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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Union County Advocate Honored By Ohio Developmental Disabilities Agency

COLUMBUS, Ohio – One of the true leaders of the *Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities* was recently honored at the *Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) 26TH ANNUAL CONVENTION* held at the *Easton Hilton* Dec. 2-4.

Steve Streng was one of three board members from across the state of Ohio who received the *Distinguished Service Award*, an honor which began in 2006. There are 616 *County Board of Developmental Disabilities* members in Ohio's 88 counties. Board members are nominated and chosen for their outstanding service and commitment to their local *County Board of Developmental Disabilities*.

"These volunteer Board members are the backbone of every agency across the state that helps individuals with developmental disabilities," said Dan Ohler, *OACB* Executive Director. "Without their guidance, experience and wisdom, the 80,000 people we serve would not have their services and programs they enjoy today."

Kim Miller, Superintendent of the *Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities*, said there were several reasons why Mr. Streng was nominated and received the *Distinguished Service Award*.

Mr. Streng is credited with coming up with the idea and holding a regional board meeting in Union County where board members and superintendents from several *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities* met in a round table discussions to brainstorm better ways to help people with developmental disabilities.

"That concept will now be replicated throughout Ohio (by the *OACB*)," Mr. Miller said.

In 2006, Mr. Streng led the movement to drop the words "mental retardation" from the name of the Union County agency.

"That started a discussion among our staff, families and the media, and in February 2007, we changed our name to the *Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities*," Mr. Miller said.

“It was never our intent to influence the state, but to follow our core values of doing the right thing...period,” he said, noting that with the signing of Senate Bill 79 in July, the words “mental retardation” were dropped from all *County Boards* and the *Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities*.

“I am humbled and very proud to receive this award, and I accept it on behalf of all the people we service,” Mr. Streng said. “Kim (Miller) and his staff make our Board look good. They breathe life into the ideas that come out of our Board meetings.”

In addition to Mr. Streng, the other board members recognized were Sam Greenwood from the *Clark County Board of Developmental Disabilities*, and Joyce Cramer of the *Crawford County Board of Developmental Disabilities*.

The *OACB* is celebrating its 26th year of operation. Its mission is to “support *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities* in providing services and supports to individuals with disabilities.”

All 88 *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities* in Ohio are members of this organization whose purpose is to educate and advocate for the 80,000 individuals with developmental disabilities who reside in the Buckeye State.

CUTLINE:

The *Distinguished Service Award* is one of the top honors given statewide, and *Union County Board of Developmental Disability* Board member Steve Streng was honored. Pictured with Mr. Streng are Jim Kouri, Steve Streng, Debbie Streng, Arin Streng, Luke Streng, Myranda Streng, Nancy Streng, (back row) Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities Superintendent Kim Miller and Mike Streng.

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