

# OACAA Briefing

January 2013



## Agency Happenings

### Lancaster Fairfield Community Action Agency Turns Historic Children's Home into Modern Supportive Housing



Rutherford House interior

On December 13, Lancaster Fairfield Community Action Agency, along with local, state and federal officials, celebrated the ground breaking of Rutherford House, a supportive housing facility for families with special needs that is located on the

campus of LFCAA and the historic site of the Fairfield County Children's Home.

The project will rehabilitate the historic structures built between 1883 and 1886 in phases to meet Ohio Historic Preservation Office requirements, and convert it into 16 apartments. There will be three one-bedroom apartments, seven two-bedroom units, and six three-bedroom apartments. Families will be required to have at least one family member with a mental or physical disability, and earn up to 35 percent of the area median income.

Residents will also have access to supportive services, such as financial counseling, early childhood programs, an adult learning center, food, clothing and housewares, utility assistance and case management.

Initial discussions for the project - named for Ed and Maxine Rutherford, the Children's Home's longtime superintendent and matron - began back in 2005. Along the journey many people and organizations have joined LFCAA as partners. There are a dozen partners on the project, from financiers, to other service agencies, to corporations. "This tremendous support for Rutherford House - a development to help our community's

most vulnerable families while preserving one of our historic landmarks - makes every step of the journey even more meaningful," said Kellie Ailes, executive director for LFCAA.

The project began to meet a local need. The area does not have a permanent supportive housing facility for families and family emergency shelter space falls far below the local needs identified by the Fairfield County Continuum of Care Plan. "We will be able to take families from the shelter to an apartment, where they will pay 30 percent of their income on housing costs," explained Donna Fox-Moore, housing director for LFCAA. "This will move them to the next level of self-sufficiency. And through the supportive services, we can continue to work with them to further their self-sufficiency."

Rutherford house has a 130-year history of serving low-income children, and thanks to LFCAA, it will continue to serve the community for generations to come, providing a viable solution toward overcoming the obstacles that threaten families at risk for homelessness.



Ground breaking for Rutherford House