



Fall 2007

The OAPMRDD

Newsline

Ohio Association of Professionals for the Mentally Retarded/Developmentally Disabled
An Affiliated Department of the Ohio Education Association

Director Martin meets with OEA representatives

OEA representatives met with John Martin, the Director of the Ohio Department of MR/DD (ODMRDD), in an historic meeting in Columbus this summer.

Representing the OEA were OEA President Gary Allen, Secretary-Treasurer Jim Timlin, OEA Lobbyist Melissa Clark, OEA Board Member Jurgen von Tresckow and OAPMR/DD Chairperson Russ O'Brien. It was the first time that a Director of the Ohio Department of MR/DD has agreed to meet with Association representatives.

Gary Allen provided an overview of OEA, our members, and our interest in MR/DD

issues. He stated that OEA represents highly qualified staff members who want to continue to provide high quality services to their communities. Children and adults with disabilities depend on the expert services and existing infrastructures of the county boards of MR/DD. OEA members providing services through the county boards of MR/DD would like to remain on the service continuum.

Director Martin indicated that he will be relying on the MR/DD Futures Committee to make recommendations regarding the future of the MR/DD service delivery system in Ohio.

He looks forward to developing simplified standards and rules that would apply to all service providers.

These standards and rules would help to limit the administrative burden and increase accountability of services for people with MR/DD. Other topics discussed included the increase in the number of Medicaid waivers and the related increase in the fiscal responsibility of the county boards of MR/DD.

OEA representatives expressed their thanks regarding the attitude of this administration for more open communication between the OEA and the ODMRDD. OEA offered their resources to the ODMRDD to work together to develop a mutually beneficial MR/DD service delivery system to enhance our communities.

Jurgen von Tresckow
OEA/NEOEA Unit 10 Rep



Chairperson O'Brien to step down

The Ohio Association of Professionals for the MR/DD has made a lot of progress since it was formed in 1983. Much has changed since that time when we had to convince the OEA that MR/DD members had unique needs. Few members even knew what an MR/DD program was. Today, we're well represented within OEA and OAPMR/DD has many proud accomplishments.

The OAPMR/DD Officers, Executive Committee, and Staff have done a lot to improve the services offered to members. The most notable include the public relations grants, the Annual Leadership Conference, The OAPMR/DD Newsline, our quarterly newsletter, and our website at www.OAPMRDD.org.

It has been an honor to serve as OAPMR/DD Chairperson. However, it is time for a change. I will not be running for re-election at the end of this term. The time has come for someone else to take OAPMR/DD to the next level.

Russ O'Brien
OAPMR/DD Chairperson

All are welcome to the next OAPMR/DD Executive Committee meeting:

**Saturday
November 17th, 2007
10:30 am - 12:30 pm**

Hudson UniServ Office
591 Boston Mills Road
Hudson, Ohio
800/654-4034
330/929-2882



MR/DD Futures Committee charged to make recommendations for improvement, change in Ohio

The future of MR/DD services in Ohio may be in the hands of a new planning committee formed this summer. OAPMR/DD leaders acted immediately to request a seat on the committee.

The committee, called, *The MR/DD Futures Committee*, was created by statute and signed into law by Governor Strickland on June 30, 2007. It is charged to work with Ohio's MR/DD system stakeholders to recommend changes that will improve individual choice, support quality outcomes, assure that the system uses sound financial and service delivery practices, and address the long-term sustainability of funding.

ODMRDD Director John Martin chairs the committee. Twenty-two people have been appointed to the committee, representing a variety of organizations interested in Ohio's MR/DD system, and include an individual with MR/DD, a family member, and others in the MR/DD arena. The committee's work has been divided into four subcommittees: Accessing Services & Support, Financing, Delivering Quality Services, and Serving Populations with Specialized Needs. Although the nominated OEA member was not chosen to serve on the committee or a subcommittee, OAPMR/DD and OEA will have a voice in the process.

Three OAPMR/DD members, Jurgen von Tresckow, Jené Wilson, and Donna Palazzo, along with Bob Matkowski, OEA MR/DD Liaison, are on the list of expert witnesses who will testify to the subcommittees. The subcommittees meeting schedules and agendas can be found on the ODMRDD website (<http://odmrdd.state.oh.us/futures/odmrdd.htm>). Anyone can give input during subcommittee public hearings, on the ODMRDD website, or by sending an email to futures-feedback@odmrdd.state.oh.us.

OEA has worked closely with OAPMR/DD on this issue. Secretary-Treasurer Jim Timlin has been especially helpful in his communications to the ODMRDD and the Governor's office. OAPMR/DD will continue to monitor the progress of the commission. The recommendations of the committee are to be issued in a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by March, 2008.



Russ O'Brien
OAPMR/DD Chairperson

OAPMR/DD 2007-2008 calendar

Executive Committee meetings - open to all members!

- November 17th, 2007
- January 5th, 2008
- May 10th, 2008
- July 12th, 2008

OAPMR/DD Public Relations Grant Application Deadline

- October 31st, 2007

OAPMR/DD Annual Issues Conference @ Mohican State Lodge

- February 29th - March 1st, 2008

Lunch Mixer at OEA Rep Assemblies

- December 1st, 2007
- April 25th - 26th, 2008



The OAPMRDD Newsline

Newsletter of the Ohio Association of Professionals for the Mentally Retarded/Developmentally Disabled

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For membership information contact Joe McCrone, 4431 West 210th St., Fairview Park, OH 44126, 216/344-1703.



Leadership needed, OAPMR/DD members wanted

OAPMR/DD members always talk about the need for Association leadership training and development of new leaders. If we are truly serious about this, I didn't see any evidence at this year's OEA Summer Leadership Conference. To my knowledge only two MR/DD reps attended, and I was one of them.

I am now entering my last year as an OEA/NEOEA Unit 10 representative. I've represented the MR/DD locals and I know how important it is that we continue to have strong leadership and representation.

I understand the perception that OEA's Representative Assemblies, conferences, and training might not be relevant to the OAPMR/DD locals. But, it's a



two-way street. How will OEA ever know what's important to you if you don't interact with OEA?

More people need to become involved. We are a *membership* organization. If you don't feel relevant to the Association, make yourself heard by getting involved. Paying your dues is appreciated but doesn't shift your membership responsibility to others.

OEA provides many training programs on topics OAPMR/DD members have asked for and need. If you want training on bargaining, there is training available. If you want training on grievances, the same answer applies. If you want to know how the Association can impact state policy and legislation, ditto. Opportunities for involvement and leadership development are everywhere.

We still need three MR/DD members to serve on OEA subcommittees. I want to thank those who have already volunteered with this, but more volunteers are needed. Contact OAPMR/DD chairperson Russ O'Brien at MisterO4@aol.com and let him know you want to be involved.

Jurgen von Tresckow
OEA/NEOEA Unit 10 Rep

Members brainstorm to keep programs vital

At the NEOEA Leadership Academy this past summer, MR/DD staff discussed the critical issues facing members. While everyone was from northeast, the concerns will be recognized by MR/DD members around the state. Staff discussed the effects of privatization, LEAs not being accessible to students leaving MR/DDs, and students transitioning to adult services early - all contributing to loss of jobs.

Ideas to keep programs vital for consumers were also discussed:

- Work with regular education staff, locals, and districts to advocate for all students and a continuum of services for students with MR/DD
- Lobby to maintain MR/DD board services
- Market MR/DD programs
- Develop relationships with newspapers and community organizations

Jené Wilson
OAPMR/DD Vice-Chairperson



www.oapmrdd.org

OAPMR/DD Conference dates set for 2008

The Annual OAPMR/DD Conference will be held February 29th – March 1st at Mohican State Park. Friday night will feature OEA officers as keynote speakers, as well as an FCPE drive and the usual delicious dinner. Saturday is not yet fully planned, but we will definitely have Kathy McKinley talking about recent developments affecting MR/DDs.

All OAPMR/DD members are invited to attend. Watch your mail for registration details after Thanksgiving.

Jené Wilson
OAPMR/DD Vice-Chairperson



No "Local Focus" this issue

Question:

What do these OAPMR/DD locals have in common?

- ACCESS
- Atco-Beacon E.A.
- Columbiana County E.A.
- COPE
- Erie County MR/DD E.A.
- Knox Co. New Hope Center E.A.
- PCEAMR
- PATMR
- S.C.E.P.T.A.
- Weaver Workshop & Sup. Assn.

Answer:

Members from these locals have contributed articles to *The Newslines's* "Local Focus" feature.

They've written about news in their local, issues they're tackling, and what accomplishments they've achieved for staff, students, and clients. We've been updated about what's going on in Athens, Erie, Knox, Lake, Stark, Summit, Cuyahoga, Portage, Columbiana, and Franklin counties.

Question:

Where's this month's Local Focus? We don't have one because we haven't had any additional submissions from the locals. It's important to communicate our local news to other OAPMR/DD members around the state. If you're in a



"Write to us today!"

local that hasn't contributed in the past, or if it's been a while since your local has been featured, why not write a "Local Focus"?

Any member, or their LRC, can contribute. Send your submission of 125-150 words to:

Gloria Stansberry, editor
thestansberrys@gmail.com

Gloria Stansberry
The OAPMR/DD Newslines editor

