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# Empowered Employees

University of Dayton

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Friday July 7, 2017

## Empowered Employees

Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley has selected the University of Dayton's Dining Services as Employer of the Year for 2017 for supporting Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley's work to empower individuals with disabilities and other disadvantages to achieve independence.

Dining Services staff will receive the award Friday, Aug. 4, as part of the Friday night concert series at the Frazee Pavilion in Kettering.

"The employees in these positions are valuable to our operations and our team depends on each individual to attain our goal of award-winning service and nutritious meals," said Mary Eilbeck, executive director of Dining Services. "Each year we bring individuals into our operations who vary in skill level and we have the opportunity to train these individuals to be successful while they assist us in our day-to-day operations."

Dining Services provides shorter-term, transitional employment opportunities for adults participating in Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley's Miracle Clubhouse, a community-based program that helps

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adults recover from mental illness through consistent employment and other support services. Clubhouse members have the opportunity to obtain permanent employment with Dining Services if they successfully complete a 6-to-9 month transitional period.

“We are fortunate in our partnership with UD Dining Services,” said Kim Bramlage, public relations manager for Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley. “They understand our program and work with each of our members. Over the past three years, eight of our members have worked at UD and several of them continued after their transitional employment position ended.”

Bramlage noted statistics from Clubhouse International that show close to 80-90 percent of adults with severe mental illness are chronically unemployed, due in part to stigma and lack of services and supports — obstacles the Clubhouse model help members overcome.

“Participating in meaningful work is vital to recovery, and transitional employment through the Clubhouse model gives someone an opportunity to have meaningful work with support – both from the Clubhouse and from the employer,” Bramlage said. “UD Dining Services staff are very supportive and create work environments where all employees are valued and supported, including our Clubhouse members.”

Dining Services employs more than 200 individuals in positions ranging from dishwashers to executive chefs within its 13 operations.

Dining Services’ multiple locations across campus are all exclusively à la carte. In addition to Au Bon Pain, Kennedy Union will feature three new micro restaurants — 'Que, Spice, and Toss — when renovations are completed in mid-August.

The Grainary and Passport restaurants are located in Virginia W. Kettering; Marycrest Complex has a full-service dining room as well. The Emporium is a mini grocery store with a full-service deli located in Marianist Hall.

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