

LEAP Celebrates 300th Nursing Home Transition

LEAP has reached a significant milestone in the area of nursing home transition services,

recently facilitating their 300th move of someone with a disability to community-based housing. LEAP began offering nursing home transitions services in 2009 after becoming an Ohio Home Choice service provider. Ohio's HOME Choice program transitions eligible Ohioans from institutional settings to home and community-based settings, where they receive appropriate services and supports at home and in their neighborhoods.

Established in 2008 with the goal of transitioning 2,000 Ohioans, the program has become a national leader in moving people back home. In addition to helping Ohioans with disabilities achieve this greater measure of independence, the Home Choice program also saves Ohio taxpayers an average of \$22,900 per person per year by avoiding higher nursing home costs. LEAP estimates that it has saved Ohio approximately \$7 million in state nursing home expenses since 2009.

Many individuals who can live independently in the community may nonetheless end up in nursing homes, often after a traumatic life event such as a stroke, protracted illness, or debilitating accident. Their resulting long hospital and rehabilitation stays can sometimes cause the loss of employment, existing housing and support systems, leaving people with no place to turn beyond remaining in a long-term care facility.

The nursing home transition services provided by LEAP restore greater dignity and independence to persons with disabilities, and can take six to twelve months to fully implement. Transition services start with a variety of assessments to determine whether or not someone can truly thrive in community-based housing. Additional steps include working with the individual and any family members to search for an appropriate new residence, arranging for needed in-home health and other support services, and furnishing the new housing using a modest, state-provided allowance.

The tremendous effort expended by LEAP staff on behalf of nursing home residents culminates on “moving day”, the long-anticipated time when an individual can finally leave their nursing facility and successfully transition into their community-based home. LEAP services typically continue for up to 90 days after move-in, and consist of home visits and additional resource location, depending on each person’s unique needs. “LEAP is committed to standing by each person as they decide for themselves where and how they want to live” said Kelley Clarett, Independent Living Specialist with LEAP.



“It’s a very personal and special journey back home for each individual.”

NEW 10-week Self-Advocacy Class Series Begins May 3

On Wednesday, May 3, LEAP will launch a free 10-week Self-Advocacy class series for persons with developmental disabilities. Covered topics include self-determination, nutrition & wellness, money management and more. All classes will be held on Wednesdays from 4-6 PM at the LEAP offices in Ohio City. To register, visit: www.leapinfo.org/events/2017/05/03/self-advocacy-class-series
Questions? Contact us: 216.696.2716 or leapinfo@leapinfo.org

Participants do not have to attend all 10 classes to enroll.



Save the Date! Thursday, Sept. 14

Celebrate LEAP's 36th Anniversary

Friends of LEAP are invited to join us for a 36th Anniversary bash on Thursday, Sept. 14 from 5-8 PM at the Breen Center for the Performing Arts in Ohio City. This year's event will feature a cocktail and "small plate" reception, silent auction, 50/50 raffle, and live entertainment by Latin Jazz artist Justo Saborit. Tickets are \$50 each and are currently available online at www.leapinfo.org. Many levels of corporate sponsorship are also available; visit www.leapinfo.org to learn more, or contact Tricia at tkuivinen@leapinfo.org to receive a sponsorship form.



Wish List

To help provide some of LEAP's field staff with tablets to use while serving consumers off site, LEAP is soliciting the donation of designated funds or technology retail gift cards such as Amazon, Apple, Walmart, Office Max and Staples. **Due to technology and data plan specifications, LEAP cannot accept used tablets or refurbished computers.** Gift cards can be dropped off or mailed to the LEAP office location: 2545 Lorain Ave, Cleveland, OH 44113. Designated donations for technology can be made by check or online: www.leapinfo.org/donate, with "Technology" written in the memo line. Thank you!

Terrell/Brennan Families Recognized

LEAP was proud to recognize the outstanding philanthropic support of the Doris Brennan and Glenn Terrell families at a special donor reception event held Thursday, March 23 in Ohio City. The legacy and vision of LEAP founder Doris Brennan lives on through her many family members, who continue to generously support LEAP's work on behalf of people with disabilities. LEAP expresses our sincere thanks to Glenn Terrell, who accepted the LEAP Family Legacy Award on behalf of his family, as well as the many other LEAP donors who help us to advance our mission of equality and inclusion for those with disabilities here in Northeast Ohio.



Glenn Terrell and Rick Terrell with LEAP Executive Director Melanie Hogan

Donate Today!

LEAP gladly accepts donations by cash, check or credit card, as well as gifts of securities, in-kind services or items of value. Donate securely online: www.leapinfo.org/support/donate, or use the enclosed envelope to mail your gift. For more information about how you can best support the work of LEAP or to request a personal meeting, contact Melanie at 216.696.2716 Ext. 836 or mhogan@leapinfo.org.

Dear Treasured Friends:

On behalf of the board and staff of Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP), we are proud to introduce you to our new stakeholder publication, **LEAPLines**.

We hope you will enjoy reading these stories as much as we enjoyed creating them. Thanks to the tireless dedication of our staff, LEAP has reached some truly remarkable organizational milestones in recent months, among them our recent three-year re-accreditation by CARF International, winning the Ohio Governor's Council on People with Disabilities (GCPD) 2016 Advocacy Award, developing a self-pay model for employment services, and facilitating our 300th nursing home transition.

We also want to let you know that we are in a new leadership recruitment season here at LEAP, and are actively seeking members to join our Board of Directors as well as our Fund Development committee. If you are committed to supporting independence for people with disabilities in our community, and have any professional expertise to lend, please consider joining our leadership team. We have established position descriptions for each role, and invite you to contact us at leapinfo@leapinfo.org or 216.696.2716 in order to secure more information or to apply.

We take this opportunity to thank you, our friends, donors and stakeholders, along with past and present board members, and our high quality, dedicated staff, for your ongoing support and contributions that allow us to continue the vision of our founder Doris Brennan, and enhance the freedom and independence of LEAP's many consumers every day. We hope you enjoy our newsletter and be further inspired to help LEAP provide the highest quality services to our consumers, both now and in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Melanie Hogan,
Executive Director



Brian Roof,
Board President



LEAP Re-accredited for Three Years by CARF International

CARF International announced that Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) has earned Three-year Accreditation based on a recently completed survey. "The leadership and staff members of LEAP are congratulated for their commitment to quality and continuous quality improvement" noted the final CARF survey report.



This recognition by CARF International represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization. LEAP has demonstrated to a team of CARF surveyors during an on-site visit its commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable, and of the highest quality.

Among the many accolades included in the CARF final report are the observation that LEAP provides a "high level of compassion and dedication to assisting consumers in enhancing their quality of life" and that "LEAP excels in its advocacy and public policy endeavors." According to Melanie Hogan, Executive Director of LEAP, "these areas of excellence are sources of immense pride for me and the LEAP staff, who are privileged to serve some of Northeast Ohio's most vulnerable residents and help them realize the highest possible levels of personal independence and empowerment."

Employment Services Update

Fee-based Employment Services

LEAP now offers comprehensive employment services for those individuals who may want to participate in a job search outside of established county referral systems and instead use a “self-pay” model to help them secure employment.

Now Available

LEAP’s dedicated employment staff hold certificates in specialized employment models for people with disabilities, such as Customized Employment and Employment First, and have helped dozens of consumers to secure stable employment with local companies including KeyBank, Great Lakes Brewery, and University Hospitals.

Working with LEAP means individuals will have the opportunity to:

- explore what they like and dislike
- sharpen job skills
- develop a career path
- express personal insights and opinions
- work with a dedicated team
- be in charge of an customized employment plan



For information about pricing or to schedule a personal employment consultation, contact LEAP’s Employment Services Director, Julia Donovan at 216-696-2716 x804 or at jdonovan@leapinfo.org.

LEAP Recognizes KeyBank for Commitment to Inclusion

Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) recently recognized KeyBank for their extraordinary commitment to hiring, supporting and accommodating people with disabilities in their workplace. KeyBank continually builds a culture of inclusion by proactively recruiting, hiring and developing people with differing abilities, and training both management and staff on best practices designed to foster diversity in their workplace.

The inaugural Workplace Diversity and Inclusion award was presented in person to representatives of KeyBank on Oct. 13 at the Breen Center in Ohio City, and was accepted by Poppie Parish, KeyBank’s Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer. “KeyBank is humbled to receive LEAP’s Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Award. Key has long-recognized that diversity and inclusion are crucial to creating a dynamic and fulfilling professional environment. Partnerships with organizations like LEAP serve as tent poles to our inclusive workplace, one where diversity among employees drives innovation, improves self-confidence, and inclusion helps shape a better future.”



Photo Caption: L-R
Leap Board Member Kandy Kricik,
Julia Donovan, Ryan Slaby,
Luci Workman, Nick Corbo,
Poppie Parish, Bill Marras,
and Shanna Delgado



LEAP Recognized by Governor Kasich for Advocacy Excellence



Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) has been recognized repeatedly for achieving excellence in Advocacy work on behalf of people with disabilities. A recent example is the Ohio Governor's Council on People with Disabilities (GCPD) Advocacy Award, presented to LEAP in October, 2016 and accepted in Columbus by LEAP Executive Director Melanie Hogan. The Advocacy Award recognizes individuals or groups who demonstrate outstanding contributions to one or more of the populations served by the GCPD. "This award is a testament to the talent and dedication of LEAP staff members who are tirelessly devoted to creating a world of greater accessibility for some of Ohio's most vulnerable citizens," said Hogan.

The Governor's Council on People with Disabilities (GCPD) serves as an advisory council for Governor Kasich and General Assembly on statewide disability issues. Learn more by visiting the Council online: www.gcpd.ohio.gov

LEAP Asks Ohio Legislators to Reinstate Disability Services Funding

LEAP has collaborated with other Centers for Independent Living (CILs) across Ohio recently in an effort to petition the Ohio General Assembly to restore and protect state funding needed to support the important work of the centers on behalf of Ohioans with disabilities. LEAP Executive Director Melanie Hogan recently provided testimony in support of Independent Living Services before the Ohio House of Representatives Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, specifically asking the Ohio legislature to reinstate the CIL budget line item (415-520) into the Ohio General Revenue Fund.

If enacted, this decision could provide up to \$1.7 million in annual funding for Ohio's Centers for Independent Living. According to Hogan "This amount will ensure the Centers' ability to deliver an increased level of independent living services in a time of increased need, and to expand the availability of independent living services to more Ohioans throughout our existing service areas as well as in areas of the state where services are not available. This investment will also bring Ohio in line with other states in the region that invest an even greater amount in the dignity and quality of life of persons with disabilities."

In addition to providing needed testimony in support of Ohio's CILs, LEAP also hosted a legislative day at their Ohio City offices on January 23, and welcomed several Northeast Ohio elected officials to learn more about the realities and needs of Ohioans with disabilities, and how organizations like LEAP work to enhance their quality of life. LEAP remains committed to an ongoing effort to keep the needs of Ohioans with disabilities at the forefront of the bi-annual state budget process. Your state elected officials also need to hear from you.



Photo Caption: L-R Ohio Elected Officials Matt Dolan, Michael Skindell, Nickie Antonio, John Eklund, and Kent Smith with LEAP staffers Donna Prease, Melanie Hogan and Tim Milkovich at LEAP offices.

To find your state representative or senator online, visit <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/find-my-legislators>



Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential

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LEAPLines is a free publication of Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP), a 501-c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to advancing a society of equal opportunity for all persons, regardless of disability. For more information about LEAP services or to schedule an appointment, please contact us:
216.696.2716
leapinfo@leapinfo.org
www.leapinfo.org



Quantum LEAP Helps Participants Bloom

Preston Carter is a well-known presence around Quantum LEAP (QL), an adaptive recreation program for people with disabilities. Entering his 9th year with our program, he may be what some call “a lifer.”

Sherri Morris, Preston’s mother, wanted Preston involved in after-work activities. Sherri had heard of QL, and thought it was a great opportunity to get Preston involved in activities that he may enjoy. But Preston was introverted, and was not interested in leaving the house.

With some prodding from his mom, Preston began participating with Quantum LEAP in the early part of 2009 as a shy, introverted man nearing forty. In his first year, he participated in many activities including Walking Club, Bowling League, and dances. He remained that shy, introverted man for some time, still preferring to be left alone. Yet, at the same time, something was happening: Sherri started to notice changes, however small, in Preston. Over time, he started to come out of his shell.

Fast forward to today, and you will see Preston is no longer the same man. He is now very vocal about engaging in different activities, and participates in most of the weekly programs Quantum LEAP offers. Sherri once wanted to see a play arranged by Quantum LEAP, and brought Preston with her. Little did she know it would catch Preston’s interest, and he has since developed into quite the theatergoer.

With all of these activities Preston participates in, he wears a watch to keep his mother on top of things, reminding Sherri when it is time to leave for an activity, especially bowling. Preston has grown into a skilled bowler and actively competes with his friends. Preston and Sherri are now a big part of the Quantum LEAP extended family that embraces everyone and tries to bring out his or her best.

To see a complete listing of Quantum LEAP activities or to register, visit our website.
www.leapinfo.org/home-community/recreation

