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The Cuyahoga County Board of DD celebrates its 50th anniversary honoring those who have made significant contributions

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This year the Cuyahoga County Board of DD celebrates 50 years of supporting and empowering people with developmental disabilities to live, learn, work and play in the community. In honor of this golden milestone, the Board of DD held an anniversary luncheon on October 10th, recognizing volunteers, Achievement Award recipients and Hall of Fame Champions.

Among the volunteers recognized were those who donated 100 hours or more of service in 2016 and volunteers who reached a milestone ranging from 500 to 7,000 hours or more over the length of their service. To date, the Board of DD's volunteers have donated more than 417,000 hours.

Achievement Awards were presented to:

- Roy Williams, *Good Life Achievement Award* recipient, was celebrated for his ability and commitment to advocate, change perceptions and bring about positive awareness.
- Cast & Crew of Razzle Dazzle, an inclusive, performing arts group, was the recipient of the *Top Hat Award* and recognized for enhancing the quality of life for people with DD through volunteerism.
- Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, *Above and Beyond Impact Award* recipient, was honored for their partnership efforts with the Stir One Up Program advocacy group, promoting inclusion and civic involvement through a joint plastic bag project which removes unwanted trash (plastic bags) from our water system and repurposes them into sleeping mats for people who are homeless.
- Giant Eagle, *Employment First Award* recipient, was highlighted for its commitment to valuing the contributions of people with DD in the workplace through its career transition liaison project, a promising model to further enhance the company's diversity.
- Dr. Akram Boutros, CEO of MetroHealth, was recognized with the *Dr. Michael A. Donzella Leader of the Year Award* for his leadership in ensuring quality, comprehensive health care and employment for people with DD in an environment that is both diverse and inclusive.

The Board of DD also inducted several Champions into their Hall of Fame, recognizing their outstanding contributions DD system and the development of opportunities for people with DD in the community. Those honored included: Dr. Judith Botwin, psychologist who led advancements in support services for people with DD at a time when few existed; John and Carol Culley, life planners for people with DD, who have dedicated the past 20 years to sharing information and resources with parents/family members; William M. Denihan, retired CEO of the Cuyahoga County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board, who created a continuum of quality services for individuals with DD who also experience mental health illness.; SAW, Inc. Board of Trustees, a group of volunteer Board members committed to providing employment, training and career growth for persons with DD; and James and Dorothy May, loving parents, advocates, leaders, and friends to many, who have dedicated their lives to assuring people with DD have every opportunity to live the lives they desire.

The Cuyahoga County Board of DD serves more than 14,000 children and adults throughout the county. It is supported primarily by a local property tax last approved by voters in 2005.

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