



City of Winchester

Shon Byrum, Mayor
113 East Washington Street, P.O. Box 408
Winchester, IN. 47394



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ISSUED BY MAYOR SHON BYRUM, CITY OF WINCHESTER, IN

Today, the “Winchester House”, a 23-bed residential in-patient treatment facility for women and their children, became a reality. The building that is now the Winchester House is owned by the City of Winchester and the Volunteer’s of America will operate an expansion of their Fresh Start Recovery Center there. Renovations will commence soon, and it is expected to become operational by Spring 2018.

Since January of 2017 the City of Winchester has partnered with many local and state agencies to become a pioneer in how a city can lead efforts to offer rehabilitative treatment for those who are caught in the cycles of addiction due to the opioid epidemic and want help. The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) approved the city a loan in 2017, and over the course of almost a year, the city and its people have wrestled with the challenges that come with such an important advancement for humanity.

The opioid epidemic and its wake of destruction does not care if you are young or old, middle-class or wealthy, black or white, wear a suit to work or blue jeans, a Democrat or a Republican. To combat this public health crisis, it takes bravery and a long-term unified vision that sees the individual suffering from addiction beyond the taboo of “junkie” and into the complex human condition of what substance addiction really is. It takes people who care genuinely about future generations and the legacy that our current generation will pass on to the next. It takes a desire to improve our communities by acknowledging that heroin addiction unchecked not only destroys lives and families, but entire communities.

A special thanks to Governor Eric Holcomb who has made addressing the opioid epidemic a major pillar of his administration and has proven that he’s makes words into deeds. Thanks to the IHCDA who creatively found a way for the City of Winchester to make the Winchester House become financially possible. Thanks to the state Senators and state Representatives that supported legislation that advances the offense against this terrible drug. Thanks to the Randolph County Commissioners who acted boldly with county finances. Thanks to the Volunteers of America, particularly John von Arx III and Shannon Schumacher, who continued to believe in us and had the amazing foresight to develop the Fresh Start Recovery Center. Thanks to the nurses, doctors, emergency responders, social workers, teachers, concerned citizens, parents, grandparents, moms, dads, and children who kept the faith and contributed their time and efforts towards



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seeing this project through. Thank you to the Compass Church and the many area churches who prayed and are participating in this worthy endeavor. Thank you to the Community Foundation of Randolph County, and the service clubs throughout the City of Winchester and Randolph County. Thank you to the great City Council that Winchester is fortunate to have; Missy Williams, Moe Lennington, Leesa Friend, Tom Sells, and the late David Furby who met this challenge with poise and inspiring leadership. This council took a good project and made it great. Most of all, thank you to the people of Winchester who are now some of the firsts to walk up to the starting line of our great race to do a small part to help save a generation from the grips of addiction.

Therefore, let the spirit of Winchester and Randolph County's compassionate problem-solving and relentless optimism in doing what is right spark a fire from our rural corner of Indiana so that someday the hearts of mankind will burn with the desire to love each other again, and restore hope.

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