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Prestigious awards honor community volunteers and employers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, March 5, 2010 –

At the 16th annual Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities Community Recognition Dinner on Sunday, March 7, seven prestigious awards will be handed out and 150 community members will be recognized.

- Community Recognition Award Recipients are individuals, businesses, and organizations that welcome people with developmental disabilities and help them to be a part of our community. Those being honored have been recognized for providing support, friendship and encouragement that all of us need at home, at work, at school and in the community:
 - They are coaches like Nick Argentati at Badin High School. Nick helped make a dream come true for David Campbell - David is the Badin High School basketball team's manager.
 - And business owners like Ralph Barker, who opened up his storefront for space to display holiday ornaments created by people working in our InsideOut Studio.
 - And volunteers like Bill Freeland. Bill became friends with a person who is paralyzed from the neck down. Bill changed his world by setting up a computer and helping him learn voice recognition software to navigate the internet and compose emails.
- The winner of the Young Pioneer Award is Al Furter. The Young Pioneer Award is presented to a family of a young child receiving and/or is eligible for services from the Butler County Board of DD. This family supports the Board by referring others, promoting the programs to others, and by displaying a strong commitment to the agency's mission and philosophy. The family continuously advocates and supports their child as well as other families and their children.
- The winner of the Employer of the Year Award is the Butler County Clerk of Court's Office. The Employer of the Year Award is for a company or organization that is a long-term employer of individuals with disabilities and has been accommodating in creating and maintaining jobs for individuals. The company or organization has shown expanded advocacy efforts beyond employment.
- The winners of the Volunteer of the Year Award are the members of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity of Miami University. The Volunteer of the Year Award is presented to an individual or organization from the community that volunteers their time and talents throughout the years to promote services and enrich the lives of individuals with disabilities.

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- The winner of the Lloyd Harris Community Award is David Campbell. The Lloyd Harris Community Award is presented to a person with a developmental disability who has made significant contributions to their community through their employment or volunteer service.
- The winner of the Jeff and Debbie Crouse Self-Advocate Award is Tim Zellner. The Jeff and Debbie Crouse Self-Advocacy Award is presented to a Self-Advocate involved with the Board's Programs who provides leadership on important issues, has his/her voice heard and able to get their message out, helps individuals and is dedicated to see things through to the finish. The winner for this award is chosen by Self-Advocates of Butler County who belong to Empowered People Reaching Out.
- The winners of the Fred Valerius Family Lifetime Achievement Award are the Kabel family. The Family Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to a family that has helped pioneer opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities through long-term advocacy and volunteer services. These efforts began prior to 1975 and are still continuing today.

The individuals to be recognized Sunday demonstrate a selfless ability to give of themselves for the sake of others. They each are deserving of some very special recognition.

They each have an impressive story to tell, although they are too modest to tell it themselves. We were honored to bring their accomplishments into the spotlight on Sunday evening.

The dinner takes place at 5:30 p.m., at the Cincinnati Marriott North off Union Center Boulevard in West Chester. John Lomax, Channel 12 news anchor, is serving as the emcee. Butler County Probate Court Judge Randy Rogers is a guest speaker and performers from the Board's adult centers will provide musical entertainment. The awards portion of the program begins at about 6 p.m.

For more information contact Wendy Planicka, Communications Coordinator, at (513) 317-0679.

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