

E-Alert

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CLARK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

Clark County DJFS, WorkPlus, Clark County CIC Playing Central Role in BRAC Response

As a result of the job loss and adverse economic impact that will come with closure of the Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport Air Guard Station, Clark County DJFS is responding to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) recommendations by assuming a key role in the local and regional response by the eight counties of the Miami Valley.

The current priority: secure a National Emergency Grant to undertake a BRAC-focused study that will include (1) a labor market analysis, and (2) a review of redeployment service providers and the needs of workers, i.e. skill assessments, and job relocation feasibility, etc (with emphasis on BRAC affected personnel).

The leadership team for the National Emergency Grant is already in place. Upon the receipt of funding, Clark County DJFS and the Clark County/Springfield CIC will enter into an agreement to provide the Feasibility/Market Study to locate the county's next industrial park. Progress toward the goals of the NEG program will become agenda items for the monthly WorkPlus Board meetings and the CIC Board. To facilitate communication, program progress and tracking, a Regional BRAC Community Planning Team is envisioned. This team would meet on a quarterly basis, and would involve all staff professionals associated with the project, as well as representation from the affected military installations in Clark and Montgomery counties.

Goals and Objectives

Three primary goals will be addressed in this proposal:

1). **Completion of a Labor Market Study** (with emphasis on the needs of employees affected by the BRAC decision—both civilian and military). This would encompass not only the labor market analysis, but also a review of redeployment service providers, and a more specific study of the "profile" of the affected workers, e.g., skill sets, educational characteristics, mobility, and assessment of worker intentions.

[See BRAC, last page]



Clark County Department of Job and Family Services Donates Computers

Every three to four years, computers owned by the State of Ohio get upgraded, specifically the ones that are used in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) network. Have you ever wondered what happens to the replaced machines? Instead of sending the units to gather dust in an obscure warehouse, Clark County DJFS was able to donate its computers to enhance technology access in the community.

In accordance with state guidelines, information was removed from each hard drive. Approximately 225 PCs went to local agencies and

organizations, some of which include: the Catholic Social Services Work Experience Program (WEP), where participants gain employment and skill building; internet and basic program education for consumers at Elderly United, an after school reading program at the Salvation Army, and educational programming services (skill building, basic education, tutoring) at various community groups and educational facilities.

Another example of the use of donated PCs was made to a local organization called AVETeC, which will enable students and



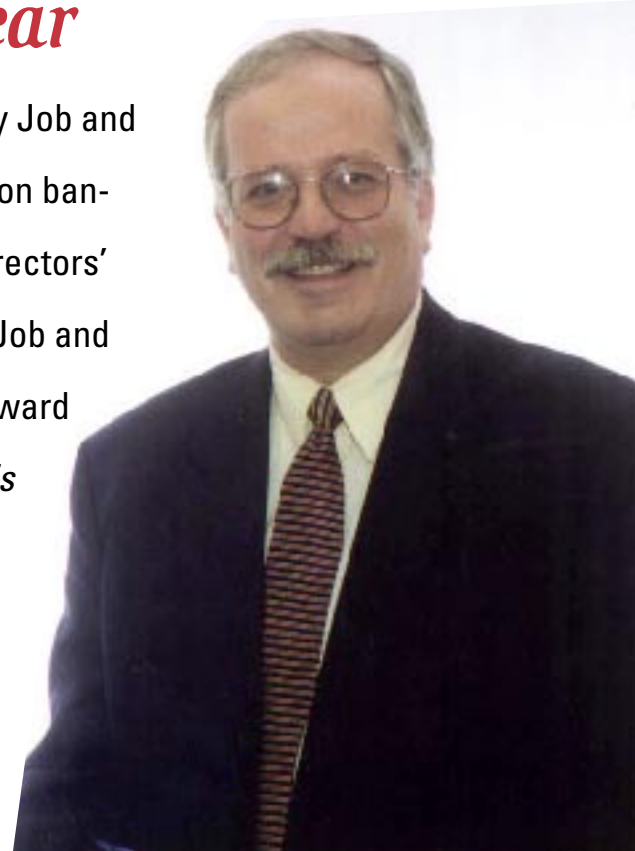
their teachers at Lincoln and Warder Park Wayne elementary schools in the Springfield City School district to communicate with students in 15 NASA schools around the country who are designing rocket launch experiments that will take place at the end of March.

The groups receiving the PC's have expressed their gratitude, and even though the technology is three to four years old, much use can be made of the computers, especially with customers or groups with limited computer access in their current situations.

Peers Honor Suver as Job and Family Services Director of the Year

Robert Suver recently was named Outstanding County Job and Family Services Director of the Year at the annual recognition banquet of the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association. Director of the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services since 1995, Suver received the annual award

"based on his career service to Clark County and his service to the director's association", according to OJFSDA President Dan Jackson. "Under Suver's leadership, Clark County has established the reputation of having one of the most progressive agencies in the state."



Nutrition

Ohio Makes Change in Method of Issuing Food Stamp Benefits to Recipients

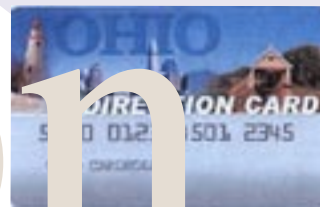
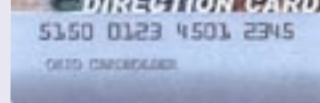
The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is changing its system of delivering food stamp benefits. The Direction Card is a computer chip card that Ohio has used to deliver food stamp benefits to Clark County residents since 1997. During the month of March, all households in Ohio receiving assistance through the Federal Food Stamp Program will receive a new Ohio Direction Card. This new card works the same as any other debit card and is expected to cut ODJFS expenses related to the card by more than 50 percent.

In addition to the savings that the state will realize, there are several advantages that its users will appreciate. A few of these are:

- *The new cards will be automatically credited if benefits are due each month. (The old cards had to be taken to special scanners each month to be updated.)*
- *Cards can now be used at any participating store in Ohio. (The old cards could only be activated and/or updated at three stores that the user had to choose.) The new cards can also be used in many other states.*
- *In most cases, the new cards can be swiped through the same debit card machines that are used for other debit card users. Users will no longer be embarrassed by having to use the "food stamp" machine.*
- *Consumers have a toll-free number available to them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This means that if a card is lost or stolen, users can act immediately to have their benefits protected.*

The one change that may be less convenient for users is that the local office will no longer be able to issue cards or assist with problems in using the cards. All new and replacement cards will be mailed by the vender contracted by ODJFS, and user problems will be handled through a toll-free customer service number:

1-866-386-3071



Children under our protection who remain in their own homes

December 2002	December 2003
403	600
December 2004	December 2005
658	744

Individuals paying on child support orders

December 2002	December 2003
7,927	7,876
December 2004	December 2005
7,938	7,874

QUICK STATS

Individuals receiving food stamps

December 2002	December 2003
13,493	14,827
December 2004	December 2005
15,485	15,942

A quarterly look at the conditions and circumstances under which Clark County families live, and the performance of the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services in response.

Individuals receiving job training assistance

December 2002	December 2003
311	521
December 2004	December 2005
599	536

Individuals receiving health insurance through Medicaid

December 2002	December 2003
23,345	24,229
December 2004	December 2005
25,129	26,040

Children under county protection who are in custody

December 2002	December 2003
203	182
December 2004	December 2005
143	163

Children receiving subsidy for child care

December 2002	December 2003
770	638
December 2004	December 2005
679	906

Families receiving ongoing cash assistance

December 2002	December 2003
711	770
December 2004	December 2005
674	684

In Brief

Transportation is Booming Component of WorkPlus

The “plus” component of WorkPlus represents all of the support services made available to help Clark County adults stay employed and to service local employers with a reliable and qualified labor pool of employees. In 2005, one of the busiest of those WorkPlus “plus” services was WorkPlus Transportation.

In total, WorkPlus Transportation provided 55,473 trips last year to people who needed rides to and from work, work activities, medical appointments, support services, and to MR/DD customers. A closer look reveals important information, including the fact that on average 50 employers each month rely on WorkPlus Transportation to get their employees to and from work. That breaks down to about 1,100 employment-related rides being provided monthly to Clark County residents. Approximately one-third of all WorkPlus Transportation is provided for work and work activities. Another 40 percent of riders -- an average of 1,817 people per month -- are receiving transportation to and from medical care and dialysis.



Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign

Pinwheels for Prevention is a program designed to bring attention to child abuse and neglect in communities throughout Ohio. In April, several communities throughout the state will be displaying colorful children’s pinwheels to acknowledge Ohio’s public awareness campaign to prevent child abuse.

As one of the participating communities, Clark County and a consortium of county agencies has formed a “Pinwheels for Prevention Committee”. The committee developed a calendar of events for the month of April, which has been designated as child abuse awareness month. During this month, a mobile display of pinwheels will be visiting several areas of the community in an effort to provide a very visual child abuse prevention campaign. Each pinwheel will represent a case of child abuse and neglect reported to the Clark County Family & Children Services Division.

A kick-off event with elected officials will be held on April 4 at City Hall Plaza from Noon to 1:00 pm. The public is invited to attend. Anyone wishing to obtain the entire calendar of events should contact Wendy Holt at (937) 327-1700, or call Pam Meermans at (937) 327-3753.

Credit Cards Now an Option for Child Support Payments

A new web site, **e-ChildsPay.com**, expands child support clients’ options for making child support payments on-line using a credit card. The e-ChildsPay.com site will only permit credit card payments. There is a transaction fee of \$11.75. Previously, the fee had been 2% of the amount of the transaction. While this new fee may be higher for those making small payments, clients making payments over \$600 will benefit from the new structure. At this time, e-ChildsPay only supports MasterCard. There are currently negotiations to add other credit cards to the system. E-ChildsPay will accept payments made by child support obligors only, not employers.

Ohio's Kinship Permanency Incentive Program

Ohio's Biennial Budget (HB 66) established the Kinship Permanency Incentive Program. Implemented in January, this program will provide financial support for minor children in the legal and physical custody of grandparents, relatives,

or other "kinship caregivers" (defined in Ohio as any relative or non-relative adult who has a long-standing relationship or bond with the child and/or family).

Eligibility requirements for Ohio's Kinship Permanency Incentive Program include:

- Child must be adjudicated by the juvenile court as being abused, neglected, dependent, or unruly
- Court must have awarded legal custody or guardianship of the child to the grandparent, relative or other kinship caregiver, based on the best interest of the child.
- Child must be considered "special needs" (same criteria as for adoption subsidies).
- A Public Children Services agency must have completed the Relative or Non-Relative Substitute Placement Approval Process, inclusive of a criminal background check, as well as completion of an application form.
- The gross income of the caregiver's family, including the child, may not exceed 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.

Other Program Specifics:

- Eligible families will receive an initial payment of \$1,000 per child, followed by \$500 per child every six months thereafter for a total of 36 months (\$3,500 limit).
- Funding will come from Ohio's TANF funds in the amount of \$10 million per year.
- This program does NOT preclude these families from receiving Child Only TANF benefits; it is in addition to such benefits.

- Initially, this will be a reimbursement based program, utilizing a new web-based tool that will allow a 3-4 week turnaround from the time a PCSA reports payment to ODJFS, to the receipt of funds back to the PCSA. Eventually, SACWIS will be modified to allow a direct pay to families.

More Information:

If you would like more detailed information please visit our website at www.clarkdjfs.org

BRAC Response Heavily Involves WorkPlus, County DJFS

CONTINUED

As a key element of this process, the Base Commander of the 178th Fighter Wing at the Springfield Air National Guard has agreed to participate in the planning phases of the study and to assist in identifying the needs of dislocated workers and what federal resources may also be available.

It is estimated that such a study would be completed within 90 days of a contract being signed. Clark and Montgomery DJFS will be responsible for designing, implementation, and dissemination of the findings of the study.

2). Completion of a Site Assessment/Market Analysis to determine the best site for the next industrial park in Clark County.

It is well recognized that the majority of the Springfield OHANG workers are higher skilled and technology savvy employees. Consequently, it is anticipated that the land selected for development would possess the amenities for attracting advanced manufacturing companies. Clark County

DJFS and the CIC will be responsible for the park’s site selection and market analysis.

3). Creation of a Miami Valley BRAC Community Planning Team. This team, already in its formative stage, will be composed of government and business representatives from the eight Miami Valley counties. It would be convened soon after funding notification to design the “deliverables” to be submitted by the consultant conducting the labor market study.

Progress toward goals will be tracked and monitored through the Clark County WorkPlus Board. The WorkPlus Board meets monthly. The CIC Board meets every six weeks and the professional staff of the CIC would be responsible for fiscal reporting, submission of progress reports and other administrative requirements.



is a quarterly publication of the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services

Forward this pdf. file as an attachment,
and encourage others to contact Robin Maynard at
937/327-1859,
or at rmaynard@clarkdjfs.org
to be put directly on this newsletter distribution list.