

News from Home

Winter 2026

2026: Expansion and Challenges

Donors are more important than ever

2026 will be a year of many changes at the Indiana United Methodist Children's Home. We will serve more children, open a new facility, and launch a new service program, all while adapting to reduced funding from the State.

The Recovery Home, which will be our seventh residential home, is scheduled to open early this spring. It will have 10 beds and will serve teens who need to establish a foundation for substance-free living, having already completed treatment at other facilities.

Plans continue for the expansion of our Independence Project. We look to build residential facilities for up to 12 young adults who need extra support as they take their first steps as independent adults after they leave the child welfare system.

Meanwhile, the Children's Home is coping with reduced funding. The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is reducing funding to the Indiana United Methodist Children's Home, as well as numerous agencies and nonprofits across Indiana. The Children's Home expects to see a 4% reduction in the amount it receives from the State per child in our care.

"The Children's Home receives most of its funding from the State of Indiana because the children in our care are wards of the State. State authorities remove children from their families because of abuse and neglect. They are placed here and, because the State is their guardian, the State pays us to care for them," according to Rich Lapinski, IUMCH Executive Director.

"We will continue to serve as many children as we can, thanks to the generous donors who support our mission," says Lapinski. "Despite the State funding cuts, we have no plans to reduce capacity or programs."

The ability of the Home to maintain services—and add new ones despite the reduction in State funding—is possible in large part because of the Children's Home Foundation and generous donors.

The Foundation is ready to partner with any individuals, churches, or businesses that want to see us continue our vital work during this challenging time. To support the mission of the Children's Home, please contact Tom Fagan, Executive Director of the Children's Home Foundation, at 317-775-0606 or tomfagan@iumchf.org.

2025 Children's Home Impact

Here are how many lives you have helped.

111 Teens (56 boys, 55 girls) IUMCH served.

13 Baptisms (5 in our Gress Memorial Chapel, 8 off campus).

12 James E. Davis School graduates in 2025.

6 Young adults who lived in the Independence Project program.



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

Making the Holidays Bright

Bringing joy through “The Best Christmas Ever”

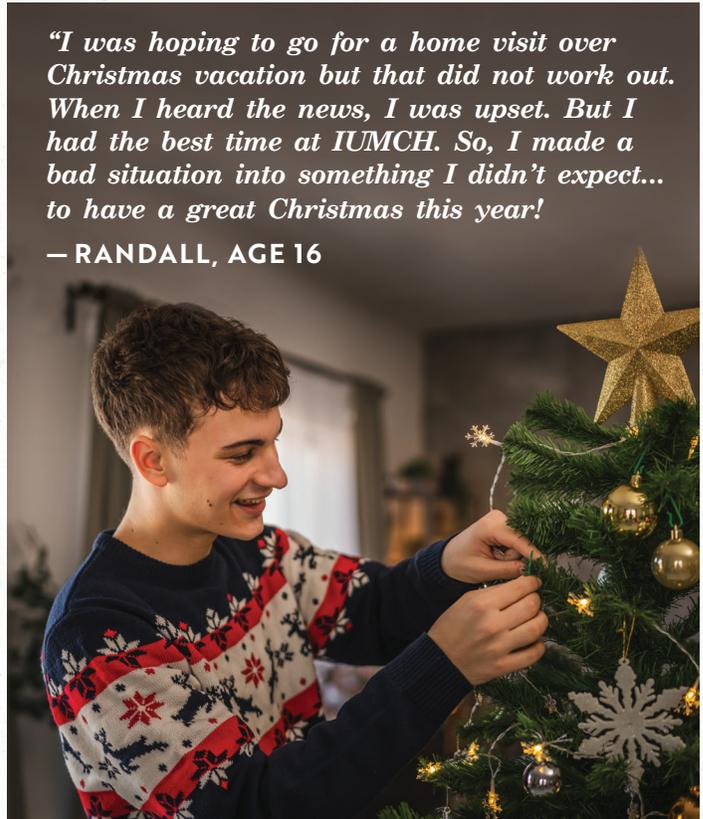
For 2025’s Giving Tuesday, we asked you to help our youths have The Best Christmas Ever, and you did not disappoint! Nearly \$16,000 came in to bring joy to the boys and girls at IUMCH. The holidays can be very difficult for several of our youths while they are away from family, and many of them have never experienced the type of Christmas every child deserves. But with your help, they:

- Went to Live Nativity at Trader’s Point Christian Church.
- Visited the Carmel Christkindlmarkt, Christmas at the Zoo, Winterlights at Newfields, and the Children’s Museum.
- Enjoyed special holiday family dinners at Outback, Logan’s Steakhouse, and Terra Gaucha Brazilian Steakhouse.
- Saw the new Avatar movie at the IMAX Theatre.
- Went to Dave and Busters, Top Golf, and an Indianapolis Fuel game.
- Went ice skating and bowling.

Thank you for bringing smiles, joy, and love to our youths this holiday season!

“I was hoping to go for a home visit over Christmas vacation but that did not work out. When I heard the news, I was upset. But I had the best time at IUMCH. So, I made a bad situation into something I didn’t expect... to have a great Christmas this year!”

— RANDALL, AGE 16



So Much More Than Just a Suitcase

IUMCH donors Stephanie and Pete Logan have seen how tough life can be for some youths, especially ones who have been removed from their families. They recalled the times they had seen teens carrying their belongings in trash bags and had a simple explanation for their gift: “It just seems that everyone deserves to have a suitcase,” Stephanie told us.



L to R: Chase, Braylon, Stephanie, and Miles Logan deliver a U-Haul full of suitcase gifts.

Not only did the Logan family, including children Chase, Braylon, and Miles, bring 46 suitcases, one for each of our current youths, but they filled each one with a bath towel and washcloth set, candy canes, a deck of cards, toothpaste, a toothbrush, deodorant, and lotions.

Seventeen-year-old Janine said, “The suitcase was something I really needed. It’s the perfect size and color! It even has wheels! Now I have a better way to pack for home visits, and I’ll be ready for a nice vacation one day.” And John Nikulski, one of our Family Teachers, commented, “On a scale from 1 to 10, the suitcases were one of the best and most thoughtful gifts I could think of. Many of our youth do not have suitcases when they arrive or leave the Home, so this gift was perfect.”

New Tax Guidelines for 2026 Charitable Giving



Here is an overview of what's new for 2026. As with all tax rules guidelines surrounding charitable gifts, it is recommended you consult with your financial advisor on the best way to maximize your tax-wise giving.

- Non-itemizers are eligible for a \$1,000 charitable deduction per individual.
- Itemizers have a 0.5% floor on their qualified deductible charitable contributions.
- Corporations have a new 1% floor on charitable deductions.

Because everyone's tax situation is different, it is important that you reach out to your financial advisor to find out how your charitable gift-giving and subsequent tax benefits may be impacted in 2026.

As always, we remain grateful for all contributions to the Children's Home Foundation.

Indiana United Methodist Children's Home Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit; E.I.N. 47-0987110. To the extent that is allowed by law, your gift to the Children's Home Foundation is tax deductible.

New Foundation Board Members

The Indiana United Methodist Children's Home Foundation Board is pleased to announce two new members. These individuals are not new to IUMCH—both have been on the Children's Home Board of Trustees—with expertise both inside and outside IUMCH.



Daniel F. Evans, Jr.

Having served on the Children's Home Board of Trustees for six years, and serving as its current president since 2023, Dan now also joins the Foundation board as a member. A well-known Indiana leader, Dan is currently serving as President

Emeritus at Indiana University Health, having served for 13 years as IU Health's President and CEO. A graduate of the Robert H. McKinney School of Law, he has served in various capacities, including Chair of the Federal Housing Finance Board, Chair of the Indiana Biosciences Research Institute, and many others.



Ryan Dunn

Ryan has been on the Children's Home Board of Trustees for three years and now also joins the Foundation board. Owner and President of Ryan Dunn Enterprises, he is a graduate of the Indiana University Indianapolis Kelley School

of Business and holds a master's from Purdue University Daniels School of Business. Ryan has a background in public finance, government and management consulting.

IRA Distributions Are Easy to Donate

One easy way to donate to the Children's Home is through an IRA. If you're age 70½ or older, you can start the new year by making a gift through your Individual Retirement Account. Consult your financial advisor to learn how simple it is to donate from your IRA and about your potential tax savings. Questions? **Contact Tom Fagan, Children's Home Foundation Executive Director, at 317-775-0606 or tomfagan@iumchf.org.**

Annual Auxiliary Ambassadors Program and Lunch

Saturday, April 25, 2026, 10:00 A.M.-1:30 P.M.
Gress Memorial Chapel, IUMCH Campus
615 W. Essex Street, Lebanon, Indiana

The Auxiliary Ambassadors program will feature updates on The Independence Project and the soon-to-be-open Recovery Home. Tours of the Home will be available after lunch. All are welcome!

For more information or reservations, contact Susan Bennett at susanb@iumchf.org.

Graduating to a Bright Future



When Bella and Gary walked into the James E. Davis School graduation ceremony to the traditional sounds of “Pomp and Circumstance,” they weren’t just taking steps toward the stage to receive

their high school diplomas—they were taking huge strides toward a more successful future. The implications of their graduation were monumental as these two students achieved something they truly never thought possible.

“This is a new chapter for many of us in this room,” Principal Tegan Gavin told the graduation audience, “and I am privileged to be part of your stories, even if only for a moment.”

Gary openly shared his story first, recounting his journey, the mistakes he made, and the people who were always there for him. Gary detailed how his life went downhill after he chose to leave the Home before graduating when he turned 18 years old; at one point he was homeless. The

Children’s Home accepted him back as a resident in our Independence Project for young adults while he completed academic requirements for his senior year. “Sometimes the place you’re trying to escape is the exact place you still need to grow. I had to learn that the hard way. But even when I gave up on myself, there were people who didn’t give up on me. They believed I could graduate long before I believed it myself.”

Then it was Bella’s turn. Addressing the audience with great emotion, she talked about resilience. “When I got here, I only had the clothes and shoes I was wearing, and I was so scared. But my family teachers were always there, letting me know I am able to do things especially with God,” she said. “Graduation was something I didn’t think I’d reach, but here I am.”

The students explored a National Parks theme during the fall 2025 semester, and Principal Gavin closed the ceremony with these remarks. “The wilderness has taught you that the unknown is not something to fear—it is something to explore. That every great adventure begins with courage. That the world is wide, and you are capable of more than you imagine.”

New James E. Davis School Principal



When Tegan Gavin stepped into the role of the James E. Davis School (JEDS) principal at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year, she was more than ready. Her six years at IUMCH—first as an assistant family teacher, a lead family teacher, an aftercare specialist and then three years teaching English at JEDS—prepared her very well for her new leadership role.

“As a principal, I love interacting with the students, getting to know them and working with them to make plans for their own future,” Gavin shares. “This year, I have implemented a motto for the school, ‘In the best interest of the children.’ It is my hope that every day, in every circumstance, we all remember why we are here, why we chose education, and the difference we are making. Even if it is just one student, we are making an impactful difference.”

The stories you read about our youth are real. We change names, images, and identifying details to protect their privacy. Occasionally, we use AI to help us share our stories better.



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