

The Community Foundation of Switzerland County, Inc. is pleased to introduce Sarah Brichto as its first Workforce Education/Grant Development Director, effective October 23.

Pam Acton, Executive Director of the Community Foundation, stated: “We are very excited to have Sarah on board and look forward to working with her to explore the educational needs of current and potential employers and to help Switzerland County residents fulfill their dreams.”

For several years the Community Foundation has been examining intergenerational poverty in Switzerland County and how the Foundation can play a role in breaking that cycle. “There are many issues that need to be addressed regarding poverty,” said Roy Leap, president of the Foundation, “but the more we researched and discussed it, the educational aspect of poverty kept coming to the forefront.”

At the same time, discussions began between the Community Foundation, Switzerland County Economic Development and the Switzerland County Commissioners/Council about expanding workforce education opportunities, partly funded by grant dollars from outside of Switzerland County. With a common goal of advancing the educational and economic attainment of the residents of Switzerland County, a Workforce Education Coalition Committee was formed. The Committee proposed a funding plan and assisted in a search for an experienced project developer to be employed by the Community Foundation. Sarah Brichto was selected, based on her prior achievements, stellar reputation, and enthusiasm for the work ahead. Her office will be in the Switzerland County Technology & Education Center.

Sarah has first-hand experience developing promising concepts into smoothly functioning programs. Almost twenty years ago she spearheaded pulling the community together to take advantage of a challenge that the Community Foundation offered through Lilly Endowment’s GIFT initiative. The challenge was to bring a community center to Switzerland County (which became the YMCA). Sarah was instrumental in securing that first \$1 million. She served as chair of the building committee, where she oversaw the construction of the \$4 million facility. She later served as President and Interim Co-Director of the YMCA.

In 2007, Sarah launched Indiana’s first regional not-for-profit Children’s Advocacy Center. During the 10 years she served as its executive director, she successfully expanded the Center’s annual budget to \$400,000, supporting a staff of three and serving approximately 500 child abuse victims per year across nine counties, including Switzerland County.

Dick Yanikoski, treasurer of the Community Foundation and a member the Workforce Education Coalition Committee, said: “We are fortunate to be welcoming Sarah. She brings to this new position a proven record of strategic planning, effective fundraising, and compassionate attention to residents’ needs. Her professional, collaborative manner will facilitate joint initiatives among businesses, county agencies, schools, and other organizations.”

For more information on the Workforce Education Coalition, contact Sarah Brichto at 812-427-2437 or [sbrichto@cfsci.org](mailto:sbrichto@cfsci.org).