

MahoningKidsMatter



Mahoning County
Children Services

THE EXCLUSIVE PUBLICATION FOR STAFF, STAKEHOLDERS, DONORS & FRIENDS

SUMMER 2019



We Need GREAT People to Become
Foster Parents



Mahoning County
Children Services
330.941.8888 • mahoningkids.com

Inside this Edition

NEWS

New Community Resource for Foster & Kinship Families 2
Introducing New Advisory Committee Members. 5

OUR COMMUNITY

Many Friends & Donors Help Enhance Lives of Children 7
Agency Community Event Highlights 9

Calendar of Upcoming Events. 12

Historic Budget Increases Approved for Ohio Public Children Services Agencies

Ohio’s county children services agencies will get a much-needed \$118 million-dollar per year boost in new funding from the state budget --- and the relief could not come any sooner.

“The new funding is both targeted to specific needs to address Ohio’s addiction epidemic and yet flexible to meet local challenges. This new investment will help us to begin to address our local crisis as children in our protective custody increases and placement cost rise. The funding will also help us address any workforce needs to alleviate the demand on our services,” states Randall B. Muth, J.D., Executive Director, Mahoning County Children Services.

See **HISTORIC INVESTMENTS**
Continues on page 2

New State Rep Manning “Rides-Along” with Children Services Caseworker to Learn Status of Child Welfare in the Valley

State Representative Don Manning accompanied a Mahoning County Children Services’ Caseworker to scheduled home visits with children and families in Mahoning County on July 19, 2019. Rep. Manning is serving his first term in the Ohio House of Representatives. He represents the 59th District, which includes most of Mahoning County.



See **REP RIDE-ALONG**
continued on page 2

MISSION: Mahoning County Children Services, in partnership with the community, is a committed leader in protecting children while helping preserve families.

NEWS



Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019

Introducing...Mina's Foster Closet

New Community Resource Available for Foster, Kinship Caregivers & Emancipating Youth



PHOTO BY JENNIFER T. KOLLAR/MCCS

Nicole Tsarnas, Founder of Mina's Foster Closet, proudly displays a variety of new 'Starter Home Kit' supplies donated for teens who are or will be emancipating (aging out) of foster

Nicole Tsarnas, a licensed foster parent, knows first-hand the rewards and the challenges of caring for children placed in her home. Many times children are placed into foster or kinship care on emergency or short notice and at any time day or night. And often times, children arrive with only the clothing they're wearing. Foster families have to be prepared and their needs for supplies and age appropriate gear may vary and change accordingly depending on the needs of the child placed in their care. Tsarnas and her husband, who have been foster parents in other states before coming back to Ohio, quickly discovered Mahoning County did not have any community resources for foster families that were available in other communities where she fostered is what prompted Tsarnas to create "Mina's Foster Closet." This new community resource aims to help other foster parents, kinship families and youths aging out of the foster care system.

See MINAS FOSTER CLOSET
continued on page 11

HISTORIC INVESTMENTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Locally and across the state, public children services agencies (PSA) are commending the Ohio General Assembly for prioritizing child safety and family stability in the budget. Child advocates are calling this the "single biggest investment in child and family services ever made by the State of Ohio." And, each of Ohio's PSAs see the unprecedented and historic investments in child welfare as a "welcome relief." For too long, children services agencies have struggled. However, the agencies are struggling even more so now as they work to mitigate the impact and toll that Ohio's addiction epidemic is causing with more children coming into foster care, staying longer, and requiring more treatment and services ultimately pushing the child welfare system to the brink. **Continued on page 6**

REP RIDE-ALONG

Continued from page 1

"I am extremely excited to be spending the day with Mahoning County Children Services. My background in youth probation and detention, as well as youth mental health, behavioral health, and addiction services, has given me firsthand experience working with the challenges that our youth and families face. I have made it a priority to bring positive change to our youth and families, including my work on HB 12 and other legislation, and I look forward to seeing what Mahoning County is doing for these individuals as well as learning what can still be done," states Rep. Don Manning, Ohio House of Representative, 59th District.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for Rep. Manning to personally observe the valuable and vital work our casework team does 365 days a year working on the 'frontline' serving our County's most at-risk and vulnerable citizens—our children and

families, explains Randall B. Muth, J.D., Executive Director, Mahoning County Children Services.

Rep. Manning's interest in child welfare and visit to Mahoning County Children Services could not have come at a better time as all of Ohio's public children services agencies are working to mitigate the impact of the drug addiction crisis. In addition, new Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly made unprecedented new investments in children services for the new biennium state budget.

Mahoning County's children are the invisible victims of the drug addiction crisis. "This crisis is having a significant impact on the demand for our services across almost all aspects of what we do at Children Services. In addition to the human toll this crisis is taking, it also has a fiscal impact, all which is important for Rep. Manning to fully understand," adds Director Muth.

Learn More About Becoming a Foster/Adoptive Family— Call Today!
330.941.8888 | mahoningkids.com

ARE YOU PARENTING THE CHILD OF A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND?



NOAS Kinship Support Services Can Help You!

- *Do you have questions about what resources are available?*
- *Do you need support?*

**Call Kim at (330) 236-5503 or
email kstewart@noas.com**

Experienced Staff are available Monday through Thursday 8:30am - 5:00pm, to assist caregivers in accessing services and problem solving issues and concerns.



Please join NOAS for a FREE dinner and childcare, and discussion for kinship caregivers of Mahoning County.

NOAS Kinship Support Group provides an opportunity for caregivers to regularly meet, discuss their individual experiences, share parenting ideas, strategies, learn from each other, develop relationships and resources to help strengthen your family.

6:00-8:00 PM ON

Monday, August 26th

Monday, September 23rd

Monday, October 21st

Monday, November 4th

Monday, November 25th

Monday, December 16th

**At Mahoning County
Children Services**

MAHONING COUNTY RESIDENTS ONLY. RSVP IS REQUIRED.

Program provided by NOAS and paid for by Mahoning County Children Services.

MISSION: Mahoning County Children Services, in partnership with the community, is a committed leader in protecting children while helping preserve families.

About Us

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



Ohio Wears Blue Day: Mahoning County Children Services staffers wear blue in support of 2019 Ohio Wear's Blue Day, a state-wide campaign held the second Wednesday in April to support National Child Abuse and Neglect PREVENTION Month also in April. The color blue and the pinwheel are national color and symbols for child abuse prevention.

2019 Executive Staff, Board, Advisory & Commissioners

ADMINISTRATIVE EXECUTIVE STAFF

Executive Director

Randall B. Muth, J.D.

Assistant Director

Rona Curtis

Department

Bradley Smith, Program Administrator

Family Services Department

Julie Rudolph, Program Administrator

Placement Services Department

Anthony Paris, Program Administrator

Business Operations Department

Melinda Posterli, Program Administrator

Human Resources Department

Susan Babinec, Manager

Information Technology Department

Joshua Cayson, Manager

Public Information Department

Jennifer T. Kollar, Public Information Officer

MAHONING COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES BOARD

Dr. Joseph Mosca, *Chairman*

Dr. Benjamin McGee, *Vice Chairman*

Delphine Baldwin-Casey

Marilyn Montes

Loisjean Haynes-Paige

Pastor Joann Pangio

Anthony Spano, *Secretary*

Daniel Wakefield

Kriss Wolford

MAHONING COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

David C. Ditzler

Carol Rimedio Righetti

Anthony Traficanti

MAHONING COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DJ Depp

Denise Dick

Megan Ellashek

Katrina Harris

Calvin Jones

Brigid Kennedy

Michele Kuhar

Tracy Lamb

Rev. Lewis Macklin

Andrea L. Mahone

Lisa Manente

Pete Milliken

Mary Alice Noble

Officer Shawnacie Ott

Dr. Matthew J. Paylo

Johanna Slivinske

Mary Jo Truman

Yvonne Wilson

About Us

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



New Members Join Mahoning County Children Services Advisory Committee

Brigid Kennedy, *Ursuline Ministries and immediate past Chairperson, Mahoning County Children Services Board*

Michele Kuhar, *Entrepreneur, consultant, retired small business owner*

Tracey Lamb, *The Ohio State Penitentiary*

Lisa Manente, *Mahoning County Child Support Enforcement Agency*

Johanna Slivinske, *MSW, LISW-S, Kent State University*

Now Accepting New Members:

Mahoning County Children Services Advisory Committee is comprised of all volunteers who will serve in an advisory capacity. Members can be from a variety of backgrounds or professions, must be a Mahoning Valley resident and have an interest in child welfare. The Committee normally meets four times per year and meetings last an hour to an hour and a half. To learn more: email: Jennifer.Kollar@jfs.ohio.gov

Posterli Earns Masters Degree in Social Work

Nikki Posterli recently earned her Masters Degree in Social Work from Youngstown State University.



Nikki Posterli

Nikki currently serves as the Agency's Program Administrator of Business Operations. She has been with the Agency since 2014. She was originally hired as Fiscal Officer and was promoted to Program Administrator in 2016. Congratulations Nikki!

Mahoning Kids Matter is the official publication of Mahoning County Children Services and published by the Agency's Public Information Office.

222 W. Federal Street, 4th Floor | Youngstown, Ohio 44503
330.941.8888 | Fax: 330.941.8787 | mahoningkids.com

Editor/Writer/Design: Jennifer T. Kollar, Public Information Officer

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without expressed consent from the Publisher.



 Mahoning County
Children Services

NOW HIRING CHILD WELFARE CASEWORKERS
To Apply: www.mahoningkids.com/careers/

Do Your Part to
PREVENT
Child Abuse and
Neglect.
Report it when you
suspect it.
Contact your County's
public
Children Services
Agency or local Law
Enforcement.
**Mahoning County
Children Services**

24-HOUR
REPORT LINE:
330.941.8888

About Us

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



2 Staffers Receive Distinguished Service Award at State-Wide Foster Care Youth Conference



As the population of youth who age out of the foster care system grows, there is an increasing need for education and resources aimed at helping to establish and prepare youth for a successful entry into society. The Purple Project's 10 Year Anniversary of the "I Believe In Me," Foster

Care Youth Conference offers interactive seminars, workshops, panel sessions, and exhibits dedicated to addressing the needs of youth who are on the path to "aging out" of the foster care system.

Congratulations Phillips & Karr

Jeff Phillips, Manager, Mahoning County Children Services' Independent Youth Living Services Program and Karey Karr, Caseworker, Independent Youth Living Services. Both were presented with the Purple Project's "Leaf Award:"



"In Recognition of Your Immeasurable Contributions to The Purple Project and the Foster Care & Adoption Communities."

HISTORIC INVESTMENTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Mahoning County Children Services is also experiencing record numbers of children being placed in out-of-home care causing a critical shortage and need for more licensed foster caregivers and to identify kinship (relative) placements for Mahoning County children. In addition, the de-

mand is taking its toll as caseworkers' caseloads are increasing and becoming more demanding and complex due to parental drug addiction issues causing children to linger longer in foster care. "This crisis is having a significant impact on the demand for our services across almost all aspects of what we do at Children Services. In addition to the human toll this crisis is

taking, it also has a tremendous fiscal impact," adds Director Muth.

The new state funding, which includes dollars specified for promising new programs like the Governor's signature children services-led opioid-response program "Ohio START" along with a new federally matched kinship (relatives) navigator program

will help agencies begin to turn the corner on years of managing in crisis. The new state funding will enable children services agencies to rebuild their workforce, rebuild capacity and begin to rebuild the lives of children and families devastated by the drug addiction epidemic.



Open Your Heart & Home

Become a Foster / Adoptive Parent



Mahoning County Children Services

330-941-8888 www.mahoningkids.com

OUR COMMUNITY

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



Mighty Cubs Director Helps Kids Put 'Best Foot Forward' Donating 300 Pairs of Socks

Sonny Parker, founder of Mighty Cubs and "Get R.I.G.H.T.," a youth mentoring program based in Sharon, PA. says building self-esteem is a huge part of his mentoring program. "You have to believe it's possible and believe in yourself," explains Parker. Parker mentors youth in school and at home. As part of his outreach into the communities he serves, Parker donates kids' athletic socks. His program helps at-risk youth and aims to decrease bullying, cyber bullying, truancy, and the risk of youth embarking down the wrong path.



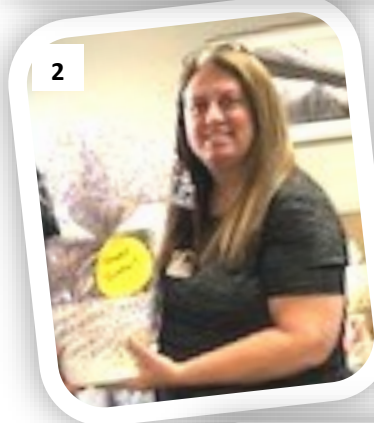
City of Youngstown Mayor Jamal Tito Brown (left) with Sonny Parker, Executive Director, Mighty Cubs (right) presented 300 pairs of socks to Mahoning County Children Services in March.

Over 300 Easter Baskets Donated to Help Brighten Holiday for Mahoning Kids



Thank You Easter Bunnies!

Thanks to the combined generosity of several individual donors and organizations, over 300 beautiful Easter Baskets were created for children ages infant to 18 and donated to brighten the holiday for the children served by Mahoning County Children Services.



1. Country Kids & Kritters 4-H Club
2. Shepherd of the Valley, Boardman Campus
3. Linda Romisher
4. Coitsville Sadelites 4-H Club
5. Delta Kappa Gamma: Darlene Malaska and Deb Vanarsdale



HAVE YOU ADOPTED A CHILD AND RESIDE IN MAHONING COUNTY?



POST ADOPTION Support Services

Public • Private • International
Mahoning County Residents

NOAS Post Adoption Support Services Is Here To Help You!

- Do you have questions about what resources are available?
- Do you need support?

**Call Kim at (330) 236-5503 or
email kstewart@noas.com**

Experienced Staff are available Monday through Thursday 8:30am - 5:00pm, to assist caregivers in accessing services and problem solving issues and concerns.



Please join NOAS for a FREE dinner and childcare, and discussion for adoptive families.

NOAS Post Adoption Support Group provides an opportunity for post adoptive parents to regularly meet, discuss their individual experiences, share parenting ideas, strategies, learn from each other, develop relationships and resources to help strengthen your family.

6:00-8:00 PM ON

Tuesday, August 20th

Tuesday, September 17th

Tuesday, October 15th

Tuesday, November 5th

Tuesday, November 19th

Tuesday, December 17th

**At Mahoning County
Children Services**

MAHONING COUNTY RESIDENTS ONLY. RSVP IS REQUIRED.

Program provided by NOAS and paid for by Mahoning County Children Services.

OUR COMMUNITY

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



Mahoning County's Top Law Officer is Keynote Speaker at 14th Annual Pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention Event

Pinwheels for Prevention, an annual community event, aims to recognize and increase awareness of National Child Abuse Prevention In April. Now in its 14th year, the event is co-sponsored by Mahoning County Children Services and Akron Children's Hospital's Child Advocacy Center. This year's event was held on April 4 at the Holiday Inn Boardman. The event featured keynote speaker, Sheriff Jerry Greene, Mahoning County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Greene highlighted the many ways that the Sheriff's Office in partnership with Mahoning County Children Services helps to protect children. Also featured, were "Bull," and "Cat" President

and Secretary, Erie Shores Ohio Bikers Against Child Abuse. Also participating were: East High School Junior Army ROTC, and Boardman High School Jazz Ensemble II provided music entertainment.



Sheriff Jerry Greene
Mahoning County Sheriff's Office



April is **National Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Month**

Protecting Children, Preserving Families



Mahoning County
Children Services

Choffin Career Center Students Awarded Community Spotlight Award:

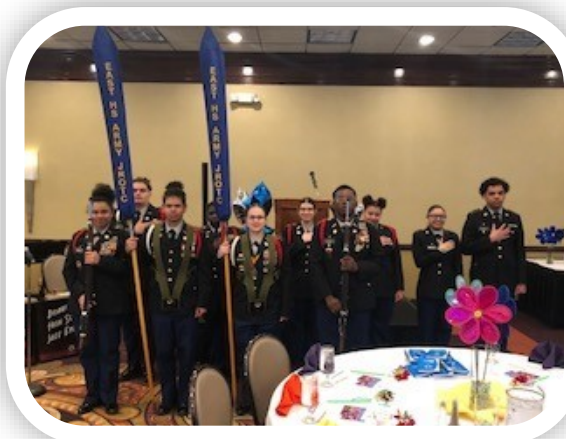
Each year a Community Spotlight Award is presented to individuals or organizations who demonstrate continued generosity, commitment and community service to Mahoning County Children. This year's award was presented to Choffin Career & Technical Center under the direction of Kaylor White. For 18 consecutive years, Choffin's Early Childhood Program's Annual Hat & Mitten Collection Drive — has given the gift of warmth with—new mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, as well as monetary contributions to Mahoning County Children Services. Throughout the years, Choffin's winter collections and donations have helped keep Mahoning County children warm all winter long!



Kaylor White
Choffin Career & Technical Center



It Takes A Village to Protect Children: (Left to right) Jennifer Kollar, Mahoning Co. Children Services, "Bull" President, Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA), Erie Shores, Ohio Chapter, Mahoning County Sheriff Jerry Greene, "Cat," BACA, and Andrea Mistovich, Child Advocacy Center, Akron Children's Hospital.



East High School Army ROTC Color Guard students under the director of Master Sgt. Douglas Moon.

Pinwheel Display is Powerful Reminder of Child Abuse Prevention



Pinwheel Partnership: Students from East High School's Junior Army ROTC Program, under the direction of Master Sgt. Douglas Moon, have helped set-up the Pinwheel Garden Display for over 11 years.



Media Messages: (above) Andrea Mistovich of Akron Children's Hospital's Child Advocacy Center and Jennifer Kollar (below/right) Mahoning County Children Services. Both serve as the Pinwheels for Prevention Month Event Planning Co-Chairs. (Below) Guest appearance at the Louie B Free Radio Show Studio, located in The Vindicator.



Every April, pinwheels are "planted" in communities across the nation to raise awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month. The pinwheel is the national symbol for child abuse and neglect prevention. The pinwheels represent individuals who advocated and took action on behalf of a child suspected of being abused or neglected.

Mahoning County Children Services and Akron Children's Hospital partner with students from East High School's Junior Army ROTC Program to 'plant' a Pinwheel Garden. For the last four years, the Pinwheel Garden has been displayed on the

front lawn directly in front of the historical St. James Meeting Place located in Boardman Park facing U.S. Route 224, one the busiest commercial traffic corridors in the county. The pinwheels were on display the whole month of April.





Foster Parent Founder of Mina's Foster Closet Awarded "Hometown Hero Award"

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

MINA'S FOSTER CLOSET

Located in the Old School Marketplace (formerly South Range Elementary School) at 11836 South Avenue in North Lima, Mina's is named in honor of a child that Tsarnas fostered. Mina's provides clothes, toys, baby gear such as strollers, highchairs, as well as New Home 'Starter Kits' to teens emancipating ("aging out") of the foster-care system.

Nicole was also recently awarded WYTV-33 "Hometown Hero Award" for the creation and launch of Mina's Foster Closet. Congratulations Nicole!

For more information about Mina's Foster Closet: 330.536.9098



Len Rome, WYTV-33 Awards Nicole Tsarnas, Founder of Mina's Foster Closet, with WYTV's Hometown Hero Award.

Keep Connected

With Us @



Website:
Mahoningkids.com



MC Children Services
@MahoningKids



Mahoning County
Children Services
@MahoningKids

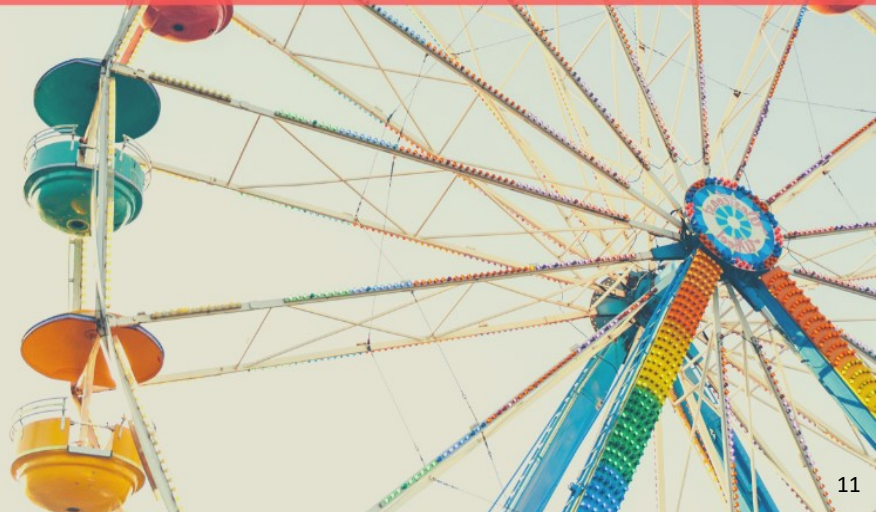
See You at the Fair!



Mahoning County
Children Services

330-941-8888 www.mahoningkids.com

Stop By Our Booth in the Medical Building to Register to Win a Lionel Train



EVENTS

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



Foster Parent Association Celebrates Successful 4th Annual Golf Scramble

The Foster Parent Association of Mahoning County's Annual Golf Scramble Event raises funds to enhance programs and services for Mahoning County Children in Foster Care. Funds are used to take children in foster care along with foster caregivers to group outings to various educational and fun venues and any other special needs that may arise throughout the year. The event is held at Parto's Golf Learning Center and is planned, hosted by Tammy and Tom Parteleno, owners and adoptive parents. Tammy is current President of the Foster Parent Association.

For more information about the Mahoning County Foster Parent Association:

Visit: www.mahoningkids.com/foster-parentassociation



Golf Scramble Teams enjoy a sunny, blue sky day on the greens at Parto's Golf & Learning Center.

Health Fair Event Reminds Staff Importance of Self-Care Wellness



Becoming a Better You: Staff from the Bureau of Workers' Comp "Better You Better Ohio" Health Program.

Mahoning County Children Services' Peer Recognition Committee sponsored and hosted an in-house Health Fair focusing on the health and well-being of Children Services' staff. Health information and activities included: chair massages, mini-manicures, blood pressure, diabetes, and bone density screenings as well as a wealth of information from the Mahoning County Board of Health, Mercy Health's Wellness.

Agency EVENTS

August 28-September 2

Children Services @ the Canfield Fair
Visit the Agency's Booth in the Medical Education Building all week long.

November 1

National Adoption Awareness Month
"Adoption Day Celebration Event"
Venue: Rotunda, Mahoning County Courthouse

November—December 2019

Christmas Gifts For Kids Holiday Campaign

Above the Rim Event

Mahoning Kids Matter | SUMMER 2019



Friendly Rivalry is Fierce On the Basketball Court Youngstown Fire Department Snares Win from Adult Parole Board

The competition was fierce at the Annual Above the Rim Basketball Event now in its Fifth Year.

The Youngstown Fire Department was on FIRE again beating the Adult Parole Board (APB) 40-25. This is YPD's THIRD consecutive win for the Grand Championship and APB's debut appearance.

The Event is held at Cardinal Mooney High School, and features a 4-team tournament. Teams participating this year: Youngstown Fire, Mahoning County Sheriff's Office and two new teams: Boardman Fire Department and The Adult Parole Authority.



Why Blue: "Battle of the Blue Championship Game" is named in honor of National Child Abuse and Neglect Month as blue is the national and official color.

Background: The Above the Rim Basketball Event is planned, hosted and sponsored by the Mahoning County Children Services' Citizens Committee and aims to accomplish three goals:

- Raise awareness about Mahoning County Children Services.
- Raise funds and fun in order to continue a stable base of funding for Children Services.
- The event is held in April to also raise awareness of National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Youngstown Fire Department Above the Rim Battle of the Blue Grand Champs!



Special Thanks:
All Photography by Frank Marr

TO VIEW ALL EVENT PHOTOS VISIT:
<http://www.mahoningkids.com/news-media/>
SCROLL DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THAT PAGE

BATTLE OF THE BLUE | 4.26.2019



ADULT PAROLE AUTHORITY



Trevail Smith
Performs a
show-
stopping
acapella
version of the
National
Anthem.
Wow!!!!



MAHONING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



**Boardman Performing Arts Center
Entertain the Crowd at Half Time**



BOARDMAN FIRE DEPARTMENT



**Ryan Kollar Reaches for the Win
In the Half Court Contest**



YSU ROTC COLOR GUARD

Opening Ceremonies

Presentation of National Colors

Youngstown State University ROTC Color
Guard

National Anthem

Trevail Smith

Game Officials

David Hight, Certified Referee
Travis Thompson, Certified Referee
Charles Williams, Certified Referee

Scoreboard Officials

Mark Oles, Cardinal Mooney High School

Event Photographer

Photography By Frank Marr

Half Time Activities

Boardman Performing Arts Center

Many, Many Thanks to Our Event Sponsors

Main Event Sponsors

Barry Dydles
Buckeye Health Plan
Cardinal Mooney High School
Lamar Outdoor
Paramount Advantage
Mahoning County Children Services
Citizens Committee

Center Court Sponsors

Rona Curtis
Denise DeBartolo York
Soup City Designs

Court Side Sponsors

Bobby DJ Music for All Occasions
Thomas H. Kollar
Photography By Frank Marr

Sideline Sponsors

Armstrong One Wire
Pepsi Beverages Company
Pine Hollow Springs Bottling Co., Lowellville
Things Remembered

2019 Above the Rim Event Planning Committee

Jennifer T. Kollar, Event Director

Margaret Baker
Lynette Brown
Josh Cayson
Teri Cercone
Rona Curtis
Debbie DeCecco
Natalie Finamore
Robert Gessler

Kristy Gustovich
Karey Karr
Bobby Litch
Marisa Litch
Nikki Posterli
Brittany Snyder

