

## Otterbein recognized as Employer of the Month Sept. 2009

Otterbein Lebanon was recognized recently as Warren County Career Center's Employer of the Month for September 2009. WCCC has been in partnership with Otterbein for a number of years with Project SEARCH, a program for students with special needs in their final year of high school eligibility. Students in Project SEARCH have been welcomed into the Otterbein facility with a space for them to learn employability skills in a classroom setting, and through mentorships in various areas of the retirement village in job rotations.

"Otterbein Lebanon has been the perfect setting for our Project SEARCH students to learn about their strengths and job interests," WCCC Superintendent Maggie Hess said. "Many of them have been hired by Otterbein into full time jobs upon their high school graduation, helping these young people to find meaningful employment and the ability to support themselves and become independent citizens."

Otterbein Vice President Jason Miller and Newcomer Hall floor supervisor Nancy Cook attended a luncheon, catered by the WCCC Culinary students, in their honor. Ms. Cook has mentored many Project SEARCH students, including Chelsea Johnson who attended the luncheon and is now employed at Otterbein in the kitchen. Also attending the luncheon was Project SEARCH Coordinator Sandy Hempel.

"The Project SEARCH students are like a part of our family," Ms. Cook said. "They all work really hard and are very dedicated." "This has been a great opportunity for the Project SEARCH students and our partners to embrace the Otterbein mission and for the students to learn additional skill sets to better the lives of people," Mr. Miller said. The WCCC Learning Lab Preschool also partners with Otterbein to provide intergenerational experiences for the children as they meet with Otterbein residents for activities, snacks together and fun.



From left WCCC Superintendent Maggie Hess, WCCC Treasurer Karen Royer, Otterbein employee Chelsea Johnson, Project SEARCH Coordinator Sandy Hempel, Otterbein employee Nancy Cook, WCCC Director of Adult Education Tom Harris, Otterbein Lebanon Vice President Jason Miller, and WCCC Director of Secondary Education Gary Patton.