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Audrain County Future Workforce Prep

Audrain County Future Workforce Prep Program is a community based initiative designed to create opportunities through community efforts to provide youth, individuals and families the information and knowledge necessary to be successful in the workplace. This intervention will include school based strategies, partnership development strategies, and employer strategies.

- In our Community Needs Assessments, employers reported the biggest need they face is an educated, prepared workforce at the ready. A primary need indicated was the need of workers with established soft (or life) skills. This initiative includes targeting the youth in the high schools not only to better prepare them for the workforce but to also increase the opportunity of these youth to join the local workforce when time to do so
- Job/Career Fairs: “Find Your Path” event. Partners for Education & Employment Coalition (PEEC), Hart Career Center, Mexico Public Schools and Mexico Area Chamber of Commerce. Event developed to expand opportunities for students to get a more in depth look at what different career paths look like and LOCAL employment opportunities. Day long career exploration event for students 8th – 12th grades. Due to COVID, these were cancelled this past year. We are looking to start them up again in 2021. Industry Tours: Entire 8th grade class is taken on tours of various factory, warehouse and production sites in Mexico which highlights tech and skilled labor positions. Due to COVID, these were cancelled this past year. We are looking to start them up again in 2021.
- Reality Enrichment and Life Learning (REALL) Simulations: In 2020, I completed a REALL simulation in each of the school districts in Audrain County before COVID stopped this activity in the schools. My goal in 2021 again is to hold a REALL Simulation in every school district in Audrain County



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- I am currently working on two projects for this initiative; “Community Voices” is a virtual format of community business leaders giving their perspective on the importance of “soft/life skills” and “employable skills” that are needed when entering the workforce. The second is delivery of hygiene bags to the “Essential Outcomes” students and student who attend the Mexico Alternative School. Other schools in the district that have similar classes are also planned to receive some bags if needed.
- I am working closely with the Student Success and Behavior Management Coordinator at MHS to develop an online webquest/game recognizing and identifying local resource agencies and organizations. In addition, a Mexico Works Job Board is being established to help students find employment and enhance job skills. The Essential Outcomes class is based off Ruby Payne’s aha! R Rules Program for Middle School and High School students.
- CMCA has participated in mock interviews for high school students enrolled in business classes or are members of the FBLA but were cancelled due to COVID. I hope to re-engage in this activity during the 2021-22 school year
- The Bright Futures Program also plays an important role in this work plan. Every school district in Audrain County has an active Bright Futures program. I am currently on three Site Committees; Eugene Field Elementary, Mexico Middle School and Mexico High School



Mexico Sustainability Project

The Mexico Sustainability Project was developed in 2017. Born out of the work of Bright Futures Mexico, planning and training began in an effort to determine ways to meet the needs of the community through the Aha! Processing Company. CMCA will invest monetary and non-monetary resources to support the next phase of this project - "Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' By World" training.

- Member of the Mexico Sustainability Project Advisory Board, member of the PEEC Coalition and serve on three Bright Futures Site Committees
- Have graduated two "Getting Ahead" classes with 20 graduates in total. Next "Getting Ahead" class is scheduled to start in April 2021. Supports built-in for the classes/participants include; transportation, childcare, meal and stipend
- Informational & Skill Enhancement presentations will be incorporated in the 2021 project offerings for past graduates of the "Getting Ahead" classes to attend. Topics are chosen by the participants and will include financial/credit tips, job seeking/sustaining information and personal growth
- Discussions have continued on addressing issues that affect the local workforce includes; transportation, safe and affordable housing, childcare, employer incentives/supports for employees, community outreach/volunteer opportunities. A grant was approved in January 2021 to hire a "Job Coach" to be utilized by this project as well as local employers



Audrain County Transportation

Audrain County Transportation Resources is a community based project designed to create public transportation resources or systems to address the needs of the community and it's residents. This project will create at least one public transportation resource for this purpose.

- Have had numerous discussions with Transportation Community Action Team (CAT) members during first quarter regarding the status of our county transportation resources from local ride assistance to medical transportation assistance
- Examples of representatives for that CAT are; The Help Center, Senior Center, Aging Best, Mexico Housing Authority, Audrain County Developmental Disabilities, Arthur Center Community Health, Job Finders and others. Continue attempting to recruit representatives from the Vandalia/Ladonia area who attend the Resource & Network Exchange quarterly meetings to discuss possible solutions for that part of the county and ways to incorporate a countywide transportation solution
- With the recent loss of two transportation resources in the county, the need for outside partners has become more of a topic of discussion
- Build on and possibly expand on the transportation assistance that was implemented by different groups within the community in response to COVID
- Work with existing groups/projects like the PEEC, Mexico Sustainability Project, Mexico Area Chamber of Commerce to further the discussion about transportation solutions for the City of Mexico and Audrain County as a whole.



Head Start/Early Head Start Support

With my office being located in the Williams Family Support Center Head Start/Early Head Start site in Mexico, some of my community outreach and collaboration efforts are to provide direct support and assistance with the programs, projects and needs of the site and the families we serve established through discussions with the Head Start Site Lead.

- Assist with/support the PAT/Head Start joint events. Also, I am on the PAT Advisory Council and a member of the ACHD Breastfeeding Coalition
- Assist in securing health and safety COVID related supplies for the site from local resources
- Pick up and deliver the “Buddy Backpacks” to the WFSC
- Ensure our agency program assistance applications and our agency programs information available and easily accessible
- Assisting with the maintenance and updating of community information board and the sharing of community events and/or assistance programs directly to the WFSC families through handouts
- Assist with securing donations of resources and items to directly support Head Start/Early Head Start projects or needs
- Continue direct work with the county Family Success Coach (Kathy Mattson) and support of the United Way of Audrain County funding
- Secured funding support to sponsor two trips for the WFSC & Community R-VI Head Start classes to Scattering Forks Outdoor Center in Mexico. Working with several agencies and organizations for virtual educational and informational programs to share in our Head Start classroom





Community R-VI CMCA Head Start at Scattering Forks in Mexico, MO

