

For Immediate Release
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Tuscarawas County
Board of Developmental Disabilities

TuscBDD Awarded Four Grants in 2023 totaling \$965,000 to Enhance Inclusion and Independence for People with Developmental Disabilities in Tuscarawas County

New Philadelphia, January 23, 2024: In 2023, TuscBDD successfully applied and was awarded four different grants from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities for a total of \$965,000 to enhance existing services and develop new projects to foster greater inclusion and independence for individuals with developmental disabilities living in Tuscarawas County.

"We are deeply grateful for these multiple grants which will enable us to expand our efforts in promoting inclusion and developing more supportive infrastructure for people with developmental disabilities in Tuscarawas County," said Nate Kamban, TuscBDD Superintendent. "This funding will undoubtedly make a significant impact on the lives of those we serve and contribute to building a more inclusive community."

Some of the components of the various grants include the following:

- **Accessible Communities:** TuscBDD will invest in the enhancement of infrastructure to ensure better accessibility for people with developmental disabilities. This will be achieved through installing universal changing stations in public restrooms, developing a community-accessible soccer field at TuscBDD's Service and Support Center, and developing a community-accessible playground and upgraded sensory rooms at Starlight School.
- **Educational & Respite Programs for Early Childhood:** The grant will facilitate the enhancement of educational programs for early childhood-aged children and their families. Funding will be used to purchase assistive devices and sensory items that will be available via the TuscBDD Lending Library for children and families participating in the Early Intervention program. The Starlight School is also serving as an after-school and weekend respite center for school-age children with developmental disabilities.
- **Technology:** TuscBDD will initiate increased use of technology-based assistive devices for people with developmental disabilities by partnering with Starlight Enterprises, Inc. to develop a residential site where individuals can trial new technologies that may assist them to live more independently.
- **Outreach to Under-Served Non-English Speaking Communities:** Tuscarawas County is home to a growing Latino population. TuscBDD will utilize grant funding to increase access to translation support, so that this population is fully aware of the services available to families residing in the county. TuscBDD is also seeking to partner with two local provider agencies, Advocates for Success, and Consumer Support Services, to provide internships for Spanish-speaking community members to work with Spanish-speaking adults with disabilities.

For more information about TuscBDD services, visit www.tuscbdd.org, or email ksilverthorn@tuscbdd.org.

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Photo Caption Information: Advocates for Success, Consumer Support Services, TuscBDD, and Spanish-speaking community members met to discuss internship grant efforts.