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**Local Resident Chosen to Speak at the Ohio Statehouse's  
Developmental Disability Advocacy and Awareness Day**

**Medina, Ohio, March 12, 2018** –On Wednesday, March 7, 2018, Logan Detwiler, Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDD) self-advocate, was a highlighted speaker at the Developmental Disabilities Advocacy and Awareness Day held at the Ohio Statehouse.

The Developmental Disability Advocacy and Awareness Day is an annual event which empowers people with developmental disabilities, their family members and other community allies to come together on a single day to advocate for policy issues and changes. Self-advocates from around the state spend the day meeting one-on-one with Ohio policymakers to share their own personal stories and to discuss concerns of people with disabilities. The self-advocates' goals were to educate policymakers on how state government services and policies can be improved, expanded, or strengthened on behalf of people with disabilities.

This year's event centered on the theme "Celebrate COMMUNITY" and began with a morning session in the rotunda of the statehouse. The session featured speeches from prominent advocates and community leaders. Logan was originally scheduled to give a brief presentation about the importance of self-advocacy, but after submitting a draft of his speech to event organizers, he was asked to be one of four highlighted speakers for the morning.

Detwiler's speech, which was live-streamed on the Ohio Channel, centered on his personal belief that making connections within the community is important to the success of people with developmental disabilities. He spoke about the power of volunteering and the role his self-advocacy activities have in helping him achieve his goals and gain acceptance in the community. In speaking to the crowd, he emphasized that through volunteer activities others in the community learn that "our disability is a part of us, not all of us!"

Detwiler is an active member of the Medina County Board of DD's Self-Advocacy program. "We were so honored to have Logan chosen to speak at this memorable event," said Michelle Fortney, MCBDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator. "His voice and personal perspective can truly help raise awareness about the importance and value of creating a culture of acceptance and inclusion in our communities."

During his speech, Detwiler spoke about his participation in self-advocacy activities such as People Together, a program which encourages people with disabilities to visit local schools, organizations and clubs to talk about their experiences. As Detwiler concluded his speech he challenged others in the crowd with disabilities to "Get to know people, make friends, make connections; it is important for our communities to know us as people."

Following his speech, Detwiler and 11 other individuals from Medina County met with State Representative Steve Hambley to discuss topics such as transportation, quality of service providers and health and safety issues.

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**About MCBDD**

MCBDD is the lifeline which connects individuals to the resources in the county, everything from residential services and employment, to funding sources and medical services. The mission of the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to promote and empower over 1250 individuals with developmental disabilities, from birth to death, to live, learn work and socialize in their communities.