

SUSTAINING HOOSIER COMMUNITIES



ANNUAL REPORT 2018–2019
ORANGE COUNTY, INDIANA

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SUSTAINING HOOSIER COMMUNITIES

Sustaining Hoosier Communities (SHC) partners local community leaders with Indiana University students, faculty, and staff, focusing their collective effort on community-identified projects for over a year. These transformative partnerships improve community quality of life — from health and wellness to arts and culture.

SHC communities nurture a diversity of individuals and perspectives and attend to holistic community well-being. Marshalled around a common cause, effective SHC community leaders include—but are not limited to—passionate residents, experienced professionals, and elected officials.

Sustaining Hoosier Communities represents just one of many types of community engagement initiatives Indiana University is undertaking through the Center for Rural Engagement to improve the well-being of Indiana and its residents. To learn more, visit rural.indiana.edu and shc.indiana.edu.

Meet the Team



Jane Rogan

Director of Sustaining Hoosier Communities



Jacob Simpson

Resilient Hoosier Communities Liaison

THE CENTER FOR RURAL ENGAGEMENT

The **mission** of the Indiana University Center for Rural Engagement is to partner with rural communities to improve Hoosier lives. It does so by providing rural communities and small regional cities with access to IU's cultural assets, research, data, community-engaged teaching, and student service. The **vision** for the center is to serve as a vital national model for connecting the distinctive resources of a state comprehensive flagship research and teaching university to the needs and future of the state's rural residents and communities.

ORANGE COUNTY

Graced with distinct characteristics and assets that provide it opportunities for growth both now and in the future, Orange County is home to 19,605 residents and four incorporated towns—Paoli, Orleans, French Lick, and West Baden. Orange County is driven by a tremendous sense of pride and investment in its development. Although none of the towns and smaller communities in Orange County have a mayor, grassroots cooperative leadership has generated progress on a number of community priorities.

Assets

Orange County's most striking assets include its landscape and historical buildings. With rolling hills and forested green spaces abounding, this region lends itself to tourism and recreation at Hoosier National Forest, Patoka Lake, Pioneer Mother's Memorial Forest, and the Lost River karst system. The West Baden Springs and French Lick Springs hotels serve the tourism industry and offer an avenue to recognize the community's colorful past. The Orange County Court House, constructed in 1850, still operates. The Tomato Products Company, originally built in 1910 and currently being restored as a community space, is another example of community assets that pay homage to the industrial past of Orange County and that prepare and transform it for an exciting future.

Residents place great value in the arts, whether through music festivals, craft shows, or impromptu jam sessions. Paolifest offers a free two-day festival celebrating music, film, and visual arts, and featuring food from local vendors. The Pride of Paoli, Paoli's combined middle and high school marching band, has a fruitful history filled with many successes at state-level competitions. Another impactful arts group, the Black Vulture Project, works to improve access to arts for residents of Paoli and the surrounding Orange County area.

Nonprofit agencies play a vital role in the fabric of the community. HandUp OC works to improve the lives of Orange County residents by connecting those in need to essential services. The Orange County Community Foundation also offers pivotal funding for programs and special projects across the county. The healthcare system is led by several nonprofit organizations and groups including

Southern Indiana Community Health Care and the Orange County Health Coalition.

Recent developments showcase economic and environmental initiatives from individuals and citizen groups. The Lost River Market and Deli, established in 2007, promotes local food systems and healthy eating. Local high school programs and youth organizations, such as the Paoli High School Agriculture Department partnership and 4-H, offer trade school competencies and life skills for local youth. Further interest in food systems has been made evident through the Living Roots Farm and Sustainable Living Center outside French Lick and the Orange County Community Garden in Paoli. The Orange County Recycling Co-Op encourages more sustainable, waste preventative practices for residents.

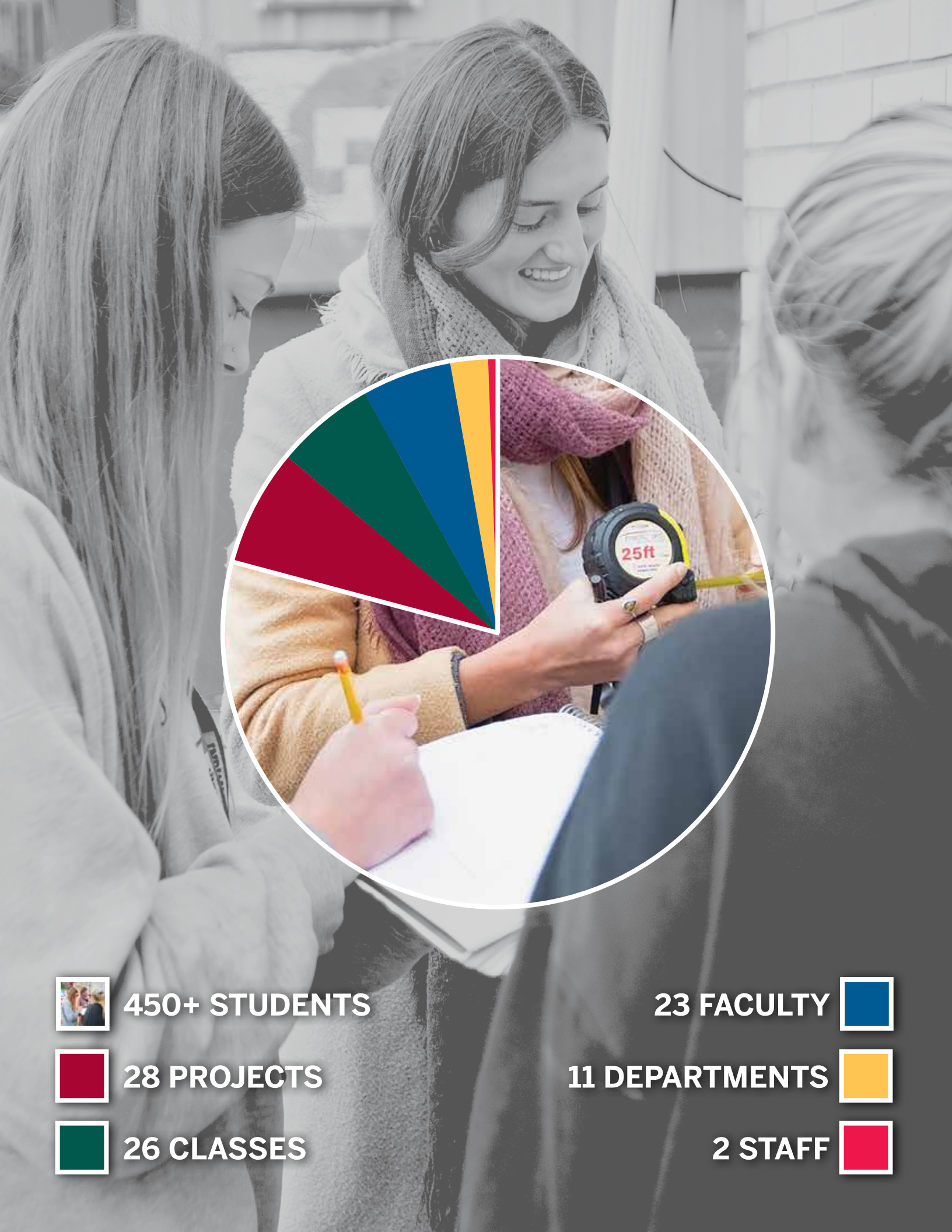
Across the county, efforts are underway that demonstrate motivation and commitment to economic growth and a desire to cultivate local leaders. The Orange County Economic Development Partnership is a nonprofit organization that strives to improve business opportunities in the county through expansion of new business and industry.

Sustaining Hoosier Communities

In an effort to build on Orange County's assets, community leaders applied and were selected to be the Sustaining Hoosier Communities focus county for the 2018–2019 academic year. In total, around 450 students worked on 28 community-identified projects, in collaboration with 23 faculty from 11 departments. These efforts led to strong relationships between faculty, staff, and community partners, who will continue to collaborate in the future.



West Baden Springs Hotel, a restored, historic property of the French Lick Resort, draws visitors from around the world. Assets like the resort were key considerations in the Media School's tourism planning for the 2024 total solar eclipse.



450+ STUDENTS



28 PROJECTS



26 CLASSES

23 FACULTY



11 DEPARTMENTS



2 STAFF



PROJECT BRIEFS

HEALTHY HOOSIER COMMUNITIES

Orange County health and wellness became an important focus for Sustaining Hoosier Communities projects. With high levels of obesity, diabetes, smoking, and physical inactivity, there is a strong need to develop and increase accessible health and wellness services, especially for residents facing barriers to care like isolation, immobility, and poverty.

Chronic Illnesses and Maternal Health

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

Southern Indiana Community Health Care joined forces with Dr. Greg Carter and his students in the School of Nursing to conduct home visits for patients with chronic illnesses and home safety concerns, demonstrating that home visits could improve health outcomes and quality of life.

Analyzing Physical Activity Data

Collaborating with Southern Indiana Community Health Care, students in Dr. Jeanne Johnston's public health assessment class analyzed pre- and post-health data from the successful Ways of Wellness program launched ten years ago, which encouraged community members to be physically active.

Analyzing Obstetrics Data

Students in Dr. Syndee Knight's statistics class analyzed obstetrics data collected by Southern Indiana Community Health Care to offer key findings on maternal health risk factors, such as substance use and barriers to care.

Health and Wellness Services

Addressing Clinic IT Needs

Southern Indiana Community Health Care worked with students in the School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering's Serve IT program to assess the clinic's information technology (IT) needs, to automate and streamline processes, and to train staff on new IT tools.

Addressing Clinic Human Resource Needs

Students in Professor Laura Littlepage's class on nonprofit human resource management collaborated with Southern Indiana Community Health Care to review human resources



Home visits by nursing students help rural Hoosiers improve their health

For more than four decades, Southern Indiana Community Health Care (SICHC) has provided high-quality, community-based health care to families in Southern Indiana. SICHC, the Center for Rural Engagement, and the IU School of Nursing teamed up through Sustaining Hoosier Communities to conduct home visits for patients with chronic illnesses.

As part of their clinical experience, students in Dr. Greg Carter's classes helped patients with diabetes test their A1C values, learn how to improve their health, and evaluate the safety of their homes. Dr. Carter's students also assessed the availability of health and social services in Orange County.

The students and SICHC health care providers debriefed each other on their experience with the patients. These conversations lead to discoveries about unknown risk factors that might be impacting patients' health, such as poor diet, low housing quality, and isolation. Together, the students and SICHC health care providers created interventions to better patients' lives.

Watch the students' story: <https://youtu.be/v2m61cKdxKk>

policies, with a particular focus on FMLA, and to recommend policy changes with future clinic staff growth in mind.

Developing a Health Communications Network

The Healing Arts Center of Southern Indiana worked with students in the School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering's Serve IT program to create a website and information hub that helps connect residents and providers of health and wellness services.

Writing Grants for the Orange County Health Coalition

Students in Dr. Jill Nicholson-Crotty's grant writing class collaborated with the Orange County Health Coalition to identify and apply for grants that advance their mission to improve the overall health of Orange County.

RESILIENT HOOSIER COMMUNITIES

Resilient communities successfully respond to social, economic, and environmental changes. Orange County has taken action to foster a sustainable local food system through Orange County HomeGrown and the Lost River Market and Deli, and reduce its impact on the environment with a recycling service offered through the Orange County Recycling Co-Op.

Local Food

Understanding Community Readiness for Agritourism

Orange County is home to a growing local foods system and a thriving tourism industry. Purdue Extension—Orange County partnered with students in Dr. Esi Thompson’s public relations class to conduct surveys and interviews to shed light on farmer and tourist perceptions and interests in agritourism.

Recycling

Addressing Obstacles to Sustainability

The Orange County Recycling Co-Op partnered with entrepreneurship students in the Kelley School of Business to brainstorm strategies for generating revenue, improving workflow efficiency, and increasing community education about recycling.

Creating a Brand

The Orange County Recycling Co-Op also partnered with a graphic design student supervised by Professor Jenny El-Shamy to create a new brand with the goal of more effectively engaging community members in the recycling program.

Developing a Website

With a Facebook page already developed, the Orange County Recycling Co-Op worked with students in the School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering’s Serve IT program to create a website with the goal of more effectively engaging community members.

Renewable Energy

Establishing a Solar Power Cooperative

In partnership with Samuel Kinsey, an Orange County resident, graduate accounting students in the Kelley School of Business, supervised by Dr. Bree Josefy, developed a business plan to establish a solar power cooperative to help provide access to affordable solar power for homes and businesses in Orange County.

IU Kelley School of Business students talk solar power, renewable energy in Orange County

Four representatives from Dr. Bree Josefy’s graduate field consulting class stood before an audience of Orange County residents to present their findings for the Orange County solar cooperative project on December 5, 2018 at the Paoli Public Library. The discussion stressed the rewards of investing in solar energy by joining a local solar co-op.

From the Lost River Market and Deli in Paoli to a community recycling center, cooperatives (co-ops) in Orange County have a promising track record. And the success of these recent co-ops has indicated that the county could stand to benefit from a solar co-op.

A member of the four-student team, Josh Palan, said the goal in developing the co-op is to better inform residents, businesses, and government entities alike about affordable energy-saving strategies like solar panel group-purchasing arrangements (GPAs) and community solar arrays, depending on their needs.

According to Nick Fabianski, who researched the average benefits for households, installing just twelve solar panels atop your home could cut down energy bills by 30%. What’s more, each participating household in this initiative could expect to see their home value increase around \$9,000 and significantly cut down their carbon footprint.

“When everyone else sees these panels on someone’s home or business, they get curious about the benefits,” said Palan. “All of that information can generate more interest and competition in a fun way.”

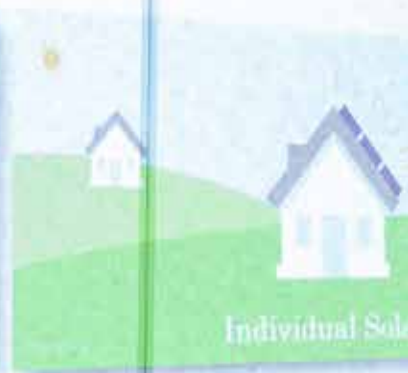
Read more: <https://rural.indiana.edu/news/2019-OC-solar-power.html>

Key initiatives of solar co-op

Community Solar



Individual Solar



INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON

Kelley School of Business students examined solar power options for Orange County residents—with a goal to reduce energy bills and carbon footprint—and presented their findings to the community.

Campuswide initiative takes IU public relations students to Orange County

On a Friday morning during the fall semester of her senior year, Payton Syberg interviewed people in a grocery store 45 miles away from Bloomington in Paoli, Indiana.

The media advertising student traveled to the Orange County town to meet with members and nonmembers of the Lost River Market and Deli. Her goal: to create a public relations strategy for the community-owned shop.

The Lost River Market and Deli

If the Lost River Market and Deli wants to start making a profit, Syberg said, success starts by reaching people who might not even know it exists.

“Realistically, we need more people to be aware of its existence,” Syberg said.

Students identified the strengths of Lost River Market and Deli and brainstormed solutions to some of its problems, including competing with budget grocery stores like Walmart. The project produced a campaign book filled with the students’ research and an implementation plan for the organization.

Syberg looks forward to seeing a real-world difference from her work. “I’m really excited.”

Read Laurel Demokovich’s full story about this collaboration: <http://go.iu.edu/2aNZ>



“This was way beyond any expectation that I had. All of them. This was amazing.”

- Debbie Turner, Lost River Market and Deli

THRIVING HOOSIER COMMUNITIES

Promoting leadership, business, and capacity development is essential to building a healthy community and economy for the next generation of Orange County. The growing tourism industry, as well as the strong local food system, present opportunities for entrepreneurship and sustainable economic impact.

Leadership

Revisiting Orange County's History

Engaging Orange County's diverse cultural history, students in Dr. Lisa-Marie Napoli's leadership class studied interviews of Paoli residents from the 1980s to understand how the community and leadership of Orange County has changed over time in order to plan for the future.

Featuring Orange County's Stories

Students in Professor Chuck Carney's public relations writing class, with the help of Orange County resident Roger Moon, crafted short-length features of untold stories in Orange County, showcasing the community's unique character and promising future.

Business Support

Strategizing for Customer Development

Lost River Market and Deli partnered with Dr. Minjeong Kang's public relations campaigns class to develop outreach strategies aimed at expanding the customer and membership base of the co-op, helping it remain a sustainable source of local food for future generations.

Forming a Business Plan

Sherry Schmidt of Orange County worked with students in Professor Steven Kreft's sustainable enterprise class from the Kelley School of Business to identify economic benchmarks for bed and breakfasts, with the goal of renovating a historic home and opening a bed and breakfast in Paoli.

Tourism

Planning for Solar Eclipse 2024

To prepare communities in Orange County for the 2024 solar eclipse, Visit French Lick West Baden collaborated with Professor Elaine Monaghan's students to create



public relations materials and produce a feature story with information about local tourism opportunities.

Preparing for the Dark Sky Designation

To increase the number of visitors and their enjoyment of the forest, Hoosier National Forest is pursuing an international Dark Sky designation with the help of Professor Bryce Himebaugh, whose students designed the light sensors needed to demonstrate Dark Sky eligible areas.

Capacity Building

Creating a Brand

HandUp OC partnered with a graphic design student supervised by Professor Jenny El-Shamy to create a new brand for the nonprofit to more effectively engage community members in their work.

Planning for Future Operations

Dr. Trent Engbers' students from the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs will help HandUp OC design surveys, develop grants, and craft a plan to acquire a building to house their operations.



HOOSIER QUALITY OF PLACE

Vibrant communities offer opportunities for residents to connect with arts and culture. Participation in arts, music, dance, and humanities develops a sense of pride and cultivates a community culture. A community's quality of place is reflected in its communal assets, built environment, including housing, green spaces, and parks. Biking and walking trails provide opportunities for physical activity and safer connectivity across the county for residents and tourists alike.

Arts

Designing an Artist Residency

The Black Vulture Project collaborated with Professor Jei Kim's students in the School of Art, Architecture + Design to develop interior and exterior designs for an art shop, studio, gallery, and retail space while striving to incorporate elements of the local community into their designs.

Developing an Arts Communications Network

With many small local groups working to build a better arts environment, the Black Vulture Project partnered with students in the School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering's Serve IT program to create connections and improve communications within the community through a comprehensive web-based information hub.

Housing

Understanding Community Perceptions about Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity has a history of helping families find affordable housing in Orange County. To build on this past success, students in Dr. Esi Thompson's public relations research class conducted a survey and series of

interviews to better understand how to reach qualified applicants and engage volunteers and donors.

Designing Modest a Home

Tim Schmidt of Orange County collaborated with Professor Jon Racek and his students in the School of Art, Architecture + Design to develop low-cost, innovative, and sustainable architectural designs for a modest home that can serve as workforce and aging-in-place housing.

Public Infrastructure

Designing Accessible Playgrounds

With a need for an inclusive recreational space that fosters community connection while providing an attraction for visitors, HandUp OC partnered with Professor Jon Racek and his comprehensive design students to develop plans for an accessible playground at Jaycee Park in Paoli.

Understanding Community Readiness for Complete Streets

The Orange County Economic Development Partnership worked with Dr. Minjeong Kang's public relations students to understand Orange County residents' perceptions of public infrastructure, such as sidewalks, trails, and roads.

Recreation

Programming for a Community Garden

The Orange County Community Garden has the potential to be an active site for youth recreation and education. Students studying youth development with Dr. Deb Getz created youth programming plans for the community garden to implement.

Relocating the 4-H Fairgrounds

The 4-H Fairgrounds are an important community gathering space, but its current location has some accessibility barriers. Economic geography students supervised by Dr. Dan Knudsen conducted a location analysis using Census data and Google Maps to inform the selection of a relocation site.

Our Continued Partnership

Through the course of the academic year, IU faculty and their students have engaged with Orange County residents and community leaders, and together they have worked on a series of community-identified projects intended to improve the lives of Orange County residents. Through research, inquiry, community participation, and direct service, students had an opportunity to realize their coursework in a community setting, and through hands-on experience in Orange County they have added countless skills to their resumes. Through their work on community projects, students have delivered tangible plans, data, and strategies to their community partners and provided a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Orange County.

Sustaining Hoosier Communities is designed to bring the resources of a large research university off campus and into a community seeking creative and positive approaches to ensure its sustainable future. The initiative offers students and faculty an intense and focused investigation of community-identified concerns over the course of one academic year. This timeframe allows for significant project work and community engagement.

While the concentrated attention of classes is focused in a single academic year, the partnership forged with the community starts nine months before the first class begins and continues after students complete their final projects. Through the IU Center for Rural Engagement, Sustaining Hoosier Communities' parent organization, we are pleased to be able to continue our work with Orange County.

Sustaining Hoosier Communities relies on engaged community partners to provide a comprehensive overview of the community's rich and diverse assets, and to generate an extensive list of community projects which seek to develop those assets for sustained future success. Towards the end of the academic year, community partners reconvened to reassess the year's work and prioritized areas they deemed most important for continued engagement and support. Using a Strategic Doing process to spark lively conversations with the community committee and project leads, we identified continuation projects together. Building on student work completed in classes, and matching community assets and needs to university expertise, we will focus on four distinct areas for future partnership between Orange County and the IU Center for Rural Engagement.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE GOALS

Health and Wellness

IU School of Nursing students saw their Southern Indiana Community Health Care patients make progress toward their health goals through treatment protocols and monitoring during consistent home visits. Rural community members may face a greater sense of isolation than other populations. Chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and hypertension, may make maintaining typical levels of participation in daily routines more difficult which can exacerbate feelings of isolation. Home visits not only allow patients with chronic illnesses to be better monitored, it also grants them greater social interaction.

The IU School of Nursing will continue to place nursing students in clinical rotations in Orange County to conduct home visits with patients with chronic illnesses. Informed by their visits this year, the School of Nursing will partner with the IU School of Social Work which will also support home visits with patients.

Local Food

Through engagements with Lost River Market and Deli, students discovered the rich agricultural traditions and assets of the region, which includes a plethora of local farms across the county. Unfortunately common across rural parts of the United States, rural residents often lack easy access to locally grown, fresh and healthy food. Orange County HomeGrown, a non-profit community service organization, was created to tackle this issue. True to its mission to promote “small-town neighborly values... and the healthy family farms that make Orange County an attractive place to live, work, play,” they have built robust farmers markets in Orleans and French Lick, and continue to encourage local growers to sell produce at Lost River Market and Deli.

Building on ongoing food systems research and community networks across Southwest Central Indiana, IU will partner with Lost River Market and Deli to continue and expand their vital work in developing a vigorous, vibrant and sustainable food system bringing healthy local food to plates across the county and the region.

Arts, Culture, and Sense of Place

A vibrant arts scene is central to thriving communities and often adds intangible character and a unique sense of place to communities. Orange County has a storied history of traditional arts and music, with Lotus Dickey as its most famous folk musician. Students experienced newer arts endeavors in Orange County through their work with the Black Vulture Project, Paolifest and the Tomato Products Company, and building a community arts network to capture the county’s vast array of artistic effort.

Capitalizing on Indiana University’s strength in the arts and humanities and the supportive projects underway in the Indiana Uplands region to bolster community art and quality of place, IU will partner with the Black Vulture Project on their efforts to bring arts, film, music and movement to children across Orange County. Additionally, IU will conduct detailed quality of place assessments to document public spaces, their use, and opportunities for blending arts and the built environment.

Housing

Orange County faces some very specific housing challenges which are shared across rural communities in the United States. The cost of new home building has outpaced the market value of homes in the region, effectively stalling new home construction. Orange County homes are older than the national average and, while also less expensive than the Indiana average, investing in a home is unaffordable for most Orange County residents. Mortgages are typically granted to households making about 30% more than the county’s median household income.

In response to the need for modest, efficient new homes, students were challenged to design homes to meet the needs of the community. IU will further this partnership and the community’s pursuit to build a pilot modest home in Paoli based on these student designs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The success of Sustaining Hoosier Communities is derived from the passion and hard work of many community partners. The community partners from Orange County listed below were especially helpful and impactful throughout the collaboration.

Community Partners

Abby Heidenreich, Purdue Extension
Andrea Crain, Hoosier National Forest
Andy Gerber, Black Vulture Project
Christi Morgan, Orange County Habitat for Humanity
Curtis Thill, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Dave Grimes, Paoli Parks Department
Debbie Turner, Lost River Market and Deli
Delilah McAdams, Orange County Recycling Co-Op
Dessica Albertson, HandUp OC
Donna Charles, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Doris Weaver, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Ella Hayslett, HandUp OC
Emily Loveland, Healing Arts Center of Southern Indiana
Imojean Dedrick, Orange County Community Foundation
John Maier, Orange County Recycling Co-Op
Kara Schmidt, Healing Arts Center of Southern Indiana
Katarina Koch, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Kristal Painter, Visit French Lick West Baden
Louise O'Connell, Orange County Habitat for Humanity
Martha Nice, Orange County Planning Commission
Misty Weisensteiner, Orange County Economic Development Partnership and the Indiana Office of Tourism Development
Nancy Radcliff, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Nathan Pate, Orange County Recycling Co-Op
Phil Minerger, Habitat for Humanity
Ramona Osborne, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Roger Moon, Resident of Orange County
Rossina Sandoval, Orange County Health Coalition
Samuel Kinsey, Resident of Orange County
Shelby Brown, Orange County Economic Development Partnership
Sherry Schmidt, Black Vulture Project
Stori Sullivan, HandUp OC
Tanya Hall, Purdue Extension
Tim Schmidt, Black Vulture Project
Wally Shellenberger, Orange County Recycling Co-Op
Whitney Sewell, Lost River Market and Deli
Yolanda Yoder, Southern Indiana Community Health Care
Zachary Brown, Orange County Economic Development Partnership

Faculty

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Deb Getz, School of Public Health
Elaine Monaghan, Media School
Esi Thompson, Media School
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Jeanne Johnston, School of Public Health
Jei Kim, Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture, + Design
Jenny El-Shamy, Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture + Design
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Laura Littlepage, O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs
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