

LEAP and Winking Lizard Tavern Collaborate on Hiring

Most of us know the great feeling that comes from thinking our job is a good fit for our skills and experience, and those who find work through LEAP's employment program are no exception.

When Te'chaun came to LEAP for help finding a job, he had practically no work experience. But what he lacked in experience, Te'chaun made up for with his unfailing enthusiasm. A recent high school graduate, Te'chaun had worked at a car wash for several months, but said he was looking for steadier work when he contacted LEAP for help.

Te'chaun's employment journey with LEAP included a wide range of services, from completing a Community-Based Assessment at Walgreens, to preparing a resume and learning interview techniques, to gaining a better understanding of how to search online for jobs. His LEAP job coach observed that he presented as a willing and quick learner who already possessed excellent customer service skills.

"LEAP showed me how to look for and interview for a job," said Te'chaun. "They helped me remain focused on my goal. I knew that once I had a job I liked I would be great at it." Te'chaun was eventually offered a job as busser and dishwasher at the Winking Lizard Tavern in Bedford. Te'chaun is also responsible for removing trash and making sure the restaurant and restrooms are in top shape for customers.



According to the Winking Lizard, Te'chaun was right about doing a good job once he had the opportunity. Te'chaun's supervisor Shannon recently shared her observations of Te'chaun with LEAP: "I wish everyone came to work with the positive attitude Te'chaun has. We love having him here. Not only is Te'chaun a positive force, he's also prompt, offers to work if someone calls off, and has shown a noticeable improvement in skills since he started working here."

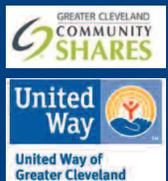


Te'chaun also feels great about his role at Winking Lizard. "Right now, I'm very happy here. I'd like to save up for my own car. Maybe one of these days, I can even be a supervisor, and help other people find their place at the Winking Lizard."

For information about LEAP's employment services or help finding a job, please contact Julia at 216.696.2716 or employmentservices@leapinfo.org.

Support LEAP Through Your Employer's Fall Workplace Giving Campaigns

Autumn brings cooler temperatures, falling leaves and the annual workplace giving campaign season at many Northeast Ohio employers. For many years, LEAP has participated in both the United Way of Greater Cleveland and the Greater Cleveland Community Shares workplace giving campaigns, which provide vital financial resources to non-profit organizations like LEAP.



The annual United Way charitable campaign has Northeast Ohio roots, growing out of the Cleveland-area "community-chest" philanthropic campaigns of the early 20th century. The idea is that by pooling funds from a wide variety of donors and redistributing them to outcome-driven local non-profits, United Way can leverage the community impact of charitable contributions for the most urgent community needs, and better track the resulting philanthropic impact.

Greater Cleveland Community Shares is also a "home-grown" charitable giving campaign, but is a more recent incarnation of workplace giving, with a focus on advocacy and social change organizations. Both campaigns allow donors to pledge a designated portion of their annual workplace compensation to the charitable causes of their choice. Donating to LEAP through a workplace giving campaign allows you to break your gift into smaller amounts over the course of an entire year, easing your budget and freeing you from writing checks or making online donations.

Selecting LEAP to receive your designated workplace giving contributions is easy! Just write in Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) on the designation form(s) and return the completed form to your employer. And thank you in advance for selecting LEAP to receive your workplace campaign donations.*

*Due to revised charitable recipient criteria, LEAP is not participating in the Combined Federal Campaign for 2018.

A Message from Our Director



Isn't it remarkable that LEAP is celebrating our 36th year of serving persons with disabilities and working to advance a society of equal opportunity for all, regardless of disability!

On behalf of the board and staff of Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP), I want to recognize and thank our many stakeholders who came together to make our recent 36th Anniversary Celebration such a success! It was wonderful to see so many old friends and also make some new ones as we celebrated the 36-year legacy established by LEAP founder Doris Brennan. More than 150 guests, including eight members of Doris's family, were on hand at the Breen Center to share LEAP's special night that raised nearly \$30K in support of vital programs and services for people with disabilities. Thank you!

As we move into autumn here in Northeast Ohio, I am reminded to invite you to continue supporting LEAP through your employer's annual workplace giving campaigns such as UnitedWay and Community Shares, and also through LEAP's own 2017-18 Annual Fund campaign, which will kick off on #GivingTuesday, a national day of charitable giving set for Nov. 28. Watch your inbox and follow LEAP on social media including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn for more information about these campaigns, which comprise a vital lifeline of financial support to LEAP and allow us to offer a comprehensive and high-quality array of services to some of Northeast Ohio's most vulnerable residents. Fluctuations in the nation's healthcare policy and continued uncertainties about the availability of Medicaid for many persons with disabilities have cast a shadow over years of progress in national disability policy. But with your help, I remain confident that LEAP can continue to be an effective disability advocate on the local, state and national level, as well as a premier disability service provider here in Cleveland, for many more years to come.

Thank you in advance for your support of LEAP!

Sincerely,

LEAP Benefits Services Now Accessible Through Self-Pay

Individuals with disabilities who need formal benefits assistance now have another avenue to obtain those services from LEAP's Certified Benefits Specialists. A self-pay option has been developed for benefits services, including applications for Social Security and Medicaid, as well as Benefits Analysis, a process whereby individuals can understand the impact of employment on their eligibility for public benefits. This can be vital information to secure prior to accepting any job offers.

LEAP recognizes that there may be cases where individuals have the desire and the ability to pay for certain services on their own. While there may be some exclusions based on Federal and state law and regulations, LEAP can permit most consumers who are interested to pay for services themselves, thereby expediting the results. A Fee for Service Screening and a Service Agreement is required prior to the commencement of LEAP services, to ensure that eligibility criteria has been verified and that there is a thorough understanding of all aspects of the arrangement.



If you or someone you know may be interested in pursuing LEAP's benefits services through self-pay, please contact Cheryl Gorham at (216) 696-2716 or cgorham@leapinfo.org.



Anniversary After-Work Party Raises Nearly \$30K for Vital Programs

Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) celebrated 36 years of serving persons with disabilities on Thursday, Sept 14 with an after-work party and benefit concert at the Breen Center for the Performing Arts in Ohio City. The evening included a reception, the auction and raffle of 29 unique Northeast Ohio-themed packages, and a concert by Latin Jazz Artist Justo Saborit. In addition, LEAP presented the Cleveland Foundation with their 2017 Outstanding Community Partner Award. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, donors and guests, LEAP raised nearly \$30K in support of vital programs and services for persons with disabilities. LEAP extends a heartfelt thank you to our Presenting Sponsors KeyBank, Ciuni & Panichi, Cleveland Clinic, and Walkway Restoration, and to the members of LEAP Founder Doris Brennan's family, for helping to make our 36th Anniversary celebration such a great success.



Latin Jazz Artist Justo Saborit



KeyBank Employee and LEAP Consumer
Ryan Slaby with parents Gary and Jane



Debra Arnell-See and Charles See with
LEAP Executive Director Melanie Hogan



LEAP Employment Specialist
Marilyn Casey at the Raffle Table



36th Anniversary Guest Celebrate by Dancing on Stage



Members of LEAP Founder Doris Brennan and Glen Terrell Families with
LEAP Executive Director Melanie Hogan (Center)

Ways to Support LEAP

Most LEAP programs and services are offered free of charge, or at very low cost, to our hundreds of consumers. As a non-profit organization, LEAP relies on the continued generosity of our program partners, donors and friends to support our work on behalf of persons with disabilities. Thank you in advance for using the methods below to help LEAP to advance a society of equal opportunity for all, regardless of disability.

Donate Online:

Online gifts to LEAP can be made safely and conveniently at leapinfo.org/donate.

Matching Gifts:

Many Northeast Ohio companies will match your donation to LEAP, effectively doubling your contribution. Please check with your employer to see if they provide matching gifts and request a matching gift form for LEAP to sign; send this along with your gift and we'll complete the request!

United Way & Community Shares:

Don't forget LEAP during your fall 2017 workplace giving campaigns. LEAP accepts designated gifts through both United Way and Community Shares. Simply write "Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP)" on the designation line when filling out your commitment form(s).

Planned Giving and Gifts of Securities:

For information about planned giving opportunities or making a gift of securities to LEAP, please contact our Finance office at 216.696.2716 Ext. 806.

LEAP Annual Fund:

LEAP's Annual Fund appeal is a great way to lend your support to vital programs for persons with disabilities. The 2017 Annual Fund campaign begins online on #GivingTuesday, Nov. 28, and runs through Jan. 15, 2018. Watch for more details online, in your mailbox and on social media.

Amazon Smile:

Your regular Amazon purchases can benefit LEAP through Amazon Smile, a charitable donation portal within Amazon.com. Simply place your orders through smile.amazon.com and designate LEAP to receive a contribution from Amazon based on your eligible purchases.

Mitchell's Ice Cream Gift Cards:

Northeast Ohio may be cooling down, but Mitchell's offers great fall flavors of ice cream, including Caramel Apple and Pumpkin Spice. Gift Cards are available in \$10, \$15 and \$25 amounts, with 25% of your purchase coming back to LEAP. Order your gifts cards online and they will be mailed to you: www.leapinfo.org/support/giftcards. Good at all Mitchell's locations.



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



LEAP Recognizes the Cleveland Foundation for Three Decades of Collaboration

Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) has presented their 2017 Outstanding Community Partner Award to the Cleveland Foundation in recognition of three decades of formal collaboration. The 2017 Outstanding

Community Partner award was presented in person to Foundation representatives Paul Putman and Michelle Blackford on Thursday, Sept. 14 at LEAP's 36th Anniversary celebration at the Breen Center in Ohio City.

According to LEAP Executive Director Melanie Hogan, "Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP) recognizes the Cleveland Foundation for their longstanding commitment to disability services program funding in Northeast Ohio. The Cleveland Foundation has been one of LEAP's longest standing partners, first supporting our work on behalf of persons with disabilities in 1987 by funding advocacy efforts

dedicated to the struggle toward equality and dignity for people with disabilities.

The Cleveland Foundation's clear dedication to programs that meet key community needs for vulnerable populations has provided LEAP with over a million dollars of financial support over the past three decades. The Foundation has supported growth and innovation in LEAP programming, and has stood beside LEAP in the most challenging of years. The Foundation's belief in our mission, and our ability to meet emerging critical community needs, has been used to create and sustain the most comprehensive and high-quality array of programs and services designed for persons with disabilities in Northeast Ohio."



Cleveland Foundation Program Officers Michelle Blackford (L) and Paul Putman (R) with Melanie Hogan (Center)

