

Healthbeat



PROJECT NEXUS: A POINT OF ENTRY



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ARTICLES

Feature Article, Employee Spotlight

Christopher Lloyd, Senior Director of Branding and Communications

IN EVERY ISSUE

Recognition & Aspire News

Christopher Lloyd, Senior Director of Branding and Communications

Social Media Hits

Brandi Caplinger, Digital Marketing Coordinator

Welcome New Employees

Paula Earlywine, Talent Aquisition Specialist
Brooke Fronterhouse, Recruiting Specialist

Way to Go!

Mary Sharpe, Project Associate

PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEOS / ILLUSTRATION

All staff photos and videos by Ben Rose: pages 6, 9, 14, 15 and 16.
Stock photography/video posed by models: page 14. Stock photos/
illustrations: pages 5, 9, 10 and 13.

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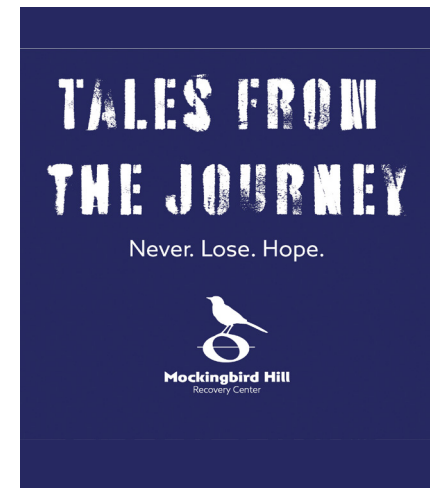
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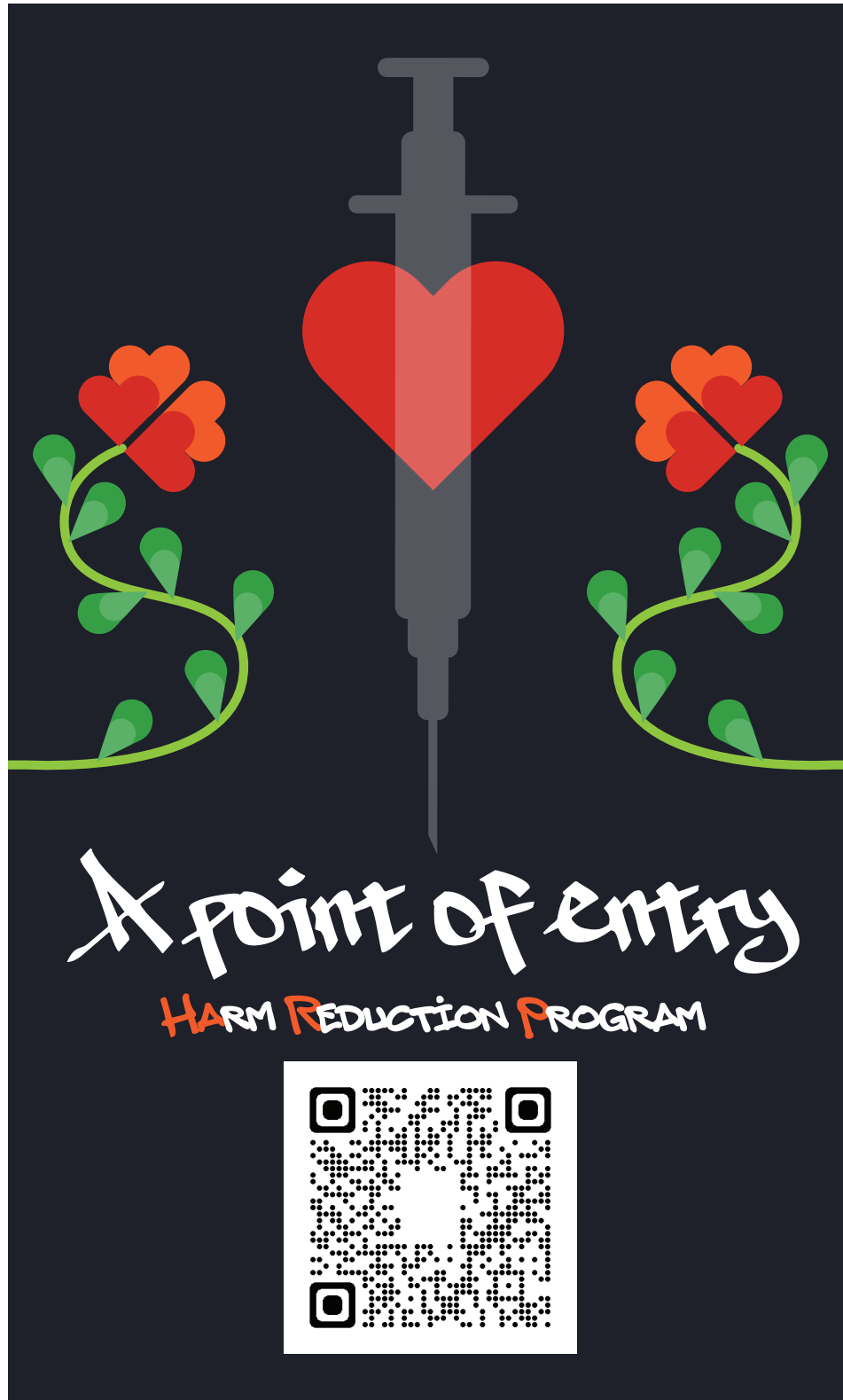


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HaRP leading the way with Project Nexus

by Christopher Lloyd, logo by Cheryl Berry



Earlier this year the Madison County Harm Reduction Program, or HARP, was accepted into [Project Nexus](#), an innovative partnership between the University of Washington and syringe service programs.

It was one of just nine such programs selected in the entire U.S.!

As a result of this partnership, HARP has realized some incredible positive results in Madison County, including enrolling 156 new participants in the program and documenting more than 1,000 uses of Narcan to treat overdoses. Countless lives are being saved!

Project Nexus involves a virtual interview to educate people about harm reduction practices and health outcomes among populations served by syringe service programs (SSP).

Participants are paid \$20 via Visa gift card for completing the interview, an additional \$20 for receiving HIV/HCV testing, another \$20 for returning for their viral hepatitis test, and an additional \$40 for referring four of their peers.

Given that the population served by HARP includes some of the most vulnerable Hoosiers – people who use drugs, who are often homeless and/or unemployed – tying the cash reward with beginning services to address their substance use has proven to be a huge boon.

HARP originally applied for Project Nexus in 2019, but the project was put on hold because of COVID. Last year they reached out offering the funding if Aspire was still interested in participating. To qualify, participants must be aged 18+, speak English and have used injectable substances at least once in the past six months.

During the three months of the Project Nexus period, 156 people in Madison County participated in the program, including 123 individuals who had never

engaged with HARP before. All 156 completed their health screenings. They were also given the opportunity to share their experience regarding stigma and barriers to care, and received backpacks, hygiene items, referrals for medical care,

boxes deployed at Aspire clinic locations – something they learned about by engaging with HARP.)

“Even though Project Nexus funding has ended, the harm reduction program is still

offering, while supplies last, gift cards and backpacks with supplies to people who come in to receive HIV/HCV testing. Though the cash reward system is controversial in some public health circles, these early results show incredible promise in getting help to people who might not otherwise seek it



Madison County Harm Reduction Program
290 likes • 357 followers

“Even though Project Nexus funding has ended, the harm reduction program is still offering, while supplies last, gift cards and backpacks with supplies to people who come in to receive HIV/HCV testing.”

— Julie Foltz

housing, HCV treatment, SUD treatment, or other services they may need from Aspire or other providers.

Additionally, 1,195 doses of Narcan were provided to program participants, and 224 doses were reported as used by them to reverse their own overdose events. Another 813 doses were used to reverse a peer’s overdose. Hundreds more were distributed to other people who use drugs and their friends and families. (Additional doses were obtained from the Narcan

out on their own,” says Julie Foltz, Director of Infectious Disease for Aspire.

The HARP program has expanded so rapidly they have currently surpassed their grant funding. However, the program will continue operating through a combination of fundraising and support from Aspire resources. It will also undergo a name change and be known as Point of Entry.

Look for news soon on how to get involved! ■



Felicia Hester
Recovery Coach, Outpatient
6 years with Aspire

Employee Spotlight: Felicia Hester



by Christopher Lloyd, photos by Ben Rose

Recently, Felicia Hester allowed some fellow Aspire Indiana Health employees to shadow her during a workday at the Hamilton County Drug Court, including a session with Judge David Najaar.

They came away impressed with Felicia’s deep knowledge of the judicial process and compassion for the people who pass through there – many of whom receive services from Aspire.

It was a typical day for the recovery coach, who has worked with patients on an outpatient basis from the Noblesville health center for six years in January.

“We were able to observe discussions regarding clients who are compliant with the program and working

their way through the phases as well as another younger client who is clearly struggling. That client was given a sanction by the court. However, the manner that the judge spoke to the client about the sanction was done in a very respectful and encouraging way,” the shadowing employee says.

“Felicia’s contributions to this client’s staffing were truly insightful, and were taken into consideration as the team came up with a plan for this next step. She has a passion and gift for this work and it comes out in her considered remarks.”

“Great joy is found watching a face light up when experiencing an ‘aha moment,’ or sitting with a client who is crying, knowing they are experiencing some healing through those tears”

Felicia began her time with Aspire as a Forensic Peer Specialist to support Drug Court and OWI Track participants in their recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). “Over the years my duties have included facilitating EOP skills groups, Prime for Life and SUDs Orientation groups, as well as serving as a member of the Noblesville Quick Response Team. Currently, my time is spent

utilizing professional expertise and personal experience to support participants by meeting one on one in the community to teach, model and encourage recovery thinking and behavior,” Felicia says.

“One of the side benefits of advocating for our clients in this position is working with a team of incredible professionals that include the judge, prosecutors, attorneys, probation officers and care assessors who are passionate about the success of our clients and value the insight and perspective of treatment providers.”

continued on next page...

After graduating from Bradley University, she actually began her career on a very different path, working in marketing for the Simon national shopping center developer. She faced personal losses and found herself going down a long, painful descent of destruction before getting the help she needed.

under contract with Marion County Probation. That chapter ended when her friend and partner relapsed, and she spent some years working in retail management and fashion merchandise buying. She became attracted to the then-new concept of peer support, earning a certification as a CHW/CRS (Community Health Worker/

equally measured by the graduate who relapses and reaches out asking for help, following the Relapse Prevention and Safety Plan they created while in our care."

In her spare time, Felicia enjoys spending time in the sun and traveling with her significant other of 22 years, who is also in long-term recovery, and they are active in the local recovery community. She has three grown sons, two in Austin, Texas, and another living at home.

"I do this work to honor all of their lives and for the families who suffered alongside them, as well as the children who don't have a say in the matter."



"On February 21, 1995 I made the decision to surrender to the disease of addiction and live a different way of life and having been doing so for the past 28+ years," Felicia says.

Felicia worked with a local counseling agency facilitating alcohol and drug recovery groups, and later co-founded and managed two treatment centers

Certified Recovery Specialist), and decided she had found her true calling – helping others who were where she had once been.

"Great joy is found watching a face light up when experiencing an 'aha moment,' or sitting with a client who is crying, knowing they are experiencing some healing through those tears," she says. "But I think success is

brother. I do this work to honor all of their lives and for the families who suffered alongside them, as well as the children who don't have a say in the matter. Aspire currently has over 15 drug court participants and/or graduates who are either already employed or looking to become employed as Peer Support Specialists. My hope is that it only continues to grow!!" ■

Same Day Access Rolls out in January



by Christopher Lloyd

Beginning in January, Aspire Indiana Health will roll out one of its boldest initiatives: Same Day Access (SDA) for new behavioral health clients.

The goal is to massively reduce the time frame for a new patient to have their intake and first therapy session. Shifting to SDA has been a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) initiative of Aspire for more than two years, and we are beyond excited to see the positive impact this will have as we head into 2024.

One of the biggest challenges Hoosiers with complex challenges face is accessing care. When a person with a critical need is told they will have to wait days or even weeks to see a therapist, that's a huge barrier to receiving the mental health treatment they deserve. Studies have shown that providers who adopt SDA show an increase in patient experience satisfaction and higher engagement rates.

Here's a brief outline of what you need to know.

SDA will roll out in a phased approach according to this timetable:

Phase 1:
Monday January 8, 2024
Lebanon & Elwood



Phase 2:
Monday January 22, 2024
DeHaven & Willowbrook

Phase 3:
Monday February 5, 2024
Carmel & Noblesville

We are already in the process of informing new patients about this system. For now, we are no longer scheduling intakes but do have a few options for those who need to be seen urgently, including routing them to the closest office, giving them the ability to take no-show or canceled appointments, and a limited availability for evening intakes.

Please note, SDA is NOT the same thing as Open Access, for those who remember that process.

When fully rolled out, new patients can call to locate our closest office or simply walk in and Aspire team members will be waiting to quickly complete their registration, establish their history and clinical baseline, make any necessary referrals within and outside Aspire, and most importantly connect them with their appropriate level of care pathway to begin treatment expediently. ■

Fight Night Benefits Progress House



by Christopher Lloyd

For the first time since 2019, Progress House held its Fight Night fundraising event on Nov. 9 featuring some Golden Gloves boxing at Primo Banquet Hall. The evening also included dinner, drinks and a 50/50 raffle. Thanks to everyone who participated or supported us, and we'll see you again next year!




Way To Go!

- Donna Carrico
- Gwenetta Hill
- Beth Jennings
- Emily Kubiak
- Stephanie Murdock
- Mariah Ramer
- Courtney Ryan
- Leah Stark
- Jazmyne Tidwell
- Heather Whitney

Recognition

We're proud of the people who work for Aspire. That's why we'd like to take a moment now and again to give recognition to them for their achievements – both inside and outside of the work they do with us serving Hoosiers.



group as well as the overall curriculum to make it more meaningful and supportive of those who are in recovery and in our services. "Ryan has dedicated a tremendous amount of time and energy to prepare the new curriculum for EOP Skills, which included making training videos for all of the sessions, coming up with quizzes for the training, and helping map the curriculum to our Matrix sessions. We are so grateful for him!"



Courtney Ryan, a Care Coordinator/Life Skills Instructor with Aspire's Hamilton County Youth & Family Services team, received feedback from a client's mother about the phenomenal work she did with her daughter. "It is like night and day, and my stress levels have gone down so much!"



Tammie Shively, Support Associate at Aspire's Elwood health center, is praised by colleagues for her helpfulness and friendly rapport with patients. "Tammie always puts the clients first and makes them feel at ease when they come into the office. She is such an amazing human being. It is such a joy working with her!"



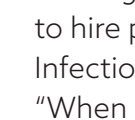
"Look up excellence in the dictionary and there you will see **Vivian Hinder's** picture. She juggles many responsibilities as Clinical Supervisor but constantly keeps her clients at the forefront, consistently goes above and beyond to provide excellent service, and is a blast to work with as a teammate."



Brook Fronterhouse, Talent Acquisition Specialist, and



Adrianna Burgos, Manager of Talent Acquisition, have been lifesavers in filling some vital, but difficult to hire position with the Infectious Disease program.



"When we had a call to action to get these roles filled, they both took the time to listen to the needs of our program and our funders. They made every effort to get qualified applicants to us and we were able to make some terrific hires!"



Infectious Disease Case Managers **Savannah Tagua** and **Kimberly Allen** "are phenomenal employees who have given their all for this company. Thank you!"

continued on next page...

Recognition



Drew Hendricks, joined the Mockingbird Hill Recovery Center as its Operations Manager in August and hit the ground running to raise the standard for both staff and residents. "Drew works tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure we have the policies and procedures necessary for our facility to function effectively and safely. Drew shows a great deal of empathy for our residents, while holding them accountable for their actions, which is ultimately what is best for their recovery."



Certified Medical Assistant **Monisha French** is praised by her coworkers for all the hard work and dedication she brings to the Indianapolis health center team. "She always strives to put her best foot forward and it shows in her work and effort. The clients all love her and she is always smiling and sharing her positive energy!"



Special Events Associate **Maggie Spitznogle** and 340B & EHB Program Coordinator **Rudy Lyon** did a fantastic job pulling together the Fight Night fundraising event to benefit Progress House. "More people than expected attended the

flawlessly planned and run event, with many sharing their thanks and excitement over the great things that are happening at Progress House!



Congrats from his team to **Kevin Sheward** for his recent elevation to Vice President. "He was given a well-deserved promotion that strongly reflects the amazing work he has been doing for Aspire for many years and the trust his colleagues have in him to lead Aspire well. Aspire is in good hands!"



Brandy Baker, Infectious Disease Case Manager, is doing an outstanding job according to her peers. "Brandy has done some amazing work for our Community Clean Up and I am proud to say that she is my colleague. She has been helpful in many ways throughout my first few weeks here at Aspire and I truly appreciate her!"



Kerri Firestone is a volunteer fighter, wife and mother and is the HIV Housing Coordinator for Aspire's Ryan White program. "Kerri always has a smile on her face and is always eager to help."



Licensed Addictions Therapist **Brenda**

Blake received this review from a client at Aspire's Lebanon health center: "Excellent work to the SUDS team that worked with this individual, and especially Brenda! Thank you for all that you do for our clients in recovery and your dedication to the work that you do!"



Kayli Wildridge, Manager, Clinical Training and Development, recently helped to load 18 videos and corresponding quizzes so Aspire's Recovery Coaches and Peer Recovery Specialists could start training for the new EOP Skills sessions they will be doing now. "She was wonderful to collaborate with and I know it had to be so much work to do. We really appreciate it!"



Ashleigh Smith, Clinical Manager at Mockingbird Hill Recovery Center, worked her way up from therapist and knows what it is like to be in the shoes of her staff. "She shows that empathy and understanding daily. Ashleigh works tirelessly to ensure our clinical team has the tools and guidance they need to provide the best treatment possible. We truly would be lost without you!"



Joseph Dixon, Residential Recovery Technician Supervisor at Mockingbird Hill Recovery Center, "is meticulously thorough in his training, providing staff with videos, written instructions and hands-on demonstrations to ensure they understand how things should be done properly. Joseph shows a great understanding of how to be a leader while maintaining compassion and understanding for our residents. Thank you, Joseph!"



The Aspire Indiana Health Information Technology team recognizes **Eleazar Marin Batana, Ryan Nennemann** and **Justin Fritch** for helping grow the service and support necessary to accommodate expanding operations. "Under the leadership and direction of **Luke Thompson**, these three professionals continue to excel in sharing growth opportunities to find ways to better serve each other and our organization. Whether it is through laughter or excellent customer service, each of them provides a human approach to a sometimes frustrating support process." ■

Aspire News



by Christopher Lloyd

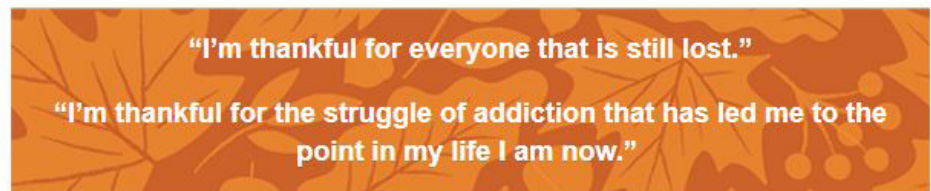


There's a lot going on at Mockingbird Hill! Tales from the Journey is a [new monthly newsletter](#) that we'll put in each issue of Healthbeat. Last issue, residents wrote down what they were thankful for. Some of their thoughts are below.



"I am grateful for the beautiful struggle me and my family have been through... Having the sense of values after hard lessons has opened my mind to the fact that I've learned how to forgive myself and others."

"At this point in my life I'm thankful for a certain peace of mind and the tools that I have acquired through Mockingbird."



"I want to thank Lauren Schaler with the Hancock County Probation Department for recommending me to come to Mockingbird Hill. Also my attorney and Judge Dan Marshall for having faith in me and wanting me to get sober."



DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and Aspire Team Culture put together this awesome video to recognize and celebrate those with disabilities and their incredible value to our organization.



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

In November we celebrate Native American Heritage Month.

Here's a video from the Aspire Team Culture talking about the importance of recognizing indigenous tribes.



CAREER SERVICES

Aspire's Employment Services program provides people with the services and supports they need to increase their ability to work successfully. We also work with employers, at no cost, to help find workers who match their specific needs. Watch this video to learn more, or call (877) 531-3236 to begin services!

KEVIN SHEWARD NAMED VP OF STRATEGY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



As Vice President of Strategy and Business Development for Aspire Indiana Health, Kevin Sheward oversees the development and implementation of business strategy for the healthcare nonprofit.

He is responsible for guiding the creation of a unified strategy for Aspire and its subsidiaries, as well as developing and

strengthening partnerships with stakeholders who are essential to the mission of making health and well-being a reality. He is a problem-solver at heart whose passion is helping people and organizations be their best selves.

Sheward has been with Aspire for eight years and previously held the title of Director of Grants, Resource & Fund Development. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science and an MBA, both from Anderson University.

Under Sheward's leadership, Aspire has seen its grant funding skyrocket over the last several years, and added millions to the company's bottom line through 340B compliance and other resource development initiatives. He has also helped launch significant fundraising campaigns

and helped guide organizational growth across Aspire.

Sheward began his professional career with the Madison County Community Foundation, guiding the foundation's grants and scholarships programs. He was selected to participate in the Madison County Leadership Academy and named to Madison County's "20 under 40" list. In 2020, Sheward was named as a fellow for the Geiger Gibson Health Policy Fellows Program through George Washington University.

He is a member of the Grant Professionals Association and in 2023 was presented with Anderson University's Distinguished Young Alumni Award. ■

Y&F TEAM OUTING

The Marion County Youth and Family team met for a team pumpkin patch outing at Waterman's Farm. We enjoyed baby animals, a hayride, picking out pumpkins, and yummy food! ■



DR. OLIVIA SMITH JOINES ASPIRE INDIANA HEALTH IN NOBLESVILLE



Dr. Olivia Smith has joined Aspire Indiana Health as a practitioner of Family Medicine at their Noblesville health center.

Dr. Smith is a seasoned physician experienced with serving a

wide range of patients and is particularly passionate about women's health, prenatal and OB care, geriatrics and LGBTQ care. She speaks Spanish and is skilled with osteopathic manipulation.

Aspire is proud to serve Medicare and Medicaid patients, and also accepts most forms of traditional insurance. It also has sliding scale fees for the uninsured.

"My philosophy of care is based on listening to patients and focusing on the whole person, not just whatever symptoms they're currently experiencing. I strive to be accepting, compassionate and nonjudgmental. I look forward to working with my patients and

the entire Aspire medical team to help patients accomplish their health goals," Dr. Smith said.

She was born and raised in Indiana, earned her bachelor's degree in general health science from Purdue University and her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Marian University. She completed her residency at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis.

Dr. Smith also has a robust record of involvement, including currently serving as a trustee on the Indiana Osteopathic Association board. At Marian she founded the Culture & Communication in Medicine Club to explore the impact of culture on medicine and look at medical disparities. ■

LAMB NEW NP IN LEBANON



James Lamb has joined Aspire Indiana Health as its primary care provider at our Lebanon health center. He is a Family Nurse Practitioner whose clinical experience encompasses emergency, primary care, women's health and pediatrics.

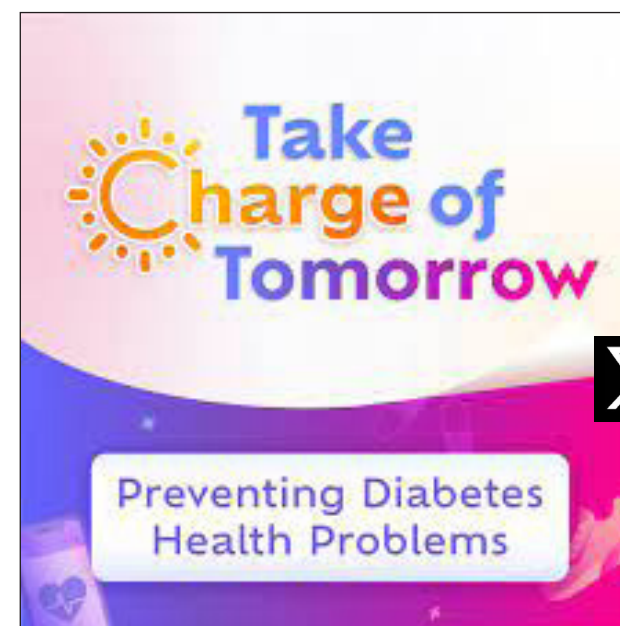
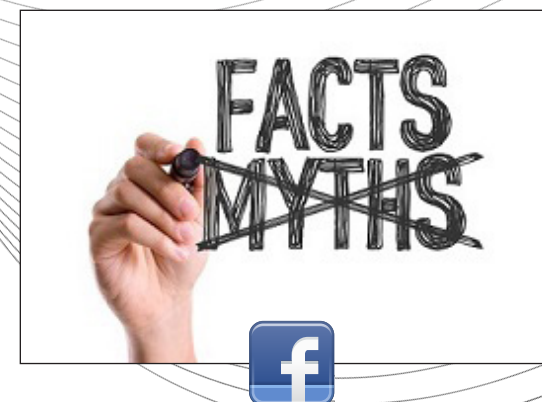
"I take pride in my capacity to perform minor medical procedures, navigate complex chronic conditions, and ensure my patients are informed and

involved in their care decisions. Collaborating closely with fellow healthcare professionals, I strive to create a seamless care experience for my patients at Aspire Indiana Health," Lamb says.

He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from Indiana University-Purdue University of Indianapolis. He previously served at IU Health - Methodist Hospital. ■

Social Media Hits

by Brandi Caplinger



Welcome New Employees!

Stephanie Antrim

Patient Access Specialist
Indianapolis

Sarah Billings

Grant Writer
Administration

Corey Brackney

Clinical Training Specialist
Administration

Alexis Brown

Staff Nurse
Carmel

Malana Brown

Residential Recovery Technician
Mockingbird Hill

Ross Brown

Care Coordinator/Life Skills
Instructor-Home & Community
Based
Indianapolis

Michael Burke

Community Health Worker /
MACY Driver
Progress House

Simone Burt

Life Skills Coach
Group Homes, Madison County

Sabrina Colbert

Infectious Disease Case Manager
Hoak

Constance Cox

Residential Recovery Technician
Mockingbird Hill

Sara Davis

Employment Specialist
Indianapolis

Jenna Dougherty

Mobile Crisis Team
Carmel

Geraldineia Evans

Care Coordinator/Life Skills
Instructor — Home & Community
Based
Carmel

Alisa Gavin

Scheduler-Patient Access
Carmel

Zachari George

Licensed Therapist-Addictions
Indianapolis

Kyra Grider

Care Coordinator/Life Skills
Instructor- Home & Community
Based
Indianapolis

Stephen Hamilton

Care Coordinator/Life Skills
Instructor- Home & Community
Based
Chase

Amiyah Hayworth

Patient Access Specialist
Indianapolis

Angela Hobbs

Accounts Receivable
Representative
Administration

Chad Jackson

Food Service Worker
Progress House

Dallas Jackson

Administrative Assistant
Administration

Jayson Jefferson

Community Engagement
Coordinator
Indianapolis

Shaneka Jemison

Certified Medical Assistant
Carmel

Dreyaunna Jones

Life Skills Coach
Group Homes, Madison County

Dacoven Kirksey

Life Skills Coach — SGL
Group Homes, Madison County

Joselyn Lara

Certified Medical Assistant
Indianapolis

Larrise Lewis

Life Skills Coach — SGL
Group Homes, Marion County

Joshua Loft

Care Coordinator/Life Skills
Instructor — Home & Community
Based
Elwood

Hua Luo

Staff Psychiatrist
Noblesville

Crystal Luzadder

Recovery Coach — OP
Noblesville

Ashley McCoy

Medical Assistant
Noblesville

Antoinette McNary

Certified Medical Assistant
Indianapolis

Christina Miles

Peer Specialist
Indianapolis

Camarah Moore

Patient Access Specialist
Indianapolis

Abimbola Oluwasesin

NP Preceptee
Indianapolis

Darla Ooley

Property Manager
Marion County

Carla Orr

Manager — Social Driver's of
Health
Indianapolis

Clairtosha Patterson

Housing Coordinator
Madison County

Jessica Rasmussen

Director, Behavioral Health FQHC
Administration

Valerie Rae Rigney

Certified Medical Assistant
Madison

Carlena Rodgers-Vertner

Patient Access Specialist
DeHaven

Hannah Schnepf

Mobile Crisis Team
Carmel

Cammi Shoultz

License Eligible Psychologist
DeHaven

Deonne Smith

Outpatient Office Coordinator
Indianapolis

Olivia Smith

Physician — Primary Care
Administration

Valena Sommermeyer

Residential Recovery Technician
Mockingbird Hill

Mallory Stapler

Staff Nurse
Indianapolis

Sheena Stevenson

Certified Medical Assistant
Hoak

Shawna Stinson

Manager, Nursing,
Residential Facilities
Mockingbird Hill

Courtney Tanner

Master's Level Staff Therapist
DeHaven

Jacquelyn Thrasher

Transportation Associate
Indianapolis

Katrina Thomas

Licensed Therapist — Residential
Mockingbird Hill

Iyan Upshaw

Hepatitis C Care Coordinator
Hoak

David Vest

Master's Level Clinical Intern
DeHaven

Melissa Westfall

Infectious Disease Case Manager
Muncie

Jenifer Williams

Recovery Coach — OP
DeHaven