



Metzenbaum Center

Helping People Live, Learn, and Earn

Winter 2022

GeaugaDD.org

DSPs Impact Lives & Community!

Geauga DD would like to sincerely and most appreciatively thank DSPs (Direct Support Professionals) for their exceptional dedication, especially during the ongoing staffing crisis. DSPs continue to work double shifts, some working 7 days a week to keep the men and women we serve safe and healthy. A DSP role goes well beyond caregiving, being determined by the unique needs and preferences of each individual they assist in daily living. DSPs continue to be the Heart and Soul of supports for the people we serve and the efforts they display do not go unnoticed! Thank you for your unmatched dedication and for everything you do to help people live, learn, and earn in our community. You are valued and appreciated!



Cookies With Santa

The Early Intervention program held their annual end of the year party and visit with Santa on December 2nd. All the families and children in attendance enjoyed participating in the festivities, yummy cookies, and of course, meeting Santa! Abundant laughter and smiles helped everyone spread some Christmas cheer.



Basketball Season Is Here

The Metzenbaum Blue Streaks Basketball season is in full swing! Both talented teams have returned to the court and have been putting their heart into practice every week. The season has been full of surprises as the competition has been tough. But, they look forward to seeing their rivals and have their focus set on States. For the team schedule, contact the Metzenbaum Foundation Rec Department at: metzenbaum.foundation@gmail.com



Jacob's Story

Jacob has an exuberant attitude and a magnetic personality. He influences people daily just by being himself. In work or play, Jacob gives his all, 100 percent with a smile on his face. He is a hard worker and a joy to be around. In any sport he decides to compete in, he sets the mood either in practice or a game with his enthusiasm and constant encouragement. He truly is someone you want as a friend.

Jacob has expectations for himself and being employed is high on his priority list. He has been working since high school but, his jobs were seasonal or short-term. To help in the search for long-term employment, through OOD, Jacob teamed up with a job coach who found an opening at the Auburn Career Center. The job coach gave some assistance through the interview process, but because of Jacob's previous work experiences and references, he landed himself the job starting Sept of 2020.

The position Jacob was hired for was a newly created role in response to combating COVID. The main goal each day is to disinfect any surface that a person touches to reduce diseases and germs from spreading. Jacob works 5 days a week, 3 hours a day and has a great relationship with his colleague Mary. In true Jacob fashion, they work hard but laugh harder as they tell jokes to each other throughout the day. Better yet for Jacob, being at Auburn Career Center gives him lots of opportunities to socialize. Jacob talks daily to students, teachers, and staff and is happy to say everyone is nice to him.

Jacob has a warm personality and easily makes friends. One person he looks forward to seeing every day is a student whom he talks with about sports. Their favorite subjects to discuss are Cleveland Browns, Cavs, Guardians, and Chardon HS athletics. Jacob just loves sports.

Playing sports is a passion for Jacob as he is incredibly competitive. He plays 2nd base in softball and was part of the Metzenbaum Blue Streaks softball team winning a Division II State Championship title. He is a regular at States as a Small Forward for basketball with the Metzenbaum Blue Streaks basketball team and was interviewed about it on Fox 8. Jacob is a fierce competitor and participates in many other sporting opportunities such as soccer, track, open gyms, flag football, pickleball, basketball camps, and weight training classes. He loves sports, and even as competitive as he is, there is not a more supportive and encouraging teammate than Jacob. He is an inspiration wherever he goes.



Annual Trick or Treat

The 2nd annual Trick or Treat Halloween event at the Metzenbaum Center was a great success! Thank you to all the departments working hard on the fabulous hallway decorations. The building was packed with over 240 visitors all enjoying the creative atmosphere! Out of the 8 participating groups, the Geauga ESC of the Western Reserve Preschool won 1st place with the most votes and a year of bragging rights. Their fun and games of "Welcome to the Jungle" hallway took the cake.



Classes, Events, and Happenings



Geauga DD and local partner agencies work together to offer in-person and virtual activities, programs, and fun opportunities. For more information on upcoming happenings, contact Geauga DD at: 440-729-9406 or facebook.com/GeaugaDD



Project: Kindness

Project: Kindness aligns self-care and service opportunities to adults who want to contribute to making a kinder world while NPowering people with developmental disabilities to put themselves on the giving end of service. Project: Kindness events include an activity that focuses on elevating participants' sense of self-worth along with a project that helps others. For more information, contact Lori Weber at: lorivw16@gmail.com or visit npowerservices.com.



Spotlighting DSPs



Congratulations to DSP Aaron Suydam on being recognized by an Individual he serves who states that, "Aaron is very kind and patient. He always goes out of his way to help people with disabilities." Thank you Aaron and congratulations!

Congratulations to Amanda Sayer on being recognized by a Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities SSA who states that Amanda should be recognized, "for giving excellent care, for dedication to people with developmental disabilities and for consistently coming into work during a staffing shortage." Congratulations Amanda!



Congratulations to Judy Carter on being recognized by a Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities SSA who states that Judy should be recognized, "for giving excellent care, for her commitment to making sure shifts were covered during staff shortages and for her consistent dedication to people with developmental disabilities." Congratulations Judy!

And now, Jokes from Andy

What do you get when you come across an alligator wearing a vest? An Investigator

I had been living in a bounce house, but it somehow got a leak. Now I live in a flat...

I wonder about things; like if you're a guy using a walker. Why isn't it called a walk-him?



**Geauga County Board of
Developmental Disabilities**
8200 Cedar Road
Chesterland, OH 44026

Save The Dates

March is DD Awareness Month!

Virtual Family Forums:

- **January 31:** Student Transition
- **February 28:** Transition 101

Contact Megan Thirion for invite:
mthirion@geaugadd.org

Movie Night: Jan. 18 & Feb. 17

Community Carnival: March 4

Night to Shine: March 9

1 Mile Fun Walk: May 20

Annual Golf Outing: June 17

Geauga Fair Band Concert: June 27

Keep a lookout for information on the
upcoming Camp Fun Day,
and Captains Game.

For the latest info on upcoming events,
visit **GeaugaDD.org** or
Facebook.com/GeaugaDD



Spreading Holiday Cheer

The Metzenbaum Aktion Club and the Metzenbaum Foundation (TMF) Rec Department always have generosity on their minds!

The Giving Tree program helped out families this season who were in need of some extra help to celebrate the holidays.

There were a total of 82 requests filled for gifts for children under the age of 18! With the generosity of employees, board members from both Geauga DD & TMF, and agencies working in the building, all the requests were filled.

Not leaving out people over the age of 18 who needed a little extra boost for the holidays, through a partnership with the Geauga YMCA, TMF was able to provide gifts to 65 individuals with DD living in Geauga County. Thank you to the generous folks who chose a name from the YMCA Giving Tree and purchased an item for our clients.

Once again the Aktion Club spread kindness and joy this holiday season by working with the West Geauga Kiwanis Group to collect, organize, and deliver their annual food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas. A total of 31 families in need were gifted from this act of goodwill! The Geauga DD is proud to support these philanthropic individuals.

For more information or to get involved, contact Sally Contizano at the Metzenbaum Foundation: sally@metzenbaumfdn.org