

# UWGL PARTNER AGENCY CHALLENGES

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19% of adults in America (over 47 million people) are experiencing a mental illness, and 4.55% are experiencing serious mental illness (over 1 million people). Over 60% of youth with major depression do not receive any mental health treatment. 11.1% of Americans with mental illness are uninsured, the second year in a row that this indicator increased since the passage of the affordable care act (ACT). The state of Indiana is the 10<sup>th</sup> highest state with frequency of mental illness and low rates of access to care. **Mental Health of America – Wabash Valley Region**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Lafayette Transitional Housing Center has had a significant challenge in maintaining staffing and volunteers. We continue to struggle with keeping enough people in positions of direct service to our clients. This is still an issue. We have seen a return of many volunteers but continue to limit their participation in client-facing interactions. We have cancelled another year of major fundraising events which have had a significant impact on our financial resources. Also, because we are not doing tours, open houses, and community presentations, we have seen a decrease in the number of new donor and volunteers that engaged with our mission. We anticipate feeling the negative impact from COVID-19 for several more years. **Lafayette Transitional Housing Center**



We see two on-going challenges as a result of the global pandemic. One is the acute staffing need for persons directly engaged in service delivery with our population. As a locally based non-profit it is increasingly difficult to keep up with the upward pressure on wages. In a very tight labor market, we see people exiting the organization for higher wages in other industries and continue to be challenged to attract new employees. The second challenge we face is that many persons with disabilities exited community-based employment during COVID lockdowns. Many of them have not returned to work. Persons with disabilities are one of the most underemployed populations in the Country. We would like to get back to pre-pandemic levels of community engagement to connect persons with disabilities to community employment opportunities. **Wabash Center**

While COVID has disrupted our lives, especially in terms of academic gaps and social/emotional well-being, we continue to help build those skills with members in hopes that they will demonstrate growth in both areas. Our members academic school day is supplemented at the Club through small group instruction by our certified teaching staff members as well as our online component of iReady. Our members social/emotional well-being is addressed and nurtured by our mentoring program, and the marinade of nationally recognized programs that are implemented with fidelity every day. Like many other agencies, we too are struggling with proper level of staff to support our members. **Lyn Treece Boys & Girls Club**



YWCA Greater Lafayette is on a mission to eliminate racism and empower women amidst a global pandemic that has resulted in an increase in domestic violence, exposed inequities in healthcare, emphasized necessity for workforce development, and highlighted the need for racial & social justice initiatives. Sustainable funding sources are an ongoing need to ensure we are able to serve the needs of the community. Domestic Violence Intervention & Prevention Program received over 7,000 calls; provided safe shelter to over 200 individual and families fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in 2021. 1 in 4 women will be impacted by domestic violence. Number of animal shelters in Indiana: **over 220**. Number of Domestic Violence Programs in Indiana: **46**. Women's Wellness Program provides bilingual services; served 1,700 women in 36 counties through diagnostic & prevention screening for Breast & Cervical Cancer in 2021. STRIVE Workforce Development, Dress for Success, Diversity Education Program all launched in 2021. **YWCA Greater Lafayette**

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American Psychological Association (APA) reported in the fall of 2021 that parental burnout is increasing the risk of child maltreatment and neglect. Currently have **566** people on waiting list for services, with **227** of them being children. APA's recommendations for parents included engaging in **evidence-based parenting programs** just like those offered by Willowstone's Active Parenting and Connect Programs free or at low cost to parents. Willowstone is investing in a space expansion at Howarth Center to bring parents back into in-person services safely with dedicated space for childcare and meals to inspire participation. We encourage all parents in the community, on our waiting list, and in counseling services to participate in these workshops, which includes our follow-up support. **Willowstone Family Services**

Since 1981, Food Finders Food Bank has been a critical component of the welfare of Tippecanoe and 15 surrounding counties: providing food to pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens. In 2008, we added the Backpack Program, currently serving 700 children in Tippecanoe County and more than 5,000 children weekly in 16 counties. In 2010, the food bank added the Mobile Pantry serving fresh and frozen food to 15 counties twice each month. Food Finders opened an expanded warehouse and the Food Resource and Education Center (FREC) in Lafayette in 2016. Until the COVID-19 Pandemic, the FREC was home to our own food pantry as well as the Education and Resource Coordination Programs. To serve the increasing number of food insecure households during the Pandemic Food Finders moved the food pantry to Market Square opening the Fresh Market. The new space, 19,000 square feet, enables us to offer more produce, dairy products, and meat. The number of food insecure households using the Fresh Market has grown to 12,000 households per month. The Fresh Market meets the immediate need for food, while our classes and programs advance our Ending Hunger strategy by teaching skills that help people become more self-reliant. **Food Finders Food Bank**



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There are several reasons we are experiencing staffing shortages; however, one of the biggest reasons is because there are not enough people currently available and qualified to meet the growing needs of our community. In addition to there not being enough people, these are high burnout roles and our staff have been on the frontlines throughout the pandemic. Our partners/referral agencies are experiencing staffing challenges as well and this creates a barrier for the families we serve to receive the services they need in a timely manner. As a result of increased mental health challenges, we are seeing the needs of our families increase. This is also putting more on our agency to respond to in a creative way. COVID-19 provided a unique opportunity for community serving organizations to have enough resources to operate and respond to community needs. As we are moving out of the pandemic, we are having to revisit the times of doing a lot with a little. COVID-19 really highlighted the impact community serving organizations can have if provided enough resources. These resources include volunteers, donations, and publicity. We are working diligently to restore the culture of social services and early childhood education in our community in a post pandemic world with limited organizational and community resources. **Bauer Family Services**

We expected to be busier after the foreclosure and eviction moratoriums were lifted, but we are much busier than expected. In 2021 the number of evictions filed in Tippecanoe County were 617, and thru mid-May in 2022 there have been 599 filed so far. In 2021 the number of foreclosures filed in Tippecanoe County were 19, and thru mid-May in 2022 there have been 45 filed so far. We are currently working with 390 clients to avoid getting to the eviction/foreclosure filings, compared to 230 families at this time last year...most of them are new clients within the month of May. Since we have had to begin foreclosure counseling, we have helped save over \$17 million worth of homes for them...these homes have over 1,600 children in them. In spite of the increased cost of housing, we are currently working with 23 families trying to purchase their first home. With our Community Loan Center Program, we have loaned over \$2 million and have saved over \$3 million in interest and fees as compared to a payday lender. **Homestead Consulting Services**



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Lafayette Family YMCA has navigated through changes due to the pandemic, from closures to the absence of large gatherings, to supporting childcare to all essential employees within Tippecanoe County. During the post-COVID-19 environment, we are keeping the following ideas/challenges in mind. Recognizing the importance of the loss of connections and relationships, empathy is the most important skill and community bridge the YMCA can facilitate in times of struggle and difficulty in having positive and meaningful interactions

. Enhancement of technology and virtual connections

- . Ensuring the financial stability of the Lafayette Family YMCA organization during and post-pandemic
- . Utilize partnership to deliver Mental Health services and resources to members, volunteers, and staff
- . Streamlining systems and procedures to ensure staffing models remain in place
- . Deepening relationships with strategic partners to increase capacities and capabilities of service delivery
- . Incorporating STEM initiatives into YMCA programs to help promote college and career readiness enhancing workforce development in our community
- . Ensuring that the broader community is aware of the YMCA mission and scholarship program is available to all **Lafayette Family YMCA**

Tippecanoe County has been in a mental health crisis since 2014 due to not having enough providers to meet the demand for mental health treatment. Covid and the recent closure of Alpine Clinic have only compounded the crisis. The



demand has created 3-12 month waiting lists in every mental health clinic in the Lafayette area. In 2020, the Tippecanoe County Coroner's Office investigated 23 suicides, a 13% increase from the year before. In 2021, the Lafayette Police Department reported taking four mental health crisis calls per officer per shift, 675 suicide-related calls, and 666 mental health problem calls, and this does not include West Lafayette, Purdue, or Tippecanoe County. Our grassroots organization has felt the strain of the overburdened mental health system. There is a massive need to expand the number of support groups, social activities, educational classes, staffing, volunteers, and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trained Law Enforcement Officers. **NAMI West Central Indiana**



LARA offers three primary educational services: high school equivalency classes, three levels of English for English language learners, and career trainings and certifications. The two biggest unmet needs to optimally serve our students are 1.) afternoon and evening hours of

childcare, and 2.) a fully staffed teacher base. Access to childcare is a barrier for parents of young children across all realms of society and adult education is no exception. We currently offer onsite free childcare from 9-noon only, making the opportunity to attend classes in the afternoons exceedingly difficult for parents with no other options. Further, as our student numbers continue to climb, our teachers have consequently needed to expand their hours and create new sections of classes. Our desire to effectively serve our students as they pursue their education necessitates hiring more teaching staff, increasing the hours of our current instructors, and extending the hours of operation of our childcare. **Lafayette Adult Resource Academy (LARA)**

At The Arc of Tippecanoe County, we have seen big changes in requested services since the pandemic. The Intellectual and Developmentally Disabled(I/DD) Community was, like all of us, seriously impacted by the Pandemic. People with I/DD function best physically, socially and mentally with a structured schedule and consistency in those around them. Many of our members do not have the ability to understand the changes going on around them and have had problems dealing with these changes. They were unable to see family and friends during the lockdown. Most did not have computers or



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internet to participate in online events/communication. Since the return to “normal”, lack of staffing has led to frequent changes in caregivers and the inability to attend social functions or even get a ride to work, further limiting their community connections. We are hearing daily from frustrated family and caregivers who cannot find staff to cover their Medicaid Waiver service hours, have quality of care issues and/or just feel completely isolated from the community. We are working on starting a Caregiver Support group to help with this isolation. We continue to offer a variety of social programs at different times and locations in hopes that with more opportunities it will be easier for people to attend at a time that works for them or their staff. **The Arc of Tippecanoe County**



The number one challenge Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) faces is identifying, recruiting, and acquiring volunteer mentors or BIGs. All youth served by BBBS are coping with circumstances leaving them at risk for substance abuse, gang involvement, troubled relationships, and academic failure. Many children are also living in generational poverty, which negatively affects individual children, their schools, and their community. BBBS reports show 81% of children enrolled in our program receive free or reduced lunch. 73% of children enrolled in the program live in single parent homes and 15% live with grandparents or other relatives due to parental incarceration or DCS involvement. The effect of the COVID-19 virus continues to weigh on all efforts to find BIGs to be matched with youth from our community. Currently 42 children are waiting to be matched - some will wait over a year, but we can fix this with more volunteers! **Big Brothers/Big Sisters**

Due to the staffing shortages nationwide, our volunteer pool was greatly impacted. Employers that we typically partner with were unable to let staff go out into the community to volunteer, due to a lack of staff on hand. Additionally, technology is what makes our Capstone Programs so great! Students interact with technology at our town simulations, just like they will when they enter the workplace. We continue to lack funds to upgrade technology or implement new technology that enhances their understanding of what it means to be a part of a business team. Both tangible technology like iPads, TVs, printers, cameras alongside usable technology like apps, learning sites, and creative software need to stay updated and relevant to keep student’s attention. We also need to ensure we are introducing them to what a current workspace looks and feels like. Technology is constantly changing so we need to find funding to make sure we have upgrades relevant to the modern workplace. **Junior Achievement Serving Greater Lafayette**



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