



**COLONIAL**  
Intermediate Unit 20

# THE TWENTY

*Your IU - Working Hard For You*



## New Logo Kicks Off IU Communications Program

*Newsletter Redesign, Email Blast Among First Initiatives*

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 unveiled a brand new logo to start the 2017-2018 school year and kick off its new communications campaign to engage more frequently and effectively with member school districts and other stakeholders.

Executive Director Charlene Brennan, D.Ed., said the time had come for a new look and feel to the most recognized symbol of the IU.

"Our old, official logo felt outdated," she said. "It was more than 40 years old, and we wanted something that incorporated our tradition, yet was more modern to head up a modern communications effort."

The IU contracted with K12PR of Clarks Summit, Pa., to redesign the 45-year-old logo. The new logo sports a modern look to "Colonial Joe," slightly new shades of color, and crisp clean fonts. It also features the IU tagline, "Dedicated to your children and the people who serve them" for the first time. The IU's Board of Directors approved the logo at its August meeting.

The new logo is the initial step in a renewed effort to communicate better with member districts and other stakeholders as part of a new strategic plan still under development.

"We didn't want to wait until the plan is finished to take these new, exciting steps," said Dr. Brennan. "As the year goes on, we will engage our member districts in a dialogue about what they



Dedicated to your children and the people who serve them

would like to know about the IU and the best ways to get that information to them."

Along with the new logo, CIU 20 worked with K12PR to redesign The Twenty and refocus the content of the newsletter on its intended audience of all school board members in its 13 member districts.

On Sept. 5, the first Colonial IU 20 email blast featuring the IU's lending library of technology tools and resources was distributed to more than 2,000 recipients, including administrators, teachers, legislators, other intermediate units, and community members.

The Twenty newsletter and email blasts are monthly publications. The newsletter can be accessed online at [www.ciu20.org/domain/109](http://www.ciu20.org/domain/109). Stakeholders can sign up for the CIU 20 email blast at [www.ciu20.org/news](http://www.ciu20.org/news), or by texting [ciu20news](tel:22828) to 22828.

## Colonial Virtual Program Provides Essential Online Learning Solution

Colonial Virtual Program (CVP) is a K-12 online learning solution enabling students to remain part of their local schools while taking virtual courses. This partnership model provides schools with flexible, online options from full-time cyber academies, part-time enrollments, test preparation and remediation courses, summer school programming to Advanced Placement courses.

CIU 20's CVP model partners

districts and parents in supporting students in their online learning. More than 100 students are enrolled in the two-year-old program. Another 100 enrolled in summer school/credit recovery programs. Participating districts include Bethlehem, Pen Argyl, East Stroudsburg, Pocono Mountain, and Bangor. Typical cost is \$4,995 per student, although cost varies depending on the student's online program. Cyber charter school costs range upwards of \$10,000, more for special needs



students. CVP saves member districts money and allows a district to start its own in-house cyber academy.

To learn more about the Colonial Virtual Program's K-12 online learning options, please contact Renee Harris at (610) 515-6566 or [rharris@ciu20.org](mailto:rharris@ciu20.org).

# IU Provides Districts With Cheaper, More Reliable Internet Service

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 provides high-speed internet service to 12 school districts, three career centers, and four other educational entities in its service region at a cost far less than what they would pay individually.

The CIU 20 consortium pools each entity's internet demand, allowing the IU to negotiate lower prices with vendors. The consortium also participates in the PAIUNet statewide network, achieving more savings through statewide bidding of internet service. What cost \$30 per megabyte 10 years ago now costs 34 cents per megabyte through these district partnerships.

CIU 20 has introduced additional, complementary services that allow schools to focus on educating students instead of worrying about back-office operations. These include telephone service and systems, internet content filtering, firewalls, and cloud server hosting.

As one of the largest programs CIU 20 offers, the ISP program builds in redundancy. If one of the internet suppliers has an outage, CIU 20 can still provide internet service to member districts without any service interruption using a secondary internet supplier. This type of redundancy would be cost-prohibitive for a school district to buy on its own. The IU also provides participating schools with "distributed denial of service protection," which protects schools' websites from becoming targets of cyber attacks - an unfortunate new trend.

The ISP team at CIU 20 is available around the clock. If any consortium member has an issue day or night, weekend or holiday, someone will answer the phone and provide immediate assistance.

To learn more about how CIU 20 can work with your school district or agency, please contact Tom Kalinoski, Director of Technology Systems and Operations, at (610) 515-6433 or at [tkalinoski@ciu20.org](mailto:tkalinoski@ciu20.org).



Tom Kalinoski, Director of Technology Systems and Operations, stands in front of the IU's network servers.

## New Software Boosts IU's Billing Efficiency



Colonial Intermediate Unit 20's Medical Billing Department substantially increased its efficiency thanks to Epitomax Electronic Medical Billing Management by PsytechSolutions.

During the 2016-2017 school year, CIU 20's Medical Billing Department, through the use of Epitomax, generated nearly \$3.5 million in revenue and helped reduce operational costs, saving money for IU member districts. The software generates reports that not only help ensure timely billing but also

identify any negative trends, so that they can be quickly investigated and corrected. These reports also assist in budgeting and end-of-year program closeouts.

Currently, 167 CIU 20 staff members use Epitomax's web-based software for student intake, provider case management, online approvals for supervisory staff, payroll processing, electronic medical billing, and program management. The software is fully HIPPA compliant.

The IU offsets district costs for programs, such as school-based partial hospitalization, in-home Provider 50 services, and outpatient services through efficient billing of managed-care organizations, such as Magellan or Community Care Behavioral Health; third-party health insurance companies, such as Aetna or Highmark; and in cases where a client may not be covered by either of these types of entities, by billing public health care programs, such as Medical Assistance.

The IU's new Epitomax software is designed specifically for behavioral health-care provider organizations having 100 or more users. Prior to contracting with PsytechSolutions and using Epitomax, the IU's medical billing software was designed in-house and programmed by a third-party programming group. It was much more costly, time-consuming, labor-intensive, and less efficient.



VOL. 13 • ISSUE 2 • SEPTEMBER 2017

The Twenty is a monthly publication of Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, 6 Danforth Drive, Easton, Pa., 18045

**Charlene M. Brennan, D.Ed.**  
Executive Director  
[cbrennan@ciu20.org](mailto:cbrennan@ciu20.org)

**Hans Baltzersen**  
Assistant to the Executive Director  
Management Services  
[hbaltzersen@ciu20.org](mailto:hbaltzersen@ciu20.org)

**Frank J. DeFelice, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Executive Director  
Administrative and Professional  
Learning Services  
[fdefelice@ciu20.org](mailto:fdefelice@ciu20.org)

**Christopher Wolfel**  
Assistant to the Executive Director  
Student Services  
[cwolfel@ciu20.org](mailto:cwolfel@ciu20.org)

**Website:** [www.ciu20.org](http://www.ciu20.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ciu20](http://www.facebook.com/ciu20)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/ColonialIU20](https://twitter.com/ColonialIU20)

© Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

# CIU 20 Leads With Innovative Internship Program

Colonial IU 20 offers an innovative internship program in partnership with Kalahari Resorts in Mount Pocono. Project SEARCH is a one-year internship program for young adults with disabilities to gain work experience and obtain competitive employment in their communities. Six students from East Stroudsburg Area School District, Pocono Mountain School District, and Stroudsburg Area School District hit the ground running as interns recently.

At Kalahari, the interns work with instructor Mason Messinger and two skills trainers, Sara Scott and Jennifer Smiley. Interns learn how to perform job tasks independently, behave appropriately in the workplace, and improve their communication and social skills. They work in many areas of the resort, including the waterparks, spa, restaurants, banquet halls, retail stores, concierge desk, housekeeping, and buildings and grounds.

In addition, graduates of the program serve as mentors to the current interns to help train them in their new job responsibilities. Eight out of 10 of our June Project SEARCH graduates gained competitive employment and currently work 20 hours or more per week.

CIU 20 hosted the Project SEARCH International Conference this past summer. The IU's Project SEARCH graduates led the way with one of the program's graduates providing an enthusiastic welcoming address to 700-plus conference attendees. The graduates led a presentation of flags ceremony from 45 states and five countries. In addition, they showcased their Project SEARCH experiences by meeting with conference attendees during a gallery walk. CIU 20 staff gave tours to conference attendees showcasing graduates in their respective places of employment at Kalahari Resorts.

For more information, including access to a student intern application, visit [www.ciu20.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=744](http://www.ciu20.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=744) or contact Dan Cullen at (610) 515-6539 or [dcullen@ciu20.org](mailto:dcullen@ciu20.org).



*Students participate in the Project SEARCH internship program at Kalahari Resorts in Mount Pocono.*

## CIU Partners With Paxinosa To Improve School Climate

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20's School Leadership Climate Initiative engages districts in a school climate improvement process aimed at positive change and equitable school environments. Paxinosa Elementary School in the Easton Area School District recently joined schools in Pleasant Valley School District in this program improvement process, which is strategic, comprehensive and research-based.

The School Climate Leadership Initiative (SCLI) grew from a partnership between the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units, of which CIU 20 is a member.

Dr. Ronald Prator, Colonial IU 20's Supervisor of Clinical Supervision and Quality Assurance, leads the project and works with schools to conduct assessments and set targets to improve their school climates. Building on the initial work in Pleasant Valley, Paxinosa staff and administration will assess four specific areas of school climate - safety, teaching and learning, relationships, and environmental structure. During the assessment period, staff will increase their understanding of the strengths and needs of their school climate and use that information to establish goals and initiate strategic planning. Experienced professionals from the National School Climate Center serve as consultants in facilitating the assessment process.

School climate is linked to a number of important benchmarks, including school attendance, academic achievement, decreased disciplinary referrals, and teacher retention. The school climate improvement process targets the dynamics in the school environment that can affect the identified benchmarks.

**DID YOU KNOW**

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 employs a staff of **1,008** people who directly service students during the school year. Those include **231** teachers, **364** associate teachers, **23** school psychologists, **75** mental health workers, **28** mental health treatment specialists, **56** speech therapists, **10** occupational therapists, **35** occupational therapist assistants, and other professional, support and itinerant staff.



Parents and kindergarten students participate in CIU 20's first family engagement night.

## CIU 20 To Host Family Engagement Nights

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20's family engagement nights build strong relationships with students' families and provide information sessions for parents that make them informed partners in their child's educational program.

The IU's upcoming family engagement night, "Parents as Partners in the IEP Process," will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 18, at the Colonial Intermediate Unit main office in Easton. The program will help parents understand the IEP process, components of the IEP, content of the IEP, and the important role parents play in the IEP process.

CIU 20 held its first family engagement night of the year on Aug. 22 when CIU 20 staff welcomed 22 families to its first Kindergarten Orientation for students attending school-age programs throughout the region. Staff spoke with parents about each aspect of the IU's elementary programs and what they can expect throughout the school year.

The IU staff plans family engagement nights in ways that support cohesive IEP teams and student growth, with the goal of meeting family needs through appropriate programs and services. Families also meet and network with other families and make personal connections with CIU 20's administrative team.

Other upcoming family engagement nights include, "Understanding the Functional Behavior Assessment and the Behavior Intervention Plan" to be held Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2018, and "Understanding the Augmentative and Alternative Communication Process" to be held Wednesday, March 14, 2018.

For questions regarding any of the IU's upcoming family engagement nights, please contact Dr. Donna Hopstetter at (610) 515-6463 or [dhopstetter@ciu20.org](mailto:dhopstetter@ciu20.org), or Bruce Tinor at (610) 515-6492 or [btinor@ciu20.org](mailto:btinor@ciu20.org).

These events are open to all families and will be held at CIU 20's Central Office located at 6 Danforth Drive, Easton, in the Northampton/Pike Rooms from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m..

## Super Sub Program Meets Challenges When Teachers Absent

Colonial IU 20's unique Super Sub program provides staff for challenging classrooms with specially trained substitute teachers.

The IU's Super Subs receive training on techniques for defusing inappropriate student behaviors; the writing of daily Data Assessment Plan (DAP) notes, which document students' progress toward their daily goals; and more specific training geared toward being a member of the classroom team. CIU 20 attempts to assign the same Super Sub to the same classroom when someone is absent from work, providing challenged students with the familiarity they need on a daily basis. Super Subs receive additional compensation when they substitute in CIU 20 classrooms.

CIU 20 developed the concept of a "super sub" two years ago when staff in the partial hospitalization program voiced concerns regarding the use of regular substitutes not trained in specific skills for the classroom.



**Colonial Intermediate Unit 20**  
**6 Danforth Drive**  
**Easton, PA 18045-7899**