

Executive Summary

Kosciusko Community Services

Executive Summary

Kosciusko County has a rich culture of generosity, compassion, and outreach - evident in the breadth of uplifting local programs and service providers. However, it can be difficult to stay informed of and utilize all of the assistance that is available. Therefore, the Kosciusko Community Services KLA project seeks to increase awareness and utilization of the community resources and services available to the residents of the county.

While researching the creation of a single local social service directory, we discovered a comprehensive social services directory already established and available online. The CARESResources.com website serves as an online resource and services directory for the residents of Kosciusko County. The site is managed by the CARES team under the umbrella of the Warsaw-Wayne Fire Territory.

Connecting with the CARES team, we discovered a desire to increase awareness of the online directory. Stated desired outcomes from CARES was an increase in the use of the website by well-informed residents. Secondary outcomes would include an increase in the number of service organizations participating on the site.

After conducting a needs assessment with the CARES team, the project became focused on addressing the network, marketing, and access to the site. This led to an audit of the current service providers listed on the site and a proposed marketing campaign.

Final Draft

Kosciusko Community Services

Kosciusko Leadership Academy Project

15 April 2025

Members & Sponsors

Heather Barron, Warsaw Public Library

Tony Booker, Ivy Tech Community College of Kosciusko County

Kyle Rainey, Self-sponsored

Special thanks to the following for their invaluable assistance and collaboration:

Mikaela Bixler, CARES Community Health Coordinator

Karen Smith, CARES Administrator

Tyler Bare, Ivy-Tech Kosciusko County Student Worker

Fellowship Mission for use of the Gathering Place

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Abstract

Kosciusko County has a rich culture of generosity, compassion, and outreach. However, such abundance can also increase the likelihood that relevant resources remain unknown or under-utilized by those in need. Therefore, the purpose of the Kosciusko Community Services (“KCS”) KLA project is to increase public awareness and utilization of the many services available within the county. The project seeks to achieve increased awareness by establishing a definitive directory of local service providers and promoting it through marketing; and to achieve increased utilization of services by expanding methods of access to the directory and later supporting individuals in contacting or visiting necessary providers.

Background

The KCS project is the combination of two initial proposals. First, to create a comprehensive directory of all the services offered throughout the county, to make it easy to locate relevant resources when needed. Second, to place assistance in public spaces (for example schools, care facilities, libraries, etc.) able to provide guidance about all social services, even those outside of assistants’ immediate field. Both of these ideas were inspired by personally experienced challenges staying informed about the multitude of services available to Kosciusko County residents, and by frustrations with vital resources going under-utilized.

Overall Strategy

We developed the following strategy to realize the project’s purpose to increase public awareness and utilization of the many services available within the county. It is a framework of recommendations with steps sequenced purposefully to try maximizing

the long-term stability of the end-result and to increase the impact of each successive step.

1. Establish a directory, including a maintenance schedule.
 - a. A comprehensive digital directory of community resources in Kosciusko County can serve as the main database of all local provider information.
 - b. Information accuracy and website functionality are paramount to the directory becoming a reputable and reliable community tool. So, it is recommended that a maintenance schedule is set up before allowing public access.
2. Provide multiple methods to access directory information.
 - a. Users' accessibility preferences and needs will vary. Access options may include a website via a mobile device/ computer/ tablet, an audio directory via phone call, or physical copies in public spaces.
 - b. Accessibility options will reduce barriers to the information and empower users to interact with the tool how they are most comfortable. It is recommended to develop adequate options prior to training in-person assistants or engaging in promotional activities.
3. Enable utilization of desired services.
 - a. Highlight catalytic resources – those that help users overcome factors limiting their ability to access other desired services. These resources may include transportation aids, compensation for lost time, language services, or child-care.

Partnership with CARES and CARESResources.com

Before implementing the above strategy and creating a new directory, we explored existing solutions: www.CARESResources.com/Resources (CARES Resources | Community Assistance | Resources | Emergency Services, 2024) was identified as a thorough directory of services in Kosciusko County. The website is managed by the CARES program (“CARES”), which is under the umbrella of the Warsaw-Wayne Fire Territory. CARES responds to individuals experiencing mental health or other emergencies, connecting them with short-term crisis services to reduce preventable emergencies. Their community goals are listed below. Bolded bullet points indicate areas we felt our project could help CARES with their stated goals.

- **Reduction in EMS and Fire Department personnel responding to calls due to mental health reasons or lack of resources**
- Reduction in Emergency Department Use for situations that are not a physical health emergency
- Reduction in inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations and usage of the least restrictive intervention possible
- Reduction in overdose deaths
- **Increase in substance use services utilized**
- Increased diversion from the criminal justice system to rehabilitating services
- **Increased use of behavioral health services**
- **Increased access to behavioral health services in historically underserved populations**
- **Decreased use of law enforcement to address behavioral health needs**

- Reduction in suicide attempts and death
- Decrease the amount of time from a crisis occurring to intake into services
- **Decrease community members being “passed around” when in need of services**

Solution

Project Scope for KLA 2024-2025

It is important to distinguish CARESResources.com from CARES. CARES is restricted to serving the City of Warsaw exclusively, but CARESResources.com contains information about services throughout the county and is useful to all residents of Kosciusko. As the owner of the website, CARES was identified as a key partner. The KLA and CARES teams met monthly to determine CARES’s needs regarding CARESResources.com and mutual goals. Currently, CARES is a two-person team consisting of Karen Smith and Mikaela Bixler. Their human and financial resources to expend toward improvements or promotion of CARESResources.com is limited.

The below points summarize the primary topics to be addressed during the scope of the KLA project, related back to the previously outlined strategy. The following sections elaborate on each point, respectively.

1. Prioritize a maintenance schedule for the website, aligned with step 1b. This was realized through KCS preparing and executing an audit protocol for the website.
2. Enable printing of the website, aligned with step 2. This was realized through CARES beginning dialogue with their web service provider about quotes for introducing new functions to the website.

3. Exploring sustained marketing options (window clings etc.), aligned with step 4a.

This was realized through marketing proposals created by KCS and provided to CARES.

Website Maintenance Schedule

Consistent with step 1b, regular maintenance of CARESResources.com mitigates the risk of a user failing to connect with a service provider due to inaccurate or non-functional content on the website. To this end, KCS presented CARES with an audit protocol and form (see appendix A) that Ivy Tech has committed resources to complete on a semi-annual basis. At the end of each audit, a list of outdated links, grammatical errors, non-responsive or closed service providers, and other notes will be provided to CARES to enact any desired changes. The first iteration of the audit is in progress as of March 2025, expected to be completed in April 2025 by Tyler Bare. The next iteration of the audit is scheduled for September 2025.

Integrated Printing on Website

Step 2 of the strategy highlights the importance of having multiple accessibility options to allow users to interact with the tool in their preferred ways. During the teams' meetings, CARES identified the ability to quickly print sections of the directory onto their website as a priority that aligned with this KCS recommendation. CARES contacted their web service provider for a quote to make this update, and the response is pending.

Sustained Marketing Options

CARES was also interested in discussing various marketing options, as suggested in step 3. (See appendix B) for the marketing proposals provided by KCS to CARES.

KLA \$500 Grant

(50) Window Clings \$340 + (2,500) Double-sided Business Cards \$122 = \$462

KLA \$1,000 Northernor Award

Applied by CARES toward annual hosting fees (\$400), annual service for QR codes (\$156), and addition of print function (estimated to utilize up to \$1000 alone).

Works Cited

CARES Resources | Community Assistance | Resources | Emergency Services. (2024,

April 9). CARES Resources.

<https://caresresources.com/>

Appendix A. Social Services Audit Form Presented to CARES

CARESresources.com Semi-annual Audit	
Revision 01 (Draft 23-Mar-2025)	
BACKGROUND	CARESresources.com spreads awareness of local resource and service providers that are available to residents of Warsaw and Kosciusko County, Indiana. Residents may be seeking providers in critical moments, so accurate content about providers is essential (contact information, functional links, etc.). A semi-annual audit of this content mitigates the risk of a resident failing to connect with a desired provider due to inaccurate or non-functional content on the CARESresources.com website and maintains CARESresources.com as a reliable resource.
PURPOSE	Identify any information on the CARESresources.com website that requires attention. This may include information that is no longer applicable, non-functional, grammatical errors, etc. Recommend corrections to the CARES team. The CARES staff is responsible for applying any updates.
SCOPE	The semi-annual audit is limited to information presented on the "Resource" page for each provider listed on the CARESresources.com/resources website.
PROCEDURE	
	1 In the "Audit Log" tab, note your name and audit start date.
	2 Go through each provider in the latest Org List. Utilize the "Audit [#] Notes" tab to document progress and necessary changes.
	3 Locate the provider's page on the CARESresources.com website. Review the page for spelling and grammar. Visit the page from a computer and a mobile device to ensure all links work as intended.
	4 Call the provider and attempt to speak with the contact provided by the organization. Refer to the latest entry from the provider in the "OG Form Responses" tab. They may want to schedule an appointment to speak with you at a later time. If a provider does not answer, leave a message, and send a follow-up email. Call up to two more times on separate days. If all attempts fail, note they were unable to be reached.
	5 Review all of the website information with the organization. If there are any changes, complete a google form with the contact on the phone.
	6 Document completion of each step and any notes on the "Audit [#] Notes" tab.
	7 Once all organizations have been audited, enter the Completion Date on the "Audit Log" tab.

Audit #	Performed by	Start Date	End Date
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
...			

Provider	Contacted?	Updates Required?	Form Completed?	Notes

Appendix B. Marketing Proposal Presented to CARES

CARES Marketing Proposal

3/24/2025 by KLA CARES Team

PURPOSE

The CARESResources.com website serves as an online resources and services directory for the residents of Kosciusko County. The site is managed by the CARES team under the umbrella of the Warsaw-Wayne Fire Territory. The mission of the CARES Program is to improve the overall health and wellness of the City of Warsaw through three main points:

1. **Assisting Emergency Personnel** with response to mental health crises and situations.
2. **Increasing Access** to established community resources and social services.
3. **Providing Short-Term Service** to reduce preventable emergencies.

After meeting with the CARES team and hearing a desire to increase awareness of their online directory, our KLA group believes we can assist with a general marketing proposal that includes ideas for expanding the awareness of CARESresources.com and potentially help the CARES team with their community goals, and especially the goals shown in bold below.

Community Goals

- **Reduction in EMS and Fire Department personnel responding to calls due to mental health reasons or lack of resources**
- Reduction in Emergency Department Use for situations that are not a physical health emergency
- Reduction in inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations and usage of the least restrictive intervention possible
- Reduction in overdose deaths
- **Increase in substance use services utilized**
- Increased diversion from the criminal justice system to rehabilitating services
- **Increased use of behavioral health services**
- **Increased access to behavioral health services in historically underserved populations**
- **Decreased use of law enforcement to address behavioral health needs**
- Reduction in suicide attempts and death
- Decrease the amount of time from a crisis occurring to intake into services
- **Decrease community members being “passed around” when in need of services**

GOAL

Residents of Kosciusko County are more autonomous, empowered, and knowledgeable about **CARESResources.com** to find and connect with available community resources.

AUDIENCE

The CARES team desires to increase awareness of the site and its resources among citizens of Kosciusko County, potential users, community members, service providers, as well as potential supporters and partners. With a wide and diverse audience who can benefit from and share knowledge of the site, we propose a blanket approach to reach multiple audiences through multiple channels.

MARKETING SUMMARY

This proposal offers a variety of print materials, physical mediums, audiovisual options, and more for promoting CARESResources.com throughout Kosciusko County with both providers and partners. The items contained in this proposal are a starting point that can be referenced and utilized as needed, and as funding and resources are available.

1. MARKETING CAMPAIGN -

Explore a variety of ways to market CARESResources.com in Kosciusko County with both providers and partners.

- a. "Providers" - organizations that offer health, housing, education, financial and other services in Kosciusko County.
- b. "Partners" - organizations and businesses that have the capacity to share resource information to residents in Kosciusko County.

2. PROVIDER CONNECTION -

Opportunities for connecting service providers.

- a. ***Annual "CARE in Kosciusko" Event** - An annual networking and information event for providers in Kosciusko County. This is a possible future option that could be realized and implemented with the help of a future KLA group.
- b. **Kosciusko Community Wellness Fair** - CARES currently attends this event each fall.
- c. ***Kosciusko Chamber Health Care Committee** -
 - [The Health Care Committee](#) meets at the Chamber on the first Thursday of every other month at 11am to discuss and analyze current healthcare challenges and their implications for the local business community.

3. USER CONNECTION -

Opportunities for reaching potential users of the website.

- a. **CARES Kiosks** - Establish information stations and/or links at partner locations to provide access to the CARESResources.com.
 - Partner with the six public libraries in Kosciusko County to designate a laptop, iPad, or computer as an information kiosk for local resources.
 - Partner with the two higher education institutions in Kosciusko County to designate a laptop, iPad, or computer as an information kiosk for local resources.
 - Partner with local government in Kosciusko County to designate a laptop, iPad, or computer in their offices as an information kiosk for local resources.

MARKETING POSSIBILITIES

Leverage current providers and potential partners to share CARESResources.com information in their businesses/organizations, include it in dispersed information to their audiences, and/or share it on their websites.

10 Coffee Shops: 5 Warsaw, 2 Syracuse, 2 North Webster, 1 Milford

- Restroom Door Flyer
- Window Cling

6 Public Libraries: Warsaw, Syracuse, North Webster, Milford, Pierceton, Mentone

- Community Bulletin Board Flyer
- Restroom Door Flyer
- Website Link
- Window Cling

4 Chambers of Commerce: Kosciusko, Syracuse-Wawasee, North Webster-Tippecanoe, Mentone

- Newsletter - Business Card or Ad
- Website Link

69 Nonprofits

- Flyer
- Business Cards
- Website Link
- Window Cling

134 Churches

- Community Bulletin Board Flyer
- Business Cards
- Restroom Door Flyer
- Website Link

3 Colleges: Grace College, Ivy Tech Kosciusko, and IN Tech

- Community Bulletin Board Flyer
- Business Cards
- Restroom Door Flyer
- Website Link

3 School Systems: Warsaw, Wawasee, and Whitko Community Schools

- Website Link
- Teacher Packets

2 Hospitals: Lutheran and Parkview Kosciusko

- Business Cards
- Website Link
- Window Cling

3 YMCAs: 2 Warsaw and 1 North Webster

- Community Bulletin Board Flyer
- Restroom Door Flyer

POTENTIAL INVESTMENT COSTS

The following marketing mediums represent possible avenues to increase awareness of CARESResources.com. While the CARES team is a part of the City of Warsaw and may choose to utilize local vendors for purchased materials, Vistaprint was used in the following table and could be used as a cost-comparison tool.

The CARES team expressed a desire for business cards to disperse, as well as the possibility of window clings that could be placed in different locations throughout the city and/or county.

	Quantity	Cost	Vendor	Frequency	Location
PRINT					
Business Card (1-sided) English	10000	\$251.99	Vistaprint	As needed	Partner / Provider
Business Card (1-sided) Spanish	5000	\$143.99	Vistaprint	As needed	Partner / Provider
Business Card (2-sided) English/Spanish	2500	\$120.99	Vistaprint	As needed	Partner / Provider
Flyer (with tear-off QR & website) 8.5"x11"	500	\$377.59	Vistaprint	As needed	Partner / Provider
Flyer (with QR & website) 5"x7"	500	\$47.99	Vistaprint	As needed	Partner / Provider
Press Release (<i>print and online</i>)	1	\$0.00	NA	Semi-Annually	Times Union, Ink Free, The Paper
Print Directory	11	TBD	TBD	Annually	Public Libraries, Schools, Colleges
PHYSICAL					
Window Cling (5"x5")	50	\$339.99	Vistaprint	One time	Partner Bus/Orgs
Window Vinyl Decal (5"x5")	50	\$460.00	Vistaprint	One time	Partner Bus/Orgs
KCVB Outdoor Sign (1-2 weeks)	1	\$0.00	KCVB	Quarterly	Kosciusko County Visitor Bureau
Billboard	1	\$375/mo	Eagle Advertising	Semi-annually	Kosciusko County
AUDIOVISUAL					
1-min CARES Video	1	\$0.00	TBD / CARES	As needed	Social Media, Provider Social/Web
Social Media Share Challenge	1	\$0.00	CARES	Annually	Social Media
Kosciusko Chamber Video	1	\$0.00	Kosciusko Chamber	Annually	Social Media
Chamber e-newsletter	1	\$25/wk	Kosciusko Chamber	Semi-Annually	Chamber Email List
Chamber Podcast - <i>In the Loop</i>	1	\$0.00	Kosciusko Chamber	One time	Chamber Website
Radio Interview	1	\$0.00	Kensington Media	Semi-Annually	1480 AM , 99.7, 103.5, 107.3 FM

KLA \$500 Grant

KLA groups have the opportunity to utilize \$500 grants for their projects. Based on previous discussions with the CARES team, we have provided an example of using the grant toward a mix of business cards and window clings. We defer to the CARES team to identify the greatest need and most impact.

Example: (50) Window Clings \$340 + (2,500) Double-sided Business Cards \$122 = \$462

KLA \$1,000 Northernor Award

We would like the CARES team to identify how this award could best be utilized by CARES if received.

SUSTAINABILITY OF MARKETING INITIATIVES

Each of the marketing tools and ideas would require a different level of sustainability. Some efforts may be identified as one-time action items, while others could be established with replenishment protocols.

MARKETING DESIGN

The CARES team expressed a desire for an updated design for marketing materials. The business card designs shown below are presented as a possible option that could be manipulated to fit various marketing tools, such as window clings.



Appendix C. Project Proud Presentation Slides

KOSCIUSKO COMMUNITY SERVICES

Increasing awareness and access to local resources and services.

This slide features a light blue background. At the top left, the title 'KOSCIUSKO COMMUNITY SERVICES' is displayed in a white box with black text. Below the title, the text 'Increasing awareness and access to local resources and services.' is written in a dark grey font. To the right of the text, there are four icons representing community services: a yellow school with a red roof and a clock, a grocery store with a red and white striped awning, a library with a red roof and a sign that says 'LIBRARY', and a white hospital with a red cross on its roof. To the left of these icons, there is a map showing a blue river, green trees, and a compass rose with 'N', 'S', 'E', and 'W' directions. The entire slide is framed by a dashed white line at the bottom.

THE CHALLENGE

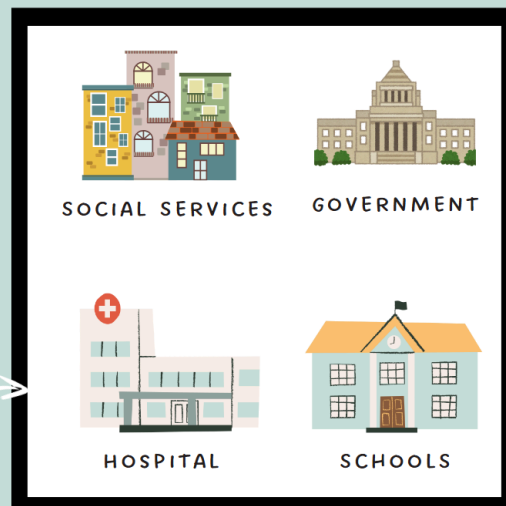
Kosciusko County has one of the highest number of social services per capita in Indiana.

Help is available... if you know where to find it.

This slide features a light blue background. At the top left, the title 'THE CHALLENGE' is displayed in a white box with black text. Below the title, the text 'Kosciusko County has one of the highest number of social services per capita in Indiana.' is written in a dark grey font. Below this, the text 'Help is available... if you know where to find it.' is written in a dark grey font. To the right of the text, there are three icons representing community services: a library with a red roof and a sign that says 'LIBRARY', a white hospital with a red cross on its roof, and a yellow school with a red roof and a clock. A blue river and green trees are also shown. White arrows point from the library and hospital icons towards the school icon, indicating the challenge of finding these services. The entire slide is framed by a dashed white line at the bottom.

THE VISION

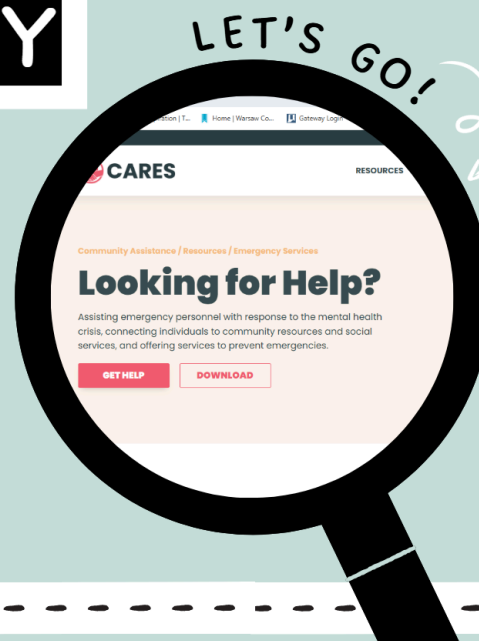
1. Establish a directory of resources & services in Kosciusko County.
2. Improve accessibility to the directory and to services.
3. Spread awareness of the directory.



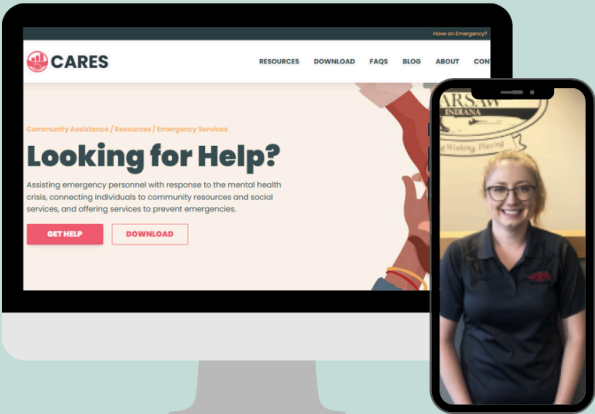
THE DISCOVERY

CARESResources.com contains a directory, already made just for services within Kosciusko County!

The website is a county-wide utility managed by CARES: a city-wide program that responds to mental health crises.



THE RESOURCE



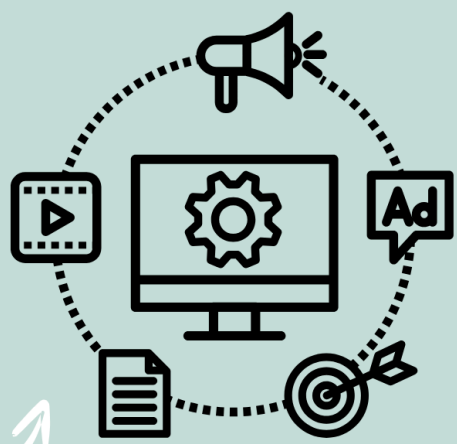
Mikaela Bixler and Karen Smith are the mighty duo behind CARES. They are busy answering calls for help within the City of Warsaw.

They accepted our partnership to support CARESResources.com and increase its county-wide impact.



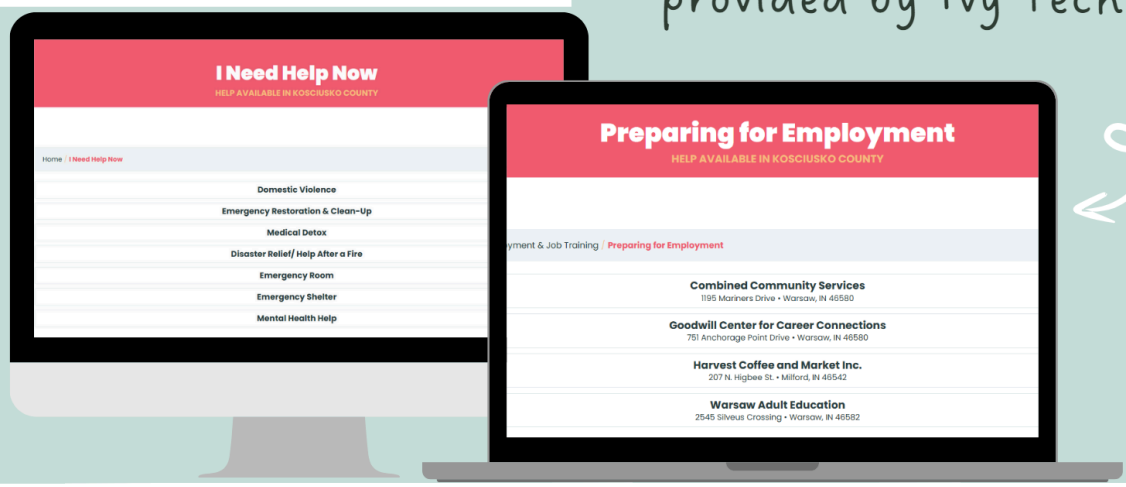
THE NEED

1. Maintain website information.
2. Provide additional accessibility options.
3. Spread awareness of the website.



THE AUDIT

Semi-annual audit provided by Ivy Tech



THE UPGRADE

Requested quotes to add easy printing function to the website.



THE PROMOTION

Presented a marketing plan, including recommended mediums and possible target locations.

- 10 Coffee Shops: 5 Warsaw, 2 Syracuse, 2 North Webster, 1 A
 - Restroom Door Flyer
 - Window Cling
- 9 Public Libraries: Warsaw, S
 - Community Bulletin
 - Restroom Door Flyer
 - Website Link
 - Window Cling
- 4 Chambers of Commerce: K
 - Newsletter - Business
 - Website Link
- 69 Nonprofits
 - Flyer
 - Business Cards
 - Website Link
 - Window Cling
- 134 Churches
 - Community Bulletin
 - Business Cards
 - Restroom Door Flyer
 - Website Link
- 2 Colleges: Grace College and Ivy Tech Warsaw
 - Community Bulletin Board Flyer
 - Business Cards
 - Restroom Door Flyer
 - Website Link
- 3 School Systems: Warsaw, Wawasee, and Whitko
 - Website Link
 - Teacher Packets
- 2 Hospitals: Lutheran and Parkview Kosciusko
 - Business Cards
 - Website Link
 - Window Cling
- Parks:
 - Restroom Door Flyer
- 3 YMCAs: 2 Warsaw and 1 North Webster
 - Community Bulletin Board Flyer
 - Restroom Door Flyer
 - Window Cling

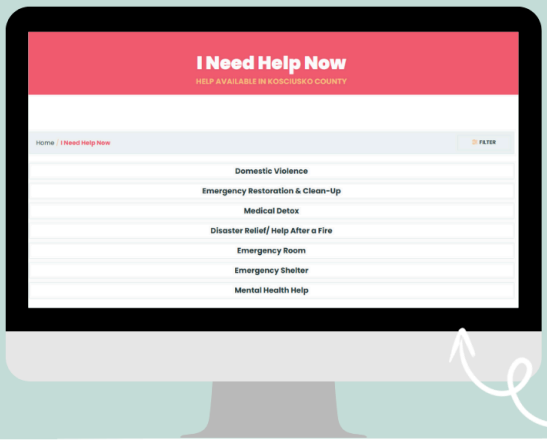
PHYSICAL						
Window Cling (5"x5")	50	\$339.99	Vistaprint	One time	Partner Bus/Orgs	
Window Vinyl Decal (5"x5")	50	\$460.00	Vistaprint	One time	Partner Bus/Orgs	
KCVB Outdoor Sign (1-2 weeks)	1	\$0.00	KCVB	Quarterly	Kosciusko County Visitor Bureau	
Billboard	1	\$375/mo	Eagle Advertising	Semi-annually	Kosciusko County	
AUDIOVISUAL						
1-min CARES Video	1	\$0.00	TBD / CARES	As needed	Social Media, Provider Social/Web	
Social Media Share Challenge	1	\$0.00	CARES	Annually	Social Media	
Kosciusko Chamber Video	1	\$0.00	Kosciusko Chamber	Annually	Social Media	
Chamber e-newsletter	1	\$25/wk	Kosciusko Chamber	Semi-Annually	Chamber Email List	
Chamber Podcast - In the Loop	1	\$0.00	Kosciusko Chamber	One time	Chamber Website	
Radio Interview	1	\$0.00	Kensington Media	Semi-Annually	1480 AM , 99.7, 103.5, 107.3 FM	

THE SHARE

Grant money was requested to provide window-clings to present in local businesses.



THE NORTHERNOR



Availability, accessibility, and visibility are priorities.

The award would support web hosting fees, buying new website features, and additional marketing.

THE BEGINNING

We hope this is just the beginning of increasing awareness and access to a vital local resource.



Tab 3

