HOYLETONIAN

SUMMER 2022

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

Building Stronger Communities One Child at a Time

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President's **Letter**

Chris L. Cox
President and CEO

Thank you to all who attended the Hoyleton Honors event in May. It was a pleasure being together in person again to reconnect and catch up on where life has taken each of us since we were together last. I am so appreciative of our board and generous donors who give their time and money to support our mission. We would not be able to do the work we do without your gracious support. I hope you enjoy this edition of the Hoyletonian as it shines a light on the impact our staff makes on our mission every single day.

We are thrilled to share that we secured our CARE certification from Cornell University in May of this year. This achievement is the result of years of hard work with staff at every level of our organization, and I am so proud of the work we have done. I believe the CARE practice model and its principles are the keys needed to continue our mission into the future.

I hope you enjoy reading the heartwarming story about a client who was recently discharged from our residential care to return home with his family. His parents were so pleased with the progress their son made at Hoyleton that they came back to campus to host a celebration for our staff to say thank you.

Juneteenth finally became an official holiday this year, giving us time and space to recognize the day enslaved African Americans in Galveston, TX, were told they were free. The P.E.E.R.S. Advisory Council marked the occasion with a special lunch at the Hoyleton campus and provided educational materials to our youth to help them learn the importance of this turning point in American history.

July 2022 marks the beginning of Hoyleton providing mobile crisis services to St. Clair County. As a human service agency, we must provide these necessary resources to help those in emergency crisis situations. Our crisis team will be first responders to mental health emergencies in our communities.

This issue includes staff stories about longevity and personal stories of commitment to Hoyleton. **The personal characteristics of our staff, donors and volunteers are innate in the DNA of the Hoyleton mission**, and I am so appreciative of each and every one of you who serve our mission.

Chris L. Cox
President and CEO

Hoyleton **Executive Team**

Chris L. Cox
President & CEO

Julie Neuner
Chief Program Officer

Brice Bloom-Ellis
Chief Strategic Initiative Officer

Shavonda Mitchom
Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

Jennifer Cox
Director of Information Systems & Performance Improvement

Alice Drobisch
Director of Philanthropy

Adam Woehlke
Director of Clinical Services

Monte Mister
Director of Therapeutic Residential Care

Caron Strother
Director of Financial Operations

Sharon Schultz
Director of Child Welfare

Andrea Nafziger
Director of Marketing and Communication

Stephanie Seaton
Director of Project Implementation

Kristin Shinn
Director of Community Support Services

Debra Burgess
Director of Human Resources

Shannon Moore
Corporate Secretary

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services **Receives CARE Certification**

It's Official! Hoyleton now has the official seal of approval as a certified CARE agency. Only 13 social services agencies in the world, and 10 in the United States, are CARE certified. Our certification was awarded in May 2022 by Cornell University, who recognized Hoyleton had met the Residential Child Care Project's highest standard for implementation of the Child and Residential Experiences (CARE) program model. This trauma-informed, principle-based program model represents a new approach for residential child and youth care work.

An agency-wide celebration was held in June to recognize the achievement. The CARE team from Cornell University even came to town to help commemorate this accomplishment. Jennifer Cox, Director of Information Systems and Performance Improvement, walked staff through the six-year process of implementing the CARE model. Several staff members then shared their experience and memories of what it was like working through the changes.

Before CARE was implemented, Hoyleton required staff to follow strict procedures and protocols. With the new program, they are now able to evaluate and determine next steps for each situation on a case-by-case basis, allowing for a higher quality of care.

The staff at residential campus and Schippel House agree that CARE was not forced on them. The training, they admitted, was extensive and time consuming. Many of the changes also took time, but everything seemed to fall into place organically as staff bought into the principles and program.

"CARE has taught us so much and we are better for it," Monte Mister, Director of Residential Services said. When we adopted CARE, back in 2017, no one realized the evolution the entire agency would experience because the program model. Hoyleton embraced the knowledge, research and rationale of CARE, and, as staff, began to implement changes based on the six core principles. They realized the benefits spoke to everyone at every level of the organization, not just direct care staff in the residential program.

"The work we have done to get to this point has changed the way we engage in our work and will determine where we are able to go tomorrow," said CEO Chris Cox.

Recognizing and understanding individual beliefs and experiences is the foundation for the changes we implemented at Hoyleton because of the CARE model. We, as an agency, learned the need to understand one another through individual lenses. We all have different beliefs, life experiences and thought processes which contribute to very individualized reactions or decision-making. The CARE model provided the tools needed to step back and evaluate challenges in youth care, which led to better decisions, processes and outcomes.

We eliminated long standing, hard-and-fast rules and regulations and explored the "why" and "how" in each situation. By utilizing the six core principles identified in the CARE model which are developmentally focused, family involved, relationship based, trauma informed, competence centered, ecologically oriented, we were able to understand why a certain behavior was happening as well as how we can change the situation to improve the outcome.

A person looking through the CARE lens asks, "Is this person willing and able to proceed with what is needed?" If the answer is yes, you can proceed without issue, but if they are not willing and/or not able, a variety of steps can be taken to modify the task and achieve a better outcome.

The CARE model now guides all interactions with clients, their families and our staff. In addition, it has shaped our administrative processes. CARE provided common-language to address challenges and is now the foundation for our continued growth as a human services agency. We are now a certified CARE agency with educated, confident staff members who step out into the communities we serve and say, "What is my role and how can I make a difference?" We are equipped with proven, effective tools and knowledge to continue our mission of enabling all people to realize the wholeness of life that God intends.

Going Live with **Mobile Crisis Care**

Hoyleton has grown to become one of southern Illinois' leaders in providing emotional and mental health services for every stage of youth and family development. We continue to add services based on the needs of our community, and our mobile crisis care team went live the first weekend of July, with a team of mental health first responders ready to offer 24/7 support to residents of St. Clair County.

For those who are dealing with mental illness, substance abuse, trauma, violence, or other issues that affect their emotional well-being, life can be difficult. It's common to feel overwhelmed and alone during a crisis. Our Mobile Crisis Team works directly with adults and children who are experiencing a crisis. Our services are 100% covered and require no out of pocket payments.

In addition to onsite crisis services, our team can provide on-going follow up and support to help prevent another crisis from occurring. They assist with developing a wellness and/or recovery plan and connect you to any needed resources. We believe recovery is possible.

Career Assistance Program **Now Available to Hoyleton Clients**

Please spread the word that we are now proud to offer and Hoyleton Career Assistance Scholarship! Any youth interested in furthering their education, who have been recipients of Hoyleton or Puentes de Esperanza services, are encouraged to apply.

The Career Assistance Scholarship supports career goals and may be used for:

1. Tuition assistance and fees required for the enrollment for attendance of the student at a qualifying institution (General Education Diploma, training school, trade, career-based school, vocational school or another institution of the same type)
2. Fees, books, supplies and equipment required for courses of instruction
3. Room, board and transportation

Applicants must provide the following:

1. Completed application form
2. A statement of less than 100 words of how the career assistance scholarship will help them achieve their career goal
3. One letter of recommendation from a professional educator, counselor or clergy

Details and the application are on our website: **https://hoyleton.org/career-assistance-scholarship**

Puentes de Esperanza Continues to **Make a Difference**

Over the past few months, members of the Puentes team have been very busy in the community, assisting clients with language translation as well as providing food, PPE equipment, clothing and other basic needs. A special thank you to our grantors, Cardinal Care and Old Newsboy Day, who provided funding for the items we distributed.

This summer, Puentes partnered with Safari Dental and the Lion's Club to offer dental and vision screenings at no-cost, or minimal cost, to their clients. Through help from the community in Percy, Illinois, Puentes was able to connect clients with businesses and community organizations to create opportunities to better serve Spanish-speaking residents.

Most recently, Puentes celebrated a Reading Book Distribution at the Fairmont City Library for families who participated in the "Aprendizaje en Familia: Learning as a Family" program. During the event, Chromebooks were given away to two lucky families. As part of the program, several families were received passes to visit the St Louis Science Center and Union Station Aquarium, this created fun family outings for many of clients who rarely get the opportunity to do so.

Puentes de Esperanza helps Spanish-speaking residents in Southern Illinois find community resources that help them establish citizenship, build a family, find employment and more. **To learn more about how you can help support this mission of Hoyleton and become a volunteer, please contact Alice Drobisch at adrobisch@hoyleton.org or 618-688-7094.**

Jared Fank's **Story**

A story of a family's love and commitment started more than 20 years ago when a young couple brought their adopted child home from Korea at six months old. Sadly, as the story continues there are many chapters of fear, frustration and heartache as their child battled anger and aggression issues. The committed parents tried everything, but they couldn't raise him on their own. They knew they needed help.

After many years and attempts at treatment and therapy, they found their way to Hoyleton, and in January of 2019, they placed their teenage boy into the residential treatment program. The journey of love and commitment continued, this time from Hoyleton staff, and on June 9, 2022, Jared walked out of Hoyleton, with his mother and the confidence and life skills needed to live a new much more stable life.

Jared's parents were so thankful for the love and support the Hoyleton staff provided for their troubled son that they came back to the residential campus and threw a party for the staff to say thank you for everything they did for their son. Jared's mother, Ann, said the change in Jared is unbelievable. She believes it would not have been possible without Hoyleton's programs, therapy and supportive environment.

One of the highlights of the party that day was both staff and clients getting to watch Jared proudly drive his mother's vehicle around the block! This accomplishment showed Jared's focus and dedication to learning new skills coupled with the encouragement and perseverance given to him by his parents, teachers and Hoyleton staff. It was a proud moment for so many who played a part in helping Jared grow.

Life with Jared was not easy before his time at Hoyleton. His mother explained that from about age five Jared was angry, aggressive and over-powering. As the years went by, Jared's anger issues escalated, and it was more and more difficult for his parents to contain or discipline him for this type of behavior. They became fearful for their safety, and his, which prompted them to search out resources for support.

Jared was in and out of treatment facilities for most of his life without much improvement. At one point when he was 16-years-old he was put into a behavioral health center because that seemed to be the only place for him, but then Jared's family found Hoyleton.

Jared arrived at Hoyleton at the beginning of 2019 and from the start it seemed like a good fit. Anthony "Amp" Smith was one of the first direct care workers he met. Anthony quickly recognized Jared as a guy who liked to work and was motivated to make money. "He really wanted to have his own XBOX and TV, so I helped him find one online and I told him what he needed to do to make enough money to get it and Jared went right to work," Anthony said.

Jared worked around the grounds on the Hoyleton campus, he worked at the Goodwill store in Nashville and spent time working at his school's workshop. He saved up his wages and got his XBOX and TV, but he was still motivated to work and make money, so Anthony talked to him about saving half of his paycheck and planning what to buy next with the other half. Jared took to this idea and, as a result, he is leaving Hoyleton with $1,800 in the bank plus a good understanding of budgeting his money and goal setting.

"I am so proud of him. He really listened to what I said and stayed motivated. He was a great worker, too. I'm going to miss him."

- Anthony Smith, Assistant Program Manager
Koelling Cottage

When Jared wasn't working at one of his jobs, he was working on himself and his behavior. "I have learned to make choices that help me," Jared said.

One of his counselors said, "He has worked on how to express excitement in a way that does not intimidate his parents." Jared is very proud of his progress and often asks his mother if there are other things he needs to work on. Jared says he will stay motivated because he is happy to now be living so close to his parents again so he can see them regularly. Jared is going to miss all his friends and counselors at Hoyleton, but he has a lot to look forward to. He is moving into a group home through CILA and will live just 20 minutes from his parents. His Mom is a nurse and has worked it out so she can be his caregiver. "I will listen to what she says as my mom and my nurse," Jared said.

In one of the workshops at the Bridges school, where he attended while at Hoyleton, Jared learned to cook. His specialties are spaghetti and mac & cheese and he can't wait to make dinner for his Mom and Dad. Jared says he will stay busy this summer mowing his parents' yard for them too.

As if the send off from Hoyleton was not enough of a celebration, Jared and his parents planned a trip to Chicago on July 16 to celebrate the 21st anniversary of Jared arriving in the United States as their son.

Everyone at Hoyleton, and his teacher from the Bridges school, have been amazed with the progress he has made since 2019, and although they will miss having him around, they are very excited to hear about Jared's next chapter in life and wish him the best.

Hoyleton Thanks You **for Your Years of Service**

Successful organizations with longevity employ dedicated staff members who also have longevity. Hoyleton Youth and Family Services was established in 1895, and, though we do not have anyone on staff who was working 127 years ago when it all began, we do have multiple members of our staff who have been part of Hoyleton for multiple decades.

Martina Taylor

Martina Taylor, who came to the United States from Germany, has been a big part of Hoyleton's mission for 34 years. Her journey began as a call-in youth care worker in 1988, and Martina is presently the Program Manager at Main St. Cottage. "I think I have been the manager at every cottage but one," Martina said.

When asked about her 34-year career caring for developmentally delayed youth in residential care, her response came easy, "I am better for it," she said. "Hoyleton has always been a good place for me to work. If you care about kids and are passionate about wanting to give them a normal life, Hoyleton is a great place to be."

Martina attributes the longevity of her career to the camaraderie she has had with co-workers throughout the years. She explained that they endured and grew up together because of many emotional experiences with the youth in their care. "This job takes patience, reassurance, and forgiveness each and every day," Martina said. "I learned to talk to youth not at them. I also learned to be sincere while also being firm and realistic. You can't make promises you can't keep with these kids – they have been through too much."

As Martina looks to her official retirement in August, and reflects on her career, she said, "These kids gave me more than I gave them. Caring for special youth who battle trauma and hardship in their life taught me resilience and patience."

Martina says she has worked with many wonderful people throughout her time at Hoyleton. She also knows she helped to raise hundreds of children and, "Maybe a few staff, too," she added with a smile!

Devrolette Fischer

Lehre House Program Manager, Devrolette (Dee) Fischer's career at Hoyleton did not begin in direct care. She started as a part-time secretary, who was highly recommended to Hoyleton CEO, Chris Cox, by someone in the social services industry. Chris trusted and respected the woman who introduced him to Dee and after meeting her he agreed she was someone who had great potential.

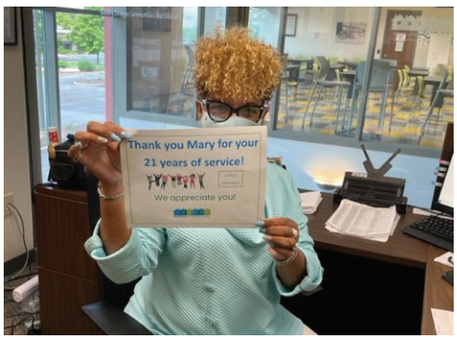
Chris knew early on that Dee could do great things for Hoyleton, so she transitioned out of administration and started gaining direct care experience as a youth care worker doing community outreach programs like after school care and the Youth at Risk program. "I've always had a passion for children," Dee said. "So I took to the direct care work easily."

After 20 years with Hoyleton, she was offered the Program Manager position at Lehre House by Child Welfare Director Sharon Schultz. Dee knew working with the population in the foster care system came with a whole new level of challenges. However, Sharon assured her she would have support in the new role. 'Miss Dee' as her clients call her, said, "I just had to open up my heart a little more - like all the way open and I would be fine."

Dee possesses the right combination of nurturing and leadership skills to manage both the seven clients currently living at Lehre House as well as staff. She admits she gets lost in the work sometimes because there is always something happening in that environment. "You have to be prepared for anything!" Dee said.

Dee recalls getting a wonderful compliment recently from a client who was transitioning out of care. He said, "I wish I could stay to see what you are going to do next because you are doing great things here."

Mary Kelly



Office Manager Mary Kelly has been with Hoyleton for more than 20 years. In her position, she gets to know many of the foster care clients as they come to her office to check in before meeting with a clinician or case manager.

One of the things she appreciates about Hoyleton is the open environment to discuss things such as spirituality – something very important in Mary's life. As a woman of strong Christian faith, she once bought a bible for a client who told her "her heart was hurting."

As Mary interacted with clients who were experiencing hardship, she always showed them grace and compassion. Sometimes she runs into former clients out in the community that she remembers seeing in the office, and it makes her happy to see them all grown up.

Tammie Watts

"When you have worked for Hoyleton for over 30 years, it is hard to pinpoint a favorite memory," said Residential Campus Office Manager Tammie Watts. "I have so many wonderful memories of our staff and youth that I cannot pick just one."

Tammie transitioned from the development office to the residential program nearly 13 years ago. "I enjoy working at the residential campus because there is more interaction with the youth," Tammie said. She loves having the opportunity to watch them open gifts at Christmas or play games out on the ball field. "Sometimes the children just come to my office to sit and chat. It is so rewarding to witness the accomplishment they feel when they are ready to move on from our care."

When asked what it takes to dedicate 30 years of your life to Hoyleton, Tammie said, "You have to truly believe in the mission. I am proud to be part of an organization with so many programs to help people who need this type of care."

As a result of her commitment to the organization, Tammie is now certified in the TCI Train the Trainers Curriculum. "I have learned so much and I enjoy training our staff about how trauma and crisis affect our youth and what we can do to help them through difficult times."

Chris & Jennifer Cox

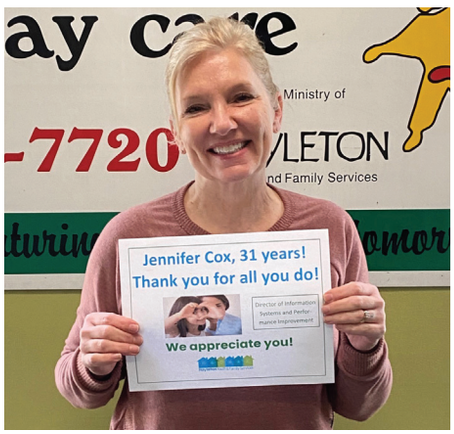
Hoyleton President and CEO Chris Cox has been with the organization for 32 years and often describes his career in social services as his 'calling.' "It has been a privilege to work side by side with some of the most caring and passionate people I have ever met," he said.

Chris met his wife Jennifer at Hoyleton when they were both youth care workers for the summer program during college. Jennifer said she accepted a position at Hoyleton because she thought it would look good on her resume and go along with her degree in social work. She had not planned to continue working at Hoyleton for the next three decades, and she never dreamed she would also meet her husband because of that summer program.

Jennifer said the first summer at Hoyleton was eye-opening. "I had no idea what a residential program was really like. Everything I knew about residential care came from TV or movies. Working at Hoyleton removed the stigma surrounding mental health and trauma for me," she said.

When asked about the importance of this type of work, Jennifer shared a memory of a time she was working in the Independent Living program and had a close bond with a client. Jennifer's client, Rachel, was given the opportunity to study aboard while in college. After about a week of being in Costa Rica, Rachel called Jennifer in the middle of the night crying because she was homesick and wanted to come home. Jennifer calmed her down and convinced her to try and stick it out a few more days before making that decision. As it turned out, Rachel finished the program and had a wonderful experience but again called Jennifer – this time to ask to be picked up from the airport when she returned. Jennifer went to the gate to meet her, and Rachel came running out to hug her.

"It was at that moment I realized I was Rachel's person," Jennifer said. "It was very humbling when I realized I could be someone's main person because they had no one else to depend on. I learned through that experience that Hoyleton was doing very important work."



Being acutely aware of the struggles and challenges of the underserved population in the Southern Illinois region, the dedicated staff at Hoyleton has grown the organization to new levels, so they can provide the services needed to individuals in their communities.

It is often said that people don't go into non-profit social services work for the money, but it was also said by many of these dedicated employees at Hoyleton that they are richer for it. What began as an orphanage over 127 years ago continues to be a focused mission with dedicated staff who work hard every day to build stronger communities one child at a time.

Honoring **Decades of Dedication**

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services began in 1895 as a children's home and has since grown tremendously thanks to the dedication of its many employees, volunteers and donors. **Throughout our 2022 Hoyleton Honors Event, we celebrated our impact and recognized several of our supporters throughout the past year.**

This year, our Empowerment Champion honoree was Dr. Karla Scott, professor of communications at St. Louis University and a founding member of the PEERS committee. Her assistance in implementing DE&I (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) has been invaluable for the organization.

Junior Service Club of St. Clair County was then recognized as our Hoyleton Enthusiast for their relentless positivity and their help in programs like Hope for the Holidays, Back to School and more.

For over 17 years, Bandy's Pharmacy has been an excellent partner to Hoyleton and its communities, providing COVID testing clinics, volunteering and more. They were presented with our Community Connection award.

According to one member of the St. Peter United Church of Christ in Red Bud, Illinois, the church has supported Hoyleton for as long as they can remember. This fervent support of our mission as well as assistance with events such as Hike & Bike, Prom at Hoyleton and Back to School has earned them the 2022 Mission Companion Award.

Our guest of honor that night was 9-year-old Payton Petrillo, adopted at the age of two into a blended family of 13. She describes her family as being, "Like a puzzle, everything's in its perfect spot."

Payton assisted the auctioneer on stage during our Fund the Future Auction, where donors received a piece of artwork created by one of Hoyleton's residential youths. This artwork featured an inspirational word and was painted using a marble painting method. Each youth then signed their name on the back.

The 2022 Hoyleton Honors event was an evening of food, fun and celebration. We looked to our future and recognized all those who have served alongside us this past year. A total of 148 people came together at the Regency Conference Center in O'Fallon, Illinois, for a night of dancing, good food and better company. Cupcakes by Sweet Kimistry were a sweet surprise as Hoyleton took a moment to celebrate a belated 125th birthday.

Donations from the evening totaled $52,000. Thank you to everyone that contributed and volunteered to make this night a success. **We will see you again next year!**

In Honor Of

In Honor Of | Gifts From

The Children and Grandchildren served by Hoyleton
Center for Racial Harmony
Chris Cox
Brice and Ilene Bloom-Ellis
Donald and Brian Freeland
Brent and Carol Freeland
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Jeanette McClellan
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Gordon and Patricia Sisk
Mark and Judith Kampen
Adam Woehlke
Brice and Ilene Bloom-Ellis
Our Grandkids: Isabelle, George and Olivia Wolfmeier
Robert and Marge Wolfmeier
Chad Zurliene's Birthday
Jerry and Karla Zurliene
Jeremy Zurliene's Birthday
Jerry and Karla Zurliene
Kelli Zurliene's Birthday
Jerry and Karla Zurliene

Memorials

In Memory Of | Gifts From

Louise Barker-Esker
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Millie Becker
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Helen Ancona
The Family of Jean Benhardt
Bethel UCC Evansville
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Darlou Mehrmann
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