

Published by the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities
"Helping people to live, learn and work in our community"

Jed Morison ends long, happy career in FCBDD leadership

Jed Morison first appeared in *Dateline* 45 years ago. The inaugural issue, printed during the snowy February of 1978, identified him in two ways: Morison was "the administrative assistant who helps decide when schools should be closed due to bad weather," and also the point of contact for readers "to send us your comments, suggestions, and story ideas."

He had a hand – usually as the writer, and often the photographer – in nearly 500 *Dateline* issues that followed. In the newsletter and many other publications, Morison sought to document the work of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, to note the accomplishments of staff, and to champion the people and families served.

"He thought it was important," said his wife, Joyce Brown Morison. "He saw it as a way to have a history of what went on, what's going on, and what will go on. And Jed wanted people to be recognized."

This month's *Dateline* is the last in which Morison will be listed as Superintendent and CEO. He is retiring at the end of December after a 54-year career in public service, including 24 years at the helm of FCBDD.

"He came in with a style of management that brings people together," said his friend and former colleague Frank New, who served as director of special education for the state and also as an FCBDD administrator.



Superintendent/ CEO Jed Morison touched by heartfelt remarks at Salute

"Jed could do the political thing, which is great when it comes time for levies. But he also wanted to make the agency better, and better known, every day," New said. "He'd meet with someone and say, 'I'd like you to come out and see our program.' And all of a sudden, there was another person who saw all that people with disabilities could do. That's the way Jed played it, and he played it hard."

Morison often says he's honored to have witnessed a civil rights movement for people with developmental disabilities, with dramatic progress in community living, employment, education, recreation and self-determination. "Jed is always listening, always calling you back if you have a question or concern or want to share something," said self-advocate Christine Brown. "Some people are not like that. I have an idea that, when Jed retires, he'll still be available to talk. It won't be like losing someone."

See Morison on page 6

Dot Yeager will serve as next FCBDD Superintendent/CEO

Members of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities have named Dot Yeager, the agency's Chief Business Officer, to succeed Jed Morison as Superintendent/CEO starting Jan. 1, 2024.

Yeager and Morison have worked side by side for the past 21 years. "Her steady leadership is a big reason services, staffing and finances remain stable," Board President Michael Underwood said. "After an extensive search and interview process, we know Dot is the right person for the job."

Yeager has a master's in business administration and maintains superintendent certification from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. She previously worked in the West Virginia governor's office and as an audit manager with Deloitte.

She is behind much of the good that has happened at FCBDD over the past two decades, said Morison, who is retiring at the end of the year. "I think this is an outstanding decision."



Dot Yeager, Chief Business Officer, named Superintendent/CEO January 2024

Gathering celebrates Jed Morison, local pandemic “heroes”

More than 500 people attended a salute for the outgoing Superintendent/CEO of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Jed Morison, and the city and county leaders who helped guide the community through the pandemic.

Held at Villa Milano on Oct. 25, the event drew attendees from FCBDD, provider and community partner organizations, people and families served by FCBDD, and local officials.

Morison, who is set to retire at the end of December, was honored for his 54-year career in public service. The salute also recognized the pandemic leadership of Columbus Public Health Commissioner Dr. Mysheika Roberts; Franklin County Public Health Commissioner Joe Mazzola, Franklin County Commissioners John O’Grady, Erica Crawley and Kevin Boyce; and former FCBDD Board President Beth Savage, who is leaving the board due to term limits.

The celebration featured lots of heartfelt remarks and smiles. Brutus Buckeye stopped by for laughs and, of course, photos.



Superintendent/CEO Jed Morison and Ethan Boerner hand out awards



Board Member Beth Savage and daughter Ellie accept award



Board member Marci Straughter introduces Marcus Thorpe, emcee



County Health Commissioner Joe Mazzola and Brutus Buckeye



Columbus Public Health Commissioner Dr. Mysheika Roberts



Franklin County Commissioner John O’Grady



Emcee Marcus Thorpe enjoys Villa Milano cake with Superintendent/CEO Jed Morison



Self-Advocates Christine Brown and Marci Straughter (Board member) with Superintendent/CEO Morison



Dave Powers of the Dave Powers Trio and Supt./CEO Morison



Franklin County Public Health guests with Brutus Buckeye



Special thanks to Robinson Dunham for assisting with set up for the event and to Todd Lilley for his assistance with special guest Brutus Buckeye



Former FCBDD Superintendent Stephen Pleasnick



Dot Yeager, Chief Business Officer and newly named Franklin County Board of DD Superintendent/CEO beginning Jan. 2024



Adam Helbling



Former Board member Dean Fadel



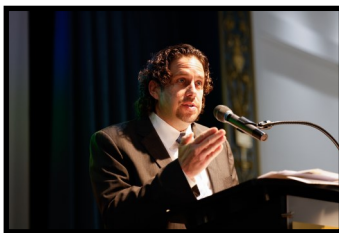
State Senator Hearcel Craig



Rebecca Love, Director of Early Childhood Education



Current Board President Michael Underwood



Dr. Luke Henn



FCBDD retiree and long-time friends Frank and Lois New



Superintendents Jed Morison and Steve Oster of Knox County



The Morison and Henn families



Brutus Buckeye with Service Coordination staff



Administration staff member Marla Battiste and husband



State Senator Hearcel Craig and former Board Member Linda Craig



State Representative Mary Lightbody presents proclamation to Superintendent/CEO Morison



Former Director of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Jeff Davis and Christine Brown



Superintendent/CEO Morison shares remarks and thanks for the special gift of a personalized Boston Rocker



Friends from ARC Industries

Special thanks to Graham Stokes for capturing the event in photographs.

Advocates seek to educate about supported decision-making

A network of Ohio self-advocates, families and professionals has launched a website and is holding monthly meetings to help raise awareness of supported decision-making.

The Supported Decision-Making Network of Ohio says the aim is to empower people with developmental disabilities to direct their own lives to the greatest extent possible by selecting people who, when needed, will help with decisions.

Embracing that simple practice can reduce what are sometimes unnecessary guardianships, said Josh Young, director of operations at the Ohio Network for Innovation.

"We have tended to judge capacity as an all-or-nothing thing. People either have the capacity to make these decisions, or they don't," he said. "And that is not accurate."

Seeing people with disabilities as vulnerable or in need of protection also can deprive them of the opportunity to learn, grow and make decisions. Many schools, Young said, have encouraged families to make guardianship a part of transition planning. "There has been this pipeline between schools and guardianship," he said. "We don't have to destroy that pipeline; we just have to change the information flowing through it."



According to the National Resource Center for Supported Decision Making, a dozen or so states have enacted supported decision-making legislation. An attempt in Ohio was scrapped earlier this year after some disability-rights advocates said they feared the statute could lead to unwelcome regulation.

Young said that, for now, the new network is focused on education. "We'd like to get the word out so that more people know about it," he said. "Every month when we meet, we start with someone telling a real-life story about supported decision-making."

The Supported Decision-Making Network of Ohio holds online meetings from noon to 1:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. For more information, go to sdmno.org

Help Children Services grant holiday wishes

Franklin County Children Services needs help from the public to fulfill holiday wish lists for thousands of youth under agency care.

Donors can contribute cash, sponsor one or more children and shop from their wish lists, or drop off new, unwrapped toys and gifts.

For details,
go to fccs.us/holiday-wish,
email holidaywish@fccs.us
or call 614-275-2525.



Sign up for FCBDD weather alerts

Families, guardians and staff members can sign up for text alerts to make sure they know about closures affecting school, early childhood and recreation programs of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

To register, send an email to emergencyalerts@fcbdd.org and make sure you give your name, telephone text number and email address.

You will then receive an email with instructions on how to activate emergency text alerts from FCBDD.

Those who signed up previously do not need to re-register.

Cancellation of programs and/or transportation also will be announced on local radio and television stations. ARC Industries and other adult-services providers follow their own procedures and are not included in FCBDD alerts.



Board facilities generally remain open unless there is a level 3 snow emergency. Even during closures, a **24-hour phone line is always answered:**

614-464-2743

Good For You

Notable achievements in the FCBDD community

We are grateful to Coats 4 Children for the generous donation of warm outerwear for students in need so that families in our Early Childhood Education program can pick up coats before the really cold weather hits. Coats 4 Children is a local nonprofit that distributes outerwear through schools and community organizations.





Congratulations to Creative Housing for receiving a generous donation of \$4,000 from Walmart to spend on holiday treats for residents. And thanks to longtime Creative Housing resident Sebina Johnson for accepting the "big check" during a presentation at the Georgesville Road store. Sebina knew just how to work the mic and the crowd!

Congratulations to Gary Tonks, President and CEO of the Arc of Ohio, for receiving the Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Arc Convention. Gary has been advocating for people with developmental disabilities and their families for nearly 50 years.



Career Milestones

30 Years

Laurie Green-Laubert

15 Years

Shiann Bennett
Tekesha Gaines
Latonya Johnson
Sean Patterson

10 Years

Jose Bennett
Jennifer Hewston
Susan Kuertz

5 Years

Jessica Arnett
Thomas Deflorio
Joshua Franck



Hearty thanks to Amy Magginis (administration) and others who helped with recent gatherings at Villa Milano to celebrate Superintendent/CEO Jed Morison and at the Railhouse to honor Early Childhood Education Director Becky Love. They were both wonderful retirement parties!

Register by Dec. 7 for Project STIR training

Interested in learning how you or someone you know can become a better advocate? The Ohio Self Determination Association and the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities are sponsoring a three-day Project STIR leadership training event Dec. 12-14.

Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility) is a training program aimed at self-advocates. It gives people with developmental disabilities the tools the advocate for themselves, mobilize others and gain leadership experience.

People who have SELF or Level One Medicaid waivers can arrange to pay the registration fee (\$575) through the Participant Directed Goods and Services (PDGS). Franklin County residents should contact their service coordinators for authorization of the service. Registration deadline is Dec. 7.

The event takes place Dec. 12, 13 and 14 at the Crown Plaza Hotel-Columbus North, 6500 Double Tree Blvd. Hotel rooms are not included in the registration fee; group rates are available. For more information, contact Cara Lloyd at clloyd@dpioh.com or 614-348-1961.

To register, go to <https://tinyurl.com/2vewbeyy>

Guardianship Services Board still needs help with gifts for clients

Support for the annual Holiday Wish List Gift Drive for people served by the Franklin County Guardianship Service Board (GSB) is lagging, and officials hope to see an uptick so that all clients have at least one gift to open.

"It's been a little bit of a struggle," said Aimee Somerville, business operations assistant at the GSB. "We're usually farther along by this time of year."

The GSB serves as the guardian of last resort to roughly 500 people with intellectual disabilities, cognitive impairments, dual diagnoses and those who are medically fragile. Most receive just \$35 to \$50 a month in discretionary spending. "These gifts really mean a lot," Somerville said.

For information and links to the lists, email guardianshipserviceboard@franklincountyohio.gov or go to: <https://www.guardian.franklincountyohio.gov/post/2023-gsb-holiday-wishlist-gift-drive>



Calendar

December, 2023

- 11/29-12/1 OACB (Ohio Association of County Boards) Annual Convention.
- 4 Public Hearing on the Annual Action/ Strategic Plan and IDEA Funding. To connect to the hearing by phone, call 1-929-205-6099. Zoom Link:
[FCBDD Public Hearing Link \(Zoom\)](#)
- 5 Self-Advocate Advisory Council at 10:00 a.m.
- 14 FCBDD Early Childhood Education and the Mid-Ohio Food Collective Produce Drive Through from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the ECEFC Bus Lane (accessed via Marilyn Lane). For more details, contact Sarah Gillilan at 614-342-5803.
- 18 Early Childhood Education and West Central Virtual/Professional Day.
- 19 Parent/Teacher Day, classes closed.
- 20 Winter recess begins for ECE and West Central School. Classes resume **January 2, 2024**.
- 25 Merry Christmas.

Dateline

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Michael Underwood, President
Marie Crawford, Vice President
William W. Wilkins, Secretary
John Bickley
Samuel Davis
Beth Savage
Marci Straughter

Superintendent/CEO **Jed W. Morison**

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities does not discriminate in employment or services on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or disability.

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www.fcbdd.org



Morison (continued from page 1)

Morison's affability and open-door policies extended to FCBDD employees. He made a habit of regular visits to all of the agency's sites and departments, from the bus compound and service coordination to schools and early-childhood centers. He didn't need to meet people more than once to remember their names, jobs and, likely, a personal detail.



Superintendent/CEO Jed Morison and Marci Straughter, Board member and Self-Advocate

Amy Magginis, executive assistant to Morison since 2017, was already an agency veteran when she decided to move to the superintendent's office. She admits to wondering whether the new job would match up with all she'd heard about Morison's gift for personal connection, kindness and good humor. "I wasn't disappointed," she said. "And I think that says a lot."

Listing all or even most of Morison's accomplishments would strain the *Dateline* format. He has been a school bus driver, counselor and direct-support professional, teacher, Ohio Special Olympics Director, and both Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent/CEO at FCBDD. He served in elective office on the Bexley City Council for 14 years, coached multiple youth sports teams, and was appointed to many boards, commissions and task forces.

Morison isn't yet sure of his future projects, but he and Joyce plan to spend more time with their four children and 10 grandchildren, all of whom live in Wisconsin. He is considering writing a book on leadership, and might want to return to the classroom.

"One of the things I'm thinking about is teaching a course, something that might help to generate interest among young people to work in this field," Morison said. "I have loved it. I still do."



Thanks for everything, Jed!