

MONTHLY UPDATE

JUNE 2021



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Summer is officially here! Although Idaho Policy Institute's team members took some time off to explore the state and beyond, we also had a very productive month. The Master of Environmental Management Needs Assessment, Second Annual Evaluation of New Path Community Housing, and Engaging Idaho's Out-of-School Youth projects were all completed in June. We also launched projects with Idaho Transportation Department and Idaho Supreme Court.

This month, our weekly team meetings focused on learning and growth for the Institute. We learned about the importance of creating an accessible website and reports to ensure everyone can utilize IPI's reports. We also had a note-taking and facilitating workshop and started making plans for creating a sustainable organizational structure for the Institute.

As the summer moves on, IPI looks forward to working with our two new interns and meeting more often in-person more! It's been amazing to be together as a team after over a year of meeting virtually.

BEST,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa Fry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DR. VANESSA CROSSGROVE FRY

PROJECT LIST

PROPOSAL STAGE

- Advancement of Idaho Women Attorneys (sponsor, Idaho Women Lawyers)
- Bicycle Safety Pilot Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)
- Connected Canyon County (sponsor, Valley Regional Transit)
- Educational Programming Attitudinal Awareness Survey (sponsor, Idaho Public Television)
- Idaho Outdoor Recreation Survey (sponsor, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Recovery, Renewal and Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World (sponsor, Trans-Atlantic Platform for Social Sciences and Humanities)
- Vision Zero Analysis (sponsor, City of Boise)

PENDING

- 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)
- COVID-19 Travel Behavior Study (sponsor, Valley Regional Transit)

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 Vehicle Service Delivery Analysis (sponsor, Idaho Transportation Department)
- Guardian Ad Litem Program Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Supreme Court)
- 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
- Policy Brief: Responses of Municipal Governments to the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Data Collection for a Full-Length Paper: Municipal COVID-19 Responses by Government Form

ENDING

- Engaging Idaho's Out of School Youth (sponsor, Idaho Workforce Development Council)
- Master of Environmental Management Needs Assessment (multiple sponsors)
- New Path Community Housing Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Team: Matthew May, Mackenzie Moss

The Master of Environmental Management (MEM) Workforce Analysis project is designed to better understand the impact of a potential MEM program at Boise State. The assessment includes a comparative analysis of peer programs nation-wide and a market analysis of employment opportunities for individuals with an MEM or related degree.

Data collection includes content analysis of both peer program websites and job postings, interviews with directors of peer programs and prospective employers, and online surveys of employers and related PhD programs.

Key findings of IPI's analysis include:

- Peer programs tend to target working professionals who are interested in advancing their existing careers. MEM students that go on to pursue a PhD are typically self-directed.
- Programs situated near public policy hubs (e.g., state capitals, industry centers) are well suited to leverage that proximity into program opportunities, such as internships, policy clinics, or project-based activities.
- Communication skills are highly valued by employers in today's market. Jobs in the environmental field increasingly call for collaborative approaches that are effective in communicating complicated material to diverse audiences.
- Peer programs emphasize the importance of diversity, both in course offerings and growing their student base.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in realignments among employers, requiring a flexible workforce that is able to adapt to changing circumstances and assume additional responsibilities. The more an MEM program can prepare students to adjust to these realities, the better off they will be in the job market.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

SECOND ANNUAL EVALUATION OF NEW PATH COMMUNITY HOUSING

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

IPI completed the second annual evaluation of New Path Community Housing. New Path Community Housing is a 40-unit, single-site Permanent Supportive Housing program with a Housing First approach in Ada County, Idaho. New Path's evidence-based program is designed to address specific issues related to chronic homelessness including high utilization of emergency medical and substance dependence services, frequent contact with the criminal justice system, and compromised overall personal well-being. As program evaluator, Idaho Policy Institute oversees all evaluation activities and works closely with New Path partners to design data collection strategies, monitoring, and reporting for this program.

This evaluation measures the impact of the Housing First model on New Path residents in four outcome categories: health, criminal justice, housing, and well-being. For this year's evaluation, IPI's mixed methods analysis included surveying New Path project partners and analyzing quantitative data measuring program participants' service utilization and well-being.

Key achievements in New Path's first two years include:

- A reduction in emergency services by 60% or 1,372 fewer days,
- Total savings/cost avoidance of \$2,659,021, and
- An increase in overall resident well-being.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

ENGAGING IDAHO'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

Team: McAllister Hall, Aisha Kayed, Daniel Lemus, Sophie Croome, D'Andre Mathews, Vanessa Fry

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides funds to create opportunities for youth ages 16-24 who are not working or in educational programs, otherwise known as out-of-school youth (OSY). The Idaho Workforce Development Council partnered with IPI to identify creative and proven strategies to engage OSY. To do this, IPI reviewed existing literature and worked with regional representatives from the Idaho Department of Labor and educational institutions across the state to conduct focus groups and phone interviews with OSY recently engaged in WIOA programs.

The literature review found that successful programs help youth build relationships with supportive adults such as mentors or caseworkers, and other youth to foster a sense of belonging and community. Similarly, literature shows that OSY respond well to direct outreach from other youth or efforts designed by youth. Successful programs also offer unique education opportunities and partner with community organizations to recruit youth and create work experience opportunities.

Findings from interviews and focus groups align with themes found in the literature. Specific interview findings include:

- Learning opportunities should accommodate learning disabilities and mental health
- Youth desire to learn job application, interview, and networking skills
- Programs should have more community relationships to connect participants with work experiences closer to their desired area of interest
- Youth appreciate caseworkers and would like a stronger relationship with them
- Youth recommend recruiting through social media with updated materials using empowering language and success stories
- Youth value educational opportunities and the associated financial assistance



PROJECT UPDATES

IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT DMV SERVICE DELIVERY

Team: Gabe Osterhout, Matthew May, Vanessa Fry, Cheong Kim, Emily Pape

IPI initiated research on the DMV service delivery study sponsored by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). The project team hosted a kickoff meeting with ITD representatives to review research questions and discuss the current service delivery model's advantages and disadvantages. Currently, IPI researchers are in the process of data mapping to gain insight into delivery model processes and outcomes across the country. This includes reviewing recent survey data collected by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) featuring responses from 49 states on 13 surveys conducted between 2017 and 2021.

RURAL INDUSTRY CLUSTERS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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

This month, the Industry Clusters team started phase two of the research project. The second phase includes interviewing representatives from the Eastern Idaho tech and engineering sector and the Southern Idaho dairy sector. Interviews include questions regarding employee recruitment and retention as well as partnerships between industry and educational organizations. Interviews are anticipated to last through July.

IPI BEGINS WORK WITH IDAHO SUPREME COURT

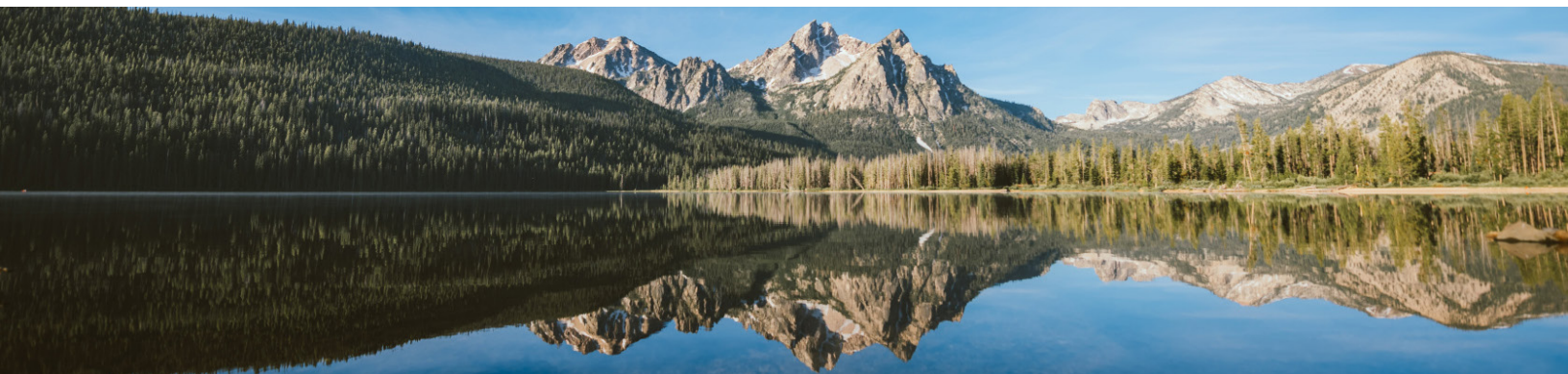
Team: Vanessa Fry, Jackie Lee, Cheong Kim, Gabe Osterhout

In June, Idaho Supreme Court (ISC) and Boise State's School of Public Service began a partnership to conduct an evaluation of Idaho's Guardian Ad Litem programs. ISC is responsible for administering grant funding for the state's GAL program to the seven judicial districts in Idaho. The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of Idaho's GAL Programs in achieving best practices for child advocacy and in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. This includes the obligation to recruit, train, and retain volunteer GALs.

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Team: Ben Larsen, McAllister Hall, Cheong Kim, Vanessa Fry

Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA) has partnered with IPI to conduct an analysis of single-site versus scattered-site permanent supportive housing programs (PSH). PSH provides stable housing and support services to residents formerly experiencing homelessness. This month, the project team worked on collecting quantitative data on costs of housing construction, support services offered, and tenant demographic data. A final report later this summer will provide an evidence-based framework for scaling both types of programs across Idaho.



STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

SUMMER INTERNS

Two students are working with IPI this summer as interns. Anaïse Boucher-Browning is a student at Dartmouth College studying Geography. Anaïse is interested in policies surrounding housing, migration, health equity, and human rights.

Edie Johnson is a student at DePaul University studying Urban Planning and Development. Edie is interested in policies surrounding sustainable development, transportation, and low-income housing.

MONTH IN REVIEW

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING AND THE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES: A PRINCIPAL-PROBLEM PERSPECTIVE

Cheong Kim participated virtually in the 2021 Public Management Research Conference, June 23-25. He presented a paper (co-author: Taehyon Choi, Ph.D., Seoul National University) that examined how government contracting was associated with the fiscal sustainability of public services. In the presentation, he emphasized that a government should understand the significance of organizational forms of contractors and, when correctly designed, it could use contracting as a strategic tool to improve fiscal sustainability.

IPI INTERIM DIRECTOR PRESENTS TO ADA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Vanessa Fry and staff from Terry Reilly Health Services met with Ada County Commissioners to review the findings of IPI's evaluation of New Path Community Housing. As the Commission considers the County's FY22 budget, they have questioned the efficacy of the program and the value of the County's investment. Fry reported that over its two years in operation, New Path saved the community over \$2.6 million, making it a positive return on the program partners' investment.



MONTH IN REVIEW

IPI TEAM RECEIVES TRAINING ON ACCESSIBILITY

Carolyn Quintero, web access analyst at Boise State, met with IPI to provide the team with training on creating accessible content. Now IPI can better provide content and information in a way that people can consume no matter device or ability.

NEWS

[“Despite federal moratorium, eviction rates returning to pre-pandemic level”](#), *Blue Review*, June 2, 2021

[“Ada County Commissioners question price tag, services at Housing First project”](#), *BoiseDev*, June 3, 2021

[“A great move forward’: New transportation funds support Idaho Highway 16 extension project”](#), *Idaho Capital Sun*, June 3, 2021

[“Ada Co. Commissioners cut New Path funding, look for changes”](#), *BoiseDev*, June 22, 2021



GET IN TOUCH



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