

Good Morning, on this rainy Friday and beginning of the Halloween weekend!

I am back to share more about what you all do!

Last week I wrote about LeafBridge School Therapy and Alternative Education. Today, I'm excited to focus on **OakLeaf Partners, both Community Employment and Transition Services!**

Do you know which local employers are typically open to hiring the individuals/candidates we refer? They include places you might know well - Giant Eagle, Discount Drug Mart, Aramark, Burlington, Meier and the list goes on. You may have encountered individuals that were placed through UCP programs and not even known it! We are supporting people in finding jobs with many businesses across Cuyahoga, Lorain and Medina Counties and are at a count of 86 placements year-to-date! This means that we are on track to help over 100 individuals find meaningful employment in our communities this year. Our team members work with people when they are just starting to look for a job, through job training and supports and everything in between. This is clearly seen in the young man whose employment path started at Wolstein in career planning, then moved along to group employment at the Oatey Company, and now works as an associate at Walmart!

Transition Services helps young adults experience employment and learn positive work skills. Last summer 4 of 42 students found permanent jobs after completing their seasonal internships through OakLeaf Partners! We are also a proud partner in the Project SEARCH program as part of a team including students, their families, school districts, employers, and the state funding source. Six hundred of these sites are hosted around the world. This year, we are serving a total of 25 students across four sites – Cleveland Clinic Main Campus, UH Parma Medical Center, Mercy Regional Medical Center in Lorain County and Westfield in Medina County. These students are all high school seniors and participate in three internships through their last year before graduating and moving on to the next chapter in life.

The program not only helps students build their skill levels but also helps them to figure out what they are interested in doing once entering the world of work. OakLeaf Partners is there to guide them through their duties and then works with them in job development and placement. On average, we place 70-75% of the participating students into jobs which compares to only a 25-30% placement rate of students with disabilities who do not have access to this program. We are proud to be the only DD provider offering this service in Northeast Ohio!

We serve so many children and adults every day. Thank you for being a part of their successes.

Have a fun and safe Halloween weekend!

Trish & the Leadership Team