On January 4, 2018, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) conducted a licensure compliance review with the Thomas Edison Group Home (TEGH) in Van Wert County. During the compliance review, DODD reviewers interviewed employees and residents, observations occurred and records were reviewed to determine the home’s compliance with the State of Ohio Licensure rules found in chapter 5123 of the Ohio Revised Code. Upon completion of the review, no deficiencies were issued resulting in the home being eligible for a 3 year license.

I would like to thank all the staff at the TEGH for a job well done. Staff continue to work hard on ensuring residents receive high quality care. This can be seen thru positive, caring interaction staff have with the residents. Staff provides emotional support when residents are upset, when they have a bad dream, when they are worried, etc. Staff celebrates with residents when they are excited over something they have done and they help residents reach goals they are working on. Staff performs many other tasks daily which further demonstrate that the residents are receiving high quality care. Staff assists in taking residents to doctor appointments and help residents understand what the doctor is telling them. Staff encourages residents to follow doctor orders/doctor recommendations. Staff can be seen cleaning constantly to ensure the residents have a clean and safe home to live in. The list goes on and on as to what a DSP staff does on a daily basis. Lastly, staff is required to complete documentation every day to satisfy DODD State requirements. Often times a staff finds themselves being pulled in 2 and 3 different direction at once. Staff must be able to be flexible and be able to multitask all day long.

Please congratulate the TEGH staff when you see them and let them know what a great job they are doing.

Janelle Wehrman, CEO
Compliance and Staff Development Updates

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself a little. I was hired into MRSI as the Area Coordinator in Mercer County in August of 2016. In November of 2017 I was offered the position of Director of Operations. In January of 2018 I finally moved into my new office and began the job duties required of this position. As the Director of Operations, I will be working on ensuring that each department is in compliance with state rules and regulations. I plan to begin completing internal audits to see where we currently are in different departments and areas that we can improve upon. These audits will be completed using tools that state surveyors use when completing their own audits. This is the best way for MRSI to discover if there are any areas out of compliance. We can then take the appropriate steps required to get us back into compliance. Audits will be a continuous process and different files will be reviewed throughout the year.

I have spent a lot of time recently working on updating the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to ensure that it is in compliance with Medicaid regulations. In September of 2016 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized a rule that required providers to develop emergency preparedness procedures for staff to follow during natural and man-made emergencies. Providers were required to have this rule implemented by November 2017. While MRSI had policies and procedures already in place for these types of situations, this new rule required that these policies and procedures be expanded upon.

This rule applies to our ICF home but MRSI is duplicating this plan and revising it to reflect the needs of each location. Once completed, each home will have its own EOP that is unique to that location.

I am currently working on updating the training on disciplinary action and employee performance appraisals for new supervisor orientation. This training is designed to explain to new supervisors how MRSI needs disciplinary action and evaluations completed so it is consistent and fair to all employees. Another training that MRSI is implementing is the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention program developed by the Crisis Prevention Institute. Many people know this program as CPI. There is 3 MRSI staff that have gone through the Train the Trainer program and are now certified to teach all MRSI staff the curriculum. All current staff have been trained on CPI and all new hires will be trained within 30 days of their start date. Another training program that MRSI plans to implement in the near future is the DSPaths program. This program will give our DSPs additional credentials to help them advance their career in this field if that is something they aspire to do. The intention is to have 3 MRSI staff go through the Train the Trainer program so we can begin training current and incoming staff.

Although it seems that there are a lot of changes occurring at MRSI right now, it all seems to be positive changes. MRSI is fortunate to have dedicated and caring staff that are willing to help out any time that they can. Many employees work additional hours to ensure that all residents and clients are receiving the care that they need and deserve. All of their hard work is truly appreciated. It’s amazing to see how much staff genuinely care about the residents and clients. I look forward to growing with this agency and I am excited to see where the next few years take us!

Emily Hoelscher
Director of Operations
Van Wert, Area Coordinator—Courtney Althouse

1. Please give a brief introduction of yourself:

I grew up in Kenton, Ohio with two sisters and a brother. I graduated from Kenton Senior High School and went on to earn my B.S in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences with a minor in Developmental Psychology from The Ohio State University in 2015. I am expecting my first child in May and plan to marry in December.

2. How long have you been in the DD industry?

I have been in the DD field since January of 2015, with some prior knowledge from my college career.

3. What’s your biggest goals as you have began your new position?

Since, starting my new position with MRSI my biggest goals consist of bringing some consistency and stability back to Van Wert County. I also, strive to better the lives of our residents in anyway possible.

4. Tell us a little about your professional history:

I started my career working for CRSI as a DSP, while finishing my senior year of college. After graduation in August I left my position as a DSP and took a job with a mental health agency. While working for the mental health agency, I worked a second job as a DSP for BLESS LLC. After a few months working in the mental health agency, I realized that it just didn’t fit. I wanted back into the DD field and to grow within the field, so I took a position with as a Program Specialist with CRSI. Then I was offered a wonderful opportunity for a position with MRSI as the Area Coordinator, another chance to grow and gain experience within the DD field.

5. What are your career goals in your position?

In this position, my goals consist of growing as a supervisor and as a person. I intend to grow within this company, expand my knowledge and gain experience about the DD field.

6. What do you like to do in your free time? Hobbies?

In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I also enjoy spending time playing with and walking my dogs.

7. What have you enjoyed most about working at MRSI, thus far?

The most enjoyable part of working for MRSI so far has been getting to know the residents on a personal level and the staff as well.
“If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward”

-Martin Luther King

Mercer, Area Coordinator—Tacey Blakeley

1. Please give a brief introduction of yourself:
My name is Tacey Blakeley. I am married with 3 children, ages: 23, 19 and 17. I graduated from Capital University with a Bachelor’s in Social Work in 1995. I have been a licensed social worker for 22 years.

2. How long have you been in the DD industry?
On and off for 24 years. I was a DSP during the summers when I was college for a group home in New Philadelphia, Ohio. My brother-in-law has developmental disabilities and I have assisted with his care when he is home for visits.

3. What are your biggest goals as you have began your new position?
My biggest goal is to have a deficient free survey. I also would like to have staff stability.

4. Tell us a little about your professional history:
I have worked with elderly in their home, nursing and assisted living facilities. I have worked with the DD population in nursing homes and assisted livings. Working with foster children and foster homes is another area of my professional history.

5. What are your career goals in your position?
My career goals are to remain in a stable employment that offers the possibility of growth.

6. What do you like to do in your free time? Hobby's?
In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family and my 2 dogs.

7. What have you enjoyed most about working at MRSI, thus far?
I enjoy the residents and the clients in the community.
Join us for
Dinner, Bake & Craft Sale, Raffle Prizes
& 50/50 drawing

All proceeds/donations will benefit clients with developmental disabilities or mental illness currently receiving services from Mercer Residential Services, Inc. to provide a great Christmas as well as other non-Medicaid reimbursable goods.

Thursday
April 26, 2018
4:30pm – 7:00pm

Location: Vantage Career Center
818 North Franklin St.
Van Wert, OH

Soup Supper Fundraiser
For
MRSI of Van Wert County

MRSI operates the Thomas Edison Group Home and provides staffing in the community for many individuals who live on their own or with family. We also provide housing for people with severe mental illness.

Tickets
$6.50 Presale
$7.50 at the door

Tickets may be purchased in advance at the Thomas Edison Group Home, 500 Augustine Dr. or from any MRSI employee by calling 419-238-1019. Meal includes choice of Chicken Noodle / Vegetable soup, sandwich, salad, dessert, punch & coffee.

Carry out & Drive Thru is available.
ADS News

The Celina and Van Wert ADS’s have continued to grow as well as stay extremely busy!! We would like to welcome all the new individuals who have chosen to receive services from our programs.

Both facilities have numerous individuals who enjoy doing a variety of activities. We are always looking for people who are willing to join us for a day to teach us a new craft, a new skill, how to play music, cook, sew, or anything else. If you, or someone you know would like to volunteer to teach us your talents, please contact:
Monica McKinney at 419-217-3484, or email mmckinney@mrsinc.org for more information.

The ADS program will again be hosting a PROM for our individuals. This will be held in September this year. We will be looking for donations to help make this event another memorable one for our individuals. If you, or someone you know would like to help with photos, decorations, corsages, boutonnieres, music, donating dresses/dress clothes, please contact:
Monica McKinney at 419-217-3484, or email mmckinney@mrsinc.org for more information.

Both Celina and Van Wert ADS’s try to offer as many different activities as possible. One of the ways we do this is by raising funds through different fundraisers to help with the cost of outings and trips. One of the fundraisers we do is Open Houses at both locations. During the Open Houses we have numerous items for sale that the clients have made themselves. These may be canvas paintings, craft projects, gift baskets or baked goods. ALL money raised during these Open Houses is used towards going on outings, purchasing items the individuals want to have in the facility, admissions for events, and more. Seeing the client’s reactions when someone wants to purchase an item they made themselves is an experience you won’t forget. The Van Wert Open House is scheduled for March 28th, 4pm to 6pm. This is a great opportunity to not only support the clients, but to visit our new location and learn more about what we do. The Van Wert facility is located at 793 Fox Rd. The Celina Open House is scheduled for May 16th, 4pm to 7pm. The Celina facility is located at 420 S. Sugar Street.

Please follow our programs on Facebook, under Mercer Residential Services, Inc.
Sincere thank you to everyone for their continued support

Monica McKinney
ADS Coordinator

Employee Shout Out!
Congrats to Taylor Schwarck, Mercer DSP for earning a 4.0 GPA in her first semester of College!!

“Life does not have to be perfect to be wonderful”
-Unknown

Congratulations to MRSI’s part-time attendance drawing winners for January/February:
- Carole Johnston
- Codie Gribble
- Deb Hitchcock
- Taylor Schwarck
- Tricia DeLong
- Jake Degado
Client Fun!

Science Central

We didn’t realize we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun.

Scene 75

Bicycle Museum

say yes to new adventures

HAPPY 30TH BIRTHDAY

Philip celebrating the 3-0!!