

# MONTHLY UPDATE

MAY 2021



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Summer is here!

IPI's student team members are on break until August, but IPI's core team continues our work. We wrapped up the Lincoln County Community Health EMS project, demonstrating the program's benefits for patients, providers, and the local health care system. The Out of School Youth project team began interviewing youth to learn more about their programmatic needs. The Rural Industry Clusters Needs Assessment project wrapped up analyzing results from school district surveys, enabling the team to determine the education and career plans of high school graduates in South Central and Eastern Idaho.

What I'm most excited about this summer is IPI will be finally moving into the Environmental Research Building on Boise State's campus. Being on campus will enable the team to have better connectivity with our university colleagues and also be more accessible to students. In the next few months, I'll look forward to sharing more about our new space as well as our plans to engage more directly with faculty and provide new opportunities for students.

**BEST,**

Handwritten signature of Vanessa Crossgrove Fry.

**DR. VANESSA CROSSGROVE FRY**

# PROJECT LIST

## PROPOSAL STAGE

- Advancement of Idaho Women Attorneys (sponsor, Idaho Women Lawyers)
- Idaho Outdoor Recreation Survey (sponsor, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Connected Canyon County (sponsor, Valley Regional Transit)
- Vision Zero Analysis (sponsor, City of Boise)
- Bicycle Safety Pilot Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)
- COVID-19 Travel Behavior Study (sponsor, Valley Regional Transit)

## PENDING

- Democratizing Innovation: Leveraging Integrated Data Infrastructures for Community-Based Problem Solving in Idaho's Treasure Valley (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Guardian Ad Litem Program Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Supreme Court)
- Modeling Resilience Through a Community Lens: Discovering Data, Creating Tools, and Connecting People Who Make Resilience Possible (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Prevalence and Probability of Youth Homelessness (sponsor, U.S. Housing and Urban Development)

## ONGOING SPONSORED

- A Foundation for Research into Webcams as Tools in Informal STEM Learning (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Communities of Excellence Charter School Program Evaluation (sponsor, Bluum)
- Department of Motor Vehicles Service Delivery Analysis (sponsor, Idaho Transportation Department)
- New Path Community Housing Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)
- Out of School Youth Needs Assessment (sponsor, Idaho Workforce Development Council)
- Public Opinion Survey (sponsor, Ada County Highway District)
- SAMHSA Treatment and Transitions Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Assessment (sponsor, Idaho Housing and Finance)
- Streamflow Data and Climate Vulnerability Survey (sponsor, Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center)

## ONGOING UNSPONSORED

- Boise State's COVID-19 Dashboard
- City Go Annual Awareness Survey
- Rural Industry Cluster Needs Assessment
- Responses of Municipal Governments to the COVID-19 Pandemic - Manuscript and Policy Brief

## ENDING

- Lincoln County Community Health EMS Cost-Benefit Analysis (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- Master of Environmental Management Needs Assessment (multiple sponsors)





# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## LINCOLN COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH EMS COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Team: Vanessa Fry, Gabe Osterhout, Lantz McGinnis-Brown

Idaho Policy Institute, in partnership with Boise State's Department of Community and Environmental Health, developed a dynamic cost-benefit analysis model to evaluate the Lincoln County Community Health Emergency Medical Services (CHEMS) pilot program. The model will enable the pilot, as well as other CHEMS efforts in the state, to demonstrate the intervention's economic effects by calculating the return on investment for marginal program costs compared to the savings from the intervention's outcomes.

The cost-benefit analysis model calculates outcomes based on user inputs. Since inputs involve assumptions and uncertainty, the user is able to enter best, middle, and worst case scenario estimates. These inputs include intervention details and program costs related to transportation, training, personnel, and administration. Another section features inputs for clinic visits, EMS calls (transport and no transport calls), emergency department visits, and hospital in-patient stays, while the user is able to customize additional categories. The model also allows users to capture longer-term benefits and account for contracting and evaluation costs. Users estimate monthly utilization levels before and after the CHEMS intervention, along with the marginal cost of each service, and the model calculates the program's costs and benefits. The outputs are displayed on a summary dashboard featuring a simple chart of cumulative costs and benefits over multiple years, while also allowing the user to view more detailed dashboards that drill down to category-level outputs.

In addition to the model, IPI produced an accompanying data memo and infographic. The infographic highlights key takeaways of the program's benefits for patients, providers, and the system based on interviews with EMTs, nurse practitioners, medical assistants, volunteers, and other local stakeholders. It also provides a snapshot of Lincoln County's rural demographic characteristics, including residents per square mile, share of population in poor or fair health, obesity rate among adults, and residents with limited access to exercise opportunities or healthy foods. It also includes other economic indicators such as the county's uninsured and disabled population, residents 65 years and older, poverty rate, and share of the population experiencing severe housing problems.



# PROJECT UPDATES

## MUNICIPAL COVID-19 RESPONSES BY GOVERNMENT MANUSCRIPT

Team: Cheong Kim, Matthew May, Vanessa Fry

As a second piece from last year's local government survey, the team is planning to produce a full-length paper examining how municipal government form is associated with their COVID-19 responses. To this end, the team is collecting additional data describing characteristics of municipalities and their governments. This is expected to be complete in June.

## RURAL INDUSTRY CLUSTERS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Team: McAllister Hall, Ben Larsen, Aisha Kayed, Greg Hahn, Vanessa Fry

The Rural Industry Clusters Needs Assessment is a two part project attempting to find the gap between high school students' plans and industry needs. This month a survey to students was closed and the team began data cleaning and analysis. School districts may use the data to guide decisions about college and career counseling. The team is beginning to schedule interviews and focus groups with stakeholders in both the dairy industry of the Magic Valley and energy, cybersecurity, and advanced manufacturing industries of Eastern Idaho.

## OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Team: McAllister Hall, Aisha Kayed, Daniel Lemus, Vanessa Fry

This month, the Out of School Youth Project worked with the Department of Labor and the Workforce Development Council to rethink the best ways to contact the target population of the study, unemployed and out of school youth aged 18-24. Rather than schedule a specific time with the youth to do in-person focus groups, youth were called and asked to complete a phone interview.

## TREATMENT AND TRANSITIONS PROGRAM EVALUATION

Team: Vanessa Fry, Lantz McGinnis-Brown, Ben Larsen

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's (IDHW) Treatment and Transitions (TNT) Program serves individuals with severe mental illness and/or a co-occurring disorder who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The project is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As the ongoing project evaluator, Idaho Policy Institute oversees all evaluation activities and works closely with IDHW program staff to design data collection strategies, monitoring, and reporting for this program.



# STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

## MPA GRADUATE INTERNS WITH DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

After receiving his MPA degree at the beginning of May, Daniel Lemus accepted an internship with Idaho Department of Labor. As part of his internship, Daniel is working closely with the IPI team on the Out of School Youth project. He is leading the process of interviewing youth to learn more about their education and employment needs.

## MPA CAPSTONE STUDENTS PRESENT RESULTS

The Spring 2021 MPA Capstone course worked to meet the research needs of a diverse set of clients under the direction of Interim Director Vanessa Fry. The students presented their results and the event was well attended by clients, including Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Surel's Place, National Forest Foundation, and Frank Church Institute. IPI wishes these now MPA graduates the best of luck!

# MONTH IN REVIEW

## IPI PRESENTS AT HOUSING SOLUTIONS SUMMIT

Interim Director Vanessa Fry and Research Associate Ben Larsen presented at Insightformation's Housing Solutions Summit on May 12-13. Vanessa Fry described the journey of launching New Path Community Housing, a new construction housing first project in Boise. Ben Larsen discussed the rapid responses in place to curb evictions and innovative solutions being adopted in states and local governments across the country. Both Fry and Larsen participated in live panel discussions following the summit.

## RESEARCH ASSOCIATES PUBLISH EVICTION PIECE IN THE CONVERSATION

Research Associates Ben Larsen and McAllister Hall wrote an article for *The Conversation* based off of eviction data received from the Idaho Supreme Court. The article, "[Despite Federal Moratorium, Eviction Rates Returning to Pre-Pandemic Levels](#)," discusses the impact of local and federal eviction protections as a response to the coronavirus pandemic.

## IPI INTERIM DIRECTOR PUBLISHES IN PLOS ONE

Vanessa Fry, Idaho Policy Institute Interim Director, published an article in PLOS ONE. The article, "[Evaluating citizen science outreach: A case-study with The Peregrine Fund's American Kestrel Partnership](#)," was co-authored with Drs. Sarah Schulwitz and Chris McClure of the Peregrine Fund and Dr. Greg Hill of University of Utah. The article discusses how social media, webcams, discussion boards, and newsletters are associated with perception of learning, agreement with messaging, and participation in programming of a citizen science program, The Peregrine Fund's American Kestrel Partnership (AKP). The study that resulted in the article also prompted a research partnership between The Peregrine Fund and IPI which recently resulted in funding from National Science Foundation's Advancing Informal STEM Learning program.



# MONTH IN REVIEW

## IPI INTERIM DIRECTOR JOINS JAFSCD EDITORIAL BOARD

Vanessa Fry, Idaho Policy Institute Interim Director, has joined the editorial board of [Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development](#) (JAFSCD), the world's only open-access, shareholder-supported, and peer-reviewed journal focused on food systems. Dr. Fry has been a peer reviewer of JAFSCD since 2017. The [JAFSCD Editorial Board](#) (JEB) consists of food system activist-scholars/scholar-activists, professionals, and experts. This diverse group will provide leadership through their roles on the JEB and the [JAFSCD Shareholder Consortium](#). As a group, JEB members represent a broad range of topical expertise, demographics, and geographies, including most U.S. states, Canadian provinces and territories, and a growing number of countries.

## NEWS

[“Despite Federal Moratorium, eviction rates returning to pre-pandemic levels”](#) The Conversation, May 24, 2021

[“Despite Federal Moratorium, eviction rates returning to pre-pandemic levels”](#) Phillipine Canadian Inquirer, May 25, 2021



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