

# Hoyletonian



**Hoyleton** Youth &  
Family Services

Summer 2023  
Hoyletonian



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## President's Letter

It has been a busy summer for Hoyleton to say the least! Earlier this year multiple Hoyleton properties were damaged by storms. First was a tornado in Salem that touched down just feet from our Schippel House. The residence was spared but a storage shed was completely destroyed leaving debris everywhere. During that storm the Fairview Heights office was damaged by high winds, which required extensive roof and building repair. This damage occurred just days after purchasing the building. As repairs from the storm got underway so did the build out of the entire first floor which is now home to multiple departments that had outgrown their space on the second and third floors of our Fairview Heights location.

The pinnacle of our summer was celebrating the groundbreaking of our residential campus. We were pleased to have Illinois Governor JB Pritzker and DCFS Director Marc Smith join us at our ceremony in July to start this once-in-a-generation construction project. It was an extremely hot day on July 27th but we all rose to the occasion! I'd like to thank our board members for attending and I applaud our Board Chair Ann Ferguson-Stephens and Vice Chair Dr. Tron Young for speaking during the ceremony and representing our organization throughout the day. I could not be prouder of Director of Residential Services, Monte Mister, for his commitment to the project, dedication to the mission and his heartfelt words during the ceremony. Now that the pomp and circumstance of the ceremony is behind us, the construction work is in full swing! We hope to have some cottages ready to move in to by the end of this calendar year! I hope you enjoy the pictures and story about the event in this issue of the Hoyletonian and that you were able to catch some of the news coverage we received from the ceremony.

In June, we hosted a residential prom for our clients at the residential campus and in our transitional living program. This event had been on hiatus for a few years due to COVID and it was wonderful to bring it back. Clients and staff all enjoyed celebrating with dinner, music, photos and dancing.

Another celebration was held for our foster care department who exceeded their goal with specialized permanencies for the year. This accomplishment came as a result of strategic changes to the workflow to maximize everyone's role on the team as well as steadfast commitment to the families in our care. Congratulations to all for a job well done.

In other program areas, we continue to add services like Pathways to Success, which began in August. I hope you will take a moment to read how our clinical team is becoming more involved in behavioral health and has successfully established Hoyleton as a Care Coordination Support Organization.

Puentes de Esperanza has been busy all summer staying connected to the Hispanic communities we serve. Our Puentes team has partnered with a local farmer's market food truck to ensure fresh fruits and vegetables are brought directly into the neighborhoods we serve on a weekly basis.

I am as committed to the mission today as I was when my journey with Hoyleton started. I appreciate your support and commitment to the work we do each day.



Chris L. Cox  
President & 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 &  
Administrative Officer*

Jenny Cox  
*Director of Learning & Staff  
Development*

Alice Drobisch  
*Director of  
Philanthropy*

Adam Woehlke  
*Director of Behavioral Health  
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  
& Communications*

Stephanie Seaton  
*Director of Project  
Implementation*

Kristen Shinn  
*Director of Community  
Support Services*

Andy Reeves  
*Director of Property  
Management*

Cary Hulsey  
*Director of Human Resources*

Shannon Moore  
*Corporate Secretary*

# Building Stronger Communities: Breaking Ground in Hoyleton

Hoyleton Youth and Family Services is proud to announce that the construction of our new residential campus in Hoyleton has begun! On July 27th, one of the hottest days of the year, Hoyleton broke ground on a new \$16M residential campus in the grounds of the current campus.

Governor JB Pritzker and Illinois DCFS Director Marc Smith joined Hoyleton staff, Board members, local elected officials, DCFS staff and donors to show their support for this once-in-a-generation project. Gov.



Pritzker had this to say during his speech to the crowd of approximately 150, "These won't just be beds, though, people will talk about it that way. It's more than that; we're building homes specially designed to support the developmental and intellectual needs of children in residential care," Pritzker said.

Board Chair, Ann Stephens welcomed the crowd to the ground-breaking ceremony and stated, "We believe the new equipment and environment, along with our expert trauma informed care, will help us achieve our goals and continue our mission for years and years to come."

Monte Mister, Hoyleton Director of Therapeutic Residential Services, took the opportunity to thank Gov. Pritzker, DCFS Director Smith and his residential staff during his speech. "I want to also say thank you to the Hoyleton Board for their unbelievable support, and to our generous donors because without their continued support this would not be possible", Monte said.



The new campus will have several features that promote sensory processing and facilitate trauma-informed care. Each cottage has a designated sensory space, equipped with a variety of tools and materials to help children self-regulate. The cottages are designed with a home-like environment in mind, with natural light, calming colors, and comforting decor.

Hoyleton President and CEO Chris L. Cox is thrilled to see this project come to fruition, stating, "We believe that

every child deserves a safe and loving environment to grow and thrive in, and our new campus provides just that. Our goal is to help foster youth feel valued, heard, and seen as they navigate their way through life."

One such foster youth introduced herself to the crowd and recited a poem titled "I Am Love," which resulted in a standing ovation. Her actions and words embodied strength and resiliency which gave the audience a glimpse into the type of support and care our clients receive in our residential program as well as this youth's potential for growth.

One of the innovative features of the new campus is the implementation of solar power. By utilizing solar panels, the campus will be able to provide a cost-effective and sustainable source of energy. The campus will also have electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. Construction of the entire project is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.



**I Am Love**  
 I Am Love  
 I Am Light  
 My future is always bright

I Am Peace  
 I Am Joy  
 Just like every girl and boy

I Am Unique  
 I Am Me  
 Its who I came to be

I am One  
 I am Free  
 To express our Unity

I Am Eternal  
 I Am Soul  
 Love always my goal

I Am Loved  
 I Am Divine  
 God's Heart is a part of me



## Spring Fling: A Night of Fun for All

A coming of age event, that is just as important to our youth in care as any other teenager, finally returned on Friday, June 2nd after a COVID hiatus. The 2023 Spring Fling, also referred to by many as Prom, was finally back and better than ever!

Our staff can testify that the youth in our residential programs have been talking about this event for months and their excitement and joy during the event was evident. Spring fling activities started early for many of the girls as they spent hours getting their hair and nails done, having make-up applied and getting into their dresses. The girls all had a good time showing off their colorful dresses. The boys cleaned up nice too!



Once everyone was dressed and looking their best a limousine came and gave the residents of each cottage a ride around campus then delivered them to the final destination, the Hoyleton Community Center, where the event was held.

As youth arrived at the event, a DJ had festive music going and a photographer was there to capture each moment. Program Managers, Assistant Managers and other Hoyleton staff members were on hand to watch the youth arrive and share in their excitement. Once all guests had arrived and got seated for dinner which included pasta, salad, chicken and a variety of cookies for dessert. The meal was served buffet-style by members of the residential staff. After dinner the real party began! Residential youth, clients from our TLPS, and



many staff members danced, sang and took pictures together throughout the evening. A Spring Fling court was announced and recognized and the 2023 Spring Fling King and Queen were crowned. Everyone in the room was smiling at the simple joy an event like this can provide.

This year's Spring Fling showed the care and commitment our residential staff has for the youth they provide for each day. Residential staff took care of everything from set up to clean up and every detail in between. For some, planning for the event started months before. Recreation Program Manager, Alaina Pryor, worked with a local business to find dresses for the girls while others helped to plan and purchase the decorations and planned activities during the event.

chase the decorations and planned activities during the event.

Hoyleton staff, from residential campus and Fairview Heights, worked together to get youth ready for the event by curling hair, applying make-up, tying neckties, pinning corsages, taking photos and joining youth on the dance floor. In addition to getting everyone ready for their big night members of our staff decorated the event space and happily served the meal. One Hoyleton staff member, Tonia Cotton, who works in the Fairview Heights office on the Crisis Team, catered the entire event!

It was truly a memorable evening for all involved.

## Foster Youth Helping Hands: Volunteering for Storm Cleanup Efforts



On March 31, the community of Salem, IL was hit by a devastating storm. In just seven minutes, an EF-1 tornado touched down and caused widespread damage. Homes were destroyed, trees toppled, and roofs were torn off multiple buildings. One of the affected properties was Hoyleton's Schippel house, a residential home for severely developmentally and intellectually delayed youth in the foster care system. Claudia Lewis, Program Manager at Schippel House said, "the important thing is no one was injured, our staff and clients are safe, but there is a lot of clean up to be done."

The entire Salem community was left reeling in the aftermath of the storm, facing the overwhelming task of clean up and rebuilding. The major force of the storm was about 100 feet north of Schippel house.

Amidst this chaos and devastation, our youth emerged as unexpected heroes in the clean-up efforts. Assistant Program Manager, Anthony "Amp" Smith and his grounds crew from the residential campus were at the forefront of these efforts. Amp has been with Hoyleton for more than 18 years and has a special bond with many of the youth who chose to work with him as part of the campus grounds crew. Throughout the year Amp and his crew of foster youth shovel snow, rake leaves, plant flowers, and take care of any other yard work needed. Clean up after the Salem tornado provided an opportunity for Amp to bring his crew to a community that needed their help and they rose to the occasion. This crew of young men spent the day clearing fallen branches and other debris, and disposing of damaged items from a storage shed that had been completely destroyed by the storm.



A group of students from the local middle school came to thank them for their efforts and gave them each a bottled water. Amp took that opportunity to make sure the youth in his care knew they were doing important work and that it was being noticed and appreciated. During the clean-up Amp said "I am sorry for the damage done at Schippel, but I knew right away it was an opportunity for the youth I work with to learn valuable lessons about helping others." The work gave them purpose and filled them with pride. One of the Hoyleton youth said, "where can we go next to help?"

As clean up concluded Claudia said, "there are not enough words to express my gratitude, and how grateful I am for being part of the Hoyleton family."

# Hoyleton Is Now A Care Coordination and Support Organization



Hoyleton Youth and Family Services is now a Care Coordination and Support Organization (CCSO) through the state of Illinois' Pathways to Success program. Beginning in August we are accepting referrals from Illinois Department of Health and Family Services for this program.

Pathways to Success is a program for Medicaid-enrolled children under the age of 21, who have significant and complex behavioral health needs. Pathways was created to help ensure that these identified children and young adults can get local behavioral health services in the least restrictive setting.

The goal of the program is to increase the use of evidence-based practices, by expanding access to services provided in home and in community settings. The Pathways program promotes a more stable living environment, improves both school attendance and performance, increases family and youth interaction, and results in less involvement with law enforcement and child welfare officials. The end result is to improve family functioning and reduce caregiver stress. Hoyleton President and CEO, Chris Cox said, "the Pathways program allows us to build stronger systems that better meets the needs of children and their families."

Hoyleton's role as a CCSO is to connect youth enrolled in the Pathways to Success program with community providers who provide the necessary support services they need within the designated service area that includes the Illinois counties of Clinton, Monroe, Perry, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington. As a local accountable hub coordinating care, our key activities are outreach, team/family facilitation, IMCANS review, crisis assessment and response, consultation and linkage with consistent principles of Systems of Care, Wraparound and Family Driven care.

Hoyleton will also serve as a mobile crisis response provider, along with other providers in our service area, on a no-decline basis, to all eligible individuals within the designated six-county service area.

## Puentes de Esperanza Farmers Market



Since summer 2022, Puentes de Esperanza has partnered with Beet Box, a mobile farmer's market that is part of the Goshen Market Foundation. Beet Box is essentially a food truck, stocked with local produce, run by volunteers with assistance from the Puentes team, that makes weekly trips to the Hispanic neighborhoods in Fairmont City to give Puentes clients the opportunity to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at low cost. Every Tuesday members of the Hispanic community can walk down the street to where the food truck sets up and choose from a variety of vegetables, fruits, and nonperishable items. Everyone in the community is welcome.



In Fairmont City there are not many grocery stores that provide fresh produce. This means often times members of the community turn to unhealthy food options as they may not have the funds or transportation to get to a grocery store. In Hispanic culture individuals are used to choosing their own produce. They understand how important fresh fruits and vegetables are for





their families. In most Hispanic countries “mercados” is an essential part of daily life. Mercado in English means market. Mercados are not just a place where people buy and sell produce, but they are also a place for social events. Mercados bring joy and liveliness to a community and create a sense of belonging. The Puentes team is happy they have found a way to bring that opportunity to our communities.

## Foster Care Department Sets the Bar: DCFS Acknowledges Specialized Permanency Rate



The Illinois Department of Children and Family Service recognized our foster care department for achieving a 25% specialized permanency rate in fiscal year 2023! Deborah Kennedy, DCFS Associate Deputy Director, was full of praise for the Hoyleton Foster Care team for their hard work and dedication to specialized foster care cases. “Not only have you exceeded the goal, but you continue to show that you’ve the best interest of our children at heart and understand the importance of providing permanencies for our Youth in Care,” Kennedy said.

A specialized permanency rate refers to placement of children who require a higher level of care due to behavioral or medical issues. A specialized foster home means more services are required than a traditional child, and foster parents need specialized training. The 25% specialized rate is an important indicator of the department's effectiveness in securing stable and loving environments for all children in the foster care system.

The foster care team credits their specialized permanency success to new strategies and initiatives within the department. One of the biggest changes was the department’s commitment to evaluating each case within 45 days, ensuring all necessary supports and services were put in place for both the child and their family within this timeframe.

Another significant change was the creation of an intake team whose primary responsibilities are to gather all the necessary information, complete assessments, and identify needed services for the child and the family. Once this initial groundwork is done the case is handed off to the caseworker, who monitors and documents the progress and well-being of the child.

This division of labor allows for a more efficient and effective process, as each member of the team can focus on specific responsibilities. It ensures that caseworkers have the necessary time and capacity to dedicate to individual cases. These new procedures and workflow have allowed caseworkers to give more personalized attention and support to each child on their caseload.

This permanency rate achievement speaks not only to the effectiveness of the team, but to the positive impact it has on the children in the foster care system. Stability and permanency give children in care a greater chance at success with building healthy relationships and growing into well-adjusted adults.

# Honors & Memorials



Tributes



Gifts from

## In Memory of

### Wayne Arnold at Rend Lake College

John and Marcia Kabat

### Harold Byers

Nancy Byers

### David Jacob Carroll

Steve and Bonnie Thiems

### Harold Carver

David and Carol Shanks

### Sarah Carver

Chris and Jennifer Cox

### Ron Glenn

Sam and Kathleen Habermehl

### Marvin Hoffmann

Raymond and Rose Anne Bense

St. John Choir of Maeystown

### Frieda Hotz

Michael and Cara Hotz

### Jennifer "Jenny" Kampwerth

Jason and Jaime Becker

Dante Boswell

Michael and Stephanie Hamilton

Barbara Hedgepath

Gregory and Ruth Jenner

Sherry Kesner

John and Gina Peppenhorst

Timothy and Mary Rehkemper

Michael and Crystal Scott

Michael and Mary Stumpf

Paul and Heather Todd

Betty Willeford

Keith and Crispina Willeford

### Ida Koelling

Shirley Cunningham

### Opal Miller

Randall and Marguerite Miller

### Conrad Steinhoff

Bob Goddard

### Brian Stumpf

Dawn Stumpf

### Tyler Verson

David and Audrey Steiner

### Edna Dell Weinel

Elaine Heatherly

### Bill and Janice Wohlwend

Melissa Wohlwend

### Jayne Wright

Sam and Kathleen Habermehl

## In Honor of

### Our 14th Wedding Anniversary

Cal Bloesch and Christine Tani

### Carol Bulton's 90th Birthday

David and Audrey Steiner

### Fr. Jerry Don

Keith and Debbie Iddings

### Fr. Jerry Schweitzer

Keith and Debbie Iddings

Jennifer Mendoza

### Carol and David Shanks

Wendy Dyer

### Kristen Eng Shinn

Jeffrey Eng

### Jana Zurliene's Birthday

Jerry and Karla Zurliene

### Kelli Zurliene's Birthday

Jerry and Karla Zurliene



**Our work to help build stronger communities isn't possible without the generosity and support of our staff, board members, donors, and volunteers**

### **Ways To Donate**

- Donate a gift for our Hope for the Holidays campaign
- Fulfill a child's wish list for the holidays
- Become a monthly giver
- Make a one-time donation
- Make a donation in memory of a loved one
- Plan a legacy gift

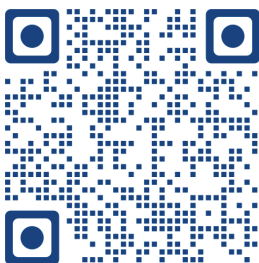
### **Volunteer Opportunities**

- Donation Drives
  - Hope for the Holidays
  - Back to School
  - Crisis Care
- Annual Golf Tournament
- Activities with clients
- Fundraising events
- Administrative tasks

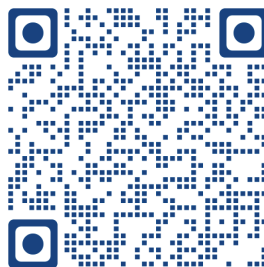
### **We're Hiring**

- Comprehensive Medical, Dental, & Vision Insurance
- Health Savings Account with employer contribution
- 403B Retirement plan
- 6-week paid caregiver leave
- Wellness program
- EAP Services
- 11 paid Holidays

**Scan To  
Donate Now**



**Scan To  
Volunteer Now**



**Scan To  
Apply Now**

