

News@Home



New Independence Project Offers Hope to Our Alumni



March 4 was a day of celebration. IUMCH dedicated the Independence Project (IP) to support our residents who age out of our programming and want extra help before living on their own.

“The goal is to provide safe and stable housing for students after graduation. But it’s more than

a place for our graduates to live, a dedicated life coach helps them develop a plan for success,” said Daniel F. Evans, Jr., the Home’s President of the Board of Trustees.

The IP was formally dedicated at a service in our Gress Memorial Chapel which was led by Evans, Home and Foundation officials, and UMC Indiana Bishop Tracy S. Malone. More than 65 supporters attended the celebration and then toured the new IP facilities on the edge of our campus.

David Charles, Foundation Treasurer shared, “As with all of our progress over the past 110 years, our mission is only possible through God’s guidance and the support of people like you.

“An anonymous donor made a nearly half-million-dollar catalyst gift to fund the first three years of our five-year pilot program. We are humbled that additional supporters are stepping up.”

Bishop Malone closed the dedication service with a prayer and a blessing: “May this house be a home of transformation where brokenness is met with grace, despair is turned to hope, and every young person discovers their full potential.”

For more information and a video about Independence Project, scan the QR code or visit our website.



Trial Run for Managing Life

Naomi is one of our first graduates to transition into our Independence Project.

Now she is employed, working 36 hours a week in a local warehouse, and she also attends cosmetology school. She recently saved enough money to be eligible for our “First Car Initiative” (IUMCH matched her savings to make the purchase and required that she buy insurance, etc.). Now she can drive herself to school and her job. She gives a lot of credit to her Family Teachers Burk and Hope McMullin, for moral support and for giving her great advice. She also credits staff member Raegan Stuck for helping her with the transition into independent living.

“That’s where the staff at the Children’s Home have been helpful. I visit and talk with Burk and Hope,” Naomi said. “Or I call Raegan on the phone, and she is always willing to help me.”

Reagan said, “I love seeing how youth become more confident in this program. In most cases, you see them blossom and go from an older teen with very little hope to a young adult with the skills they need.”

So far, it’s working well for Naomi, who puts a great focus on her budget. “In my opinion, this is a well-thought-out program. I do pay for my food, clothing, gas, and all the day-to-day necessities,” she said. And she is looking to the future when she will be out on her own.

“The Children’s Home came up with the monthly ‘dream fee’. I don’t really pay rent, [instead, each month] I put money in my ‘dream fee account’, and I will get that money back when I leave. When I leave, I will have a nice savings account.”

“I consider this a trial run for managing life in the real world.”

– Naomi



Dear Friends,

As we celebrate Mother's Day and prepare for Father's Day, our focus turns to family.

The security of a family. If you have it, you know it. It's care. It's love.

And it's a powerful sense of community that carries you toward independence and a life of happiness.

Some children don't have this. And when they don't—it's hard to overcome.

We are grateful for the supporters who are part of our care that helps our children overcome their difficult past experiences, (see our long list of amazing supporters who shared gifts of \$1,000 or more last year on pages 3 and 4). You faithfully follow our stories, pray for our mission and respond to our calls for help. You support our mission that uses the Teaching-Family Model of care, (TFM) allowing us to nurture and protect like mothers and fathers, (read more about TFM on page 6). **This evidence-based caring environment in our family-style homes provides the security that our teens so desperately need. It helps them heal.**

The TFM of care will also support teens who will be in our new family-style recovery home that will open in 2026 (see blue box below), as well as the young adults who are part of our new Independence Project IP, (read about our IP on page 1). **Modeling and teaching social skills and how a family should function breaks the cycle of generational abuse.**

This care provides our teens and young adults with a sense of community and the safety net that a family should have. And when they fail, we give the security they need to prosper.

Thank you for being part of our Children's Home family—and for keeping us in your prayers. When our teens and young adults succeed, Indiana wins.

May God bless you and your family,



Christy Huston
Christy Huston, MA, CFRM, IOM
Foundation
Executive Director



Rich Lapinski
Rich Lapinski, MS
Children's Home
Executive Director/CEO

Who are these with you? These are the children God has entrusted to our care.
— Genesis 33:5

In our *News@Home Winter 2025* issue, we shared our news about breaking ground on a new “recovery home” scheduled to open in early 2026. Thank you for sharing our excitement about providing a much-needed service to the teens we serve and thank you for your questions about our new program. To respond to your questions:

What our Recovery Home IS:

1. A safe, structured home for up to ten teens after they have achieved initial sobriety. Programs offered in the home help them maintain sobriety.
2. Our approach integrates the best evidence-based practices, including Seven Challenges, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, among others. Our services include mentorship, life skills development, and therapeutic resources to help youth build independence and stability.
3. Our seventh family-style home on our campus using the Teaching-Family Model for up to ten students, who will also attend our on-campus school and have the opportunity to worship in our chapel.

What our Recovery Home is NOT:

1. NOT a “detox facility” or active treatment or rehabilitation center.
2. NOT intensive treatment using Medication-Assisted Treatment services.
3. NOT a locked facility or “in-patient” facility.



From Their Voices

In all stages of our lives, especially in our families, we all want to have “a seat at the table,” a position where we are valued, contributing members. So we asked our teens to reflect on what it means for them to gather around our large dining room tables, whether it’s time to eat, do homework, learn how families are supposed to function, learn to advocate for themselves, celebrate their accomplishments or a time to be heard:

“The first night I came to the Home, the Family Teachers asked what I was craving for dinner. They made me a special meal, complete with my favorite ice cream and homemade brownies. It meant a lot to me that they cared so much.” – **Jared**, Age 17

“I enjoy the nights when we all cook together. Sometimes we can make a mess, but no one seems to care. We all pitch in and clear the table and load the dishwasher. We have had some great talks around the dinner table, too. In our home, the Family Teachers ask us to go around the table and we each share the good things that happened on that day. We also discuss our challenges.” – **Angela**, Age 18

“My favorite meals are when we have food from other countries. It is fun to try new foods and learn a little bit about what other people like to eat. There is more to life than hamburgers and hot dogs!” – **Joshua**, Age 15

“As Family Teachers, we enjoy sitting around the table and being a part of the conversations that the girls have. Sitting around a dinner table eating tasty food brings people together. Our dinner table is the focal point in our home. Not only do we eat together daily but we have family meetings around the table and the girls tend to gather there after school to talk about their day.”

– **Burk McMullin**, Family Teacher

“My favorite meal is fried chicken. My Family Teachers are from Texas, and they also know how to fix Tex-Mex meals. We all go shopping together and help pick out things we want to eat. We try to eat healthy food at every meal.”

– **Sonia**, Age 17



Principal Stuart Recognized and Honored for 40 Years



After a distinguished 40-year career at the IUMCH James E. Davis School, Principal Jim Stuart was recognized with a prestigious award from the Boone County Chamber of Commerce last month. He was honored at the Chamber’s Annual Awards Banquet for his life-long dedication and service to youth.

Principal Stuart will be retiring at the end of the school year. He began his career here teaching English at our school, and over the past four decades has fostered a safe, supporting environment for our students, many of whom had previously never had a positive school experience. Most notably, he helps our students graduate.

The Chamber’s citation echoes what we all feel about him: “[Jim is] a man of faith, a man of character, a husband, a father, a grandfather, a mentor, an encourager, a motivator, a fan of music, travel, literature, jokes, and all things Disney, and the guiding light of James E. Davis School. He will be truly missed in the years to come and is so appreciated for his many years of service.”

What a proud 40-year legacy he leaves behind!

Angie Godwin Society

Donors of \$1,000 or more—in one gift or throughout 2024—are recognized below as Angie Godwin Society donors. Miss Godwin was the founder of the Home 110 years ago. Her vision has endured because of generous donors like you!

Thank you!



Gifts of \$100,000 and above

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"Imagine, as a teenager, trying to navigate today's stress and pressures without family love and support. Our donations to the Children's Home help protect their futures by encouraging these young people to succeed and thrive despite the circumstances that brought them here."

Cathie Mills, Angie Godwin Society donor and member of Noblesville First United Methodist Church.

Family Teachers *Indispensable for Success*

All of our Family Teachers have extensive training and continuous coaching in the Teaching-Family Model. The relationships they develop with our teens result in success stories throughout our organization.

Hope and Burk McMullin have been with us nine months now, and they exemplify the compassion it takes to be Family Teachers. Mother's Day and Father's Day will be the first that they will celebrate on our campus with the eight teenage girls they care for in the busy Godwin Home.

The McMullins have very interesting backgrounds, and both of them have a servant's heart. Hope was a second-grade teacher, and Burk has been a state trooper, transportation manager, and an executive chef. Burk's great, great, great, great grandfather also had a servant's heart. He was Hannibal Hamlin, Abraham Lincoln's first Vice President.

"You have probably heard this before from other staff, but working at the Children's Home is a calling," Hope shares. Their commitment is deeply rooted in their faith and their desire to make a meaningful impact on the lives of the teens they work with. "We were called by God to work here."

"We look forward to spring break and consider it a time of renewal."

– Hope McMullin

So, the girls will be focusing on getting back into nature. "We look forward to hiking on some of the beautiful trails around central Indiana. By the end of the break, we hope the girls feel rested and rejuvenated."

Burk adds, "When our girls leave here, they know they can reach out to us anytime for support. We raised five of our own children and have dealt with issues in our immediate family. We feel

that challenges with our own children prepared us to be successful Family Teachers.

"Following the Teaching-Family model, youth learn to become more successful as they approach adulthood. A good example of this is one of our girls who recently transitioned from Godwin Home to one of the independent living apartments. She has a job, she's currently enrolled in cosmetology school, and she recently purchased a car. She knows she can reach out to us anytime for support. Witnessing her progress makes it all worthwhile," he said with pride.

These dedicated Family Teachers have many successes to celebrate with their girls in Godwin Home this year on Mother's Day and Father's Day.



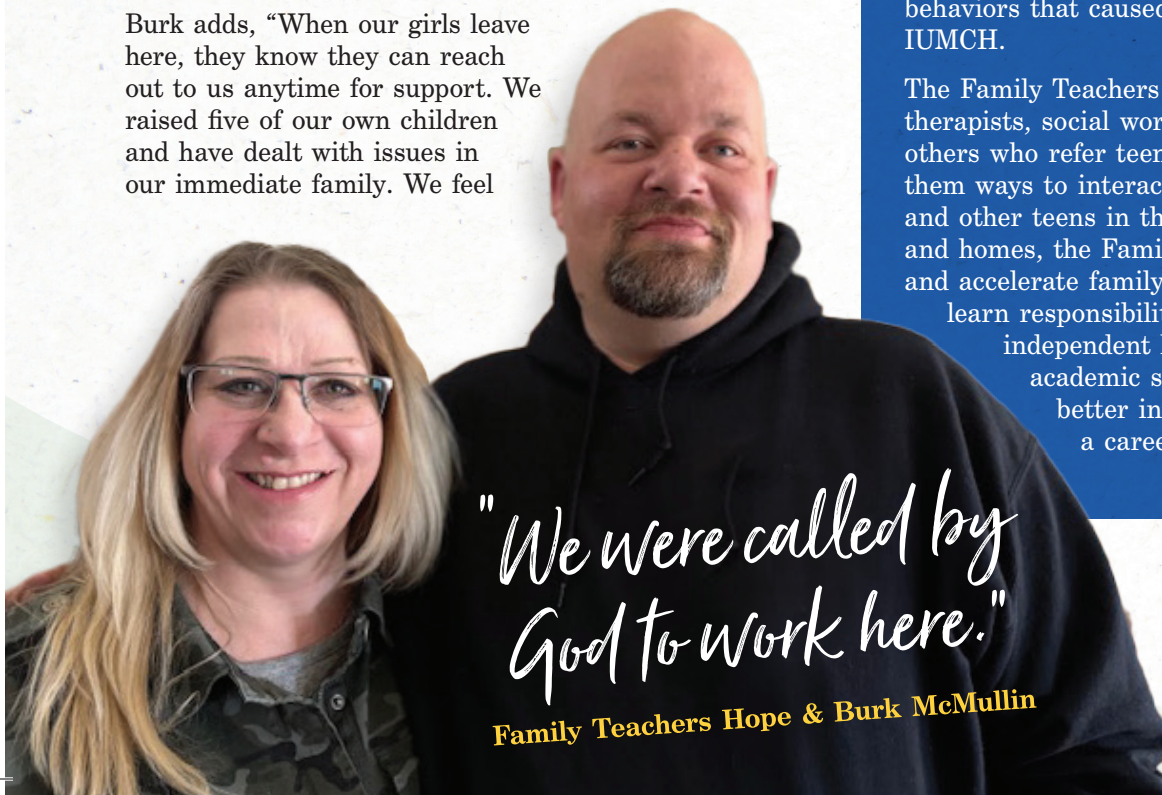
To watch a short video and hear from a few of our Teaching Family couples, scan the QR code:

Teaching-Family Model Produces Results

The Teaching-Family Model has been recognized as an evidence-based model of care by the American Psychological Association.

Up to eight teens live in each of our family-style homes with their Family Teachers. Married couples hired as Family Teachers provide daily care and supervision while teaching important social skills and functional alternatives to behaviors that caused teens to be placed at IUMCH.

The Family Teachers work closely with parents, therapists, social workers, probation officers and others who refer teens for services. By teaching them ways to interact successfully with adults and other teens in their schools, communities, and homes, the Family Teachers help facilitate and accelerate family reunification. Our teens learn responsibility and age-appropriate independent living skills, along with academic skills to help them perform better in school and prepare for a career.



"We were called by God to work here."

Family Teachers Hope & Burk McMullin

Auxiliary Takes on New Name, New Project

Since 1967, IUMCH Auxiliary has made a huge impact in the lives of our children by taking on special projects. Now the group is changing its name to Auxiliary Ambassadors. The new name reflects its intent to recruit more men and women throughout Indiana to help advocate for the needs of the children we serve. Membership Chair Larna Spearman says, "Membership in the Auxiliary Ambassadors is just a way to show appreciation for how the Home continues to make transformational changes in our students. We provide and pass on the hope, skills, gifts, integrity and love so many at the Home have passed on to us."

At its Executive Committee meeting last month, the renamed volunteer group voted to financially support the unique table and chairs in the recovery home (see

story below), just as it has supported the custom-made tables in the other six family-style homes on our campus. Members and others are invited to make a tribute or memorial gift, with recognition opportunities on the back of the chairs.

Auxiliary Ambassadors President Kay Franscoviak made the first gift toward the project, dedicating one of the 20 chairs in memory of her late parents, Ethel & Dale Richardson. "We pray that the teens who sit around the table will look back someday and remember positive life-changing moments from their time at the Indiana United Methodist Children's Home," said Kay.

To learn more about joining the Auxiliary Ambassadors or participating in helping fund the table and chairs, please contact Susan Bennett at susanb@iumch.org

Executive Director Lapinski Building Recovery Home Dining Room Table

Children's Home Executive Director and CEO Rich Lapinski shared a quote from the inside cover of his late father's trade school textbook. The quote comes from 19th-century architect John Ruskin, and it starts like this: *"When we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight nor for present use alone."*

Rich has inherited his father's love for woodworking and is using his hobby for the good of the new recovery home by building the dining room family table. It will be a custom 12' x 5' elm table with 20 chairs.

"As anyone who works with natural materials knows, it's very difficult to perfect anything," said Rich. "You must consider the grain and the natural curve of the wood. Things that some would consider imperfections turn out to be the things that make it distinctive and beautiful. The table will be the gathering place for our teens. Like the table, it is our individual approach to each teen that can help them and bring out the things that are beautiful in them."

Ruskin's quote continues: *"Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for ... that men will say, as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, 'See! This our fathers did for us.'"*





What's New at the Children's Home?

Come See Our Park-Like Campus!

There is new construction, new services, and the trees are blooming at the Children's Home.

Visit the Children's Home to see and learn. Come by yourself, with some friends, or with a group. Our tours are planned according to your availability and will accommodate any physical limitations. Whether you can visit for 30 minutes or 2 hours, you'll enjoy seeing our beautiful campus!

To set up a tour contact:

Tom Fagan, Children's Home Foundation
Development Director
317-775-0606 tomfagan@iumchf.org

Meet Carter

Carter came to the Children's Home in 2024. There was a lot of instability in his life, and after witnessing drug use and abuse at home, it was easy for him to get in trouble himself.

However, at IUMCH, teachers like Mrs. McConnell helped him work on his self-confidence and concentration, and recently, he was able to receive his Indiana ACE Diploma.

"Mrs. McConnell never gave up on me. I've never had a teacher like her. All of my teachers helped me graduate and I am so happy to have my diploma."

"When he passed his first test, he fell down on his knees and cried."—Mrs. McConnell



Indiana United Methodist
Children's Home Foundation
Hope Has A Home in Lebanon

iumch.org

Contact for Home:

515 W. Camp Street, Lebanon, IN 46052 | 765-482-5900

Contact for Foundation:

9333 N. Meridian Street, Suite 222, Indianapolis, IN 46260
317-775-0606 | info@iumchf.org

