

FSSA UPDATE

July 2022 | Volume 11, Issue 2

We bid Deputy Secretary Michael Gargano farewell

At the end of May, FSSA Deputy Secretary and Chief of Staff Michael Gargano retired after a career at FSSA that started in 2009. Michael served in various roles, including FSSA secretary from November 2010 to February 2013. Replacing Michael is Kim Opsahl, who previously served as director of the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement, Michael!



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Office of Healthy Opportunities updates and announcements

The Office of Healthy Opportunities was created in 2018 to work with communities served by FSSA to:

1. Identify individuals' social risk factors that affect their health and wellbeing.
2. Address those risk factors through programs, services and policy design.

Our work is being implemented by three advisory workgroups and five teams. These groups consist of FSSA staff from various divisions and levels of the agency who have dedicated some of their time to develop and guide our programming.

OHO's goals fall within four areas:

- ▶ **Community engagement: Reimagine existing programs and policy with FSSA constituents**
- ▶ **Program and policy design: Refine programs to improve participation and better address barriers and social risk factors affecting constituents**
- ▶ **Workforce development: Build a representative workforce knowledgeable about social risk factors**
- ▶ **Accountability and evidence: Implement high-quality accountability mechanisms for equity guided by research and evidence**

Thanks to their effort, we are excited to share the following updates.

Workforce development

FSSA's first Employee Resource Group: No Barriers. ERGs are professional development and networking groups. Membership is open for all FSSA staff who support the mission of a certain group.

The purpose of No Barriers is to provide a safe space and supportive atmosphere for differently abled individuals and their allies; to share experiences and information to reduce internalized ableism; and to provide education to FSSA employees to advocate for themselves and for agency constituents with disabilities. Please check The Hub for information about how to start your own ERG within the agency!

Accountability and evidence

Demographic standards. OHO's Accountability Team is leading an agency-wide effort to improve the consistency, quality and clarity of demographic data and to achieve a better understanding of how the agency is serving diverse populations across our programs and systems.

If you have experience working directly with constituents to collect their information for programs or eligibility, we would welcome your feedback to inform FSSA's data systems! Please contact healthyopportunities@fssa.in.gov if you would like to learn more or how to support this endeavor.

Staff updates

We are excited to welcome Mandy Bagwell, JD, as our agency's inaugural ADA coordinator. She is charged with:

- ▶ **Managing staff and constituent complaints and concerns**
- ▶ **Improving accessibility of our communications and our physical and virtual spaces**
- ▶ **Broadening agency knowledge on disability-related needs and accessibility**
- ▶ **Improving compliance across our internal operations in FSSA**
- ▶ **Supporting ADA compliance, knowledge and disability-related experiences within division-level programming**

Learn more about her in this issue's *Five Questions!* Feel free to contact her with any concerns at ADA@fssa.in.gov.

You can stay in touch with OHO and our projects by reaching out to healthyopportunities@fssa.in.gov for more information or by requesting access to our FSSA [Office of Healthy Opportunities SharePoint page](#).

Engaging a data-savvy workforce

FSSA's Data and Analytics team partners with Purdue to build the next generation of data innovators

Over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented FSSA and each of its care divisions with unprecedented challenges. Never in the agency's history has the timely sharing and accurate analysis of data among diverse stakeholder groups been more critical for supporting the health and wellbeing of Hoosiers. In this data-dependent environment, it is important for FSSA to recruit, retain and train up staff with the skills needed to use data to its fullest potential.

Engaging this data-savvy workforce, however, is a challenge. Data scientists and visualization experts often bring great technical expertise to the agency but lack the combination of technical skill and subject matter expertise to understand FSSA's myriad services and programs. Other state agencies and local health care organizations are also in desperate need of data talent, making the market for these workers competitive and costly.

To address this talent shortage, the Data and Analytics team engaged the Data Mine, a cross-disciplinary community of over 1,100 students studying data science at Purdue University. Throughout the course of the spring semester, the Data Mine provided 17 students working from campus approximately 10 hours per week. Students worked directly with program and divisional leads, received hands-on experience with the agency's technology suite and analyzed various FSSA datasets. The students were divided among three work groups: Indiana 211, the Indiana Pregnancy Promise Program and the Department of Corrections-Medicaid Taskforce.

Work culminated in a capstone event in April, where students presented dashboards and discussed their findings.

The presentations and dashboards can be found here:

- ▶ [Indiana 211](#)
- ▶ [Indiana Pregnancy Promise Program](#)
- ▶ [DOC-Medicaid Taskforce](#)

Cristian Guandique, deputy director for data science and engineering, spearheaded the program and helped mentor the students throughout the semester. "The students began the semester with a very limited understanding of FSSA, our data and our technology," said Guandique.

"But they were drawn to the agency's mission of serving Hoosiers and as they learned more about our work, they quickly connected with our people and within a few short weeks, they were jumping into projects and bringing fresh ideas and perspectives to our data and dashboards."

While the work for this semester has concluded, Guandique sees this as just the beginning of the agency's relationship with the Data Mine and other data science programs around the state. "This semester helped us identify interns for this summer who will return to campus in the fall and lead a new cohort of students and projects for us throughout the next school year," said Guandique. "By the time these students graduate in the coming years, we will have a

deep pool of talented students with experience working with FSSA's data, technology and people to draw from. The value of this data pipeline for our team, for the agency and the people we serve is immeasurable."

To learn more about the FSSA Data and Analytics team, please visit the [Data and Analytics Hub page](#).



Excited to be at Purdue for FSSA Indiana Day at the Data Mine! Talking about data science, WISE and opportunities to engage students in human services and government work!

Awards & Recognition



Nicole Norvell, on her last day as OECOSL director, was presented with the much-deserved Distinguished Hoosier Award by FSSA chief of staff Kim Opsahl, on behalf of Governor Holcomb.

FSSA's first chief data officer, Connor Norwood, PhD, on his last day with FSSA receives the Distinguished Hoosier Award from Secretary Rusyniak.



Rachel Johnson-Yates on Twitter: "Congrats to all of my friends who were honored at Indy's Best and Brightest 3/24/22. Let's keep changing the world!"

In April, Logansport State Hospital celebrated National Library week with their librarian of 32 years, Brian Newell. He's pictured with Director of Rehabilitation Services Jill Rowe (L) and Medical Director Dr. Danny Meadows (R).



Congratulations to Scott Krumwied, FSSA's Disability Determination Bureau administrative services director, who was presented with the Distinguished Hoosier Award. Scott retired at the end of May after an illustrious 41 year career at DDB!





WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND FSSA!!



Thank you to everyone who stopped by to see our crew at Data Day 5! In these pics, Cristian Guandique and Matt Kirby from the FSSA Data and Analytics team show attendees how FSSA is using data to drive better health outcomes for Hoosiers. Kudos to Indiana MPH on another great event!



DMHA brought in Indy's Love on a Leash to give our team some puppy love.



Evansville State Hospital employees gathered for a picture with their colors representing years of service.



FSSA was set up in the Indiana Black Expo Summer Celebration health fair to answer questions about our benefits and services.



First Steps' new outreach materials



DMHA director Jay Chaudhary helped celebrate the opening of Turning Point's new Recovery Café Kokomo.

Evansville State Hospital had a Hot Diggity Dog cart at the staff entrance to celebrate Public Service Celebration week.



DMHA's Tony Toomer was back in his hometown of Muncie to share his experiences as a hero of recovery as part of the 3rd Annual Delaware County Symposium on Substance Use Disorder.

NEW online group coaching session topics, dates & times!

Did you know you can attend four group coaching sessions from the same series to achieve your 2023 health premium discount? Group coaching is confidential. Only your health coach will see if you attend and use the chat feature to participate.

Employees and spouses enrolled in coverage must fully complete one of the four activity options. Get started by signing up for a [group coaching series](#). Click on the “Coaching” tab at the top. The deadline to start this option is Aug. 15.

Your chosen activity must be completed by Sept. 30, 2022, to qualify for the 2023 health premium discount. Track your progress toward completing an activity in your [Rewards Center on the ActiveHealth portal](#).

Check out the upcoming online group coaching schedule. Still have questions or need support? Reach out to the ActiveHealth Customer Support team at 855-202-4219.

[Click here for more details on your gift cards and 2023 health premium discount.](#)

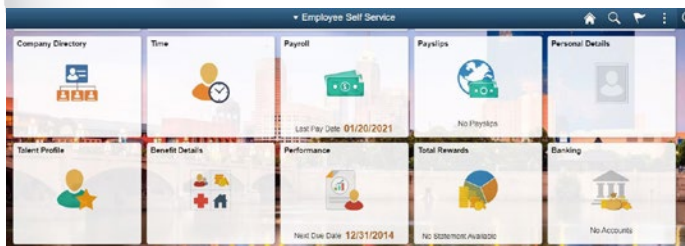


Pat yourself on the back, FSSA!

PeopleSoft 9.2 rollout was a success

As most of you are aware, in May, the State Personnel Department rolled out PeopleSoft HCM 9.2 and staff were required to complete a series of trainings about the new employee self-service module. As time consuming as these trainings were, it should be noted that overall completion of the trainings for the state was around 88% and FSSA’s employee completion was 97.6%!

So go ahead and pat yourself on the back, FSSA, for being awesome.



Donna Barnes, licensed provider, retired at 84

Was care provider for 53 years

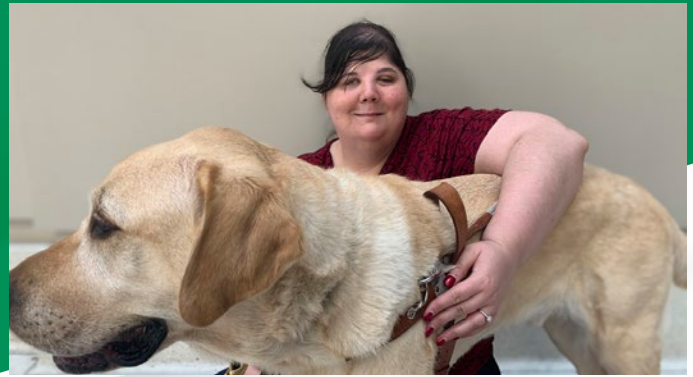
Donna Barnes, licensed provider, retired at the age of 84. Jason and Annette presented Donna with this certificate. She was thrilled. She said she does miss “her kids.”

Congratulations to Donna Barnes on her retirement after serving our youngest Hoosiers in Fort Wayne as a licensed, home child care provider for 53 years! Thank you, Donna, for showing the way by being one of Indiana’s first child care providers to be licensed!



The **State Employee’s Community Campaign** returns this fall to FSSA. More information coming in September.

FIVE QUESTIONS



Name: Amanda (Mandy) Bagwell, JD (shown here with her service dog Buddington)

Title: FSSA ADA coordinator

Education: BS in psychology from Indiana University Kokomo and a JD from Valparaiso University School of Law

Career Highlights: Mandy has focused on improving lives for individuals with disabilities through her exposure to working with individuals in the legal system and assisting with constituent and policy concerns for an Illinois Congresswoman. She also worked as a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor for Vocational Rehabilitation, where she focused on individuals who were blind or visually impaired and participants with disabilities who had legal barriers. She focused on assisting in creating partnerships with employers within the community to assist her participants in entering or reentering the workplace.

1 What attracted you to a career here at FSSA?

I grew up knowing poverty personally and watching my family struggle to raise children with disabilities and addiction problems, and my mother, who was a single mother for a while, fought day and night to advocate for me to have a good quality education, exposure to appropriate activities as a child and to have a stable childhood even with my failing vision. My mother and stepfather never disowned their children because some of us had disabilities and some struggled with addiction. Then the tables turned, and I started taking care of my mother and stepfather as they had health problems as I started college. FSSA drew me in because FSSA is all about breaking down barriers to equal health care, equal employment and placing everyone on an equal playing field so we can continue to help and build each other up as a community. It is not about the money; it is about the people and their lives.

2 What gives you a sense of accomplishment professionally?

I feel accomplished at the end of the day when I have advocated for others, educated individuals around me, and learned from my peers and the constituents that I serve. We do not know what we do not know, and to keep improving we need to improve ourselves and those around us.

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

I am handling ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and accessibility concerns for both our employees and constituents. If you experience something, say something. I am here to help and create a team approach to make FSSA ADA compliant and welcoming to everyone.

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

Grace and mercy can go a long way. Empathize with others, do not sympathize.

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

I was in the process of becoming either a contract negotiator or legal librarian because of how happy explaining terms, clauses and regulations make me when I can help others get what they need. I also assisted in making online legal databases more accessible for individuals who are using screen readers when I was attending law school.