**Weekly Focus**

**October 5, 2012**

**Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director**

The mission of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

RSC Staff Meets with Governor Kasich

Last Friday, Governor Kasich met with RSC VR Field Staff to discuss ongoing efforts and how he could best be of assistance. In the hour long meeting, Governor Kasich sought to understand the roles that we play in helping people with disabilities to become employed and what resources they need to help consumers gain employment. He was also interested in the great work that RSC, especially the VR staff, has done to release 7,000 people from the waiting list. This meeting allowed staff to communicate their successes and challenges moving forward to assist Ohioans with disabilities. Governor Kasich reiterated his belief that people with disabilities should not be forced to live in the shadows and that he is committed to making sure that his administration is doing everything possible to assist them.

New VR Staff Training

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff conducted training for 41 new staff members providing comprehensive instruction on RSC process and procedures. New staff included VR Counselors, Vocational Rehabilitation Public & Private Partnerships (VRP3s) and Caseload Assistants. It was a hard week with much to learn but RSC consumers will benefit greatly by the new, knowledgeable staff. I would like to welcome these new staff members to RSC.

Picture Caption:

*New VR Staff Training Graduates*

NDEAM is Wednesday, October 10

RSC is hosting our annual National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) event at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium on Wednesday, October 10, 2012, from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. Our Keynote speakers are TyKiah Wright, founder of WrightChoice, Inc. and Blake Haxton, an Ohio State University student who, as a High School senior, contracted a rare form of bacteria called the "Flesh-Eating Disease," and had to endure numerous surgeries and procedures including the amputation of both of his legs. He is currently a junior majoring in Finance.

Since the NDEAM national theme is “A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can You Do?”, the speakers at our event will focus on doing all they can do to further that inclusive workforce as we continue to promote successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities. NDEAM promises to be both uplifting and educational. We hope to see you at the Statehouse Atrium this coming Wednesday!

Director Miller Visits Pilot Dogs

The purpose of Pilot Dogs, Inc. is to improve the general condition of people who are blind and other persons having sight impairments. I visited the organization in Columbus to see firsthand the amazing work this organization is doing to assist the visually impaired in Ohio. The training program these dogs go through is extensive.

Picture Caption:

*Director Miller (left) with Steve Hoyt, Student Services Director for Pilot Dogs, Inc. (center) Bob Ulm, WDOH-107.1 FM, Delphos, OH with guide dog, Pipa.*

Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers Annual Conference

I was honored to participate in a panel discussion at the Ohio Council’s Annual Meeting on Thursday at the Hilton Hotel in Columbus/Polaris. The purpose was to share our major policy initiatives for the coming year, how we engage consumers with addictive or mental health issues and the challenges we face to accomplish those things as we move forward. I was joined on the panel by Gary Mohr, Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections; Michael Colbert, Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services; and Will McHugh, Assistant Director at the Ohio Department of Health. Leaders at the local level expressed their appreciation for us taking time to answer questions and share how we all realize that we must move beyond silo’s in government and share the responsibilities that are a common thread in all of those we serve. My thanks to Hubert Wirtz and Lori Criss for including RSC in their event.

Combined Charitable Campaign Update

The Combined Charitable Campaign (CCC) activities are keeping many people at RSC very busy. This week alone, Central Office held a Cupcake Challenge, sponsored a Cornhole Tournament and we all ate well at the Diversity Food Fair. While these activities are fun and tasty, they are helping us approach our goals for CCC. So far, we have 213 pledge cards out of our goal of 247. Also, we have raised $54,166.17 toward our goal of $68,978.

With 14 more days left to reach our goal, I want to remind everyone that the Silent Auction and Wreath Sale is on Thursday, October 11, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. Please consider donating items for the auction. It promises to be another great event for RSC employees while benefiting CCC.

Picture Captions:

*Luncheon Hostesses (left to right): Debra Howard, Kim DeSimone, Meredith Rogan, Charla Banks and Maria Munoz.*

*Serving food at the Diversity Food Fair.*

*Jennifer Maxson* (center) *and Kathy Boss* (right) *gave the award for Best Presentation to Lori Myers for her “Fried Egg Cupcakes.”*

*Best Tasting Cupcake Winner Kelly Hall* (left), for her “Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Cupcakes,” *receiving her award from Jennifer Maxson* (center) *and Kathy Boss.*

*Clarissa Gordon won the Creativity category with her “Pull from the Pumpkin Patch Cupcakes.”*

Below: *Judges Orlando Rodriguez, Rachael Clinkscale and Mary Koeninger*

*Below: “Freaky Eyeballs”*

*“Sweetcakes with a Side of Peach Topping”*

*“Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough”*

*“Buckeye Blitz”*

*“Cotton Candy Confections”*

*“Spiced Pumpkin”*

*Here it comes!*

*Look at those heels!*

*What a throw!*

For more information or questions on stories in this publication please call Shirley Marchi, Community Relations Liaison, at 614. 438.1477.

Produced by the Office of Communications, October 5, 2012.

**RSC’s Facebook website:**

[**https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Rehabilitation-Services-Commission/155300754532533?sk=wall**](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Rehabilitation-Services-Commission/155300754532533?sk=wall)

**RSC’s YouTube website:**

[**https://www.youtube.com/user/OhioRSCTV**](https://www.youtube.com/user/OhioRSCTV)

**RSC’s Twitter website:**

[**https://twitter.com/#!/OHRSC/**](https://twitter.com/#!/OHRSC/)