



Agency Happenings

Ironton-Lawrence CAO Hosts Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for New Medical Center

On July 8, the Ironton-Lawrence Community Action Organization (ILCAO) hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate the opening of the new St. Mary's Medical Center in Ironton. The medical center, which was a collaborative effort between ILCAO and St. Mary's of Huntington, WV, will bring much needed hospital services to the area.

In 2001, Lawrence County lost the only hospital in the county, forcing 62,000 residents to seek services from hospitals across the river in West Virginia and Kentucky and leaving 400 people without a job. To help address the medical needs of the community, ILCAO purchased an 18-acre site and built the \$18.5 million medical center with St. Mary's. The 46,000 square foot facility will offer 24-hour emergency care, a diagnostic center, laboratory, 12-bed trauma center and primary care services. The ILCAO will have a Family Medical Center at the facility with pediatricians, family care physicians and a dental clinic. In addition, Hospice of Huntington will be located in the building. The facility will employ almost 100 people.

"The opening of the center is a landmark day in the progress of Lawrence County," said D.R. Gossett, executive director of the ILCAO during the ribbon cutting. "Having up-to-date, quality health care right in the community is a critical advancement in the quality of life for Ironton residents." During the ribbon cutting ceremony remarks were also made by the CEO of St. Mary's, a county commissioner, the mayor of Ironton, and a nun from St. Mary's. The ceremony was followed by tours of the facility. Participants could walk through the ER and trauma areas, the laboratory and radiology section, viewing all of the state-of-the-art equipment. Doctors and staff were on hand to answer questions and explain how the equipment worked. Pediatricians were also available to answer questions. In addition, a helicopter and EMS vehicle for transporting patients were available for attendees for viewing.

The center was open to patients at 7 a.m. July 9.



Mayor Rich Blankenship, County Commissioner Les Boggs, Executive Director D.R. Gossett, St. Mary's CEO Mike Sellards and Sister Mary Grace Barile cut the ribbon at the new St. Mary's Medical Center

ILCAO Executive Director D.R. Gossett addresses the crowd at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new medical center

Staff and physicians discussed the new facility with attendees and answered questions during facility tours