

EDUCATION and the “Friends of Clinton County”

Benefits realized by increasing the educational attainment of Clinton County residents:

- 1) A corresponding increase in the overall health of the citizens of the community;
- 2) A decrease in the crime rate;
- 3) An increase in the variety and quality of cultural activities; and
- 4) The most obvious benefit to be realized is that the ability of a skilled workforce and the quality of local educational institutions are the top two criteria for new business expansion and economic development. The economic future of Clinton County is inextricably linked to educational excellence.

Clinton County ranks 75th among the 92 counties in our state in percentage of citizens with a baccalaureate degree and 76th in the state in per capita income. The relationship of those two statistics is not coincidental. Depending on the school district, 30-50% of our students do not pass both the English and Math portions of the ISTEP exam in a given year and too many Clinton County students drop out of high school without a diploma. Improvement in these areas will help Clinton County to be a thriving part of the state of Indiana and the global community.

What can we do? We can:

- *Develop an understanding in the community as to the critical nature of this issue to Clinton County;*
- *Develop a program to educate and encourage parents to be partners in the education of their children;*
- *Develop and support existing programs that help children when parental support is lacking;*
- *Support educational leadership in the county in their efforts to improve the excellence of their schools' offerings;*
- *Support teachers as they strive to enhance their teaching;*
- *Stress the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics in educational preparation for a global economy;*
- *Develop a marketing program to encourage students to graduate from high school and to pursue education beyond high school;*
- *Develop a program to increase participation in Indiana's 21st Century Scholars Program; and*
- *Provide increased scholarship support for post-secondary education.*

As you can see, many of the things that we can do will have some costs associated with the effort. Local and state governments are struggling financially. They literally do not have the financial resources to do what they have been doing, and would be very seriously challenged to add any increased expenditures. The Board and Staff of the Clinton County Community Foundation believe that this issue is so critical to the well-being of Clinton County and is so urgent that we cannot wait until “better times” to do something about it. We are asking “*Friends of Clinton County*” to contribute to the **Education Fund**. Grants will be made each year from this fund to support one or more of the efforts outlined above.

Donors to this annual campaign will be listed in our Annual Report and on our website as “*Friends of Clinton County*.” They will also receive reports when grants are made from the fund describing the program and the progress being made. We believe that this issue is at the very heart of the future of Clinton County and we are committed to doing something about it. We invite you to join the “*Friends of Clinton County*” and make a difference!

Please give very serious consideration to helping us with this important matter for Clinton County.