



FSSA UPDATE

December 2021 | Volume 10, Issue 4

Natural Born Pilots 2021 cohort takes flight

Watch the Natural Born Pilots' final presentations



Natural Born Pilots, inspired by the Chuck Yeager quote, “There’s no such thing as a natural-born pilot,” is FSSA’s leadership development program designed to strengthen relationships, enhance communication, develop leadership and networking skills, create an internal pipeline of leaders, build morale, and inspire our agency’s top talent. Each year, this program brings together a handful of our FSSA colleagues to learn from each other and other inspiring Indiana leaders.

This year’s class graduated on Dec. 10, 2021, by delivering short, idea-focused, thought-provoking talks about various topics in the Indiana Government Center South Auditorium. If you missed the presentations, they’re available to [watch on the FSSA YouTube channel](#).

Congratulations to the newest FSSA Natural Born Pilots

Lindsay Baywol,
Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning
Andrew Bean,
Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning
Merih Bennett,
Division of Technology and Strategy
Amy DeYoung,
Division of Technology and Strategy
Rosita Floyd,
Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning
Shawna Frazier,
Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning
Justin Goree, Office of General Counsel
Jessica Harlan-York, Division of
Disability & Rehabilitative Services

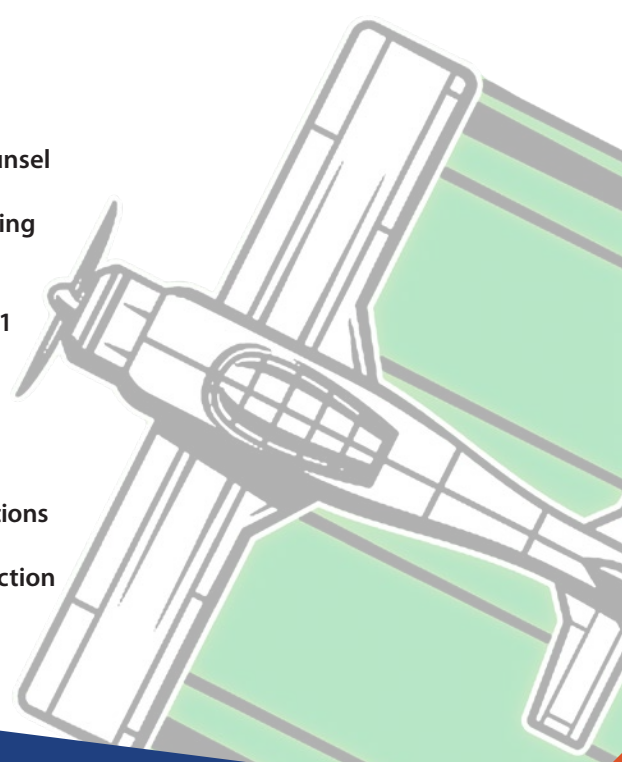
Michelle Inabnitt,
Division of Family Resources
Jessica Keyes, Office of General Counsel
Elizabeth Killian,
Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning
Shannon LeMaster,
Division of Family Resources
Cathleen Nine-Altevogt, Indiana 211
Michelle Schaefer,
Division of Disability and
Rehabilitative Services
Nicole Scott,
Division of Family Resources
Caleb Slocum, Physical Plant Operations
Tony Toomer,
Division of Mental Health & Addiction
Elizabeth Wahl,
Pregnancy Promise Program

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SECC goals met... Dan eats a bug!

Thank you to everyone that donated this year through the State Employees' Community Campaign. Your generosity contributed to another successful campaign and allowed FSSA to reach its fundraising goals!

FSSA staff raised over \$178,000 with a 40% staff participation. By reaching these milestones, staff were rewarded with jeans for the rest of the year (as long as it's appropriate according to our ["dress for the day" policy](#)) and Secretary Dan Rusyniak kept his promise and ate a bug. A video recording of him [eating crickets](#) is available on our YouTube channel.



Area	Total 2021	# Donors
Administration	\$32,179.16	142
Disability Determination Bureau	\$5,167.50	71
Indiana 211	\$364.00	3
Division of Mental Health and Addiction	\$4,213.72	33
Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning	\$3,196.00	31
Evansville Psychiatric Children's Center	\$675.87	17
Evansville State Hospital	\$9,373.67	94
Madison State Hospital	\$12,744.74	62
Logansport State Hospital	\$12,963.58	97
Richmond State Hospital	\$3,953.47	60
NDI	\$3,394.00	76
Division of Disability & Rehabilitation Services	\$18,737.50	163
Division of Family Resources	\$57,749.83	643
Division of Aging	\$2,443.00	18
Medicaid Policy & Planning	\$11,284.74	97
Total	\$178,440.78	1607
Goal	\$175,000.00	
Need to goal	\$(3,440.78)	

Webinar overviews managed long-term services and supports

Making it possible for Hoosiers to age at home



One of FSSA's biggest projects and largest priorities currently is our [long-term services and supports reform initiative](#). This project has the overarching goal of making it possible for more Hoosiers to age at home and in their communities. One of the ways we plan to accomplish this is by implementing managed LTSS to improve service coordination to make it easier for older Hoosiers on Medicaid to navigate long-term services.

We encourage staff to stay up to date on this initiative. One way you can do that is by watching [this recording of "MLTSS 101,"](#) a webinar to provide an overview of managed long-term services and supports. The webinar was led by our partners at [ADvancing States](#), a national consultancy with extensive expertise in MLTSS programs. The presentation covers both the national perspective along with key concepts for long-term services and supports providers.

If you have any questions about this project, please email them to AskTheSecretary@fssa.in.gov.

FSSA attorney releases first novel

“In the Belly of the Bell-Shaped Curve” was released on Oct. 30

Boredom, exasperation, annoyance and mediocrity.

These are definitely not words to live by, but attorney Michael Carter, who serves FSSA as the Division of Family Resources’ director of contract compliance, put them together along with an idea. The result was his first published novel, “In the Belly of the Bell-Shaped Curve,” which was released on Oct. 30, 2021.

And the book is anything but mediocre. “In the Belly of the Bell-Shaped Curve” has a glowing take from Kirkus Reviews, one of the gold standards in publishing. Kirkus said Michael’s creation was “an often funny satire of the excesses of the free-market ethos.”

“In the Belly of the Bell-Shaped Curve” was also selected for inclusion in the iUniverse Rising Star program, which recognizes excellence in writing and overall potential. This is quite a feat for a first-time author who had always wanted to write a book.

Michael is a graduate of Indiana University, earning a bachelor’s in English and Doctor of Jurisprudence from the McKinney School of Law. Before working for FSSA, Michael also practiced law for years as a trial lawyer and as a deputy attorney general.

He completed his manuscript and submitted it to his publisher prior to the pandemic but said the back-and-forth editing process continued well into the pandemic.

“The novel is a humorous satire on our society, which is at times surreal and absurd, but is plausible within the mind and experiences of the lead character, Turk,” Michael said. “At other times, it is deeply serious.”

As for the title, Michael explained it this way.

“One of the themes of the book is the frustration the lead character feels being stuck in the middle of the bell-shaped curve, the belly, and his apparent averageness compared to

the ideal on social media, TV, movies, magazines, and other media, to which he cannot measure up.”

Michael’s novel is available on [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble online](#) and in their bookstores and his publisher’s online bookstore, [iUniverse](#), and it’s currently available in a variety of formats.

“Hard copy, paperback, e-book (Kindle) and audiobook,” Michael said. “Listening to the audio is fun for me because the actor emphasized most of the words and phrases in the same way that I heard (?) them in my head.”

Recently, Michael was tabbed as a feature author for the Indianapolis Public Library’s Indy Author Fair and at the Miami Book Fair in Miami back in November.

Michael clearly enjoyed writing his first novel, but when asked what was more fun, writing or practicing law, Michael stated both.

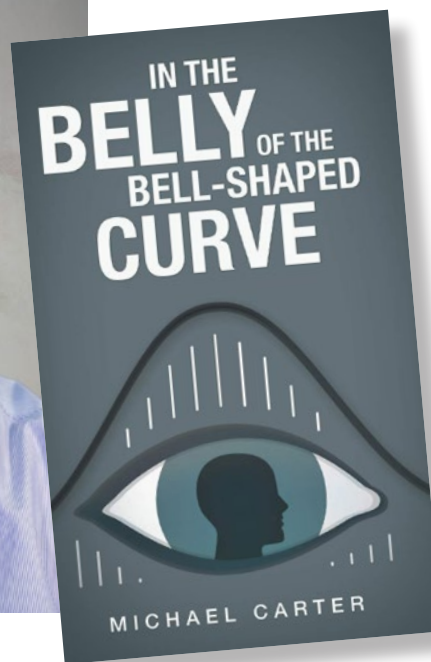
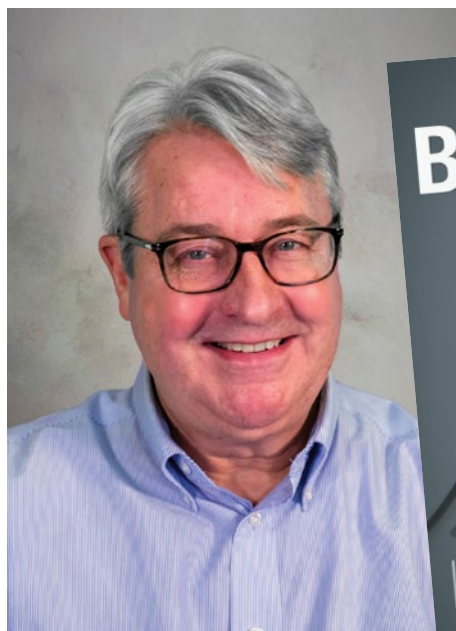
“Creative writing and fiction are more fun, but I also love my present job (with DFR). My routine was to get up one hour early each

day and write before I went to work. I would be too tired to try and write in the evening.

“I spent years as a trial lawyer and loved the thrill of doing jury trials, despite the pressure to win,” Michael added. “There is nothing like the feeling you have when you have finished closing arguments and the judge has read the instructions to the jurors and sent them to the jury room for deliberations. You have put all your energy and your passion into this case, worked countless hours, survived on little sleep, and are still experiencing an adrenalin rush and all you can do now is wait for the verdict.”

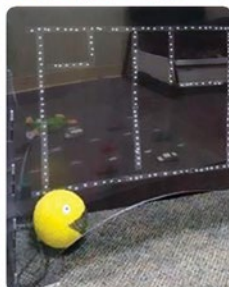
Sounds like the basis for a future novel.

You can find out more information on Michael and his book at his website, [michaellcarter.com](#).

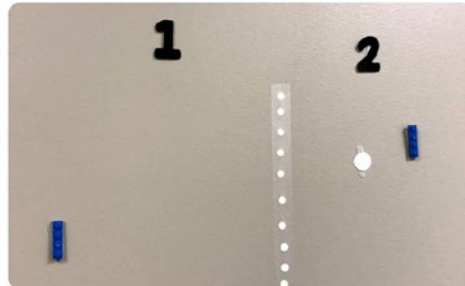
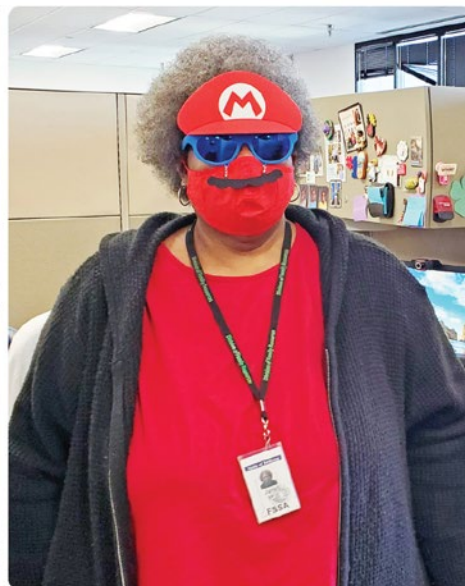
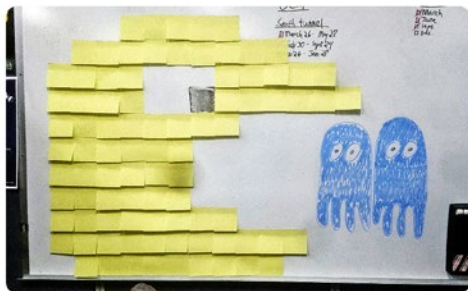


SUPER SECC

The week of Sept. 27 to Oct. 1 had a video game theme for the State Employees' Community Campaign. FSSA staff was able to participate in that day's theme and wear jeans. Monday: Spruce up that workspace with a video game character! Tuesday: Which charities do you support? Wednesday: Present your co-workers with a Level Up Award. Thursday: Donkey Kong Island... wear Hawaiian shirts! Friday: Sports/Pop Culture Day... Wear what's important to you!



SUPER SECC





WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND FSSA!!



The NDI congratulated Cathy Holdt for achieving 50 years of service to our agency and to some of Indiana's neediest citizens being treated in our state psychiatric hospitals. Kudos!



DFR represented FSSA in the SECC basketball tournament at the Governor's Residence.



Congrats to our ALMOST completely dominant Team FSSA kickball team who finished second in the SOI Employees Indiana SECC kickball tourney! Only the mighty State Board of Accounts fared better to take first place.



Thanks to everyone at the MHA of Indiana Mental Health and Addiction Symposium & Heroes for Recovery luncheon who stopped by to take a picture with our traveling "Know the Facts" photo booth.



Richmond State Hospital staff attended the Meridian Health 2021 Speaker Series Event to hear from (and meet!) former NFL quarterback Ryan D. Leaf. Ryan shared his personal and inspirational story about his struggle with addiction and mental illness.

Data and Analytics team's new Hub page

The FSSA Data and Analytics team has a new Hub page to help our FSSA divisions realize the full potential of data and improve program delivery. By compiling, analyzing and presenting FSSA's immense data catalog in a clear and concise manner, the Data and Analytics team seeks to facilitate data-informed strategic decision-making that ultimately improves the health and wellbeing of Hoosiers.

No matter your level of familiarity with using data, the Data and Analytics team's new Hub page will connect you with the agency's vast array of data-driven resources, tools, workshops and trainings opportunities and subject matter experts.

To learn more about the Data and Analytics team and how they might be able to assist you, check out [their Hub page](#).



“COVID-19 Corner” recording for state psychiatric hospital staff now available

COVID-19 update virtual town hall

On Dec. 1, 2021, FSSA Secretary Dr. Dan Rusyniak and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Maria Finnell hosted a virtual town hall for the state psychiatric hospital network staff. During this virtual event, the doctors addressed concerns, myths and questions about the COVID-19 vaccine. The town hall was recorded and may be viewed on [our YouTube channel](#).



State employees are eligible for a variety of discounts

Did you know that state employees are eligible for a variety of discounts across the state? A list of the all employee discounts can be found by visiting the [State Employee Discounts page](#) or in the [Employee Resources section](#) of The Hub. The discounts range in variety, too, including gym memberships, amusement parks, car rentals/repairs, cell phone service, restaurants and travel to name a few. If you have a question about any of the discounts, please email spdcommunications@spd.IN.gov and they will be able to assist you.



FIVE QUESTIONS



Name: Tyson Runkle

Title: Office of Communications and Media communications manager

Education: Bachelor of science, public relations, Ball State University (CHIRP! CHIRP!)

Career Highlights: Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, Togo, West Africa, 2005–07, Community Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention. Board member YETI Kids, which built and funds an orphanage in Nepal. Raised over \$1.3 million for charity through the State Employees' Community Campaign. Two-time recipient of the State Employees' Community Campaign Director's Award. Crossed the border between Togo and Burkina Faso in a donkey cart and the border guard with the machine gun just laughed and waved us through. Ate a whole pizza once.

1 What attracted you to a career here at FSSA?

In order to maintain a lifestyle I was accustomed to, I needed a job after my Peace Corps service. I came across an opening at the Division of Aging that aligned with my skill set and wish to continue working in a field that helped others.

2 What gives you a sense of accomplishment professionally?

Helping to ensure the messaging from FSSA to our stakeholders and staff is clear and concise by working with the divisions and hospitals to take out the government speak out of communications.

3 What do you want FSSA workers to know about the work you're doing?

The Office of Communications and Media works with all the divisions and hospitals across FSSA on a wide range of stuff and things. But one thing people might not realize is the reach of our listservs. For example, from Jan. 1 2020, to Nov. 30, 2021, a two-year time span, FSSA has sent out 952 announcements to over 15.4 million emails. That's double the state population.

4 What is the best advice you can offer, based on your years of experience?

"Any time you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world and you don't, then you are wasting your time on Earth." —Roberto Clemente

5 What about your background might your co-workers find surprising?

When my friends were starting to have kids, I would organize baby showers for the guys and got pretty good at it. So good in fact, I was interviewed for an [article about man showers](#) by the *Chicago Tribune*.