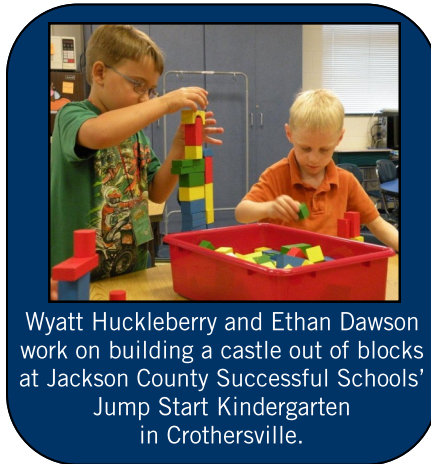


## Jackson County United Way Creating Long Lasting Community Change

### Jackson County Successful Schools: Jump Start Kindergarten

While students work on building a castle out of blocks at Jackson County Successful Schools' Jump Start Kindergarten; Crothersville Elementary Kindergarten teacher, Ann McCollom shares how Jump Start creates a smooth transition to the beginning of the school year. "They learned procedures such as going to the bathroom, story time, working in groups, sharing, and using and taking care of school materials. They learned that there are rules to follow and consequences for when they aren't. As a bonus, they learned colors, how to write their names, and nursery rhymes. It may only be two weeks long; but it is invaluable to those who attend."

Brownstown, Crothersville, and Medora each host a Jump Start Kindergarten program in the summer before school starts. Mary Jane Steinkamp, Brownstown Elementary School Kindergarten teacher, offered this comment about the Jump Start Kindergarten program, "The students who attended Jump Start were more prepared for the start of school than those who did not attend. If Jackson County United Way can secure the funding for a Jump Start program again next year, we would be thrilled."



Wyatt Huckleberry and Ethan Dawson work on building a castle out of blocks at Jackson County Successful Schools' Jump Start Kindergarten in Crothersville.

### Partner Agencies: Girls Inc.

"Growing up in a drug abused home, Girls Inc. taught me how to overcome the pressure of any drug. Before I went to Girls Inc., I did not know what I wanted to do when I grew up. I soon decided that I wanted to be the first person in my family to actually graduate from college and be successful. Through participating at Girls Inc., I learned how to have confidence in myself. Girls Inc. taught me how to love myself for who I am and it helped me become a strong, smart, and bold young lady.

Girls Inc. shows me that I am capable of doing much more with myself than I ever thought."

-Jodeci Gonzales,



Alysha Otte (\$2,500) and Jodeci Gonzalez (\$15,000) accept National Girls Inc. Scholarships which will continue to help them become strong, smart, and bold.

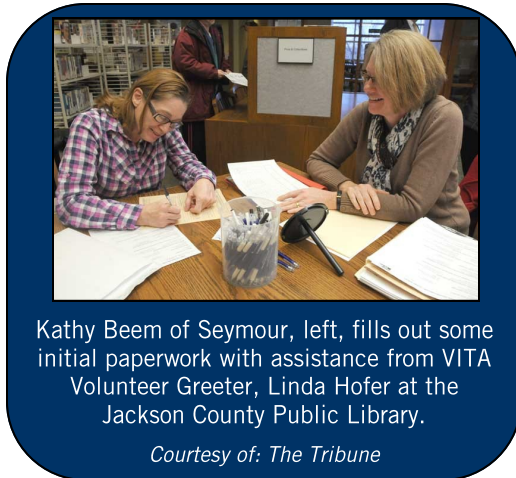
### Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Families with an income below \$49,000 who need assistance filing their tax returns can find help through Jackson County United Way's volunteer-driven Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. This year 25 volunteers served over 1,000 hours to help families in need.

It is not difficult to promote the VITA services; "satisfied customers" like Kathy Beem tell family and friends about the great help they receive. Kathy said this about her VITA experience: "Well, the reason I came to your tax service was because I have always gone someplace to do my taxes. I found out about this program last year, and it was offered for free! I appreciate the fact that you're available."

Volunteers filed 218 returns and helped Jackson County families find \$268,013 in Federal refunds and \$87,886 in Earned Income Credits.

"Jackson County United Way is a vehicle that allows me to give back to my community. Programs like VITA are important in not only helping those in need by bringing extra dollars to the pockets of the individuals we serve, but also by bringing extra dollars to Jackson County as a whole," commented Blake Fish, VITA volunteer.



Kathy Beem of Seymour, left, fills out some initial paperwork with assistance from VITA Volunteer Greeter, Linda Hofer at the Jackson County Public Library.

Courtesy of: The Tribune

### Stuff The Bus: School Supply Drive

Amber Hatfield-Owens, Cummins employee, United Way donor and community volunteer, and her daughter, Ella collect school supplies at Jackson County United Way's Second Annual Stuff the Bus School Supply Drive. Amber recognizes the value of providing school supplies to local students in order for them to succeed in the classroom and later excel in the workplace. Stuff the Bus also provided an opportunity to instill the value of volunteering in her daughter. Volunteers are an essential to this program. Over 110 volunteers served 548 hours to ensure students heading back to school had the supplies they needed to be successful. The 2010 Stuff the Bus support was amazing; collecting over 10,000 items worth over \$11,000.



Amber Hatfield-Owens and daughter, Ella, collect school supplies during Stuff the Bus.



## Jackson County AmeriCorps Building a Stronger Community

Jackson County United Way just completed the first program year of Jackson County AmeriCorps. Jackson County AmeriCorps is funded by a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service through the Indiana Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

Twenty-six AmeriCorps Members serve at 10 host site organizations providing direct service to clients as well as volunteer coordination & recruitment.

AmeriCorps Members allow local host sites to build outreach capacity and provide additional programming in Jackson County United Way focus areas of Education, Health, & Financial Stability.

AmeriCorps Members receive a living allowance, earn an educational award, participate in professional development and community service days. AmeriCorps Members must 18 years or older, be a U.S. Citizen, and have a high school diploma or G.E.D.

### Education

#### Read Jackson County: Reading Forward

Childhood literacy is getting a boost in Jackson County due to Read Jackson County AmeriCorps Member's expanded programming. The Reading Forward program focuses on third grade students who are struggling with reading and comprehension. Becky Bujwid, AmeriCorps Member, has recruited, trained, and coordinated 29 volunteers who served over 860 hours.

Tara Johnson, a volunteer tutor, shared her experience, "What I found in my work with the children is that they are all so very capable, the aptitude is 100% there. One of my learners wrestled with comprehension. I found using a simple book square, helped him to zero in on the main idea while supporting parts of the story increased his understanding. It also has increased his joy in reading."

### Health

#### Girls Inc.: Health & Fitness Program

Girls Inc. has implemented a new program focusing on Health, Fitness, and Nutrition. Girls' Inc AmeriCorps Member, Lauren Fife offered Big Sister Day at the Seymour Club. Female athletes from various Seymour High School sport teams (basketball, swimming, soccer, etc.) volunteered to come after school to spend some quality time with the Girls Inc. members. The team captain explained their sport and why it would be fun for the girls to try. The athletes also told the girls why they are involved in their sport and how it keeps them fit and healthy. The student athletes and Girls Inc. girls then participated in a related fitness activity. Girls Inc. girls then had the opportunity to ask questions. Lauren shared how one day a little girl said, "Thanks for inspiring us!" with a big grin. Lauren leaned over to the athletes and said, "she means inspire." The program was a great way to connect the girls with healthy high school female role models and to connect the healthy high school female role models with volunteering.

### Financial Stability

#### Anchor House: Financial Stability Program

Anchor House has been able to provide a new Financial Stability program for clients due to AmeriCorps Members,

Amy Lynch and Glenda Johnson. Amy and Glenda developed a program that is suitable for Anchor House's clients to start talking about money including: budgeting, spending, and saving. Amy shared this about the new program, "Volunteers helped develop the program.

Professionals in the banking community have been very helpful in developing the program, as well as, helping me to recruit more volunteers to continue the program once the AmeriCorps service has ended." Volunteers are the most important piece of the program, without volunteers the program couldn't exist. As a Financial Stability Mentor, volunteers have the opportunity to walk with clients through important financial decision making. "Seeing clients be successful is a joy," said Glenda.

