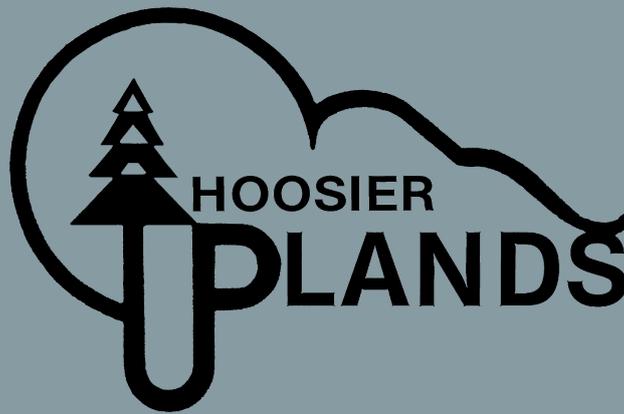


HOOSIER UPLANDS EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



Choices Initiative

Hoosier Uplands has received notice of funding from the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) and the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), in the amount of \$350,634 for the Community Substance Misuse Prevention and Mental Health Promotion grant. This funding is for a two year period and is designed to provide substance abuse prevention services in Lawrence County. These services will include the following:

- A vaping media campaign, focusing on youth
- Local policy work related to substance abuse among youth,
- Substance abuse prevention programming through the use of the Too Good for Drugs curriculum in afterschool programs
 - Positive alternative events for youth including Safe Night and others
 - Implementation of the Strengthening Families Program. This will be implemented in conjunction with Serenity Now Therapists and will work primarily with youth and non-traditional parents such as foster parents or family members raising their family's children. Biological parents will also be included in programming if they are working towards regaining custody of the youth.

This project will begin in July of 2020. Currently, we are waiting to hear from the state if any amendments need to be made to the project.

Mission Statement

The mission of Hoosier Uplands, is to plan, implement or cause to be implemented, and provide comprehensive services to the poor, elderly, and disabled. The corporation strives to alleviate poverty, improve living conditions, and provide access to health care and social services to those families and individuals in need within our service area. All endeavors are pursued with the client in mind, never forgetting the value of every human being or the importance of our responsibility to the public which we serve.

Head Start Summer Program

After 10 weeks away from their teachers and friends, approximately 100 Head Start children are looking forward to returning to their classrooms in June. Through funding provided by the CARES Act, Head Start staff are preparing to operate a six-week summer program. The program is for enrolled children that will be attending kindergarten in August.

There will be three classrooms of children at the Bedford Head Start center and one classroom at Mitchell, Loogootee, Salem, and Paoli. Staff are eager to begin preparing for the arrival of children on June 15. The program will operate four days per week for six weeks.

Our Head Start program uses the Frog Street pre-k curriculum during the school year and Frog Street has a summer curriculum specifically designed to give children the refresher that they need prior to entering kindergarten. The curriculum focuses on literacy and math skills and integrates science, social studies, physical development and more. Based on child assessment data gathered prior to the dismissal of classes on March 13, staff will provide a time of individualized instruction each day to assist each child in mastering specific skills.

The program will provide lunch and a hearty snack to the children each day and will send home single-serve food items home with the children each Thursday to supplement their food supply at home.

In addition to the academic piece of the summer Head Start program, staff will place a strong emphasis on enhanced hygiene practices with the children as well as social distancing. Additional funding from the CARES Act has enabled program director Debbie Beeler to purchase a disinfecting machine for each center called Minuteman Mist It. The machines are used in hospitals and provide an easy and safe method to disinfect and sanitize all types of surfaces. The machines are portable and will be able to be used inside buses as well as classrooms.



The Technology Silver Lining of COVID-19

By: Andrew Wolber

Director of Information Technology Services

All concerts are canceled. So are sporting events, major conferences, and conventions for every vertical industry imaginable. Restaurants, bars, and movie theaters had been ordered closed by city officials. Theme parks have shut down, and the fate of every family's summer vacation plans are... let's just say up in the air? Welcome to the brave new world of COVID-19.

While it is too early to assess the changes caused by this global pandemic, there are signs that it will permanently change the way society functions. From its impact on the global economy to our daily lives, COVID-19 will leave an enormous impact on how we consume, how we learn, how we work, and how we socialize and communicate.

Nowhere is this more prominent than in the technology that we use every day and that has become not just a tool we use but in many cases the way we communicate with others since the pandemic. For better or for worse folks, COVID-19 has dragged most of us into the 21st Century (for some kicking and screaming).

While we are all looking forward to the day we can once again go to an actual social gathering, it seems that the old adage is still alive and well "Necessity is the mother of invention". It's safe to say that no one would have ever expected to be able to actually work at home. However with the stay at home order issued in late March, the agency took a giant leap with Remote Access Platforms, Telehealth, Web Based Storage and Audio/Virtual Conferencing. Hoosier Uplands survived the storm! Interestingly enough, these technologies had been around for quite some time. We just learned to embrace it. We learned something else as well about the technology and about the way we do things. When push comes to shove, we find a way to get our work done. Has it come with some bumps? Yes. Have we had to change the way we did some things? Absolutely. But with the new reality of social distancing, we have opened up a brand new world of opportunity to serve our community.

The Technology Silver Lining - Continued

This revolution of sorts is not just limited to the workplace but in every aspect of our lives. Streaming entertainment has become the technology of choice. Gatherings, such as family birthdays, graduations, and even weddings that have gone virtual out of necessity, have become a new normal. Those of us with school age children, have been thrust into the age of online learning. Even the way we shop for everyday items such as food and other staple items has seen an exponential increase in online ordering.

This is not to say that many of these things will revert back to the way we did things before. We will still have face to face gatherings. The kids will go back to school at some point. We will be able to eat out at the local restaurants. However, we've now had to come to grips that COVID-19 is a reality. The silver lining is that through all of the social distancing we've had to endure, through technology and thinking outside the box, business still gets done, kids still get an education, we still get entertained, and most of all we are still able to interact with the ones we love.

So did technology save us from the unemployment, social isolation, or just sheer boredom? Absolutely NOT. WE DID, when we decided to do things differently and embrace what we already had. But hats off to Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and the rest of the tech geeks out there who got us thinking about it.

Mitchell Opera House

The Mitchell Opera House has rescheduled all events through June due to COVID-19. The next event that is currently scheduled to take place is July 24th.

Check out the Mitchell Opera House website: www.mitchelloperahouse.com for the most updated information!



Employee Highlights

- Amanda Wolfe has been promoted to the Energy Assistance Director! Robin Grissom retired on May 15th.
- Natalie Wells wrote and submitted her first HOME application on her own, which was just awarded for \$1,550,000, to rehab New Horizon Apartments!
- Whitley Clements and all of her 21st CCLC staff worked hard over the last three years of the Cohort 8 grant and were one of the few in the state to receive automatic renewability for the program for another four years.
- Amy Canada received her Associate of Science in Early Childhood Education from Ivy Tech. She has also been accepted at Ball State to pursue her bachelor's in Early Childhood!

