

*Ohio Association of County Boards  
Serving People With Developmental Disabilities  
73 E. Wilson Bridge Road  
Worthington, Ohio 43085  
Contact: Linda Oda  
Director of Advocacy Services  
513-218-4851  
[loda@oacbdd.org](mailto:loda@oacbdd.org)*

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 8, 2010

## **Morgan Looking Forward To Many More Years At the Helm For Delaware County**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Bob Morgan may have served people with developmental disabilities for more than 30 years and been a visionary leader that is respected throughout the state, but he is not – emphasis on not – retiring.

Morgan, superintendent of the *Delaware County Board of Developmental Disabilities*, made that point abundantly clear as he accepted the highest honor bestowed on a superintendent of a *County Board of Developmental Disabilities* at the *Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) of Developmental Disabilities (OACB) 27th ANNUAL CONVENTION* at the *Hilton at Easton* Dec. 1-3.

“Let me make one thing clear – I am not retiring. As Charlton Heston once said, ‘you can take this job. . . .when you pry it from my cold dead hands.’” The crowd of about 600 people erupted into laughter.

Morgan was honored with the Kenneth Legats Award for “visionary leadership in administration.” This award is presented annually to an executive who has been nominated by the *OACB Board of Trustees* and who over a career of more than 20 years has shown high ideals, vision, and moral leadership in the administration of programs for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Morgan was introduced by Monty Kerr, last year’s Kenneth Legats Award winner and Superintendent of the *Belmont, Harrison, and Noble Counties Board of Developmental Disabilities*. Ken Legats was a well known and respected superintendent from the *Muskingum County Board of Developmental Disabilities*. His wife and a current Board member for the *Muskingum County Board of Developmental Disabilities*, Carabeth Legats, participated in the ceremony Dec. 3.

While the list of Bob Morgan’s accomplishments are long, Kerr pointed out some key innovations that later became adopted statewide as proof of Morgan’s visionary outlook, including the fact that 20 years ago, the *Delaware County Board of Developmental Disabilities* dropped the term “mental retardation” from its title.

In August 2009, Governor Ted Strickland signed into law Senate Bill 79 which took the words “mental retardation” out of the names of all *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities*

(formerly known as MRDD), as well as the *Department of Developmental Disabilities*.

Additionally, more than 15 years ago, Morgan had the foresight to distinguish the County Board's role as funder, coordinator and monitor of services, rather than as a provider of direct services, Kerr said.

“Bob enthusiastically pursued participation in the Self Determination Demonstration project in Ohio,” Kerr said. “Bob not only believes in the principles of self determination, but has based policy and practices on these principles. As a result every child and adult receiving services from Delaware CBDD has an individual plan with an individual budget.”

Kerr said Morgan's entire philosophy can be summed up in a motto created by Bob Morgan years ago: “When people gain control their lives will improve and costs will go down.”

In accepting the award, Morgan thanked his Board and staff, and said he was honored to be in the company of others that shared this award in the past and thanked the *OACB*. He said being in this position was a bit serendipitous in that he never expected to be in this position as Superintendent when his career started, but has enjoyed the journey along the way.

Morgan accepted the award with his wife of 42 years, Lynn next to him. With a smile, he raised his award and said, "see you next year" to an ovation.

“It would be great if we could figure out a way to have Bob Morgan mentor every new superintendent we hire in Ohio,” said Dan Ohler, *OACB* Executive Director. “Bob never loses sight of the people we serve, and as a result, he gets the highest possible outcomes in every phase of what he does.”

The *OACB* is celebrating its 27th year. Its mission is to “support *County Boards of Developmental Disabilities* in providing services and supports to individuals with disabilities.”

All 88 *County Boards of MRDD* in Ohio are members of this organization whose purpose is to educate and advocate for the 85,000 individuals with developmental disabilities who reside in the Buckeye State.

**CUTLINE: Robert Morgan (second from right), who was selected as this year's Kenneth Legats Award winner, is pictured with (from left) Monty Kerr, last year's winner, Carabeth Legats (wife of Ken Legats), and Dan Ohler, OACB Executive Director.**

**Pictured with Ken Legats award winner Robert Morgan are Board Members, staff and family. Shown are Wendy Mack, Cheryl Smart, Andrea Biernacki Sweet, Glen Tibbitts, (second row) Kristy Schaber, Lynn Morgan, Robert Morgan, Patty Hollingsworth, Alice Nicks, and Susan Munday. Pictured in front of the group is Cory Grywalski.**