

Indianola Promise Community  
135 Front Street  
Indianola, MS 38751

# delivering the Promise

A Quarterly Publication of  
Indianola Promise Community  
FALL 2016

When children get the right start,  
Indianola prospers.

Early Childhood

Kindergarten

College and Career

Grade 12



**September 15 was no ordinary Thursday in Indianola, Mississippi.** It's not every day the U.S. Secretary of Education rolls into town in a big yellow bus. But that's exactly what happened when John B. King, Jr., US Secretary of Education, and senior Department of Education officials stopped at Carver Elementary School to visit the Indianola Promise Community.

King and his group were greeted by drummers, Mr. and Miss Carver, and a host of Sunflower County Consolidated School District officials and IPC steering committee members.

The stop in Indianola was the 9th event of a five-day tour from the nation's capital traveling all the way to Louisiana. Secretary King stopped in the Mississippi Delta because Indianola is home to IPC, one of the federal government's promise community sites.

During the visit, Secretary King got to see three promise community programs in action: the C.A.R.E.S. mentoring program (Children Are Reaching Excellence with Support), the LINKS neighborhood outreach and case management program (Linking Individuals, Neighborhoods, and Kids to Services), and the IPC Literacy Fellows program, which targets third graders who are at risk of not scoring high enough on

the state Reading Gate test. King visited with students, parents, and mentors getting personal testimony of each program's success.

Included in the site visit was a windshield tour of the Indianola Freedom Community Gardens, the renovations of the Indianola Pool, and the Ka-BOOM! Southgate neighborhood park, which had been built with over 350 volunteers. King was accompanied by Delta Health Alliance's CEO, Karen Matthews, and Josh Davis, Vice President External Affairs.

Prior to leaving Indianola, Secretary King said in a press conference that "there are very important leading indicators of the success of IPC particularly with early education." King continued with, "The amount of kindergarteners who are ready to begin school has doubled." Delta Health Alliance's Matthews said about the visit, "IPC is showing real progress and receiving national attention, but there is still work to be done."

Indianola Promise Community was the only Promise Neighborhood included in the tour. IPC is one of two rural Promise Neighborhoods of the twelve nationwide. IPC consists of nearly 30 programs and initiatives that work together to expand the health care and educational opportunities for Indianola children and their families. IPC unites health care, education, government, community, and faith-based organizations to develop a "pipeline" of academic, family, and community resources, from prenatal care through high school graduation, creating a path for students to gain meaningful careers and earn financial independence.



The Indianola Promise Community (IPC) is a community-based initiative to provide children with the opportunity to succeed in school, graduate, and attend college. Our priority is making sure children in Indianola have the opportunities they need to excel. The IPC is a project of Delta Health Alliance. For more information, to volunteer, and to get involved, call us or come by and visit us. IPC Office, 135 Front Street, Indianola, MS 38751, 662-686-3930.

## upcoming events

**ipc**  
Indianola  
Promise Community  
SUPPORTED BY DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE

**Neighborhood Survey**  
We will be knocking on doors  
November 7 – 11.  
IPC staff and volunteers will be going door to door to ask your opinion about issues important to the community.  
We hope you will participate!

For questions, please call the IPC Office at 662-686-3930.

### HISTORICAL FACTS (COURTESY OF SUNFLOWER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM)

Flooding is part of being located in the Mississippi Delta. Sunflower County has survived numerous floods since its founding in 1844. Some of the well-known floods occurred in 1854, 1912, 1927 and 2011. Even in the past year have we had major flooding. Fortunately, the people of Indianola and surrounding areas have always worked together to mediate damage and as Marie Hemphill states, are "the character of people who, refusing to give up, came back after each overflow to rebuild with determination and faith."



## INDIANOLA PROMISE COMMUNITY'S SUMMER CAMPS

Each May as school ends, parents devise ways for their children to keep their brains "exercised" over the break between the formal learning that takes place in classrooms. For parents in Indianola and Sunflower County, partnerships between the Indianola Promise Community and various community organizations make summer "learning loss" virtually a thing of the past. Many children who take part in summer camps are finding they are keeping up with their peers and with the right programs are finding the voice they need to grow as a student and citizen.

IPC campers are assessed during the summer using a quick vocabulary and word recognition reading test. At the beginning of camp, a pretest is given to create a baseline score for comparing growth. The results show strong progress during the camps.

### PRE-TEST (beginning of camp)

57.1% of students were at age-level



### POST-TEST (end of camp)

71% of students were at age-level

24% increase in learning

From fire safety, art, wellness and entrepreneurship to academic development, literacy, and core subject work, children who attend Indianola summer camps get the academic boost they need while exploring subjects that push them to be well rounded.

Jakhai Randle, 8th grader, and Jamarlus Thornton, 7th grader, are two Indianola students who benefited from the time they spent at camp. Jakhai took part in the Sunflower County Freedom Project because she wanted to learn more about the Civil Rights Movement, while Jamarlus worked to build his self-confidence in a special speech program. "I came to get more education and carry on the things the Freedom Project taught me. I want to pass it on to other students who did not get to come," remarked Jamarlus. He also found most of the things he learned over the summer applied to what he learned once classes resumed. Jakhai felt the work she and her fellow campers did gave them the extra time they needed to truly excel and explore education. "I got to learn about things we do not get to discuss in school like the connection between the Civil Rights Movement and Black Lives Matter. I wanted to learn about Emmett Till and Fannie Lou Hamer and the Freedom Project made that fun."

Kate Gluckman, the new Director of the Sunflower Freedom Project, saw the growth of students over the course of the summer and through repeated participation in the program as a major highlight. "In terms of their reading, leadership capacity, and maturation... it's really fun to see our students progress and come out as capable high school students." Verna Ransom, education coordinator for the B.B. King Museum, saw similar growth in her students. The health focus of the B.B. King Museum's Art of Living Smart allowed for different growth to be seen. "We witnessed our students daily making the changes needed to live healthier lives," Ransom commented.

Communities and students see summer as a time to take a break from formal learning, but in today's society too much of a break can lead to being "left behind." The Indianola Promise Community and its community partners work each summer to create an environment where learning is a year round process. Children here who have grown up with the expectation of going to summer camp are starting to reap the benefits and showing they are the smartest learners around.



## cassandra's rules!

Cassandra Rule, IPC Social Services Coordinator, assists Indianola residents with available services.

**Open Enrollment for 2016- 2017 Health Plans start November 1, 2016.**

- **November 1, 2016:** Open Enrollment starts — first day you can enroll, re-enroll, or change a 2017 insurance plan through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Coverage can start as soon as January 1, 2017.
- **December 15, 2016:** Last day to enroll in or change plans for coverage to start January 1, 2017.
- **January 1, 2017:** 2017 coverage starts for those who enroll or change plans by December 15, 2016.
- **January 31, 2017:** Last day to enroll in or change a 2017 health plan. After this date, you can enroll or change plans only if you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period.

Note: Special Enrollment Period (SEP) a time outside the yearly Open Enrollment Period when you can sign up for health insurance. You qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain life events, including losing health coverage, moving, getting married, having a baby, or adopting a child.

— [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)



IPC in Indianola, Ms has been life changing when it comes to education and revitalizing our community. This is what I think about IPC is " where there is love there is growth and there is life" IPC has brought life back to our schools here in Indianola. Since IPC has been established in our community, our children have experienced hope and enlightenment in their schools as well as in the community. Grades and daily attendance have greatly improved as a direct result of IPC. You see IPC is not just in the schools but it has enhanced our playgrounds for the children, revitalize the community swimming pool and has brought Imaginary Library into every home that desires it. To me, Glenn Donald IPC is a blessing from God through the hands of some loving and caring people who put the children first.

— SUNFLOWER COUNTY SUPERVISOR GLENN DONALD

# I P C week



## FAMILY spotlight

Meet the IPC Family of the Month: The Harris Family

The Harris family, mother Patricia and daughter Ayanna Katrice, were born and raised in Indianola, MS. Their family motto is: "The greatest gift of all is love." Patricia also believes that with God, all things are possible and Ayanna believes "Life doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful." They attended Friendship Baptist Church where Patricia is an active usher and Ayanna sings in the choir.

Ayanna, a senior at Gentry High School, has been an honor student throughout her life. She has participated in different programs that IPC sponsors beginning as early as the 7th grade with A Healthy You. Not only has she served as a B.B. King Ambassador, but she was also a member of the B.B. King All-star choir. She is now a member of the Indianola Youth Council and a student tutor at Project RISE. She plans to attend college and return home to be a kindergarten teacher. She wants to give back to her community as much as she can. Her mother is her biggest supporter!



Patricia is an active member of many groups teamed up with IPC. Her first glimpse was when she started as part of the Parent Leadership Institute. She was then a member of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA program where she worked with the Imagination Library. She is now a member of the Indianola Promise Community Parent Advisory committee, Freedom Garden committee and Roosevelt Neighborhood Association committee. She looks forward to working with C.A.R.E.S. to mentor a student at Lockard Elementary.