



# Kosciusko By Choice

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## Executive Summary

Kosciusko by Choice is a marketing campaign highlighting people who have chosen to move to and stay in Kosciusko County. This campaign consists of eight video interviews and accompanying blog posts which will be posted and promoted on a variety of platforms throughout the next year, through both Clearly Kosciusko and the Kosciusko County Convention & Visitors Bureau (KCCVB). This campaign's primary goal is attracting new talent to Kosciusko County, as well as showing the diversity and quality of life the area has to offer.

This project was designed as primarily a talent attraction and retention tool. Attracting and retaining talent is crucial in order to expand Kosciusko's workforce and allow Kosciusko to grow both economically and in population. Attracting and retaining talent has county-wide impact and is essential to growing and improving our community. This project is happening in conjunction with Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation's (KEDCO) MakeMyMove initiative, the goal of which is to bring remote workers into Kosciusko County. The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership also has a development plan called the Road to One Million. The goal of this plan is to increase the regional population to one million residents by 2031, which means attracting more people to the area.

The Kosciusko by Choice campaign offers a way to let people tell the amazing stories of why they choose to live in Kosciusko County, and it represents the diversity and quality of life found in the area. The goal of the campaign is to get the message out about Kosciusko County and all it has to offer. It also provides a way to further the Clearly Kosciusko brand.

The Clearly Kosciusko brand was originally created by Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams to promote the lakes in the area but grew into a slogan for the entire county. In 2020, a Kosciusko Leadership Academy (KLA) whitepaper project was done to turn Clearly Kosciusko into a county-wide brand. As a result of this project, Clearly Kosciusko is now a partnership between KEDCO, Kosciusko Chamber of Commerce, KCCVB, and Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams. Lilly Center just recently passed leadership of the brand to KCCVB, and this campaign offered a way to take the brand further after this transition. Inspiration for this campaign came from the Hoosiers by Choice campaign, a state-wide initiative that allowed people to tell the story of why they chose Indiana as their home.

The project budget totaled \$12,400, which included both video production and Facebook advertising. The project has been very doable, as it has already launched and is set up to continue at least until the end of the year if not longer. It was funded primarily by KCCVB and also by KLA mini-grant. The videos were produced by DreamOn Studios and were 90 seconds each. Four videos have been released so far and the other four will be released before the end of the year. The first four videos were promoted on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and the Clearly Kosciusko website, ClearlyKC.com. So far, the campaign has reached 29,137 people on social media, gained 603 likes, 127 YouTube views, and has driven 265 users to the Clearly Kosciusko website. Additionally, the campaign has gained press coverage in Ink Free News, Times Union, NewsNow Warsaw, and WSBT 22 News, as well being featured on the Clearly Kosciusko podcast.

After KLA ends, KCCVB will take over ownership of the Kosciusko by Choice campaign, making this project sustainable. If this project wins the Northenor Award, the money will be used for additional



digital marketing of the campaign through YouTube Ads, Google Ads, and Facebook Ads. This will help the campaign reach a broader audience outside of Kosciusko County, showing why the place to live, work, play and learn is Clearly Kosciusko.

## Problem & Solution

### **Need for Talent Attraction & Retention: MakeMyMove and Road to One Million**

Recently, there have been many discussions in the community regarding talent attraction and retention, especially with KEDCO launching their MakeMyMove initiative to bring remote workers to Kosciusko County. Additionally, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership has a development plan called the Road to One Million. The goal of this initiative is to increase the regional population to one million residents by 2031, meaning each Indiana county will need to increase the number of people migrating into Indiana and lessen the number leaving the state.

The City of Warsaw is known as the “Orthopedic Capital of the World” and is home to many orthopedic device and instrument manufacturers, and this industry provides nearly 18,000 jobs in the county as of 2018. Many leading agribusiness and recreation businesses have also made their home in Kosciusko County. These companies often recruit specialized talent from outside the community, including both national and international locations. There are multiple opportunities for higher education in Kosciusko County as well, bringing young talent to the area. This positions Kosciusko County as a location filled with quality career and education opportunities, as well as providing quality of life with over 100 lakes, great school systems, and a wide variety of other amenities. Kosciusko County needs a way to showcase the amazing quality of life, diversity, and community it offers that would help it stand out and attract talent.

### **Recent Developments of the Clearly Kosciusko Brand**

On top of this, Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams recently passed leadership of the Clearly Kosciusko brand to KCCVB. Clearly Kosciusko is a brand designed to be a unifying voice for the county and is a partnership between KCCVB, KEDCO, Kosciusko Chamber, and Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams. The goal of Clearly Kosciusko is to ensure all four of these organizations are working together to promote Kosciusko County. It also provides a landing point for new individuals to the county, which will then direct them to the organization that will help them most effectively. With leadership of the brand being passed to KCCVB, this was an opportune time to launch a new campaign to take the Clearly Kosciusko brand to a new level. KCCVB is planning on rebranding as Clearly Kosciusko starting in Spring of 2024, and this campaign also provides an opportunity to start that brand transition.

### **Why Kosciusko by Choice**

Kosciusko by Choice, a marketing campaign run through Clearly Kosciusko and KCCVB, provided a solution to these problems. Creating eight video interviews with people who choose to move to and stay in Kosciusko County would assist with attracting and retaining talent, as well as showing the diversity and quality of life of the area.



## Research

### **Clearly Kosciusko History**

Several different avenues of research were conducted before the project began. First was a deep dive into the history of the Clearly Kosciusko brand, which was originally created by the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams. During a brainstorming session on how to better promote the county's over 100 beautiful lakes, the Lilly Center team came up with the slogan, "Clearly Kosciusko." This slogan could be used to communicate a variety of things about Kosciusko County, such as clearly the place to live, clearly fun, clearly relaxing, and clearly entertaining. In 2018, the Lilly Center applied for and was awarded its first grant to fund a billboard campaign introducing Clearly Kosciusko. These billboards appeared along U.S. 30 and at the four borders of the county. However, what started as an initiative to promote the county's lakes morphed into much more, as Clearly Kosciusko became a unifying voice used to tell the county's story.

In 2020, Clearly Kosciusko became a KLA project itself. This KLA whitepaper project was also focused on creating a plan for sustainability to support talent attraction and retention. It extended the Clearly Kosciusko brand to also include KEDCO, KCCVB, and the Kosciusko Chamber, so all these organizations could unite to promote the county. It then went on to detail the ways the Clearly Kosciusko brand could be leveraged to grow the population of Kosciusko County through talent attraction and retention. One way this was accomplished was by adding a membership feature to the Clearly Kosciusko brand, so businesses in Kosciusko could join the brand and help promote it.

### **Future of Clearly Kosciusko**

As previously mentioned, this year the Lilly Center passed ownership of Clearly Kosciusko to KCCVB, and KCCVB is planning on rebranding as Clearly Kosciusko in Spring of 2024 in order to take the brand further and better promote Kosciusko County.

The designer who created the Clearly Kosciusko brand is Aaron Winey of Blue Note Design, LLC. We met with him and discussed the future of the brand, as well as getting any necessary design files and the Clearly Kosciusko branding guide. Additionally, we held meetings with the Lilly Center's teams to get any necessary assets related to Kosciusko County as well as getting the copyright transferred to KCCVB from Grace College. KCCVB also held meetings including all organizations, KEDCO, Chamber, and Lilly Center to discuss the future of the Clearly Kosciusko brand and get their input on the brand transition to KCCVB.

### **Hoosiers by Choice**

The Hoosiers by Choice campaign was used as a model for this campaign. Hoosiers by Choice is a state-wide project run by Indiana Destination Development Corporation (IDDC) to raise awareness of all Indiana has to offer by allowing individuals to tell the real and authentic stories of why they choose to become Hoosiers. People from a variety of backgrounds, working in different industries, and in different communities in Indiana are featured, showing the wide range of diversity and opportunities found in Indiana. Kosciusko by Choice seeks to do the same thing, just for Kosciusko County specifically.



## Budget & Funding

### DreamOn Studios

First, we met with DreamOn Studios in Warsaw to discuss the best format for filming these video interviews and the budget. They recommended short, 90 second videos with plenty of quality-of-life imagery included. We asked them to quote the first three videos, since our goal was to film and release at least three videos before the end of KLA. The final estimate for the first three videos was \$4,550.00. In a later meeting, we discussed the budget further and agreed to do eight videos total for this project over the course of 2023, at approximately \$1,500 per video, totaling \$12,000 altogether.

Kosciusko By Choice Campaign			SUBTOTAL \$4,550.00
Description	Item	Quantity	Price
<b>Kosciusko By Choice Testimony Videos</b> + 3 - 1:30 videos + Filming - Equipment & Labor + Editing + Final videos delivered via downloadable link	\$6,500.00	1 Unit	\$4,550.00 <del>\$6,500.00</del> 30% OFF
30% Non-Profit Discount provided for marketing/promotional trade-out.			
Once signed, an invoice will be submitted for 50% deposit. Balance will be due upon completion of the final edits.			
Travel Expenses outside of Northeast IN will be billed separately as needed.			
Additional hours available at \$150/hr			
<b>Total</b>			\$4,550.00

Figure 1 DreamOn Studio Quote

We also discussed with them all the platforms these videos would be released on. This included both Clearly Kosciusko and Visit Kosciusko County's social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram,



YouTube, and TikTok. Additionally, the videos would be added to the Clearly Kosciusko website with accompanying blog posts.

### **Funding**

We applied and were awarded the \$500 mini-grant available through KLA. We also received the majority of our funding for this project through KCCVB. Since KCCVB is now leading the Clearly Kosciusko brand, they were happy to fund this project to help promote Clearly Kosciusko further. KCCVB also placed some advertising money behind this project through Facebook ads, \$50 per video. This will total \$400 in Facebook promotion by the end of the project.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
8 Videos	\$12,000	KLA mini-grant, KCCVB
Facebook advertising	\$400	KCCVB

## Video Production Process

### Selecting People

First, we brainstormed as a group who we would want to interview for this project. We agreed that we wanted people from a wide variety of backgrounds, working in different industries, who represented different people groups and cultures within Kosciusko County. We also agreed we wanted people who were not originally from Kosciusko County but had chosen to move here and stay here.

Next, we brainstormed eligible individuals to interview. We reached out to KEDCO and the Kosciusko Chamber of Commerce for recommendations of people to interview, as well as asking for recommendations of people from others in our own organizations.

Later, we attended a One Warsaw meeting for their recommendations on the project as well. One Warsaw is a nonprofit organization that is focused on diversity and inclusion in the Warsaw area. One Warsaw recommended that we focus on representing all of the communities in Kosciusko County, not just Warsaw and Winona Lake, as well as providing more potential people to interview.

Our group wrote an email template that was used to contact all individuals, including the details of the project along with the specific amount of time that would be required for the individual to participate. In total, we reached out to 23 people who were potential interviewees. We so far have had six people successfully schedule and interview. Many of the other people we reached out to did not respond, had time constraints or schedule conflicts, or no longer met the requirements of the project (for example, had moved out of Kosciusko County).

### Filming Process

One member of our KLA team was present at all interviews to ask a list of questions we had written beforehand. See Appendix A for these questions.

Depending on how the conversation flowed, additional questions were asked. If possible, we had the individual say the phrase “I am Clearly Kosciusko by Choice” at the end of the interview in another language to show the diversity of our area even more distinctly. Once DreamOn finished editing videos, they were sent to our KLA group, KCCVB staff, and the interviewee for approval before publishing.

## Final Results

### Final Videos

We have completed six videos so far and have interviewed the following individuals: Lakesha Green, Wagon Wheel Center for the Arts; Chris Scheeren, Blue Barn Berry Farm and Empowering Voices, LLC; Rusty Martinez, Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams; Benjamin Navarro, Grace College; Jennifer Olsen, Cardinal Services; Lorena Oplinger, Wildman Business Group. We have published four of these six videos to our social media channels and Clearly Kosciusko website and will release the other two before the end of the month. The remaining two videos for the project will be scheduled and filmed before the end of the year. For these last two videos, we are seeking individuals outside of Warsaw and Winona Lake, to address the concerns about representing individuals from all communities in Kosciusko County.

### Campaign Results

The results of the first four videos, as of April 10<sup>th</sup> are as follows. The campaign has reached 29,137 people on social media, and has gained 603 likes, 127 YouTube views, and has driven 265 users to the Clearly Kosciusko website.

Video	Kosciusko By Choice Results									
	ClearlyKC Facebook Engagement	ClearlyKC Facebook Reach	KCCVB Facebook Engagement (includes paid ads)	KCCVB Facebook Reach (includes paid ads)	Instagram Likes	Instagram Reach	TikTok Likes	TikTok Reach	YouTube Views	Website Views
Lakesha Green	64	1,299	45	6,545	51	1,240	2	83	34	95
Chris Scheeren	60	1,318	34	8,912	80	1,494	2	27	18	65
Rusty Martinez	88	746	56	1,595	87	1,340	1	28	68	91
Benjamin Navarro	6	66	12	3,854	14	547	1	43	7	14
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>3,429</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>20,906</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>4,621</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>265</b>

Figure 2 Analytics from Campaign

Additionally, an article about the campaign appeared in Ink Free News, Times Union, and NewsNow Warsaw. WSBT 22 News also did a piece on the campaign which aired March 16<sup>th</sup> and appeared on their website. The campaign and some of the interviewees are also being highlighted on the Clearly Kosciusko podcast, which is powered by KEDCO. The podcast is having two panel episodes featuring these individuals and the campaign, which will be released May 3<sup>rd</sup> and May 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Sustainability & Grant Money

### **Sustainability**

After the end of KLA, KCCVB has agreed to take over management of the Kosciusko by Choice campaign and complete the remaining videos. KCCVB would like to continue this campaign next year and will consider it in their budget and look at the potential for other funding opportunities for the campaign. KCCVB will be re-branding as Clearly Kosciusko in Spring of 2024, and this campaign is helping promote the Clearly Kosciusko brand further.

### **How We Will Use the Grant Money**

If our project wins the Northenor Award, we would use the grant money to increase digital advertising of the campaign. Right now, KCCVB has placed \$400 in Facebook Ads behind the campaign, but it could go much further with YouTube Ads, Google Ads, and more Facebook Ads. Increasing the campaign's reach would give it a better chance of reaching people outside of Kosciusko County and accomplishing its ultimate goal of attracting talent to the area.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Kosciusko County needs a way to attract and retain talent. Doing so will have county-wide impact, increase our population, and cause economic growth. It will assist with KEDCO's MakeMyMove program and help towards reaching the goal of the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership's Road to One Million development plan. Kosciusko by Choice is a marketing campaign that allows people who have chosen to move to and stay in Kosciusko County to tell their stories, while also representing the diversity and quality of life in the area. It is also helping further the Clearly Kosciusko brand. This project has been very do-able, and so far, four videos have been published, with four more planned to be released before the end of the year. The campaign so far has reached 29,137 people just through social media, and more through press attention, the Clearly Kosciusko podcast, and the Clearly Kosciusko website. KCCVB has been willing to fund the majority of this campaign and is taking over ownership of this project once KLA ends, making it sustainable. The goal is to continue this campaign through the rest of this year and hopefully into the next, and maybe longer if it continues to perform well. If this project wins the Northenor Award, the grant money will be used to increase digital marketing with a variety of digital ads. Ultimately, this grant money will be used to show the surrounding area why the place to live, work, play, and learn is Clearly Kosciusko.

## Appendix A: Interview Questions

- What is your name, where do you work, and what is your title there?
- Tell us a little bit about your background, where you are from, and what brought you to Kosciusko County.
- Tell us more about your organization/business.
- How else are you involved in the community?
- What is one of the 'well-kept secrets' of our community? Favorite locations in Kosciusko?
- What do you see for the future of Kosciusko County?
- What does the phrase 'Clearly Kosciusko' mean to you?
- What unique opportunities does Kosciusko County provide?
- Say phrase: "I am Clearly Kosciusko by Choice" at the end of your interview. (In another language, if applicable)

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