

The Center's News



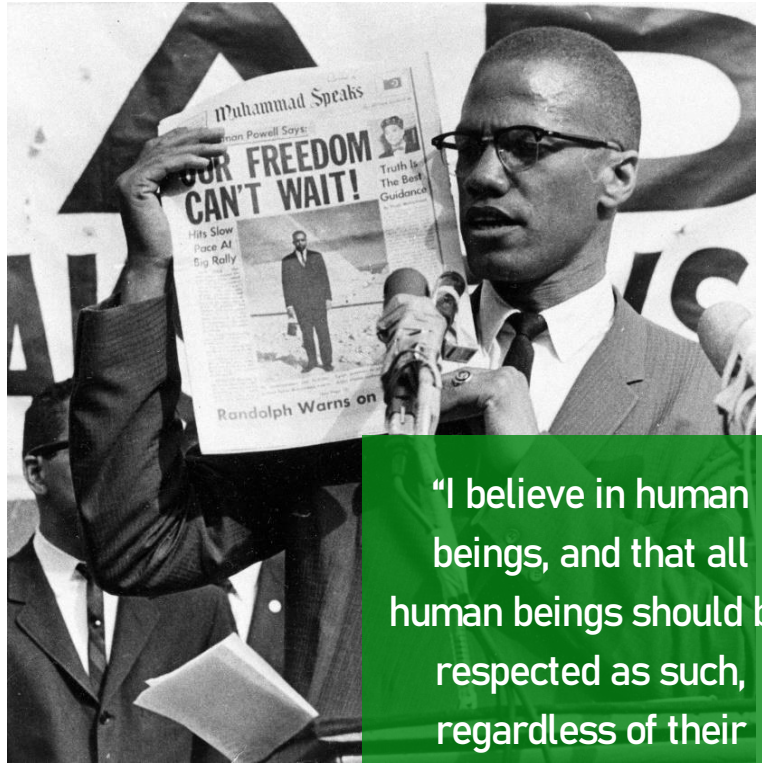
Black History Month, observed annually in February in the United States and Canada, is a dedicated time to celebrate and recognize the profound contributions and historical significance of African Americans. This month-long observance serves as a crucial platform for acknowledging the rich tapestry of Black Culture, history and achievements that have often been marginalized or overlooked.

The origins of Black History Month can be traced back to the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a pioneering African American historian. In 1926, he initiated a

history week dedicated to African Americans to ensure that the significant contributions of Black individuals to American history were not forgotten. Over time, the celebration expanded to encompass the entire month of February, providing a more comprehensive opportunity for reflection and education.

Black History Month is a tribute to the countless Black individuals who have played pivotal roles in shaping various fields, including arts, sciences, politics, and civil rights. From trailblazers like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X to contemporary influencers, the celebration is a testament to the resilience, creativity, and determination of the Black community throughout history.

The importance of Black History Month lies in its ability to shed light on a narrative that has often been neglected. By dedicating a specific time to recognize and honor Black history, society can foster a more inclusive understanding of the nation's past. It serves as a reminder that the struggles and triumphs of the Black community are integral components of the broader American story.



“I believe in human beings, and that all human beings should be respected as such, regardless of their color.”

– Malcolm X

Black History Month provides a platform to address ongoing issues of systemic racism and inequality. It encourages open dialogue and reflection on the challenges faced by the Black community, both historically and in contemporary times. By acknowledging the past and present struggles, society can work toward dismantling barriers, fostering unity, and promoting a more just and equitable future.

Paying attention to Black History Month is not just an act of remembrance; it is a commitment to education and understanding. Schools, communities and individuals can use this



month as an opportunity to learn about the diverse contributions of Black Americans and engage in conversations that promote cultural awareness and sensitivity.

In essence, Black History Month is a celebration of resilience, achievement and the ongoing journey towards equality. By paying attention to this dedicated month, we honor the legacies of those who have paved the way for progress and contribute to building a more inclusive and understanding society for future generations.



“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”
- Barack Obama

Independent Living Program

American Heart Month

Bianca Nosek – PHWF Coordinator

As of the most recent available statistics, cardiovascular disease continues to be a prominent global health issue. According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2019, an estimated 17.9 million people died from cardiovascular disease, representing approximately 32% of all global deaths. These numbers underscore the persistent and substantial impact of cardiovascular diseases on populations worldwide.



As we navigate the challenges of contemporary health issues, staying informed about the latest statistics and continuously advancing preventative measures remains crucial in the ongoing battle against cardiovascular disease.

Taking care of your heart is crucial for preventing heart disease and maintaining overall cardiovascular health. Here are some tips to promote heart health:

1. Adopt a Healthy Diet:
 - Include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins in your diet.
 - Limit saturated and trans fats, cholesterol and sodium intake.
 - Choose heart-healthy fats such as those found in olive oil, avocados and nuts.
2. Stay Physically Active:
 - Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week (walking, running, cycling)
3. Maintain a Healthy Weight:
 - Achieve and maintain a body weight within a healthy range for your height and build.

4. Quit Smoking:
 - If you smoke, quitting would be beneficial for your heart health.
5. Limit Alcohol Intake:
 - If you consume alcohol, do so in moderation. This typically means up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.
6. Manage Stress:
 - Practice stress-reducing techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga, or other relaxation methods.
 - Find healthy outlets for stress, such as engaging in hobbies or spending time in nature.
7. Get Regular Check-Ups:
 - Schedule regular check-ups with your healthcare provider to monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol levels and overall heart health.
8. Stay Hydrated:
 - Drink an adequate amount of water daily to support overall health.
 - Limit the intake of sugary beverages and excessive caffeine.
9. Prioritize Sleep:
 - Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night.
 - Establish a consistent sleep routine.
10. Know your Family History:
 - Be aware of your family history of heart disease and share this information with your healthcare provider.
 - Understand your own risk factors and take proactive steps to manage them.

Remember, these tips are general recommendations and individual needs may vary. It's always advisable to consult with your healthcare provider for personalized advice based on your specific health situation. These tips are adapted from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and Community Medical Center.



Free Tax Assistance

Jared Price – IL/ Transition Coordinator

The Vigo County Public Library is currently taking appointments to assist Vigo County Residents who meet financial guidelines. Currently, the income threshold is \$60,000. This applies both to individuals and families.

If you qualify, call VCPL today at (812) 232-1113 located at 680 Polar Street Terre Haute, IN 47807 to schedule your in-person appointment with a

Certified Tax Preparer. All services are provided free of charge. All appointments are first come first serve. Appointments will begin February 1st and run through April 8th.



What you will need:

- Photo ID
- Social Security Card
- Date of Birth
- W-2
- 10-99
- Any other Tax forms that apply to you
- Last year's Returns
- Direct Deposit Information



****If you have a spouse or children who are also part of the claim, you will need to provide their Photo ID, Social Security Cards, and dates of birth.****

Total Eclipse of the Sun

Holly Neil – IL/Transition Coordinator

On the afternoon of April 8, 2024 a total solar eclipse will occur. This means the moon will pass between the sun and the Earth. This will cause the sky to be completely dark. A total eclipse is very rare. It happens about once every 375 years.

The eclipse will begin at 1:45 p.m. and last roughly 3 hours. The total blackout will be roughly at 3:00 p.m. and last less than 15 minutes. Hopefully it will be a clear day here so we can see maximum viewing in our area.

There are lots of places selling special glasses for this event. Some libraries will offer free glasses. The Space and Science Institute offered grants to some libraries to purchase these. Amazon offers special glasses that cost between \$25 and .15 if you buy a lot of them at once. Whatever you choose to buy, just make sure that they are safe for viewing. Looking directly at the eclipse can cause burns to your retina.

As the date draws closer, the news shows, and weather channels will offer updates and suggestions on how to best watch this once in a lifetime event.



The WILL Center will be volunteering at CODA's Solar Eclipse Block Party on April 8th 2024 from 1:00pm-4:00pm. Please join us at this FREE public event to view the solar eclipse, eat, and party!

PLEASE JOIN CODA FOR A
**SOLAR ECLIPSE
BLOCK PARTY**



Bring a chair!



APRIL 8, 2024

1PM - 4PM

**26 S. 17TH STREET
TERRE HAUTE, IN**

FREE ENTRY

FOOD, LIVE MUSIC, ROCK

PAINTING, BOUNCE

HOUSE, FOAM PARTY

TERRE HAUTE
2024
A TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE HAUTE

MHIA
Mental Health America
of West Central Indiana

THE **WILL CENTER**
Empowering People with Disabilities
in West Central Indiana

Volunteers & Interns

Randy Berg – Front Desk

The WILL Center is seeking volunteers to help in the office and has openings for college interns needing placements who are interested in independent living. Volunteers will be assisting with the front desk responsibilities such as answering phones, greeting new people or consumers and communicating with staff about appointments or information and referral services.

For further information, please contact Randy Berg, BSW, at (812) 298-9455 or via e-mail at randy@thewillcenter.org

L.I.V.E Program

Low Vision Awareness Month



As we enter Low Vision Awareness Month, it is essential to shed light on the challenges faced by individuals living with low vision, a condition that affects millions of people worldwide. Low vision refers to a significant visual impairment

that cannot be fully corrected with glasses, contact lenses, medication or surgery. This condition has a profound impact on daily life, but with awareness and understanding, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive society.

What is Low Vision?

Low vision is not a singular diagnosis but rather a spectrum of visual impairments that result in reduced visual acuity or field. People with low vision may experience difficulty in activities such as reading, writing, recognizing faces, or navigating their surroundings. It is crucial to recognize that low vision does not imply total blindness, and individuals with low vision often retain some degree of sight.



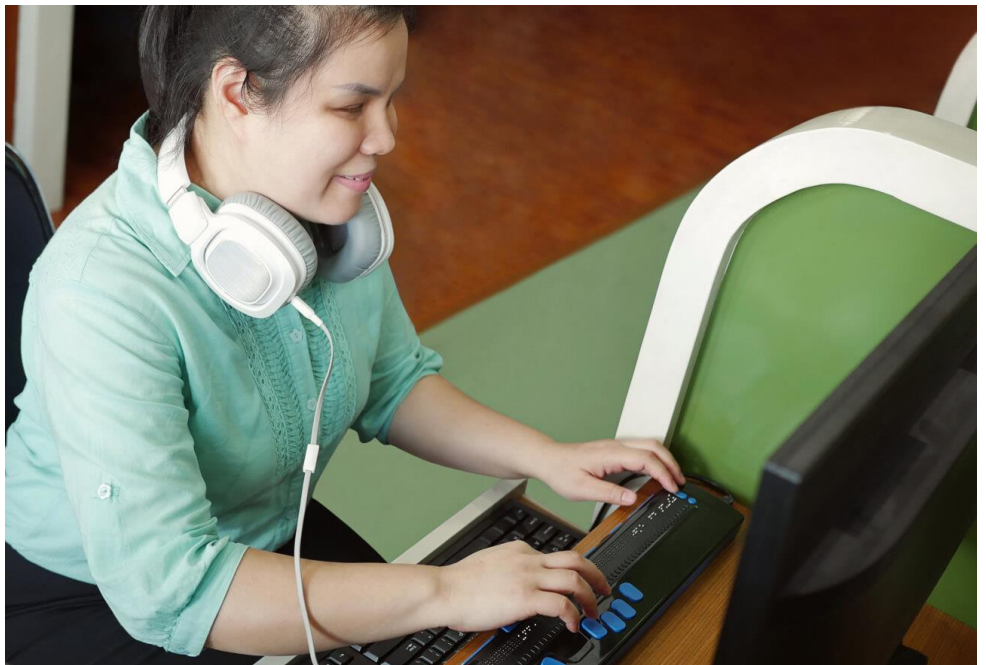
Why Low Vision Awareness Matters:

1. **Promoting Inclusivity:** Awareness of low vision encourages communities to be more inclusive and understanding. By recognizing the challenges individuals with low vision face, we can work towards creating environments that cater to diverse needs.
2. **Early Detection and Intervention:** Understanding the signs of low vision allows for early detection and intervention. Regular eye check-ups become crucial in identifying visual impairments, enabling timely support and adaptation strategies.
3. **Embracing Diversity:** Low vision affects people of all ages and backgrounds. By raising awareness, we promote empathy and

understanding, fostering a society that embraces the diversity of experiences and abilities.

4. **Advocacy for Accessibility:** Awareness of low vision prompts advocacy for accessible environments. From digital content to public spaces, designing with inclusivity in mind ensures that individuals with low vision can navigate and participate fully in various aspects of life.
5. **Supporting Research and Innovation:** Increased awareness often leads to greater support for research and innovation in the field of visual impairments. This can lead to the development of new technologies, tools and treatments that improve the quality of life for individuals with low vision.

In conclusion, Low Vision Awareness Month provides an opportunity for us to learn, empathize and advocate for a more inclusive society. By understanding the challenges individuals face, we can work together to create environments that empower and support everyone, regardless



of their level of visual ability. Let us use this month to celebrate diversity, raise awareness, and foster a world where everyone can thrive.

2023 End of Year Review

In a world where success is measured by impact, The WILL Center takes pride in our extraordinary journey of accomplishments we were able to achieve in 2023. We strive to provide a positive change to those in our community and are dedicated to helping people with disabilities.

In the summer months, we orchestrated an exclusive fan appreciation event for people who were in need. In our community, many homes or apartments may not have working AC or only provide window AC units; however, we were able to provide 50 people with brand new fans.

As the cold months approached, the need for heat in homes rises and so too the costs. Towards the colder months, we help consumers apply to the Energy Assistance Program (EAP), which assists low-income families with the high costs of energy. In 2023, we were able to help over 70 people with their EAP applications.

We would also like to highlight that throughout 2023, The WILL Center was able to provide services to over 300 disabled individuals. Our success as a non-profit organization is not just about numbers, but about the lives touched, the challenges overcome, and the transformative influence we have had on members of the disabled community.

Join us as we continue to shape the future, fueled by a passion for excellence and a commitment to making a lasting difference in the disabled community.

