

# OPPORTUNITY CENTER NEWS

September /October 2014

A message  
from the  
Superintendent

## My Voice, My Choice

The Center for Medicaid and Medicare has recently changed its rules to promote and support greater community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities. These are important rules that expand service options to individuals with disabilities. They are currently being interpreted that individuals on **Medicaid waivers cannot receive services in a segregated setting**. It is also being suggested that it would be a conflict for county boards to provide service and support administration (SSA services) while providing adult services (Seneca Re-Ads). The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities is suggesting that county boards should no longer be able to provide adult services. **This would mean that sheltered workshops would not be an option for individuals with Medicaid waiver funding**. In Seneca County it would result in some individuals not being able to choose Seneca Re-Ads as a provider of service. I fear that it would remove a valuable choice for individuals in Seneca County to receive needed services.

Individuals with developmental disabilities who are (or will be) enrolled on Medicaid waivers are at risk of no longer being allowed to choose the excellent and well-established services provided by the Seneca County Opportunity Center; **many of their family members will be devastated by the loss of a trusted provider (Seneca Re-ads) and important safety net for their loved ones**. **This could be the beginning of the forced closure of sheltered workshops in Ohio and Seneca County. This would mean the forced closure of Seneca Re-Ads.**

The Seneca County Opportunity Center has been providing quality supports to individuals and families for the last 50 years. We need your support to keep this valuable option for individuals with disabilities and their families in Seneca County. I invite you to join us on Tuesday, November 18 for a Dinner & Dialog at the Opportunity Center from 5:30 to 7:30 pm to further discuss this topic and provide options for families to write state and federal legislative representatives on this important topic. Dinner will be provided. RSVP to Joan at 419.447-7521 ext 134. Please plan on attending this important meeting!

Lewis Hurst  
Superintendent





## Special Olympics

Pictured are athletes with coaches who participated in the 2014 Summer Games in June. At right are more Special Olympians!



## Advocacy in **ACTION**

Our Seneca STIR (Steps Towards Independence & Responsibility) advocate group has been hard at work again! STIR members assisted in creating and filming the 24 Rights of Ohioans with Developmental Disabilities. Sadly and too often these rights are misunderstood or not read. The group's goal was to make them understandable and fun to learn. The videos will be used for training staff and persons served. They will be debuted at the annual Unity Conference this November. Other upcoming projects for the STIR group include teaching modules that help people become more independent and/or responsible. The first module they plan to teach is Respect. The STIR group is passionate about preventing bullying and they believe it starts with respect.



## Fishing Class

A fishing class made the summer special for many individuals who participated. Janet Zilch applied for and received a \$500 grant to purchase life jackets, bait and supplies. Volunteers from the Seneca Tiffin Izaak Walton League donated fishing pole holders and life jacket holders and also joined in the fun. Janet became a certified fishing instructor through the Division of Wildlife who also donated fishing poles and class information. Janet, with the help of Joe Coleman, organized 5 fishing outings throughout the summer.



The participants included:

John Miller	Charles Heimrich
Tom Steinhauser	Josh Meyers
Bill Young	Sean Allison
Ralph Gallo	Daniel Hinton
Mike Faber	Patrick Steyer
Nick Frish	





Sharon Huffman has announced her retirement. She has been school secretary for the School of Opportunity for 35 years. In those 35 years many faces have come and gone but Sharon has always been the anchor that steadies the ship. In her retirement, we hope Sharon has time to enjoy gardening, cheering for the Cleveland Indians, knitting, listening to Elvis and Rod and traveling with her husband, Pat.



Sharon, good luck and we will miss you!

## GOOD LIFE

### Building Good Lives through Relationships

The Good Life positive culture training continues to grow at the Opportunity Center. We are so proud of Joe Coleman and Judy Bowling, who graduated as Good Life facilitators this summer. Joe is a workshop Habilitation Specialist and occasionally drives bus. Judy is a bus driver. Joe, Judy, and the Good Life team facilitated a team building session, Good Life Jenga, during the all staff in-service. Participants were invited to reflect on three values that are important to them in a relationship, such as honesty, respect, listening, etc. They wrote each one on a wooden, life size, Jenga block. Staff shared their key components and then stacked them into a tower. The tower symbolized a strong, healthy relationship. Next, staff were asked how they would feel if a negative thing happened in the relationship (for example, how would you feel if I didn't listen to you or disregarded your opinions?). Participants shared the impact and took a block out from the Jenga tower. Sometimes it fell. Sometimes it remained standing but weakened with holes. Our small every day actions can have a big role on either helping or hurting a relationship. Is it possible to rebuild the relationship after the core values have been harmed? We all have a vital role in protecting and building relationships. We all have ownership. We can choose to *"eat the frog,"* and let another person know they hurt us, even though it might be out of our comfort zone to do so. Eating the frog means we will try and deal with problems before they are too big to deal with; it is easier to eat a baby frog than a 20 lb frog! If you are the person who hurt the relationship, you can try to become more *self aware* and *rational* to use coping techniques/communication techniques that help not hurt. We all need to be *intentional* about building, protecting, and maintaining relationships. Think about the actions you can take to show you are an *ALLY* to someone SCOC serves, your co-workers, family and friends.



Seneca County Opportunity Center  
780 E. CR 20  
Tiffin, OH 44883

169 Board Members

David Culp

Patricia Smith

Joe Moore

Amy Kirkpatrick

Lindsay Parkins

Sandy Hallett

\*\*\*\*\*

SCOC 419-447-7521

Fostoria Re-Ads

419-937-2081

Family Learning Center

419-448-5079

Early Childhood

Center of Fostoria

419-436-0797

Our MISSION

To improve the lives of persons with disabilities!

## FUN FACTS

- The School of Opp serves 12 school districts.
- Seneca Re-Ads is celebrating 30 yrs of partnership with Roppe.
- Taco salad is the highest selling meal in the cafeteria.
- Snow removal cost the SCOC \$8,859 last winter.
- As a department the SSA's have 36 pets.
- Transportation operates 17 routes each day.

## 2014 SCOC Calendar

Oct 13	Columbus Day ( <b>Program Closed</b> )
Oct. 14	169 Board Meeting, SCOC, 5:00 pm
Oct. 16	Hoot in the Park, 5–7:00; public invited
Oct. 25	SCOC Craft Show, 9 am–3 pm
Oct. 28	School Pictures, SCOC
Nov. 4	169 Board meeting, 5:00 pm
Nov. 8, 9	Unity Conference, Sawmill Creek
Nov. 11	Veterans' Day ( <b>Program Closed</b> )
Nov. 18	Dinner & Dialog, SCOC, 5:30 pm
Nov. 25	PM–Parent Conferences
Nov. 26	AM–Parent Conferences ( <b>School Closed</b> )
Nov 27-28	Thanksgiving ( <b>Program Closed</b> )

