

Ohio Guardianship Assn. honors local probate judge with Service Award

By KEITH ARNOLD
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

The Ohio Guardianship Association recently awarded Franklin County Probate Judge Robert Montgomery with its Distinguished Service Award during the association's annual conference in Fairborn.

The association promotes the highest quality of ethical services by guardians and guardianship programs through education, networking and advocacy and serves as a leader in advocating for policies

and legislation ensuring the ethical practice of guardianship throughout the state.

"It is an honor to receive this award from such a group of distinguished people that continually try to make other people's lives better when there simply is no one else," Montgomery said. "Having the Ohio Guardianship Association recognizing our public guardianship program here in Franklin County is the ultimate validation of the program's success."

Montgomery is responsible for

implementation of new guardianship programs in Franklin County. Working with the Ohio General Assembly, the judge created the Franklin County Guardianship Service Board, the first public guardian in the state.

Success of the service board led to the Ohio Legislature passing a measure to allow for other Ohio counties to have their own public guardian, a press release detailed.

Montgomery last year created the new Limited Guardianship for Mental Health Care Purposes,

which allows family members to be involved in the mental health care of a loved one after the age of 18.

The program was developed to ensure a family member's continued involvement and may avoid the need for involuntary civil commitment by ensuring mental health treatment sooner rather than later.

"The key purpose of this limited guardianship is to allow a family member to be able to stay involved in the mental health care decisions of a child after they reach the age of 18," Montgomery explained.

"This will allow at-risk children to transition into adulthood with your assistance without putting them under the confines of more restrictive programs."

Some key offerings of the program are the service may be confidential, it provides for a quicker response for treatment, allows for continued support for the loved one and gives the family member the ability to coordinate a mental health plan with the ward and the individual's treatment team.