

# Ohio Matters

An Official Publication of *The Ohio Chamber of Commerce*

## GET INFORMED.

124th annual meeting in the books  
Chambers recognized for advocacy efforts  
Ohio Chamber welcomes new chairman  
Newly elected board members

## SHARE SUCCESS.

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Ohio Business Gateway Modernization Project  
Random drug testing in the workplace

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Echoing Hills Village helps those with disabilities  
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## 124TH ANNUAL MEETING IN THE BOOKS

The 124th Annual Meeting and Legislative Reception of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce accomplished chamber business, inspired attendees and honored chamber members.

The day began with a meeting of our board of directors, where Tom Zaino, who had been chairman of the board for two years, handed the gavel over to our next leader, Larry Kidd. Kidd, president and CEO of Reliable Staffing in Jackson, told the Annual Meeting crowd that his goals for his tenure are to continue the winning ways of the Ohio Chamber PAC endorsed candidates and to increase diversity on the board of directors.



Ohio Chamber Treasurer and Chairman-Elect Jeff Walters



Ohio Chamber Chairman of the Board of Directors Larry Kidd

Treasurer and chair-elect of the Ohio Chamber Board of Directors Jeff Walters presented the chamber's financial report. The chamber's dues and program revenue for 2016 were just over \$3 million and expenses were in line with budgeted amounts. Net assets increased by approximately 4.5 percent as a result of dues and program revenue, increasing slightly, in addition to considerable improvements in 2016 investment market conditions. Walters will serve as chair-elect for the next two years.

Finally, during the business portion of the meeting, the members elected 16 business leaders to the board of directors. (See listing in this issue). Those elected will serve three-year terms.

The highlight of the day, though, was the keynote speaker, former football coach and retired ESPN analyst Lou Holtz. Coach Holtz mesmerized the crowd by instilling in them his rules for life, making them laugh with his one-liners and entertaining them with a magic trick.

Holtz began by telling the crowd how he grew up in East Liverpool, Ohio, in a one bedroom home, where he lived with his parents and sister.

"I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth because I was born in this country," he told the crowd.

He graduated from East Liverpool High School and earned a bachelor of science degree in history from Kent State University in 1959 and a master's degree from Iowa in arts and education in 1961. He played linebacker at Kent State for two seasons before an injury ended his career. While at Kent State, he was a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He has received 14 honorary doctorate degrees and written three books.

"The words in my books are short so the people in Michigan can read them," he told the crowd of Ohio business leaders.

He doesn't dwell on the challenges he has overcome in his life.

"It isn't the fact you have problems, it's what you do with them," he said.

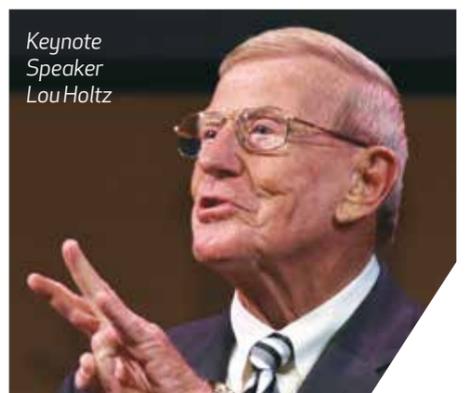
He told the audience that 22 months ago, the home he shared with his wife, Beth, burnt to the ground due to a lighting strike in the middle of the night.

"We lost everything," Holtz said, "but nothing we were going to take with us to heaven."

Going through life, Holtz believes you need four things.

- Something to do
- Someone to love
- Someone who believes in you
- Something to hope for

He said getting through life is simple if you keep in mind "What's Important Now," which ironically spells out win – something as a football coach he got used to doing. Holtz is the only coach in the history of college football to take six different teams to a bowl game, win five bowl games with different teams and have four different college teams ranked in the final Top 20 poll.



Keynote Speaker Lou Holtz

### QUICK GLANCE

New Board Members Elected

Larry Kidd assumes position of chairman

Coach Lou Holtz featured as Annual Meeting keynote speaker

While he was an assistant coach on The Ohio State University's 1968 National Championship team, he is best known for the 11 seasons he spent coaching at the University of Notre Dame. As the head coach at Notre Dame, his 1988 team went undefeated and won the National Championship, beating the Mountaineers of West Virginia University in the Fiesta Bowl. He told the crowd that after achieving a life-long contract with the Fighting Irish, he stepped away because, even though his teams were winning every year, he felt like he was just maintaining. "Any time you try just to maintain, you lose your enthusiasm," he said.

Holtz surprised the audience by doing a magic trick in which he tore a section of newspaper up and then opened it to show the audience it was really still all together. This left the audience with an important lesson: "Winning in life isn't complicated. Just emerge each day to be the best you can and do the right thing." 🍀

Photos continued on page 3

*You want to hear  
from top-name speakers.*

*WE HOST NATIONALLY  
RECOGNIZED EVENTS.  
WE'RE ALL FOR OHIO.*

A special thank you to all of our sponsors for helping us  
make the 124th Annual Meeting & Legislative Reception  
such a huge success!

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sincerely thank all of our sponsors for making this  
event possible.

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# 2017 OHIO CHAMBER ANNUAL MEETING



Lou Holtz performs magic by tearing a newspaper to shreds and then putting it back together again.



Ohio Chamber Chairman Larry Kidd takes a selfie with Lou Holtz.



Former member of the Ohio Chamber Board of Directors J. Van Carson, retired partner with Squire Patton Boggs, is recognized for his 28 years of service by Chairman Larry Kidd and President and CEO Andy Doehrel.



Our members enjoyed our Annual Meeting.

## ANOTHER GREAT LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION





Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce



Greater Medina Chamber of Commerce

## CHAMBERS RECOGNIZED FOR ADVOCACY EFFORTS

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce recognized two local chambers on stage at our Annual Meeting for their advocacy efforts. The Ohio Chamber's Chamber Action Alliance (CAA) awarded the Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce with the 2017 Best Advocacy Campaign Award and the Greater Medina Chamber received the Leadership in Grassroots Advocacy award.

The Best Advocacy Campaign Award recognizes an advocacy campaign centered around a single issue. This year's campaign focused on voter education. The Lima/Allen County Chamber worked with the Lima Young Professionals to encourage participation in the 2016 election by conducting voter registrations, providing voter and candidate education, and educating voters on how to advocate. The Lima/Allen County Chamber had great success with this program and will continue to promote the initiative.

"Under the leadership of President Jed Metzger, the Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce has continued to expand its efforts to better educate the voters of Northwest Ohio on candidates and issues impacting Ohio's business climate," says the Ohio Chamber's Director of Political Programs Rich Thompson.

Sen. Matt Huffman and Rep. Bob Cupp presented commendations to honor the Lima/Allen County Chamber for its efforts.

The Greater Medina Chamber of Commerce received the 2017 Leadership Grassroots Advocacy Award for its commitment to legislative advocacy and leadership in grassroots efforts.

"Every year, the Greater Medina Chamber of Commerce is a leading advocate for Ohio's job creators," says Thompson. "This year, the Greater Medina Chamber received this award because it hosted candidates' forums, educated their members on pending business legislation and became active in the ballot initiative process. The Greater Medina Chamber is a true asset to the area, and the Ohio Chamber and the CAA are lucky to regularly work with Jaclyn Ringstmeier and her members."

Senate President Larry Obhoff, Rep. Steve Hambley and Rep. Darrell Kick presented commendations to honor the Greater Medina Chamber for its award.

The CAA is the statewide, grassroots advocacy coalition of Ohio's chambers of commerce, coordinated by the Ohio Chamber. The CAA determines statewide policy issues facing the business community, educates and empowers pro-business advocates to take action and champions a business-friendly climate throughout the state of Ohio. 🗣️

## OHIO CHAMBER WELCOMES NEW CHAIRMAN

Larry J. Kidd,  
principal and CEO  
of Reliable Staffing  
Services, advocates  
for business



Larry Kidd

Larry J. Kidd, 53, a native of Jackson, is a man of action.

After previous jobs had taken Kidd and his family to California, Tennessee and Florida, they returned to Ohio in 1997 to establish roots. Kidd found what he was looking for in a job as director of purchasing for a large food processing company, which brought him home to Jackson.

He then bought two businesses with which he saw an opportunity to do it better: a warehousing and logistics company (2003) and a light manufacturing company (2004). But he couldn't find the hourly workers he needed to staff his businesses.

The result was the launch of a new business. In 2006, Kidd founded Reliable Staffing Services to provide staffing to the light industrial, manufacturing and warehousing markets in Southeastern Ohio.

"I decided to form my own staffing firm to supply our own needs," he says. "Shortly after that, I discovered that there were others that needed what we were doing."

Reliable Staffing Services has twice been named "one of the fastest-growing staffing companies in the United States" by staffing industry analysts. Kidd says his background and business experience contributed to the quick success of his business.

"We were users of our staffing firm, so we knew all the trials and tribulations, especially in warehousing and manufacturing," he says. "We knew what it took to be successful in that business."

### CIVIC AND COMMUNITY LEADER

When his firm was only a few months old, an employee was injured on the job. Although the worker was not seriously injured, the claim was costly, causing Kidd's workers' comp premiums to skyrocket.

Kidd says that was a result of the way workers' compensation costs are calculated in Ohio. The costs to a business are based on its payroll and average claims over the previous four years. His firm had only been in business a few months and didn't have a claims history to average.

The unfairness of the system frustrated him, so he reached out to his state senator, who suggested that Kidd get involved in the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

"He told me, 'You'll have access to legislators and help influence changes,'" Kidd says.

After joining the chamber's Workers' Compensation and Legislative Employment Law committees in 2009, Kidd found he enjoyed the advocacy work. When he was asked to join the board of directors, he gladly accepted and saw it as an honor for his hard work on behalf of his fellow businesspeople in Ohio.

Kidd says all the candidates the chamber supported in the 2016 election won, a success he hopes to continue in the future in his new role as chairman of the board.

"As chair of the chamber, I would like to be able to maintain that level of success," he says. His other goals include expanding both diversity on the chamber board and its marketing efforts.

Kidd holds other positions of civic and community leadership as well. He was appointed by Gov. John Kasich as a director of JobsOhio, a quasi privately run economic development board for Ohio, and is a trustee of Rio Grande Community College and a director of Holzer Health Systems.

A past director of the Ohio Staffing Association, Kidd is a founder of a local business council designed to serve as a roundtable for ideas on how to improve the business environment in the region.

His favorite nonbusiness activities are water sports (more swimming and boating, and less fishing), which he enjoys from his second home in Longboat Key, Florida, and running. Having completed three half-marathons, Kidd tries to run at least 20 to 30 miles a week.

Kidd lives with his wife, Cindy. Together, they have three children, Alex, 20, Carly, 21, and Mitchell, 35. 🗣️

## NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

At the Ohio Chamber's Annual Meeting, the following members were elected to three-year terms on the Ohio Chamber's Board of Directors.

### NORTHWEST

**Jeff Gorman**, President & CEO  
The Gorman-Rupp Co., Mansfield

**Wes Jetter**, Chairman & CEO  
Fort Recovery Industries Inc.  
Fort Recovery

### NORTHEAST

**Jeff Dafler**, VP Government Affairs  
The Timken Co., Canton

**Jay Gershen**, President  
Northeast Ohio Medical University  
(NEOMED), Rootstown

### SOUTHWEST

**Walt Davis**, Partner  
Shakerland Farms LLC, Lebanon

**Steve Ringel**  
President – Ohio Market  
CareSource, Dayton

### SOUTHEAST

**Robb Reder**  
VP Finance & Assistant General  
Manager  
Glatfelter, Chillicothe

**Matt Sheppard**  
Sr. Director – Corporate Development  
& Gov't Affairs  
Chesapeake Energy, Harrisburg

### CENTRAL

**Steve English**  
Sr. VP Government Affairs  
Nationwide Insurance, Columbus

**Blake Thompson**  
VP Government Affairs  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus

### AT-LARGE

**Ron Becker**, CEO  
Hilscher-Clarke Electric Co., Canton

**Bill Bishop\***, President  
Associated Insurance Agencies Inc.  
Westerville

**Robert Camp**, VP & General Manager  
White Castle System Inc., Columbus

**Michele L. Connell\***, Partner  
Squire Patton Boggs, Cleveland

**Dennis J. Duchene\***  
President & COO  
CareWorks, Dublin

**Mark Dunford\***  
Southern Ohio Regional  
VP of Operations  
Charter Communications, Cincinnati

**Melissa Ingwersen**  
President – Central Ohio District  
KeyCorp, Columbus

**John Kennedy**  
VP & General Manager –  
Plant Operations  
Dynegey, Cincinnati

**Michael Moore**  
CEO, President & Director  
Gulfport Energy Corp., Oklahoma City

**Clif Morehead**  
Regional Manager, Corporate  
Government Relations  
General Electric Co., Cincinnati

**Tom Raga**, President & CEO  
Dayton Power & Light, Dayton

**Tom Secor#**  
President  
Durable Corp., Norwalk

**Élise Spriggs**  
Senior Vice President,  
External Relations  
State Auto Insurance Co., Columbus

\*Denotes new director

#Denotes filing an unexpired term

By Rob Gilmore, partner, Kohrman, Jackson & Krantz LLP

## FEDERAL CIRCUIT COURT HOLDS TITLE VII PROTECTS LGBT WORKPLACE RIGHTS

On April 4, 2017, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals held that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. [*Hively v. Ivy Tech Comm. College*, No. 15-1720 (7th Cir. 2017)]. Title VII prohibits employment discrimination “based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin.” This is the first time a federal circuit court held that “sex” refers to sexual orientation, in addition to gender.

The plaintiff, Kimberly Hively, was a part-time adjunct professor at Ivy Tech Community College. Hively alleged she was denied a full-time position at the college on six separate occasions due to the fact that she was openly gay. She brought a discrimination charge on the basis of sexual orientation with the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission (EEOC), which eventually made its way to a federal district court.

The district court, following past precedent, held that Title VII does not apply to sexual orientation, and a three-judge panel for the Seventh Circuit affirmed. However, the Seventh Circuit agreed to hear the case en banc (the entire panel of Seventh Circuit justices), where it then held that sexual orientation was included in the reference to “sex” and thus protected under Title VII.

Prior to Hively, various states and the EEOC had reached this conclusion. In 2015, the EEOC stated “[t]he question is not whether sexual orientation is explicitly listed in Title VII as a prohibited basis for employment actions. It is not.”

*Continued on page 6*



## OHIO BUSINESS GATEWAY MODERNIZATION PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Ohio Business Gateway is an online filing and payment system that processed more than 5 million transactions and \$12.4 billion in online payments in 2016.

The Gateway Modernization Project began in 2015, when Gov. John Kasich appointed Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor as chair of the Ohio Business Gateway Steering Committee. In her role leading the Common Sense Initiative to streamline business regulations and improve the business environment in Ohio, Taylor has heard a great deal from Ohio businesses about the need to modernize the Gateway. As a result, she is leading a project to do so and make it even more responsive to the needs of its business users.

*The Gateway Modernization Project has circulated targeted user experience surveys and will be conducting in-person previews to gather even more feedback from business users.*

By working closely with the Steering Committee and members of the broader business community, the project team went through an intensive project planning process to pinpoint the needs and expectations business users had of the Gateway. Those requirements were then used to develop an implementation roadmap to transform it into a more user-friendly, reliable and secure portal. The implementation of the transformation is currently under way.

### BENEFITS OF THE MODERNIZED GATEWAY

Phase I of the Gateway Modernization Project is focused on designing and building an improved user experience and simplifying transaction flows. When the Modernized Gateway goes live in fall 2017, business users will experience the following improvements.

- A modern look and feel will make the Gateway more intuitive and easier to use.
- Prepopulated information and fewer required clicks will reduce the time it takes to complete transactions.
- Online help functionality will provide real-time information and the ability to request assistance any time, from any page on the Gateway.

Phase II of the Gateway Modernization Project, scheduled to go live in spring 2018, will introduce a more reliable, flexible and secure system architecture, featuring:

- Updated technology, which will provide Gateway users with more reliable service during high-traffic periods
- An increased ability to add new transactions quickly, increasing the state's ability to offer additional services to Gateway users
- Incorporating user feedback into the Modernized Gateway design

Obtaining and incorporating user feedback has been an important part of the Gateway Modernization Project. In September 2015, the results of a survey of more than 2,400 Gateway users were used to determine specific pain points of the current Gateway and critical new functionality that should be incorporated into the Modernized Gateway. Since then, the Gateway Modernization Project has circulated targeted user experience surveys and will be conducting in-person previews to gather even more feedback from business users. 📌

For more information about the Gateway Modernization Project, visit [business.ohio.gov/gatewaymodernization](http://business.ohio.gov/gatewaymodernization) or email [gatewaycommunications@governor.ohio.gov](mailto:gatewaycommunications@governor.ohio.gov).

# RANDOM DRUG TESTING IN THE WORKPLACE – CAN WE DO IT?

**We are considering adding random testing to our drug-free workplace program. What advice can you provide to assure we implement it successfully?**

This is a good thing to be thinking about, particularly because random drug testing is an effective tool for deterring illegal drug use in the workplace. There are four main areas to consider when establishing a program that will be both effective and efficient.

- Selection process
- Timing
- Confidentiality
- Collection process

## SELECTION PROCESS

Rather than pulling names from a hat, using an objective, nondiscretionary system operated by an outside drug testing vendor allows for convenience and privacy. If you are mandated by a regulatory body, be sure you understand its required standards for randomization. The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation's Drug-Free Safety Program (DFSP), for example, explains that random testing should utilize "an objective and nondiscretionary computer program operated and maintained by an outside contractor."

## TIMING

Varying the time of the month in which you send someone for a random test creates a level of unpredictability for the employee. And because random testing is a job function, it should be conducted during an employee's shift. That will allow you to track the time he or she takes to travel to the collection site, provide a specimen and return to work. Controlling this window

of time will help minimize the risk of an employee compromising the collection process.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Don't show up on a job site with paperwork and pull an employee off in front of everyone. Instead, use a private location to inform the employee that he or she has been selected for a random test. Typically, only the DFWP program administrator and the employee's supervisor need to know when an employee is leaving for the test. The fewer people who know, the easier it is to maintain confidentiality. Consider what you will say to employees who inquire about the employee's whereabouts.

## COLLECTION PROCESS

If you do an on-site collection, use a discrete location and bring employees in one at a time to be tested. If you use an off-site facility, sending one employee at a time versus sending a group of employees to a collection site will help maintain confidentiality.

Establishing a random testing program that lines up with these best practices will help you maintain a high level of integrity that benefits both the employer and the employee. 📌

*A member of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Working Partners® is a nationally recognized expert in drug-free workplace issues. Its current initiative, funded in part by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, aims to increase Ohio's employable drug-free workforces in 17 Ohio counties. For more information, reach it at [www.WorkingPartners.com](http://www.WorkingPartners.com) or (614) 337-8200.*

Continued from page 5

## FEDERAL CIRCUIT COURT HOLDS TITLE VII PROTECTS LGBT WORKPLACE RIGHTS

But rather, "[s]exual orientation discrimination is sex discrimination because it necessarily entails treating an employee less favorably because of the employee's sex."

In the majority opinion for the Seventh Circuit, Chief Circuit Judge Diane Wood held that "discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is a form of sex discrimination" and that it "is actually impossible to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation without discriminating on the basis of sex." The majority rested its decision on two theories: (1) sex stereotyping and (2) the associational theory.

The term "sex stereotyping" comes from the Supreme Court decision *Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins*, in which the court held that discrimination for failing to act in a manner that is stereotypical of a

certain gender is discrimination on the basis of sex. In that case, a female employee was discriminated against for being too "masculine."

Here, the majority wrote that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is the "ultimate" form of sex stereotyping. "Any discomfort, disapproval, or job decision based on the fact that the complainant — woman or man — dresses differently, speaks differently, or dates or marries a same-sex partner, is a reaction purely and simply based on sex."

Associational theory states "that a person who is discriminated against because of the protected characteristic of one with whom she associates is actually being disadvantaged because of her own traits." Hively faced discrimination because her partner (with whom she associates) was a woman. Therefore,

## MEMBER NEWS

### POLICY CONFERENCE AT SALT FORK – SAVE THE DATE – OPENING SPEAKER SET

Since 1989, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce has hosted a biennial policy conference that brings together state legislators and governmental affairs professionals to explore pressing issues coming before Ohio. The solitude of Ohio's largest state park, coupled with attendees of all backgrounds, lends itself to a casual, yet productive, event, to which past attendees return again and again.

This year's conference is Sept. 6-8. While the full agenda is still in the planning stages, we are excited to announce that the opening night speaker is New York Times best selling author J.D. Vance, author of "Hillbilly Elegy."

We have reserved the entire lodge and many cabins. All members of both the Ohio General Assembly and the Ohio Chamber of Commerce are invited to attend. There are sponsorship opportunities available now, including event sponsorships and gift bag items. Please contact Keith Lake at [klake@ohiochamber.com](mailto:klake@ohiochamber.com) for more information.

Registration information will be available in late June.

### WELCOME OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

Stephanie Kromer joined the Ohio Chamber staff in March as director of external relations. Kromer will be working with our current members and attracting new members.

Prior to joining the Ohio Chamber, Kromer was a legislative aide for Rep. Andy Thompson in the Ohio House. Her knowledge of the inner workings at the Statehouse will come in handy while talking to members and potential members at the Ohio Chamber. She also worked for King Strategic Communications on various election campaigns.



Stephanie Kromer

She is a 2014 graduate of Ashland University, where she received a bachelor of arts degree in political science. Kromer and her husband reside in Gahanna.

### HIRING PRIVATE SECURITY?

If your company hires private security services, the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Private Investigator Security Guard Services (PISGS) wants you to know that state law requires security guard companies be licensed. Each guard also needs to be registered. A license ensures the company meets state requirements and is insured, and that all registered employees have passed a state criminal background check.

To find out what security companies are licensed in Ohio, go to [www.pisgs.ohio.gov](http://www.pisgs.ohio.gov) and search for licensed companies. You can also contact PISGS at (614) 466-4130 to verify that a company is operating legally in Ohio.

If you have concerns about a security company or security guard, PISGS has a tip line. Text a tip to (614) 705-2847, and someone from the enforcement unit will follow up. 📌

Hively was also being disadvantaged and discriminated against because Hively was a woman.

Judge Richard Posner, in his concurrence, took a different approach. He admitted that when Title VII was passed, the term sex "undoubtedly meant man or woman," but that the term over time has broadened and "we now understand discrimination against homosexual men and women to be a form of sex discrimination." Posner asserted the courts are not "merely the obedient servants of the 88th Congress (1963-1965), carrying out their wishes."

Unsurprisingly, the dissenters argued the new rule "does not derive from the text of Title VII in any meaningful sense." The dissenters stated that "common-law liability rules may judicially evolve in this way, but statutory law is fundamentally

different," and the court is "not authorized to amend Title VII by interpretation."

This issue is likely to make its way to the Supreme Court, as the federal circuit courts are divided. Each of the other circuit courts has ruled that sexual orientation is not protected by Title VII. Most recently, in March 2017, the Eleventh Circuit reached such a conclusion. Because the laws surrounding this issue are currently in a state of flux and differ across the country, employers would be wise to review their current workplace discrimination policies to ensure they conform with the laws of the jurisdiction in which they reside.

*Rob Gilmore is chair of the Labor and Employment Law Practice Group of Kohnman Jackson & Krantz LLP, with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.*

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Echoing Hills Village provides opportunities to those with disabilities



Echoing Hills Village is described as a Christian ministry for individuals with disabilities, but it is so much more. With a focus on Live, Learn, Connect, Play, Worship, Echoing Hills is committed to revolutionizing lives.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the organization was founded in 1967 by the Rev. D. Cordell Brown, who was born with cerebral palsy. His parents owned 80 acres of farmland in Warsaw, Ohio, and Cordell's goal was to create a premier summer camp experience for those with special needs.

"He had a great vision," says Echoing Hills CEO Buddy Busch. "We continue to carry on that legacy of commitment to creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities to know and experience Jesus Christ."

What started as a summer camp flourished into other programs, and Echoing Hills became a village. Today, the nonprofit has locations in five regions statewide and offers residential services, day programs, education programs, vocational services and recreational services, in addition to its seven-week summer camp program in Warsaw.

"We give people the tools they need to live their own lives," says Kate Conway, development project coordinator.

Echoing Hills' reach even extends to West Africa. While traveling in Ghana, Cordell was overwhelmed to learn that children with disabilities were often abandoned. So 20 years ago, the organization began partnering with ministries to offer programs there.

### IMPROVING LIVES

Echoing Hills' philosophy is based on four values: Choice, fulfillment, dignity and relationships.

Relationships are important, Busch says, because many people with disabilities have limited opportunities to interact with other people.

"God created us to have a relationship with us," he says. "It can be lonely. They often don't have many friends."

That's where Echoing Hills comes in. The programs and camps create opportunities for relationships with other people and with God.

When 70 campers of all ages and abilities arrive each week from mid-June to early August, they have opportunities to connect with others while swimming, riding in go-karts or shooting a paintball gun.

"When you see a 10-year-old catch a fish and jump up and down, it's one thing," says Busch of the camp experience. "But when you see a 60-year-old man catch a fish, you realize it's one of the most exciting experiences for him, even though he's 60 years old. You see that same joy and excitement."

### INDEPENDENT LIVING

In 2012, the organization established echoingU. Now operating with two Ohio campuses, this transitional program helps young adults work toward higher education, independent living and employment.

Echoing Hills also operates residences. Initially, 18 to 36 people lived in larger homes. Then about 10 years ago, they started moving people into smaller community homes. Today, 20 to 30 homes house four to eight people each.

"It was a watershed moment for us," Busch says. "It changed our view of how to best serve people with disabilities in the future."

In addition to being more personal, smaller homes afford residents more freedom. As an example, Conway cites a resident who moved into one of the smaller homes. She says that for the first time in her life, the 65-year-old woman has a bedroom to herself.

Although Echoing Hills is a Christian-based organization, its services are available to people of all faiths.

"Our goal is not to buttonhole or evangelize everybody," Busch says. "We want to ensure they experience the love of God on a daily basis."

To celebrate its landmark anniversary, Echoing Hills will kick off a celebration during a camp in July, with the other regions hosting dinners in September and October. 📌

For more information or to get involved, visit [www.ehvi.org/](http://www.ehvi.org/).

## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Each issue, we feature a member of the board of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. This month, we spotlight Thomas M. Zaino, JD, CPA, managing member of Zaino Hall & Farrin LLC and ZHF Consulting LLC.

### What does your company do?

We are a boutique business law firm that focuses on tax and government affairs. In the tax area, we primarily assist taxpayers with state and local tax planning, compliance evaluation and policy. Our firm's wholly owned, non-law firm subsidiary, ZHF Consulting LLC, assists our clients with advocating and lobbying on all types of issues at the federal, state and local levels. What makes us unique compared to other firms is the extent to which our attorneys leverage experienced non-attorney professionals, such as accountants and former government/elected officials, to provide our services.

### How does your company impact the Ohio economy and benefit the Ohio business community?

We defend taxpayers from overreaching governmental tax authorities by defending them on audit, reviewing taxpayer compliance to identify refund opportunities and restructuring client operations to ensure a tax-efficient legal structure. Our lobbyists advocate for all types of positive governmental policies that impact our clients, including at the federal, state and local levels.

### What is your role at your company?

I serve as the managing member of the law firm and its wholly owned consulting subsidiary. I am blessed to manage a team of uniquely experienced attorneys and non-attorney professional accountants and lobbyists that provides our clients with value-added advice and services.

### What do you hope to gain from your membership with the Ohio Chamber?

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce is the leading business association in Ohio and fosters the development of valuable relationships among business and government leaders. We hope to leverage these relationships to improve our effectiveness at advocating for positive, pro-business government policies in Ohio.

### How has serving as a member of the board helped you or your company?

Personally, I have been able to establish long-lasting relationships with other board members, Ohio Chamber members and government leaders. These relationships are invaluable to me. Serving on the Ohio Chamber Board of Directors



helps our firm stay up to date on current developments and hear directly from government leaders and other organizations about important public policy matters. Serving on the board also helps promote me and our firm as leaders in the Ohio business community.

### How long have you been on the board and committee?

I have been active on the Tax Committee since the early 1990s. Working on that committee opened doors for me and transformed my career — in 1999, I became tax commissioner for Gov. Bob Taft after being nominated by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. I joined the board of directors in 2005 and have served on the Executive Committee since 2011.

### What are some of the latest goals/objectives of your company?

Our goal is to be the go-to tax and government affairs firm in Ohio. We make every effort to provide high-value legal and consulting services to our clients that seek a competitive business environment in Ohio. For example, we continue to work on ways to make Ohio's state and local tax system more efficient and less burdensome on Ohio businesses.

### How has the Ohio Chamber helped your company achieve those goals/objectives?

Serving as chairman of the board has been a great honor and has helped highlight our company as a leader in the business community. The Ohio Chamber, through its excellent staff and committees, has helped us serve our clients better. For example, our firm successfully represented a coalition of business associations to provide more uniformity to Ohio's municipal tax system (i.e., H.B. 5). This effort for our clients would not have been as successful without the support and commitment of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, its Tax Committee and its excellent staff of professionals. 📌

# INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS



Having just finished our Annual Meeting, I started thinking about all of the ways our members have to interact with not only our staff, but also other Ohio Chamber members and elected officials. Although our Annual Meeting is our signature event, we have many opportunities throughout the year for our members to participate in and I hope you will consider trying any or all of these forums.

Almost monthly, we have Ohio Chamber committee meetings taking place, usually at our headquarters in downtown Columbus. As a member-driven organization, we rely on the expertise of our members to provide input on topics in the areas of education and workforce development, energy and the environment, health care, labor and employment, small business, public affairs, taxation and public expenditures and workers' compensation. The Ohio Chamber's committees guide the policy priorities and legislative issues that we undertake.

To educate business leaders on human resources issues, we partner with local chambers of commerce to provide business symposiums. At these symposiums, we take the information to our members. Our next symposium

is Friday, June 30, at the Gary Anderson Competitive Center in Port Clinton. The topic is 10 Management Mistakes to Avoid, presented by Bill Wahoff, of Ohio Chamber member Steptoe & Johnson PLLC. This symposium is free. To register, email [admin@PortClintonChamber.com](mailto:admin@PortClintonChamber.com).

This summer we will again travel the state meeting with our members on our All for Ohio Tour. On this tour, Ohio Chamber staff members will visit our member companies and host members of the Ohio House and Senate from their area. It's a great opportunity for us to get to know our members and for our members to get to know their elected officials. The tour will begin in July. If your company would like to participate, please email our vice president of communications, Julie Feasel, at [jfeasel@ohiochamber.com](mailto:jfeasel@ohiochamber.com).

In September, we will again host the Policy Conference at Salt Fork. This biennial event is something that our members and members of the Ohio General Assembly look forward to attending every other fall at Salt Fork State Park. This year's policy conference is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 6, through Friday, Sept. 8. I'm very excited to announce that our Wednesday night

speaker is New York Times best-selling author J.D. Vance, who penned the story about growing up in *Hillbilly Elegy*. Vance has just moved back to Columbus from the West Coast to establish a foundation that helps Ohio battle the opioid epidemic, among other things. Registration for this event will be available in late June.

This is just a summary of events we have going on throughout the year. We always post our events on our webpage at [www.ohiochamber.com](http://www.ohiochamber.com) and include additional information in this publication and our Chamber Update emails. I encourage all of you to get involved in the Ohio Chamber, as we do have something for everyone. 🇺🇸

*Andrew E. Daebel*

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SAVE THE DATE:  
SEPT. 6-8, 2017

POLICY  
CONFERENCE  
AT SALT FORK

Wednesday night speaker: J.D. Vance,  
author of New York Times bestseller "Hillbilly Elegy"  
Registration information will be available in late June.

#ALLFOROHIO