. Our grandchildren – yours and mine – deserve the best possible version of our world. And frankly, those of us who have fought for years still deserve to be heard. Everyone wants to be seen for their beauty and richness, not their perceived "less-ness."

Denise Blackburn-Smith has been an FCBDD service coordinator for the past 15 years. An advocate in the disability community, she was born with cerebral palsy.



Judith "Judy" Heumann 1947-2023

Judy Heumann, an activist whose determination, advocacy and success in shaping public policy led to her being regarded as "the mother of the disability rights movement," passed away on March 4 at age 75.

Heumann contracted polio as a toddler and was unable to walk. Her family refused to place her in an institution, and fought back when a principal called Heumann "a fire hazard" and blocked her from entering kindergarten.

She went on to become a teacher in New York City, an official in the Clinton administration, special adviser in the Obama State Department and sat on the boards of some of the nation's leading nonprofits. She helped found the World Institute on Disability and was featured in the Oscar-nominated 2020 documentary *Crip Camp*.



Along the way, Heumann organized protests and was instrumental in developing national disability rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. "Some people say that what I did changed the world," Heumann wrote. "But really, I simply refused to accept what I was told about who I could be. And I was willing to make a fuss about it."

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
(Ribbon Cutting Ceremony - 6 p.m.)

ARC GROVE CITY
3705 Marlane Drive
Grove City, OH 43123

Light appetizers and refreshments will be served

RSVP BY APRIL 17, 2023: Amanda Smith, Chief Services Officer - asmith@arcind.com or 614-479-2513

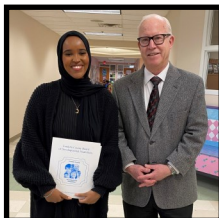
This facility has been designed to meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities in the Grove City community.

Good For You

Notable achievements in the FCBDD community

Thanks to Early Childhood Education teacher Jessica Bennett and others who helped to organize and promote the agency's job fair in March. It's great to connect with people interested in building rewarding careers at FCBDD and the Early Childhood Education Partnership.

Thanks to state Rep. Munira Abdullahi for her recent visit. We appreciate the interest of our local legislators, and we're always happy to talk about the many ways FCBDD supports kids and adults with developmental disabilities.



Congratulations and thanks to Kim Boulter and Jennifer Corcoran of the Ohio chapter of the Changing Spaces Campaign for leading the effort to bring more universal changing tables to public spaces. Tables supplied by the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities were available for the first time during Developmental Disabilities Awareness and Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse, and a push is underway to add changing-table requirements to the Ohio building code.



Career Milestones

35 Years
Brenda Toney

30 Years
Julie Williams

20 Years
Amber Dzodan
Carla Lynch

5 Years
Shannon Chandler
Ciara Okon

Thanks to all who testified last month before an Ohio House of Representatives legislative committee in support of the DD Budget Coalition's request for additional state funding to address Ohio's DD workforce crisis. To learn more or share your story, visit

www.ohioddcrisis.com

Staff volunteer spotlight

FCBDD produce giveaways help families in need

As lead organizer of the monthly drive-thru produce pantry at the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Sarah Gillilan has worked to distribute tons (literally) of fresh fruit and vegetables to local families.

She'll admit that she sometimes goes home never wanting to see another bag of onions or celery. But veggie fatigue aside, most everything about the project – a joint effort of the FCBDD Early Childhood Education Partnership and the Mid-Ohio Food Collective – has been a huge success.

"We knew before we started that there was a need, among families we serve and other families who live in this area," said Gillilan, activity coordinator at the FCBDD Early Childhood Education and Family Center. "As rich as our country is, there is no reason for anyone to be hungry."

Gillilan and colleagues hosted the first free produce pantry in 2019, then paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. The popular events returned this fall and will continue over the summer.

You deal in some pretty big numbers, right?

It's really taken off. Just from November to February, we distributed more than 38,000 pounds of food and served 640 families.

Volunteers seem to do a great job making sure families are comfortable with what can be a difficult and emotional experience.

We try to get that stigma of free food out of people's minds. This is for everyone, anyone, to come and get what they need for their families.

Do you expect participation to remain high?

A lot of people are struggling with rising food prices. And now that the extra pandemic allotment of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits has run out, that's going to have a big impact.



Helping with the produce drive-thru is probably meaningful for staff, too.

It makes for a long day, and it's a lot of heavy lifting and hard work. But even during times we've had rain, tornado sirens going off and lightning flashing, we're still smiling. We're giving away food, and I don't know how that wouldn't put a smile on your face.

Including, on occasion, sweet potatoes as big as your head.

Yes! I've got the photo to prove it.

The free, drive-thru produce markets take place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the Early Childhood bus lane at FCBDD, 2879 Johnstown Rd.

Calendar

Editor's Note: The following calendar is tentative due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Call 614-342-5950 before attending any meeting to see if it is still scheduled.

April, 2023

- 10-14 Spring Break. ECE and Schools closed.
- 20 FCBDD Early Childhood Education and the Mid-Ohio Food Collective Produce Drive through from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the ECEFC Bus Lane (accessed via Marilyn Lane). For more details, contact Sarah Gillilan at 614-342-5803.
- 26 Goodwill Harmony Session "Hear My Voice" at 4411 Tamarack Blvd. 11 a.m.
- 26 ARC Grove City Open House & Ribbon Cutting, 3705 Marlane Drive; 5:30-7:30 p.m. RSVP to Amanda Smith at 614-479-2513
- 27 Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Board meeting at Noon at 2879 Johnstown Road, Columbus, Ohio, via Zoom for the public. Please contact Amy Magginis at 614-342-5950 for meeting details. Click on the following link to connect:
FCBDD Board Meeting Link: <https://bit.ly/3JvZSUJ>
- 27 Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Board "World's Largest Provider Fair!" 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Ohio State Fair Grounds, 17th Avenue at I-71 in the Lausche Building.

Dateline

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Michael Underwood, President
Marie Crawford, Vice President
William W. Wilkins, Secretary
John Bickley
Samuel Davis
Beth Savage
Marci Straughter

Superintendent/CEO **Jed W. Morison**

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities does not discriminate in employment or services on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or disability.

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Information about the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is always available on the internet at:

www.fcbdd.org

you're invited
Goodwill Harmony Sessions

**HEAR
MY
VOICE**

Join us for a collaborative performance featuring Goodwill Columbus Artists, Singers, Storytellers & Actors, Friends in Harmony Choir and guests Justus Dominguez & Donte Woods-Spikes.

Wednesday, April 26 | 11:00am
Franklin County Harmony Center
4411 Tamarack Blvd, Columbus, OH 43229
[learn more at goodwillcolumbus.org](http://goodwillcolumbus.org)

goodwill  **columbus** 

Help families in need by giving to Operation Feed

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is asking staff members to donate during the month of April to Operation Feed, the Mid-Ohio Food Collective's biggest fundraiser.



Advocates say demand for food assistance is greater than ever. Low-income households are struggling with both rising grocery costs and the loss of pandemic SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) allotments.

According to Mid-Ohio, every dollar raised allows the giant food bank to distribute up to \$4.89 worth of groceries. In 2022, Mid-Ohio served 625,000 children, adults and seniors across its 20-county service area. It distributed more than 74 million pounds of food, enough to provide 169,897 meals each day.

To help, FCBDD employees can again choose from the following options:

- * Go to the Franklin County Operation Feed page at <https://give.mofc.org/franklincounty> to donate by credit card. Be sure to select Franklin County Board of DD as your team.
- * Send a contribution (sealed, please) to Mandy Holland in administration. Checks should be made out to the Mid-Ohio Food Collective, with Operation Feed noted in the memo line.
- * Contact Jennifer Schueneman, FCBDD controller, if you want to make a one-time payroll deduction. Email her with the amount, and please note Operation Feed in the subject line of your message.

FCBDD Community Star Awards Nomination Form

Do you know someone who should be recognized for extraordinary accomplishments or service supporting individuals with developmental disabilities?

If so, please take a moment to complete and return this nomination form. Nominations will be accepted until **Monday, June 12, 2023**. All nominations will be considered by an Award Committee, and winners in each category will be recognized at the FCBDD Community Star Awards Ceremony in the Fall of 2023. **Please submit this nomination to: Awards Committee, c/o Amy Magginis, 2879 Johnstown Road, Columbus, Ohio 43219.**

(PLEASE PRINT)

1. Name of Nominee: _____ Daytime Phone# _____

Home Address: _____

2. Please complete one nomination per form and check the category for which this person or organization is nominated. Nominees are not required to be staff members or affiliated with FCBDD.

Person Receiving Services/Self-Advocate

Parent/Family Member

Early Childhood/School Staff

Provider Organization

Volunteer/Good Neighbor

Transportation Staff

Employer

Direct Service Professionals

Management/Supervisory/Administrative Staff

Service Coordination Department Staff

3. Why should this nominee be recognized? _____

4. Please describe any other achievements or information regarding this person or organization to support this nomination: _____

Nominated by: (Please Print) _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone # _____ Work/Daytime Phone # _____

"Helping people to live, learn and work in our community"

