



Board of Commissioners

PRESS RELEASE

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Lake County Commissioners Proclaim March 2023 as Developmental Disability Awareness Month

PAINESVILLE, Ohio, March 2, 2023– An estimated 4.7 million Americans have an intellectual or developmental disability. Some of these may include autism, down syndrome, and cerebral palsy, to name a few. These conditions can cause an impairment in areas like language, learning, and physical behavior. In order to highlight and empower these individuals and their contributions, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, at their March 2, 2023 meeting, has proclaimed March “Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month” in Lake County.

Throughout the years, thousands of people with developmental disabilities have been supported by their families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers and again this year, the Board of Commissioners are encouraging everyone in the Lake County community to enrich, engage, and to stand “Side by Side” to provide vital support and resources to these incredible people. One of the most effective ways to increase awareness is through active participation in community activities that will enrich their lives by showing how much they are supported.

"Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a time when we strengthen our focus on encouraging the public to better understand the individuals we have the privilege to serve," Elfie Roman, Superintendent of the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Deepwood. "This year, our theme 'Uniquely Me In 2023' celebrates what makes us each different. We all have unique talents, obstacles to overcome, or diverse ways to approach life or a task; we are each unique and that's certainly something to celebrate."

"These children and adults simply want what we all aspire to; stay healthy, active, and involved as a vital part of our community," commented Commission President John R. Hamercheck. "It's important we shed light onto any barriers individuals with developmental disabilities might face and help them better connect with others in our Lake County family."



From the left: Heather Ryan, Diana Hollander, Ellen Petry, Commissioner John Plecnik, Larry Petry, Elfie Roman, Commissioner John Hamercheck, Commissioner Richard J. Regovich.

Commissioner John Plecnik added, "I am grateful to be in a position where I can help to raise awareness for these amazing individuals with developmental disabilities. We are so pleased to honor them and celebrate with them by designating March as "Developmental Disabilities Awareness" month. We encourage everyone to join with us in celebrating the successes of all Lake County citizens and acknowledge that through diversity in our community and workforce, our lives are enriched."

"We encourage people to learn more about the thousands of people we serve in Lake County," added Roman. "For example, Larry is a young man who receives services from the county board and is unable to communicate through typical means. He uses a communication device to tell his story, one that he primarily wrote. He perseveres and always has an extremely positive outlook. His uniqueness adds to his personality and shows remarkable dedication and strength that can encourage others. Larry embodies what it means to be 'Uniquely Me In 2023' and illustrates how something that makes a person unique is worth recognizing and celebrating."

"March is National Developmental Disability Awareness Month, which seeks to highlight the importance of inclusive communities where everyone feels welcome, accepted, and loved for who they are. Each of these children has unique abilities and experiences that contribute to the rich fabric of Lake County and I am proud to support them," said Commissioner Richard J. Regovich.

The Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Deepwood is located at 8121 Deepwood Blvd., Mentor, Ohio. For more information or questions about community resources or the services offered, contact them via phone at (440) 350-5100 for assistance.

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