



April 2021

FUSE Mission

FUSE empowers families and individuals with disabilities and mental health needs by providing information, training, support and encouragement.

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Remember FUSE when doing your estate planning. FUSE has an operating endowment at the Hancock County Community Foundation. For more information visit givehcgrowhc.org

Founders, Funders and Friends

Dear FUSE Supporter,

As I sat down to write this letter to you, I honestly had no idea where or how to start. We, like so many others have had an interesting year and are still facing so many challenges and unknowns. I am humbled and honored by the way we have come together during these "unprecedented times". Your support and encouragement has been so overwhelming and the motivation that kept Courtney and I going even on our worst days. Thank you!

As the pandemic set in after the 2020 Spring Inspiring Abilities Expo, we were faced with so many tough decisions. We knew that we had to create safe options for families and individuals to still keep up on information and provide opportunities to connect with others. We started offering virtual monthly meetings instead of in-person and virtual social options, such as Parents Night In every Friday night and Kids Chats and Games on Zoom. As things started to open back up with Covid restrictions, we quickly put safety policies in place to bring back small group programs.

We were thrilled to work with Hancock Wellness Center this year to offer another year of the Adaptive Swim program. It was excellent to welcome Ryan Shea, Adaptive Swim Instructor to the program. He was a great addition and was able to guide the 19 volunteers with all 11 swimmers. Since we were unable to end the program with the usual pizza party and awards, each swimmer and volunteer received their program shirt, pictures and medal in a FUSE drawstring bag. It was fulfilling for Courtney and I to see each swimmer and volunteer really reach that next level, even with all the challenges of running a program in a pandemic.



We were also excited to pick back up with the newest program, CIC (Connections-Independence-Community). This new teen and young adult group is working towards building connections while increasing their independence in the community. They were able to start meeting in very limited groups and settings in October. We have found that movies, games and food seem to be the key to making the group happy. They already have an 80's movie matinee, virtual Bingo and a Pizza Party at Chicago's Pizza in Greenfield planned for April. They like a busy calendar and we are so happy to be able to provide a few opportunities to socialize with old and potential new friends.

On October 24, 2020 FUSE families and supporters filled the FUSE office parking lot for the first ever FUSE Trunk or Treat. Vendors were visited by 142 people in two hours. It was great to see so many kids given the opportunity to dress up and have a safe option to trick or treat. We were also delighted to have the help of the CIC in planning and hosting this new annual event.

The biggest highlight by far in 2020 was our annual visit from Santa Claus. As we neared the holidays, we feared that the virus might impact one of our favorite events, but with a few new plans put into place, we were able to host Santa and 15 FUSE families. Santa even did a couple of FaceTime chats with kids that were unable to attend in person because of last minute challenges. Somehow our evening with Santa seemed even more magical and we are so thankful for his continued love and connection to our FUSE families.



All of these priceless moments and the support we have felt have definitely helped us to stay positive and face each challenge as it presented itself in 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. Being able to see over 100 golfers at the 18th annual David Borgmann Memorial Golf Outing and 15 teams at the 13th annual Strike a Difference for FUSE Bowl-a-thon was a true measure of the love and support we truly have in our community. Your support with your time, treasures and talents took on a whole new meaning for us in 2020. I am just so thankful that we continue to have the opportunity to have these connections with each of you!

Sara Cummins, Executive Director

Meet Betsy: Using Her Time, Talent and Passion to Make A Lasting Impact

How did you hear about FUSE?

Through work, I had heard all this talk about FUSE. "FUSE did this," "FUSE did that," "we were at a FUSE event," "FUSE rocks!" "Have you heard about FUSE?" Many of my clients participate or have participated in FUSE programs over the years. I'd heard nothing but great things and when I finally met the "FUSE ladies," they totally lived up to all the hype!

When did you start volunteering with FUSE?

I started volunteering with FUSE in 2016 through the adaptive swim program. I was voluntarily in public in a swimming suit-and that's not something I would do for just anyone:)

Why did you want to start CIC?

One of the things I treasure most in life is time spent with friends, being silly and having fun. Or being serious and talking about the heavy stuff. My friends make my life more sweet, help keep me sane-ish, and are a crucial part of my personal self-care regimen. But I saw that many of my clients, particularly after they finished high school, didn't have friends anymore. They were starting to show signs of depression as a result of the isolation. I went out on a limb and assumed that there were other young adults with a disability who were also feeling lonely, isolated, and maybe a little depressed. I wanted to help fix this and I really like going out for pizza, so it was really a no-brainer!

What makes CIC so amazing?

The young adults! They each bring their unique and special views to the group and I love that this is place for them to share that.



Why is FUSE important to the community (disability and community as a whole)?

Being a parent is hard. Being a parent to a kid with special needs adds a whole extra (or 10) layers to the stress, worry, and anxiety of being a parent. My husband talks about the year his son was diagnosed with autism and how terrifying that process was for him as a parent. He would have done anything to have the support and knowledge that FUSE offers families in this exact situation. Having people that can come around you in that moment and say, "you got this and here's what you do and when it gets too overwhelming, WE got YOU," is invaluable.

But FUSE is an invaluable organization to the community as a whole because it provides awareness and education about these awesome kids. My clients have taught me so much about unconditional love and forgiveness and joy in the little things and pa-

tience and resilience and determination; I am a better person because of them. Think about how our world would be better with more of all of those qualities!

What is your favorite FUSE memory?

I have three. The first was last Feb (BEFORE quarantine was a thing) when we hosted a sensory-friendly viewing of Sonic the Hedgehog at Legacy Cinemas. Myself and my client helped plan this event and worked hard to spread the word about the event. On the day of, the movie theatre was packed! I remember telling my client to look around because she had made it possible for all these people to come together to do this. She was so stinking proud and I think her smile could have powered Greenfield! That moment right there. Helping my client feel that sense of pride. That is why I do what I do and why FUSE does what it does and why I think we would all do it for free because there is no greater feeling in the world than watching someone glow with pride.

The second was in December (while COVID-19 was STILL a thing, but we social distanced, so it was ok) at a screening of Elf at Legacy Cinemas just for the CIC. Almost everyone had seen this movie before because Elf is a classic and we were hollering out the punchlines before the actors said them and singing along with carols. It was just so...fun! I want this for my clients and for anyone who comes to a CIC event: laugh out loud fun with your friends. There is no better medicine in the world than laughing (especially with friends)!

Third, a CIC regular recently posted to our Facebook page that he wanted to go see a movie and would anyone like to join him? Guess what? People met him and they went to see this movie together! That is my ultimate goal for this group: that they become real friends that do stuff together not because there is some event, but because they actually really like each other!



What would you love to see happen in the future for FUSE? For CIC? (Sky's the limit)

World domination? Honestly, I hope CIC just keeps growing! I want this to be a huge group that laughs, supports, encourages, and loves each other. I want this to be the thing that people look forward to, that motivates them to be better, that pushes them to try new things.

Why should someone support FUSE?

I get it. There are a million good causes out there. 3-legged dogs that need a loving home, kids that go hungry most days, people who have no heat on freezing cold nights, the list goes on and on. What sets FUSE apart? FUSE can take whatever you are passionate about and put it to good use. I love to go get pizza with friends and laugh and be silly and I turned that into the CIC. You don't have to start a whole program, but I know we could take your unique talent and put it to good use. Love to make holidays wreaths? Teach my CIC'ers how to do it! Do you know everything there is to know about 18th century weaponry? My CIC'ers are into it and want to know more! Are you a fitness guru and want the world to be fit and fab?? My CIC'ers love to sweat it out! This is your chance to share your passion/hobby/talents with folks who will appreciate it to the moon and back. I promise you that will never find a group of people more thrilled to meet you and learn from you than my CIC'ers

Is there something you wish more people knew about FUSE?

Don't be afraid to ask for help because this is a judgment free zone! FUSE has got resources and knowledge and connections to all kinds of things because it is literally their job. They won't think you are a bad parent or stupid if you ask.

Anything else you want FUSE supporters to know?

People don't know what they don't know. So when we post stuff on Facebook, please please please share it! It might not be your thing, but you might have a friend that would totally benefit. That is the quickest, easiest way to support FUSE-just share what we are doing!



Be a part of the first ever Virtual Inspiring Abilities Expo!

This two day event will be held on May 14 and 15 from 10 am to 3 pm. Attendees will have the ability to explore 4 sessions with 12 unique topics over two days. Register now to access the virtual conference app or website today. For more details visit www.fuseinc.org or call (317)462-9064



All we can say is, WOW!! We had such a great Strike a Difference for FUSE Bowl-a-thon on February 27! The bowlers raised over \$11,000!!!

Thank you so much to anyone that raised funds, donated or sponsored this 2021 fundraiser!!

We are blown away by your support and love for our mission. We are so grateful and humbled! Thank you so much!!

2020 Facts and Figures

Training and Support Programs

446 individuals attended 959 program sessions

Information/Referral

185 information/referral requests fulfilled

Topic areas for information/referral include: adaptive equipment/assistive technology, community-based services, community living options, early intervention and preschool, education K-12, employment, financial planning, habilitative therapy services, health care financing/insurance, legal needs, medical services, recreation, transition to adult services, and others.

Financials:

Revenue

4000 Direct Public Support	47,172.31
4100 Indirect Public Support	2,554.44
4200 Program Income	3,546.33
4300 Marketing Income	334.00
4400 In Kind Contributions	6,527.00
4500 Fund Raisers	35,865.89
4600 Grants	39,825.00
4750 Endowment Revenue	2,200.00
4900 Uncategorized Income	0.00

Total Revenue

\$138,024.97

Gross Profit

\$138,024.97

Expenditures

5000 Programs	72,680.35
6000 Fundraising	24,167.37
7000 Administration	22,982.71

Total Expenditures

\$119,830.43

Net Operating Revenue

\$ 18,194.54

Net Revenue

\$ 18,194.54



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