

Richland County Board of DD names next superintendent

The Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities (RCBDD) Wednesday appointed Michele Giess as the next superintendent of Richland Newhope. Giess will succeed Elizabeth 'Liz' Prather, who is retiring at the end of this year.

Giess was selected from a field of eight qualified candidates and was one of three people interviewed by the RCBDD Search Committee, which was comprised of three board members. The Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities (OACB) assisted in the search.

A 27-year employee of Richland Newhope, Giess has served as director of the agency's Service and Support Administration (SSA) since 2013.

"Michele is truly worthy of this position," noted RCBDD President Nicholas Gesouras. "Her



dedication to this organization for over 27 years has prepared her for future challenges and successes for the Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities.”

“I am honored to be given the opportunity to lead this organization and work with this wonderful group of employees in this capacity,” says Giess. “The Richland County Board has maintained a great reputation for supporting individuals to live the lives they want and be a part of their community. I look forward to leading our organization as we continue this mission. “

Giess will assume her new role on Jan. 1, 2018.



Christmas party tickets still available

Tickets remain available for Richland Newhope’s annual Christmas party for individuals who receive our services. The party is set for Friday, Dec. 1 from 7-9 p.m. in Fairhaven Hall at the Richland County Fairgrounds.

You can get tickets from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. now through Nov. 30 at the following Mansfield locations:

- Richland Newhope Administration Building, 314 Cleveland Ave.
- Early Childhood Center, 255 Hedges St.
- Raintree, 721 Scholl Rd.

There is no charge but everyone attending must get a ticket prior to the party. Each individual is allowed up to five tickets. Those who receive services from a residential provider should check with that provider to see if a ticket has already been picked up.

This year's party will feature a DJ, dancing, a photo booth, coloring station, and snacks.

For more information, call 419-774-4200.

Presentation for students and staff

The senior director for Law and Policy at the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University recently visited Mansfield for two presentations. On Nov. 2, Jonathon Martinis, Esq., J.D., spoke to 30 students at Mansfield Senior High about their dreams and goals. Martinis asked them to make their own dream board and to share it at their meetings with their individual consultants. The following day he did a presentation for both Richland and Crawford County Board of Developmental Disabilities staff about supported decision-making and guardianship. Martinis has more than 20 years of experience representing and advocating for people with disabilities.



Treats galore

There were plenty of smiles and tasty candy during the annual Halloween parade and Trick or Treat at the Early Childhood Center on Oct. 31. Families joined in the Halloween fun, too.

The preschoolers also enjoyed singing Halloween songs and playing games. Many employees dressed up for the festivities. Click [here](#) to check out the photos on Facebook.



Pumpkin Day!

Preschoolers at the Early Childhood Center were excited to receive a pumpkin from the Disney characters Tigger and Eeyore. Marion Correctional Institution staff dressed in costume and passed out 250 pumpkins on Oct. 18. For the past 13 years, the prison has donated pumpkins to children in preschool classes and Early Intervention. They grew over 4,000 pumpkins this year.



November Employee of the Month

Name: Susan Monastra

Position: Occupational Therapy Assistant

Employed since: 1984-1994; 2006-present (21 years)

Nominator's Comments: "She is an outstanding co-worker. She is passionate, caring, and hardworking. She goes above and beyond the call of duty to meet the needs of



the individuals she serves. She coordinates everything related to wheelchairs for Newhope. She always takes a person-centered approach to therapy care for our individuals. She is continuously looking for solutions to issues that staff are facing. It is her goal to improve the quality of life for each individual she works with."

Employee of the Month Comments: "I really appreciate being recognized for my work. It's a team process, and I could not do my job without the help of other staff members. I really enjoy the interactions with the kids and adults. My heart is at Raintree, and I have known many of the residents for more than 30 years."

EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

36 Years – Karen Al-Farsi

30 Years – Rita Maxey, Judy Randall

25 Years – Carla Rumas

19 Years – Mary Blamer, Connie Emery

17 Years – Michelle Deibig

14 Years – Jackie Fry

13 Years – Shauna Bradley

12 Years – Sandra Baum, Eunice Thompson

11 Years – Jama Compston

10 Years - Tina Baker, Lori Looney

7 Years – Sarah Helms, Renee Mehl



Thanksgiving holiday reminder

Richland Newhope's Administrative offices, Service and Support Administration, and Early Childhood Center will be closed Nov. 23 and 24 for the Thanksgiving Day holiday. Our offices will reopen at 8 a.m. on Nov. 27.

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