

2026 OPRA Great Provider Summit Speaker & Session Information

<u>Day, Time & Track</u>	<u>Session # & Title</u>	<u>Session Description</u>	<u>Speaker First Name</u>	<u>Speaker Last Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Organization</u>
<p>Wed., May 6th 1:00pm-3:00pm Ready For It: Pre-Conference Training</p>	<p>Pre-Conference Training Leading Through Change: Using Appreciative Inquiry to Build What's Next</p>	<p>Ohio's DD system is in the midst of significant change — new assessment tools, conversations about acuity-based rates, potential shifts in contracting, workforce instability, and increasing financial pressure. For many providers, it can feel like we are constantly reacting. But what if, instead of organizing around what's broken, we organized around what's working?</p> <p>In this highly interactive two-hour preconference session, Molly McGuigan of Case Western Reserve University will introduce providers to Appreciative Inquiry (AI) — a strengths-based approach to organizational strategy and systems change that has been used around the world to help organizations navigate complexity without losing clarity or momentum. Rather than focusing on deficits or fear, Appreciative Inquiry helps leaders identify moments when their organizations were at their best — operationally, financially, culturally — and use those insights to design the future intentionally.</p> <p>This session is especially relevant for CEOs, executive leaders, and emerging leaders who want to lead with steadiness and intention in uncertain times. Attendees will leave with a practical framework and facilitation tools they can immediately use with their own boards, leadership teams, or staff. When the external environment feels unstable, the strongest strategy may begin by rediscovering what has always made your organization strong.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to explore how AI can be used as a practical strategic planning tool — not just a feel-good exercise. Attendees will learn to identify core strengths and capabilities that can anchor their organization during system change. Attendees will learn how to move teams from survival mode to possibility thinking. Attendees will learn to draft a strengths-based strategic focus for the next 12–24 months. 	Molly	McGuigan	MBA, Co-Founder / Managing Partner	Bellflower Street, LLC
<p>Thurs., May 7th 9:30am-10:30am Come Together: Executive Leadership Track</p>	<p>Session 1 Mission to Market</p>	<p>This presentation emphasizes the importance of clearly defining, embracing, and actively promoting an organization's mission to employees, prospective staff, families, and the broader community. OVRs' Jamie Steele will demonstrate how mission, vision, and values can shape messaging around safe environments, individualized services, and meaningful community integration. This presentation will challenge organizations to make their mission visible "literally everywhere," ensuring that daily operations, branding, and community presence consistently reflect their core purpose.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will be able to identify how an organization's mission, vision, and values can be operationalized to guide messaging around safety, individualized services, and community integration across internal and external audiences. Attendees will be able to analyze current organizational practices to assess the visibility and consistency of mission-driven messaging in daily operations, branding, and community engagement. Attendees will be able to apply strategies for embedding an organization's mission "literally everywhere" by developing actionable approaches to align staff communication, recruitment efforts, and community presence with the organization's core purpose. 	Jamie	Steele	President/CEO	Ohio Valley Residential Services
<p>Thurs., May 7th 9:30am-10:30am One Way or Another: Program Design & Innovation Track</p>	<p>Session 2 Tech-Enabled Independence: How Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration is Reimagining DD Service Models</p>	<p>This session highlights how Anne Grady Services, a leading Ohio DD provider, has partnered with two innovative organizations—NextGen AT and Station MD—to design a more responsive, scalable, and person-centered model of care. Through a combination of remote support infrastructure and telehealth access, the agency is driving outcomes that matter: improved independence, timely interventions, reduced hospitalizations, and more meaningful engagement for the individuals they support.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to analyze the integrated care model implemented by Anne Grady Services Attendees will learn to evaluate the operational and clinical impact of remote support and telehealth in DD services Attendees will learn to identify scalable strategies for modernizing DD service delivery 	Ken	Smith	CXO	NextGen AT
			Co-Speaker: Lindsay	Horne	Director of Supported Living	Anne Grady Services
			Co-Speaker: Emily	Martinez	Account Executive	StationMD

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Thurs., May 7th 9:30am-10:30am Taking Care of Business: Business, Finance & Operations Track	Session 3 The ABCs of Management Services Organization for I/DD Providers - Formation and Lessons Learned	Hattie Larlham, Echoing Hills and Arc Voyagers have jointly formed the Ohio Provider Management Services Organization (OPMSO) with the goal of enhancing operational efficiencies and reducing costs through shared resources. By leveraging collective buying power and shared procurement processes, the goal is for the OPMSO to negotiate better pricing and terms for supplies, equipment, and third party services. This session will review the legal structure of the OPMSO and lessons learned during our first year of operations. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to understand the purpose and core functions of an MSO. 2. Attendees will learn to review the legal structure of an MSO formed as an Ohio LLC. 3. Attendees will learn to share examples about the types of contractual relationships to be entered into by an MSO on behalf of member organizations. 4. Attendees will learn the potential benefits of being a member of an MSO.	Stephen	Colecchi	CEO	Hattie Larlham
			Speaker Panel: Tim	Neville	President and CEO	Echoing Hills Village, Inc.
			Speaker Panel: Paul	Marzec	Director of Procurement Operations	Ohio Provider Management Services Organization
			Speaker Panel: Amanda	Waesch	Vice President / Attorney	Brennan, Manna & Diamond, LLC
Thurs., May 7th 9:30am-10:30am We Are the Champions: Supervision & Workforce Track	Session 4 Seasonal Wellness in I/DD Services	Seasonal changes, holidays, and community events can disrupt routines that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities rely on for stability. Variations in diet, hydration, activity levels, and medication timing can increase risks related to seizures, aspiration, constipation, and medication effectiveness. This session will explore practical strategies providers can use to support seasonal wellness while maintaining safe medication and nutrition practices. Attendees will learn how to anticipate common risks, support DSPs during meal-related activities, and implement simple wellness supports that promote consistency in care during routine disruptions. Attendees will leave with actionable tools to help individuals safely participate in seasonal celebrations while maintaining health, safety, and person-centered outcomes. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to identify common seasonal health risks that impact individuals with I/DD. 2. Attendees will learn to apply strategies to support safe nutrition, hydration, and medication routines during schedule changes. 3. Attendees will learn to strengthen DSP confidence in supporting wellness and meal-time safety. 4. Attendees will learn to implement proactive planning approaches to reduce preventable health incidents.	Deb	Maloy	Director of Education and Services, RN, CDDN	Tarrytown Expocare Pharmacy
Thurs., May 7th 9:30am-10:30am I Won't Back Down: Advocacy & Innovation Track	Session 5 The Soundtrack of Synergy	What happens when advocacy, innovation, and community experience share the same stage? Synergy is more than collaboration, it's a movement powered by shared voices across Ohio's I/DD community. Join a panel of Synergy collaborators who have helped shape and experience the conference firsthand as they share how this one-of-a-kind event brings providers, people with disabilities, families, and advocates together for side-by-side learning that challenges assumptions, sparks innovation, and strengthens the field. Rooted in Synergy's mission to create collaborative experiences that lead to better lives, this session explores how intentional inclusion and courageous conversation create real momentum for change. Attendees will gain insight into how engaging in collaborative spaces like Synergy strengthens provider leadership, fuels advocacy efforts, and helps organizations stay responsive in a rapidly changing system. If you've ever wondered whether Synergy is "for you," this session will help you see how your voice and organization are essential to the future we are building together. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to: Find Your Voice - Reframe Synergy as a strategic provider resource that strengthens leadership, workforce culture, and system influence. 2. Attendees will learn to: Turn Up the Volume on Advocacy - Learn how collaborative spaces accelerate advocacy by bringing providers, self-advocates, and families into shared action. 3. Attendees will learn to: Keep the Rhythm of Innovation - Discover how side-by-side learning with community voices sparks practical innovation you can bring back to your organization. 4. Attendees will learn to: Play in Harmony Across the System - Understand how cross-community partnership builds stronger relationships and drives lasting system change.	Bethany	Toledo-McCray	Executive Director	Lighthouse Cove
			Co-Speaker: John	Hannah	Self-Advocate	CRSI

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<p>Thurs., May 7th 11:00am-12:00pm We Can Work It Out: Sponsored Track</p>	<p>Giv. Sponsored Session Resilience on Purpose: Building Organizations That Outlast Uncertainty</p>	<p>I/DD providers are operating in constant motion—balancing workforce shortages, tight budgets, and rising expectations from payers and policymakers. This interactive session explores how leaders are using data, dashboards, and emerging AI tools to help agencies not only keep up, but thrive. Presenters from Giv. share how to identify KPIs that actually matter, automate what drains capacity, and embed practices that can turn data into a driver of resilience, sustainability and belonging. Participants will leave with practical templates, a KPI guide, and a “data huddle” framework—and the confidence that regardless of their size, budget, or systems, they can take meaningful steps today that build strength for tomorrow.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to identify high-impact KPIs that drive resilience, sustainability, and performance in I/DD organizations. Attendees will learn to leverage dashboards and emerging AI tools to automate processes and reduce administrative burden. Attendees will learn to implement practical data practices—including KPI guides and data huddles—to strengthen decision-making and organizational capacity. 	Danny	Laneri	VP Business Development	Giv.
			Co-Speaker: Alec	Fowler	Senior Director of Business Development	Giv.
<p>Thurs., May 7th 11:00am-12:00pm We Can Work It Out: Sponsored Track</p>	<p>Gladey Sponsored Session Leadership Momentum: Protecting Your Mission Through Executive Continuity</p>	<p>If two leaders left tomorrow, would your organization maintain its momentum? Executive continuity is not accidental. It requires intentional bench development, structured advancement, and disciplined succession planning. This session presents a leadership momentum experience designed to proactively build executive bench strength, stabilize management performance, reduce turnover risk, and protect long term mission impact.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to evaluate current leadership depth and identify vulnerabilities that could disrupt organizational momentum if key executives depart. Attendees will learn to apply structured approaches to build executive bench strength through targeted development, advancement pathways, and performance calibration. Attendees will learn to construct a proactive succession framework that stabilizes management performance and mitigates leadership transition risk. Attendees will learn to align leadership development and succession strategies with strategic priorities to sustain performance, reduce turnover risk, and ensure long-term organizational resilience. 	Stacy	Sufka	MPA, MAC, MBAn, LSSBB, ODCP	Gladey Consulting, LLC
<p>Thurs., May 7th 11:00am-12:00pm We Can Work It Out: Sponsored Track</p>	<p>Smart Living Systems Sponsored Session Expect the Unexpected: How Creativity Makes Remote Support Thrive</p>	<p>If your future success were visible now, would you embrace the next step of innovation today? Establishing remote support for your agency is a huge undertaking: we will preview what’s possible for the individuals you serve and your team when centering creativity and quality. Smart Living Systems has worked with Louisa Ridge of Summit County for the last year to set up and grow their remote support services. This session will share key challenges from Louisa Ridge’s first year as a remote support provider, as well as the creative approaches that achieved growth and quality outcomes for their agency. Attendees will leave with new ideas for how tech-first services can benefit those they support, and a deeper understanding of what to expect when establishing remote supports as a new line of service. Smart Living Systems is the technology arm of LADD, a Hamilton County provider agency.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to identify the key operational, cultural, and technical challenges encountered during the first year of launching remote support services, using the Louisa Ridge case example. Attendees will be able to analyze how creativity, quality-centered design, and tech-first service models contributed to measurable growth and improved outcomes for individuals supported and agency staff. Attendees will learn to apply practical insights from Smart Living Systems’ implementation experience to anticipate requirements, risks, and opportunities when establishing remote supports as a new service line within their own agency. 	Hannah	Eldridge	VP, Operations	Smart Living Systems
			Co-Speaker: Jerome	Kidd, Jr.	Remote Support Technology Manager	Louisa Ridge
			Co-Speaker: Shawn	Thorpe, Jr.	Remote Support Operations Specialist	Louisa Ridge

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Thurs., May 7th 11:00am-12:00pm We Can Work It Out: Sponsored Track	TrailBlaze Creative Sponsored Session Change is Inevitable. Chaos is Optional.	Leadership transitions, mergers, acquisitions, board shifts, and executive retirements are not rare events in our sector anymore. And for organizations serving people with developmental disabilities, these moments carry weight. They affect staff morale, family/guardian confidence, and community perception. Too often, communication during change is reactive, rushed, or reduced to a single announcement. In this session, we'll challenge that approach. We'll explore how to lead communication with intention — aligning leadership voices, honoring legacy while signaling forward momentum, engaging stakeholders before rumors take root, and using disruption as an opportunity to clarify mission and strengthen culture. Because change will happen. The only question is whether you let it create confusion or you lead it with clarity. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to develop a proactive communication plan for leadership transitions and organizational change. 2. Attendees will learn to craft aligned messaging that honors legacy while clearly signaling future direction. 3. Attendees will learn to engage key stakeholders effectively to maintain trust, morale, and organizational stability during disruption.	Tim	Hindes	Chief Trail Officer	TrailBlaze Creative
			Co-Speaker: Erin	Sogal	VP of Inspiration	TrailBlaze Creative
Thurs., May 7th 1:00pm- 2:00pm Come Together: Executive Leadership Track	Session 6 Ohio's Policy and Business Landscape: What Leaders Need to Know Now	This panel brings together leaders from the Ohio Chamber and the Statehouse to share a business and policy perspective on Ohio's current environment and what lies ahead. Panelists will discuss legislative priorities, economic pressures, workforce trends, and broader policy dynamics shaping the months to come. The conversation is designed to help provider executives understand the external forces influencing their organizations—and how to engage effectively as system and business leaders. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will be able to describe key policy, economic, and workforce trends shaping Ohio's current business and legislative landscape. 2. Attendees will be able to identify near-term legislative and regulatory priorities that may impact provider organizations and service delivery. 3. Attendees will be able to understand how business community perspectives and policymaker considerations influence decision-making at the Statehouse.	Rick	Carfagna	Sr. VP of Government Affairs	Ohio Chamber of Commerce
Thurs., May 7th 1:00pm- 2:00pm One Way or Another: Program Design & Innovation Track	Session 7 AI Meets IDD: Top Tools for Providers	Artificial intelligence is already embedded in everyday tools, yet many disability service providers remain unsure how to use it safely, effectively, and responsibly. This session cuts through the hype to show how AI can reduce administrative burden, improve documentation quality, support multilingual staff, and strengthen person-centered services. Attendees will gain a practical understanding of what AI is, where it adds real value in provider settings, and where clear boundaries are required. Using real-world examples and live demonstrations, this session focuses on realistic use cases that respect HIPAA requirements and operational realities. Attendees will leave with a clearer framework for evaluating AI tools, avoiding common risks, and taking small, confident steps toward adoption that support staff retention, compliance, and better outcomes for people served. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to identify practical, low-risk AI use cases that reduce staff documentation and administrative time Understand key compliance, security, and governance considerations when using AI in provider environments. 2. Attendees will learn how to evaluate AI tools without technical expertise or large budgets. 3. Attendees will learn to apply a simple framework for introducing AI gradually and responsibly within an organization.	Patrick	McKinney	Director of Marketing	Kibu

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<p>Thurs., May 7th 1:00pm-2:00pm Taking Care of Business: Business, Finance & Operations Track</p>	<p>Session 8 The Rising Cost of Employee Medical Benefits - Unpacking Myths, Strategies that Work, Hope for the Future</p>	<p>Over the past 20 years, employer health benefit costs have increased more than 200%, while wages have risen less than 70%. The 2026 renewal cycle is proving to be particularly difficult, with more employers facing double-digit cost increases. It seems every year, employers are told this will be the strategy that finally bends the cost curve. Such as: Self-funding, MEWAs, Captives, Consumer-driven health plans, Wellness programs, HMOs, Capitation, Spousal waivers, Smoker surcharges, Point solutions, ICHRAs, Defined Benefits, PBM transparency, Prescription drug importation, Mark Cuban and “cost-plus” drug pricing. Each arrived with bold promises: more control, smarter consumers, better health, lower costs. And yet medical trend continues to far outpace inflation. Pharmacy remains the fastest-growing category of spend. Benefits are reduced. Administrative complexity continues to escalate. Financial statements suffer. Employers are left stitching together more vendors, more contracts, and more risk—without durable cost relief. The hard reality is a silver bullet doesn’t exist - regardless of how the plan is funded, carved out, disclosed, imported, or branded. What’s needed instead is a higher level of vigilance, a greater degree of understanding, and market innovations that attack in fundamental ways. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to identify Cost Drivers: Explore the underlying factors contributing to the ongoing rise in health benefits costs, looking beyond simple explanations to understand the more complex dynamics at play. 2. Attendees will learn to analyze Current Strategies: Examine various strategies, evaluating why many popular efforts have fallen short, and discuss innovative and sustainable approaches to managing employee benefit risk, toward strategies that promote long-term stability and predictability in health benefits. 3. Attendees will learn to discover Long-Term Solutions: Focus on meaningful green shoots that are emerging and that offer real promise to address many of the challenges we face today. At the core of this evolution is a sharper focus on earlier, more accurate diagnosis and faster, more effective treatment, which has the potential to materially alter cost trajectories and outcomes simultaneously.</p>	Paul	Nachtwey	Employee Benefits Practice Leader	The Alera Group
<p>Thurs., May 7th 1:00pm-2:00pm We Are the Champions: Supervision & Workforce Track</p>	<p>Session 9 The Training Revolution: Why DSP Training Determines Retention & Quality Care</p>	<p>The direct support workforce is in crisis, and the solution begins with how we train, support, and empower the people who provide daily care to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This session explores the powerful connection between high-quality training, workforce retention, and the overall quality of care. Attendees will examine national statistics, real-world challenges, and the financial impact of turnover, alongside evidence-based strategies that strengthen DSP confidence, competence, and commitment. Special emphasis is placed on interpersonal and trauma-informed training—skills proven to reduce burnout, prevent crises, and improve relationships. Attendees will leave with actionable solutions that elevate workforce stability, enhance person-centered outcomes, and build a culture of learning that transforms organizations from the inside out. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to apply evidence-based interpersonal and trauma-informed strategies that strengthen communication, reduce conflict, and improve relationships between DSPs and the people they support. 2. Attendees will learn to evaluate the financial impact of turnover and outline practical ways organizations can reinvest in training to reduce costs and enhance quality of care. 3. Attendees will learn to design or refine a training approach that builds DSP confidence, competence, and long-term commitment through ongoing, person-centered learning. 4. Attendees will learn to identify at least three root causes of DSP turnover and explain how targeted training directly improves retention and workforce stability.</p>	Joel	Carson	Staff Development and Training Coordinator	RHA Dayton
<p>Thurs., May 7th 1:00pm-2:00pm I Won't Back Down: Advocacy & Innovation Track</p>	<p>Session 10 Thriving as a Neurodivergent Professional: Unlocking Your Unique Potential</p>	<p>Join us for an empowering and interactive session tailored for IDD service professionals, focusing on how we can thrive as neurodivergent individuals in the workplace. This session emphasizes the importance of mental and emotional well-being in the professional sphere and is full of insights and practical strategies to empower neurodivergent professionals in creating a supportive and inclusive environment for ourselves and others. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to explain key neurodivergent profiles and analyze how neurodivergence influences communication styles, executive functioning, workplace dynamics, and service delivery within the IDD sector. 2. Attendees will learn to identify evidence-informed techniques that promote resilience, reduce burnout, and support emotional regulation—for themselves, neurodivergent colleagues, and the individuals they serve. 3. Attendees will learn to articulate the strengths associated with neurodivergent thinking, evaluate the organizational benefits of inclusive practices, and explain why psychological safety and well-being are foundational to high-functioning teams. 4. Attendees will learn to outline tools, accommodations, and growth resources that foster accessibility and inclusion, while identifying strategies to address barriers and enhance engagement across diverse cognitive styles.</p>	Heather	Janci	Executive Consultant, Provider Strategy	SETWorks

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Thurs., May 7th 2:30pm-3:30pm Come Together: Executive Leadership Track	Session 11 From Context to Strategy: Leading Organizations Through Change	Executive leaders are being asked to interpret external forces and translate them into internal strategy. This session focuses on the unique role of CEOs and executive teams in times of transition—balancing mission, people, finances, and system expectations. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on their leadership approach, organizational posture, and how to move forward with clarity and purpose in a complex environment. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will be able to interpret key external forces - policy, system, workforce and financial - and assess their implications for organizational strategy and leadership decision-making. 2. Attendees will be able to evaluate their current leadership approach and organizational posture in the context of transition, complexity, and competing demands. 3. Attendees will be able to identify practical ways to lead with greater clarity and purpose while balancing mission, people, financial sustainability, and system expectations.	Stacy	DiStefano	CEO	Consulting for Human Services
Thurs., May 7th 2:30pm-3:30pm One Way or Another: Program Design & Innovation Track	Session 12 Growing Community and Opportunity: The HELP Harvest Model	Explore how HELP Foundation’s HELP Harvest program is redefining vocational services through community-rooted partnerships and evolving educational and work-based experiences. What started as a greenhouse and training program has flourished into a seed-to-table model that includes hydroponic growing, food production, and a community café — all designed to prepare people for meaningful, integrated employment. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will learn to examine how HELP Foundation’s HELP Harvest program leverages community-rooted partnerships to redesign traditional vocational services into an integrated, workforce-aligned model. 2. Attendees will learn how hydroponic growing, food production, and café operations function as structured, work-based learning environments that build transferable employment competencies. 3. Attendees will be able to determine key program design elements that support meaningful, competitive, and integrated employment and assess how these strategies could be adapted within participants’ own service systems.	Tamara	Honkala	President & CEO	HELP Foundation
			Co-Speaker: Susan	Berneike	Vice President	HELP Foundation
			Co-Speaker: Allison	Briskey	Chief Program Officer	HELP Foundation
Thurs., May 7th 2:30pm-3:30pm Taking Care of Business: Business, Finance & Operations Track	Session 13 ICF Reimbursement Update & Benchmarking Trends	This session will be focused on all things ICF Reimbursement! Based on legislation surrounding House Bill 96 (HB96), we will discuss the ICF rate calculations for FY27. It will be crucial for providers to develop thoughtful strategies around spending that impacts the Direct Care Ceilings going forward with the removal of the Professional Workforce Development add-on. Additionally, we will walk through examples of the capital fair rental value calculations and provide scenarios to demonstrate opportunities for providers. Other timely ICF Reimbursement updates will also be shared during this session as well as preliminary benchmarks based on the 2025 cost reports. Learning Objectives: 1. Attendees will be able to understand the implications for FY27 ICF rates based on state budget language. 2. Attendees will be able to understand strategies and opportunities to consider as it relates to ICF reimbursement and the rate setting process. 3. Attendees will be able to understand the Ohio ICF Reimbursement system including each cost center that comprises the total per diem rate and associated allowable costs. 4. Attendees will be able to understand the ICF rate calculation methodology including the impact of ceilings, case-mix, inflation factors and efficiency opportunities.	TJ	Ely	MBA, Senior Manager	Plante Moran, PLLC
			Co-Speaker: Denise	Leonard	CPA, Partner	Plante Moran, PLLC

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<p>Thurs., May 7th 2:30pm-3:30pm We Are the Champions: Supervision & Workforce Track</p>	<p>Session 14 Avoiding The Ambiguity Abyss: The Vague Burn-Out</p>	<p>Burnout is often attributed to excessive workload—but research consistently shows that one of its primary drivers is the absence of clarity, direction, and shared purpose. When employees lack a clear understanding of where the organization is headed and how their work contributes to that destination, engagement erodes, decision-making fragments, and fatigue accelerates. In contrast, teams anchored in a well-defined mission and vision demonstrate stronger alignment, greater resilience, and more sustainable performance. This session explores the critical connection between organizational clarity and employee well-being. Attendees will examine how clearly articulated mission and vision statements function as strategic anchors—guiding priorities, shaping culture, and reinforcing meaning in day-to-day work. We will move beyond theory to practical application, focusing on how leaders and team members can intentionally integrate mission and vision into meetings, performance conversations, and routine decision-making processes. By the end of the session, Attendees will be equipped with practical strategies to strengthen team cohesion, reinforce purpose, and create a workplace culture where clarity drives both performance and well-being.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to identify clear vision and mission. Attendees will learn to recognize ways to bring these things into every meeting and conversation. Attendees will learn to avoid preventable employee and team burnout through clarity, alignment, and purpose-driven leadership. 	Sarah	Davies	MLS, DD Professional, Parent of Person with DD	Self Employed
<p>Thurs., May 7th 2:30pm-3:30pm I Won't Back Down: Advocacy & Innovation Track</p>	<p>Session 15 The Funding Future of Ohio's Medicaid Program</p>	<p>While the DD system grapples with the future ability of our county board partners to help fund waiver services, large questions about broader Medicaid funding continue to hover above the discussions. These questions are spurred by policy changes from HR 1/One Big Beautiful Bill, litigation related to nursing home, and the ongoing debate on property tax. This session will focus primarily on the federal economic threats to the Medicaid program but will briefly touch on the impact on the debate around property tax and state litigation on funding for the I/DD system.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to analyze federal policy risks to Medicaid funding, including implications stemming from HR 1/"One Big Beautiful Bill" and related federal budget dynamics. Attendees will learn to evaluate downstream impacts on waiver-funded DD services, particularly in the context of county board fiscal capacity and evolving Medicaid financing structures. Attendees will learn to assess intersecting fiscal pressures, including nursing home litigation and property tax debates and their potential effects on long-term funding stability for the I/DD system. 	Christine	Touvelle	Director of Advocacy	ctouvelle@opra.org
<p>Fri., May 8th 9:00am-10:00am The Final Countdown: General Session</p>	<p>Session 16 Looking Ahead: State Leadership Perspectives for the Final Months of the DeWine Administration</p>	<p>Leaders from Ohio Medicaid, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities come together for a forward-looking conversation about the months ahead. This panel will focus on priorities, areas of continuity, and anticipated focus from June through December as the DeWine administration enters its final phase. Panelists will share perspectives on what providers should be paying attention to, how agencies are thinking about alignment and transition, and what this period means for Ohio's system and provider community.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will be able to identify key priorities and focus areas state agencies are advancing between June and December as the DeWine administration enters its final phase. Attendees will be able to understand how state agencies are approaching continuity, alignment, and transition across systems during this period. Attendees will be able to recognize implications for providers and the provider community, including areas to monitor, prepare for, or engage with in the months ahead. 	Lyndsay	Nash	Director	Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
			Speaker Panel: Kevin	Miller	Director	Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
			Speaker Panel: Scott	Partika	Director	Ohio Department of Medicaid

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Day, Time & Track	Session # & Title	Session Description	Speaker First Name	Speaker Last Name	Job Title	Organization
Fri., May 8th 11:30am-12:30pm Who Are You: General Session	Session 17 Who Are We, Really? Clarity, Distinction, and Direction in a Changing System	<p>As providers navigate policy shifts, system transition, and increasing pressure to adapt, clarity about who you are—and why you exist—matters more than ever. This plenary session invites the provider community to step back and synthesize what they've heard throughout the Summit, including perspectives from state leaders earlier that morning, and reflect on what truly differentiates organizations in today's environment. Moving beyond generic statements like "we care about people," the session challenges providers to articulate purpose, value, and direction with greater intention and honesty. The conversation sets the stage for deeper reflection on culture, leadership, and how organizations show up for their teams and the people they support.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will be able to synthesize key themes from Summit discussions and state leadership perspectives to understand the external environment shaping provider organizations in the months ahead. Attendees will be able to differentiate between generic mission statements and meaningful organizational distinction, identifying what truly defines purpose, value, and direction in today's system. Attendees will be able to describe how clarity around organizational identity influences leadership choices, workplace culture, and how staff and people supported experience the organization. 	Stacy	DiStefano	CEO	Consulting for Human Services
Fri., May 8th 12:45pm-1:45pm Let It Be: Closing Keynote Address	Session 22 Creating a Positive and Mindful Workplace Culture	<p>The growth and overall success of an organization is defined by its culture and leadership. A thriving workplace fosters collaboration, trust, and a shared sense of purpose, leading to higher engagement, productivity, and retention. Effective leadership goes beyond strategy—it requires setting the right example. When individuals cultivate an environment that supports mental, physical, and emotional well-being, they enable teams to perform at their best while maintaining balance in their personal lives. This keynote explores how to create a workplace culture where collaboration replaces competition, and appreciation takes precedence over ego-driven dynamics. By embracing mindfulness and emotional intelligence, organizations can foster a culture where individuals feel valued, empowered, and motivated to contribute to the collective success. Grounded in research, this session will also highlight practical mindfulness strategies that enhance workplace well-being and effectiveness.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees will learn to master mindful communication with awareness, empathy and compassion. Attendees will develop emotional intelligence to handle high-pressure situations with ease. Attendees will learn to set healthy boundaries for self-care and mental health. Attendees will learn to build a culture of appreciation and recognition. Attendees will learn to apply mindfulness techniques to reduce stress and boost productivity. 	Pandit	Dasa	CEO / Keynote Speaker	Work Mindful Corp