

Service Learning in Blackford County about Scientist-Activist Mobilization

IPFW 2015 Service Learning Showcase October 30

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Collaborators

- **BLACKFORD COUNTY CONCERNED CITIZENS:** Residents of Blackford County formed this organization because too many people were getting sick, suffering from cancer and serious neurological illnesses. Their mission is to improve the quality of life of Blackford County's residents by reducing the incidence of diseases, primarily through citizen action to investigate the diseases that are prevalent and by advocating to have these diseases investigated.
- **BLACKFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** They preserve research materials on the history of Blackford County and have published material on the county's glass industry.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES CENTER:** They promote the understanding and conservation of the natural resources of the region through scientific research, educational opportunities and outreach.
- **HOOSIER ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL:** Indiana's largest environmental policy organization with more than 30 years' experience in environmental advocacy and education. They believe that work like this project is part of their goal to help Indiana to a healthier future.
- **IPFW STUDIO M:** This high performance multimedia studio assists students and specializes in 3D production, graphic design, CD/DVD authoring, audio/video & web presentation.



Course Design

- Employing reciprocity as a threshold concept, the service learning component was collaboratively designed in conversation with our partners
- Course concepts pertaining to social movements are used as lenses through which students critically reflect upon experience, rather than relying on experience alone, to deepen their knowledge and document their learning
- Toxic discourse is studied as a narrative rooted in the rationality of counterpublics that are drawn together in periods of uncertainty
- Toxic discourse signals the possibility of costly elements in contexts assumed to be safe, managed and governed by legitimate authorities
- Students identify and analyze the dynamics of interactions between scientists and activists as they collaborate in pursuit of improving public health in Blackford County

BCCC Citizen Monitoring Projects

The Hartford Iron Cleanup

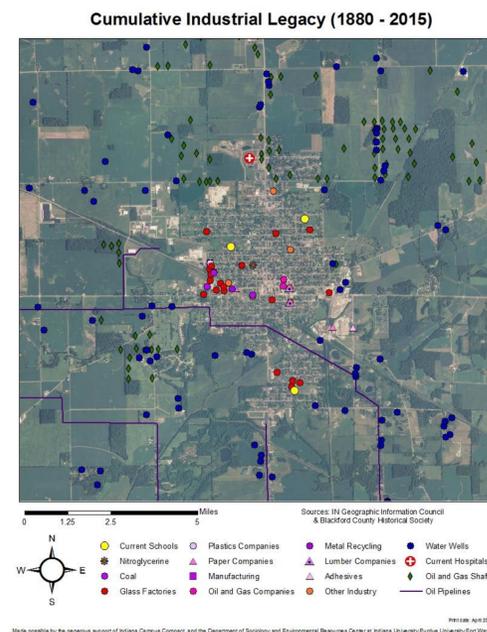
Posted on August 18, 2015 by Blackford County Concerned Citizens

Hartford Iron and Metal in Hartford City is a heavily contaminated site currently undergoing cleanup mandated by state and federal agencies. Blackford County Concerned Citizens is concerned that the contamination could have health implications for the community, so we are keeping a close eye on the cleanup.

Precautions for the Hartford City Baseball Field

Posted on June 23, 2015 by Blackford County Concerned Citizens

Blackford County Concerned Citizens, in partnership with the Hoosier Environmental Council, has tested soil at Southside Elementary, the Babe Ruth baseball field in Hartford City, and Montpelier's Little League fields for heavy metals that might have been left behind by glass factories decades ago.



The Institutional Review Board determined under protocol #1507016294 that this project meets the criteria for exemption under 45CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Context

- The 2015 report on county health outcomes for Indiana ranks Blackford County as 86 out of 92 counties, in the lowest quartile for health
- Blackford County has higher than national or state rates for bladder, colon and thyroid cancers
- Citizens' survey indicates Blackford County may have Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis rates that are more than double the national average



References

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