

THE SCOOP

April 3, 2017

A lesson for local leaders

Amazing. Eye-opening. Enlightening. Those are just some of the words used to describe Richland Newhope's annual Community Awareness Day on March 16.

Twenty-six members of the Mansfield-Richland Area Educational Foundation's current Leadership Unlimited class – representing businesses, schools, and agencies throughout Richland County – served as the participants. Each one was given a simulated disability for approximately two hours. It was an opportunity for them to experience first-hand what it means to have a disability, how it can impact someone's life, and the importance of emphasizing someone's abilities.

The simulated disabilities ranged from hearing and visual impairments to physical challenges.

"I had a pretty tough time doing pretty simple tasks," said Michael Cline, who was asked to wear ear plugs and gloves to simulate a hearing impairment and difficulties with fine motor skills.



This year the participants visited facilities operated by Richland Newhope, Richland Newhope Industries, Inc., and HR Choices as well as sites in the community where individuals supported by Richland Newhope are employed.

Many of the participants said they were impressed by the staff they met at each location, calling them “kind,” “loving,” and “unbelievable.”

“Their hearts are just huge,” said Jason Crundwell of St. Peter’s Parish who visited Raintree, an intermediate care facility operated by Richland Newhope.

Another participant described the experience from a different point of view.

“We think about how we can help them (people with disabilities)...but, realistically, what did they do today that helps all of us?” noted Andrew Smallstey, administrative director of the village of Lexington.

This was the 16th year that Richland Newhope has held Community Awareness Day as part of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

Artists shine at exhibition

Dozens of artists showcased their work during the 7th Annual Bringing the Elements Together Art and Talent Exhibition on March 24 at the Richland Mall.

The exhibition featured a wide-range of crafts and artwork done by children and adults supported by Richland Newhope, including paintings, photography, pencil sketches, note cards, and jewelry. There were also performances by the Richland Newhope



Industries, Inc. Dance Troupe, two vocal soloists, a signing choir, a hip-hop dancer, and three musicians.

In addition, the event once again featured an artist doing portrait sketches, a coloring page station, and informational displays, including one celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

“This event not only gives those we support a chance to showcase their artistic abilities, it also provides an opportunity to involve the entire community in an awareness month activity,” said Jane Imbody, Richland Newhope’s Community Relations director.

Bringing the Elements Together marked the last of three major activities to mark Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in March.

Fond farewell

Vicky Todd said goodbye on March 22 after 30 years of dedicated service with the Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Friends, co-workers, and family members gathered for a retirement celebration. Vicky touched the lives of many individuals during her tenure, especially those in the retirees' group known as Options.

Congratulations, Vicky!



Preview of the first quarterly edition of The Insider

The Insider, a monthly newsletter that Richland Newhope first debuted in 1984, returns this month as a quarterly, electronic-only publication. It will have longer stories than what you typically find in our new twice-monthly newsletter, The Scoop.

The Spring 2017 edition of The Insider will have the story of one local family with two young children who share the same, rare chromosome abnormality. One child, Micah, was recently featured on our March billboards and on the cover of our special March church pamphlet.

We'll also feature a profile of a new provider agency in Richland County, you'll learn more about Ohio's STABLE account, and we'll have information about Richland Newhope's 2017 strategic plan.

To join our newsletter email list, visit our [website](#) to sign up!

April Calendar

April 7 – First Friday, Element of Art Studio/Gallery, 5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

April 14-21 – Spring break for preschool classes at the Early Childhood Center

April 26 – Richland County Board of DD meeting, Administration Building, 11:30 a.m.

April 26 – Richland Newhope Industries, Inc. Dance Troupe 'Dancing Throughout the Decades,' Renaissance Theatre, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

April 29 – Best Buddies 'Dueling Pianos Night' Fundraiser, Mid-Ohio Conference Center, 6 p.m. Click [here](#) to purchase tickets.

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