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➔ TODAY'S VERSE

Psalms 1:1-3 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.



➔ FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY

People who call our community their own.

What makes Laura Vaughan smile? "The thing that makes me smile the most is seeing young 4-H'ers start to grow up in the program and once they get toward the end of their journey, they really start to blossom," said the 19-year-old Noblesville resident, a 10-year Hamilton County 4-H'er and former Junior Leader who was found in 2021 helping with the Hamilton County 4-H Fair in Noblesville. The daughter of George and Lisa Vaughan, she was first runner-up in the 2020 4-H Fair Queen Pageant. During the 2021 4-H Fair, she earned multiple scholarships and was one of two county 4-H'ers presented the coveted Tenure Award with scholarship money from Farm Bureau. "My biggest achievement is being awarded the Cornelius Vanderbilt scholarship at Vanderbilt University" in Nashville, Tenn. "It's a full-ride scholarship so I get all of my tuition covered. I was so excited to be handpicked from a pool of, I think 45,000 applicants, to represent my school in such an amazing way." Today's feature is a look back at one of The Times' previous Faces of Hamilton County. Since age 10 until she graduated high school, she was a youth volunteer at Conner Prairie, which is open now through Dec. 18 for A Merry Prairie Holiday outdoor lighting display featuring thousands of holiday lights, courtesy of Reynolds Farm Equipment, plus visits to Prairietown, food and more. For tickets, visit connerprairie.org

And **Another Thing...**

1. Asteroid Approaching

The Christmas asteroid challenge has begun. According to space.com, an asteroid as large as the Great Pyramid of Giza will be visible in the night sky from now until next week. It made its closest approach to earth today, but will still remain visible through Monday. A telescope will be needed. And the asteroid named RN35 will be about as bright as Pluto. It will be whizzing past at around 13,500 mph.

The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper

NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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Councilman Schwartz Honored by County Commissioners with Continental Award

The Hamilton County Commissioners honored outgoing Councilman Steve Schwartz with the Continental Award Monday at their bi-monthly meeting. The award is the highest honor that can be bestowed on Hamilton County residents.

"I admire Steve for all the things he's done behind the scenes that people never knew about," says Commissioner Mark Heirbrandt.

"He's never been a credit taker. But instead, an affable consensus builder and devoted community steward."

Schwartz was elected to the Hamilton County Councilors in 2002. He represented District 3 which includes Noblesville, Jackson, and White River Townships. He and his wife Lori own Schwartz's Bait & Tackle.

"My proudest accomplishment as a councilor has been the creation of more than \$50 million in surplus and rainy-day funds for the County," Schwartz says. "All while maintaining one of the state's lowest county tax



Councilman Steve Schwartz

rates."

The Continental Award is given only after a unanimous vote of the three County Commissioners. Recipients must demonstrate a commitment to service over at least a decade, as well as "an attitude of teamwork, a generosity of spirit, and a desire to selflessly support and celebrate the people and communities of Hamilton County."

Schwartz's last County Council meeting was Dec. 7, 2022.

Local Businesses Honored by Indiana Chamber in the Rankings for Best Places to Work in Manufacturing



At the first Best IN Manufacturing luncheon yesterday, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce celebrated that thriving industry by honoring the makers that have risen to the top in the Coolest Thing Made in Indiana competition and Indiana's Best Places to Work in Manufacturing program.

Among the businesses the Chamber recognized as Indiana's most enjoyable manufacturing companies to work for were Nexxt Spine LLC at 5th and SMC Corporation of America at 11th, both in Noblesville.

"The importance of Hoosier manufacturers cannot be overstated. They create the goods that sustain individuals and businesses all across the state. And the products make their

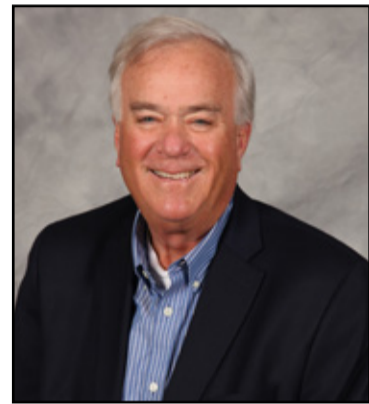
way throughout the nation and around the world," says Indiana Chamber President and CEO Kevin Brinegar.

The second Coolest Thing Made in Indiana contest wound up being a battle of Kosciusko County. In the end, online voters crowned Maple Leaf Farms – and its roast half duck – of Leesburg the champion and Polywood of Syracuse – the maker of a 12-piece pit sectional – the runner-up.

Founded in 1958, Maple Leaf Farms has grown to 900 employees and produces about 40% of the nation's duck supply. The winning entry, the roast half duck, is a fully cooked dish that both saves chefs time and allows

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Cook Vetoes Term Limit Ordinance



Mayor Andy Cook

In a news conference on Tuesday afternoon, Westfield Mayor Andy Cook discussed his veto of the term limits ordinance for elected officials recently passed by the Westfield City Council.

This was his first veto of an ordinance in four terms as Westfield Mayor. Cook's decision comes after the city's legal counsel raised concerns about the ordinance establishing a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms for the mayor and city councilors and a maximum of three consecutive four-year terms for the clerk-treasurer.

The proposed requirements are scheduled to take effect in January, 2024.

"The reason I elected to veto was not based on the merits of term limits; it was solely based on legality," Cook said during the conference.

"When I took this office several years ago, I took an oath of office that said I would uphold the constitution of the State of Indiana. It is for that reason I have vetoed this ordinance."

City administration not only sought the opinion of city legal staff at Taft Law, but also Co-Chairman of the Indiana Election Division Brad King, who advised that the purview setting of term limits is purely at the discretion of state legislature.

A live stream of the conference is available on the City of Westfield's Facebook page at facebook.com/CityofWestfield/

HerMD's 1st Indiana Location to Open in Carmel in January

HerMD, a female-founded, physician-led organization, focuses on gynecology, menopause, sexual health and medical aesthetics, earlier this week announced its first location in Indiana and fourth physical location in the US. HerMD will open in Carmel City Center on Jan. 19 at 885 Monon Green Blvd., Suite 118 in the Hamilton West building.

HerMD currently operates 3 locations in Cincinnati, OH, Crescent Springs, KY and Nashville, TN, and has a telehealth presence in 5 states.

HerMD

"Patients have traveled from over 35 states and Canada to HerMD in the Cincinnati market because they have been unable to find this type of care closer to home," said Kathy McAleer, CEO, HerMD. "By opening an office in a neighboring state, we are thrilled to provide care to patients seeking a revolutionary healthcare experience closer to

➔ See LOCATION Page A7

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 7:58 a.m.
SET: 5:19 p.m.

High/Low
Temperatures
HIGH: 45 °F
LOW: 32 °F

Today is....

- Bill of Rights Day
- International Tea Day
- National Lemon Cupcake Day

What Happened On This Day

- 1791 The Bill of Rights becomes law when ratified by the Virginia General Assembly
- 1939 *Gone with the Wind* premieres at Loew's Grand Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia
- 1970 Soviet spacecraft Venera 7 successfully lands on Venus, the first successful soft landing on another planet

Births On This Day

- 37 Nero Roman Emperor
- 1907 Oscar Niemeyer Brazilian architect and designer of the United Nations Headquarters and Cathedral of Brasilia

Deaths On This Day

- 1966 Walt Disney American animator, director, screenwriter, producer and co-founder of The Company
- 2010 Bob Feller American baseball player

➔ INSIDE TODAY

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➔ OBITUARIES

Richard 'Dick' Borst
Jane L. Cheney
Robert 'Bob' Walter Moore
Darrell E. Morris

➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

When you buy a plastic water bottle, make sure it's labeled "BPA-free." Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at www.thetimes24-7.com.



➔ HONEST HOOSIER

10 Hamilton County shopping days until Christmas. Here's a Christmas greeting from Betsy, Joe, Richard, Kelsey, Jacob, Melissa, Tim and all the friendly folks at The Times!



➔ TODAY'S QUOTE

"Christmas isn't a season. It's a feeling."

- Edna Ferber

➔ TODAY'S JOKE

When it comes to Christmas, there are five stages in your life:

- You believe in Santa
- You don't believe in Santa
- You are Santa
- You look like Santa
- You think all the Santas you see look young



The Times appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank **MICHAEL L. GRAHAM** for subscribing!

THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
35/42 PARTLY CLOUDY	28/34 FLURRIES AND POSSIBLE ICE	25/30 FLURRIES AND POSSIBLE ICE	22/31 MOSTLY SUNNY	23/35 FLURRIES, PEAKS OF SUN	25/32 PARTLY CLOUDY	18/34 CLOUDY

OBITUARIES

Richard 'Dick' Borst

June 21, 1933-December 13, 2022

Richard 'Dick' Borst, 89, of Fortville, passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022 at Compassus Hospice in Indianapolis.

He was born on June 21, 1933 in Indianapolis.

Mr. Borst was a graduate of Shortridge High School and proudly served his country in the United States Army during the Korean War. He retired after 33 years as a Sears appliance salesman.

He was a member of New Hope Presbyterian Church, the Fortville Masonic Lodge #207, Scottish Rite, Murat Shrine, Noblesville American Legion and the Fortville VFW. Mr. Borst loved to fish and hunt.

Survivors include his wife Mary Lou Borst; 2 daughters Susan Hinds and Linda (Kip) Lohmiller; 2 sons James (Kimberly) Borst and Robert (Jaylene) Borst; 9 grandchildren; and 15 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father Frank Borst; mother Ionia C. Lee; daughter Joyce Ann Borst; and grandson Benjamin Patrick Towle.

Visitation is scheduled to run from 4-8 p.m., with Masonic Services scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m., on Friday, Dec. 16, 2022 at Randall & Roberts Fishers Mortuary, 12010 Allisonville Rd., in Fishers. Services are scheduled to be held at 12 p.m., noon, with an additional visitation scheduled to begin at 11 a.m., on Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022 at the funeral home, with the Rev. Kemper Huber officiating. Burial will be at Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Memorial contributions may be made to New Hope Presbyterian Church, 12550 Brooks School Rd, Fishers, IN 46037 (newhopefishers.org); or Indy Honor Flight, PO Box 10, Plainfield, IN 46168 (Indyhonorflight.org).

Online condolences may be made at randallroberts.com

Jane L. Cheney

March 9, 1939-December 11, 2022

Jane L. Cheney, 83, of Noblesville, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 at her home.

She was born on March 9, 1939 to Kenneth and Vera (Mollenkopf) Kirkpatrick in Noblesville.

Mrs. Cheney was a graduate of Fishers High School and worked in admitting for Riverview Hospital, as well as the Connor House kitchen at Conner Prairie. She enjoyed crafting and bird watching. She also loved her pets.

Survivors include her 2 sons James (Lora Dorton-Cheney) Cheney and Jay Cheney; sister Martha Rouse; 2 grandchildren Jay (Sharalyn) Cheney and Kelly (Robert) Cheney Babcock; 5 great-grandchildren Faith Miller, Jay Cheney, Mikayla Cheney, Greyson Cheney and Emma Cheney Babcock; dog Sassy; and cat Pumpkin.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband James Cheney.

Visitation is scheduled to run from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., noon on Friday, Dec. 16, 2022 at Randall & Roberts Fishers Mortuary, 12010 Allisonville Rd., in Fishers. Burial will follow at Highland Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to American Diabetes Association, PO Box 7023, Merrifield, VA 22116-7023 (diabetes.org).

Online condolences may be made at randallroberts.com

Robert 'Bob' Walter Moore

September 29, 1953-December 14, 2022

Robert 'Bob' Walter Moore, 69, of Noblesville, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022 at his home.

He was born on Sept. 29, 1953 to Elmer LeRoy and Norma (Simpson) Moore in Flint, Michigan.

Mr. Moore proudly served in the United States Marines. He retired from the maintenance department at Suez. He enjoyed fishing, reading, traveling, and watching sports, especially football. Mr. Moore's most cherished times were those spent playing with his granddaughter.

Survivors include his wife of 26 years Carol (Simpson) Moore; 3 children Olivia (Daniel) Kilburn, Nicole (Jason Starless) Moore and Ryan Moore; 5 siblings Don (Wendy) Moore, Richard Moore, Terry (Rob) Hedges, Gary (Ruth) Moore and Michael Moore; and granddaughter Eleanor Kilburn.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Memorial services are scheduled to be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022 at Randall & Roberts Funeral Home, 1150 Logan St., in Noblesville, with the Rev. Stanley R. Sutton officiating. Visitation is scheduled to run from 1 p.m. to the time of service.

Memorial contributions may be made to Noblesville Fire Department, 135 S. 9th St., Noblesville, IN 46060 (checks made payable to the NFD Hamilton County Community Foundation), or a secure online donation through the Central Indiana Community Foundation (www.cicf.org/giving/give-now/existing-fund/). If making an online donation, please put "Noblesville Firefighters Fund" under the Fund Name section.

Online condolences may be made at randallroberts.com

Obituary deadline

The Times publishes obituaries daily at www.thetimes24-7.com, and in its print product every day with the exception of Sundays and Tuesdays. All obituaries must come from a funeral home. A photo may be included and should be sent as a high-resolution JPEG.

Daily obituary deadline is 4 p.m. for the following day's print publication.

To read more obituaries, visit www.thetimes24-7.com.

Darrell E. Morris

October 12, 1939-December 11, 2022

Darrell E. Morris, age 83, passed away at his home in Noblesville on Sunday morning, Dec. 11, 2022.

He was born on Oct. 12, 1939, in Indianapolis, son of the late Cecil Wilbur and Edith N. (Myers) Morris.

Mr. Morris was a 1959 graduate of Westfield-Washington High School.

While in school, he worked summers for Curtis Dyna Products, but was laid off shortly after graduation. This led him to spend the summer with his parents in the Ozarks. Upon returning home, he hired on as a carpenter with GM and spent the next 38 years with the company, retiring from their Bus and Truck division in 1997. Mr. Morris quickly found that retirement was not for him. He started driving for the Carmel Clay School System and would remain there until his 2nd retirement, about 10 years later.

He proudly served 6 years in the Indiana Air National Guard.

His strong faith served him well throughout the years. Mr. Morris was a member of the Little Eagle Creek Christian Church, where he served as both a deacon and a board member, as well as a youth co-sponsor with his wife. In the early 80s, he, along with a few other like-minded friends, helped start Geist Christian Church. In later years, Venture Christian Church became his new church family.

At 17 years old, Mr. Morris met the love of his life, Sue Reddick, during a summer church camp. They quickly fell in love, and when the time was right, headed down to the discount store, picked out rings and were married on June 5, 1960.

He and his wife took up square dancing, along with her twin sister Lou and her husband Jim, and immediately fell in love with the activity. Over the next 30 years, Mr. Morris would serve in many capacities within various square-dancing organizations, including, director of the National Square-Dancing Committee, as well as serving, along with his wife, as President, Vice President and Treasurer for their group, the Do-Si-Squares. He also had a very creative and artistic side. He loved to paint, but his woodworking projects fell a little closer to his heart. He loved making quilt racks for family members, and cradles for the grandkids. There is one special piece that has a story all its own; the rocking horse that Mr. Morris made for the 1st grandchild, which has been passed down through the family, and enjoyed by each and every grandchild and great-grandchild that followed.

It was no secret that his wife's favorite time of the year was Christmas, but Mr. Morris enjoyed it too. For many years he enjoyed playing Santa Claus for the Wiseman and Randolph families.

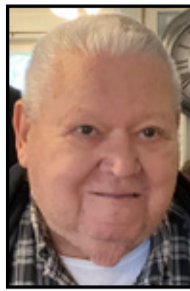
His gentle heart and love for his family are only the beginning of the legacy that he leaves behind.

Survivors include his 3 daughters Tammy (Don) Gray of Fishers, Sherry Gould of Noblesville and Sheila (Frank) Boles of Sheridan; 4 grandchildren Kevin (Katy) Gould of Sheridan, Katie Sue Osborne of Westfield, Chelsea Lynn Lara of Noblesville and Austin (Bianca) Gould of Sheridan; 3 bonus grandchildren Draya Boles of Indianapolis, Larissa Boles of McCordsville and Mariah (Trevor) Skirvin of Portland, Ind.; 9 great-grandchildren Alivia Gould, Liam Gould, Lincoln Gould, Waylon Gould, Gabe Lara, Coralyn Lara, Abel Skirvin, Zoey Skirvin and Eme Skirvin; brother Richard (Marcella) Morris of Miami, Oklahoma; brother-in-law Lyle (Pat) Richard Reddick of Noblesville; sisters-in-law Mary Rose Martin of Noblesville, Marcella (John) Ann Edwards of New Palestine, Beverly I. Trencher of Kokomo, Linda Lou (Jim) Lewis of Cicero, Maxine Reddick of Noblesville and Dona Reddick of Greenfield; and his feline BFF Gretta.

He was preceded in death by his parents Cecil Wilbur and Edith N. (Myers) Morris; brothers-in-law Donald Gene, Alonzo, Carroll, Wayne, Larry and William Reddick; sisters-in-law Virginia Miller and Phyllis Manier; canine furbaby Buddy Boy; and the love of his life, wife Nancy Sue (Reddick) Morris on Nov. 27, 2022.

Services are scheduled to be held at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022, at Kercheval Funeral Home, 306 E. 10th St., Sheridan, with visitation scheduled to run from 1 p.m. until the time of service. Pastor Mike Berry will be officiating. Mr. Morris is scheduled to be laid to rest at 10 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 19, 2022, at Little Eagle Creek Cemetery in Westfield.

Memorial contributions may be presented to the National Kidney Foundation or the American Diabetes Association.



Timmons Answers Reader Questions



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents

I'm 65 years old and started working for my high school newspaper when I was a sophomore in 1972. If I'm counting on fingers and toes correctly, that means I've been involved with the craft for right at 50 years. During that time I've been fortunate to have a fair amount of reader reaction. Some good, some not so much.

But I have never, not even close, had the kind of reaction that the trip to Israel created. And a good many of you have asked questions - so let me do two things here. First, I'll try to answer some of them today. Second, if any church or community group would like to hear first-hand the details of the trip, just e-mail me and I will be happy to visit with you and share. I'm trying to organize the photos now into some sort of organized manner that doesn't resemble Uncle Bob's vacation slide show from 1964. No promises though!

More importantly, let's get to your questions:

Several of you asked if I found any answers? At first I wasn't sure what you meant. But one reader from Sheridan mentioned a column I wrote as we were leaving that mentioned the world being in a funk and that the Holy Land might be the best place to start looking for answers.

The short answer is, I don't know. When we were in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and I was losing patience with another group that had cut in front of us, I realized my trials and tribulations were absolutely nothing compared to what Jesus of Nazareth went through. And after more reflection on that, maybe handling things with more grace is part of the answer . . . and, for me at least, the biggest challenge.

The most often asked question was, what was it like to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles? In a word, unreal. On the last day of the tour we were walking the path Christ followed when He was forced to carry His cross. Our guide pointed to a spot on a stone wall where Jesus reportedly leaned and placed His hand. We all did the same. And when it was my turn, the idea that I was physically doing the exact same thing the Son of God did, albeit in much different circumstances, physically impacted me. It made me think of how tired He must have been. I could not begin to imagine the pain He was in after the torture He endured.

Nor could I wrap my head around carrying a wooden cross that weighed a few hundred pounds.

Humbling? Overwhelming? Thankful? I work with words for a living and even more than a week after the fact am still not sure how to describe it.

What was my favorite part of the trip? Many of you asked that. It's hard to pick out one thing. Hermon Mount, the place where Jesus told Peter he would build His church on that rock, was very big (no pun intended). Masada, the fortress on top of a mountain where a thousand Jews chose death rather than surrender to slavery under the Romans, was impactful. But the three sites - the birth, the death and the resurrection - would have to be at the top of my list.

Conversely, several asked if there were any disappointments?

Sure. I wish we would have had lots more time. But more than that, it was disappointing to learn that there is some healthy disagreement on what happened where. Scholars and archaeologists are at odds on many of the locations - like the exact spot of the crucifixion. It's certainly understandable. Two thousand years have gone by and everything from the landscape to governments to cultures and even written records have changed.

Understandable, no doubt. But still disappointing.

Would we go back, was another question echoed from many? No doubt. However, I would want to do it differently if we did. The tour worked well for us as first-time visitors. It gives a very broad view of a lot of things. But if we were able to go back, I'd rather be able to spend more time with fewer places - especially the three favorites mentioned above.

The second-biggest question I got was how did this impact my faith?

I guess the easiest answer is that it made me realize how much work I have to do. I mentioned before we left that believing wasn't the problem, it was prioritizing time for that belief. I hope to do better in that regard. Perhaps more importantly, I understand why I should.

For those ready to move on to other topics, this is the final planned column on the Holy Land pilgrimage. Thank you from the very bottom of my heart for so many of you coming along with me on this trip.

God bless!

Two cents, which is about how much Timmons said his columns are worth, appears periodically on Thursdays in The Times. Timmons is the chief executive officer of Sagamore News Media, the company that owns The Noblesville Times. He is also a proud Noblesville High School graduate and can be contacted at timmons@thetimes24-7.com.

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THE TIMES

Electric Vehicle High-Paying Jobs Coming to Kokomo

A tier one supplier for the electric vehicle industry, soulbrain MI, recently announced plans to establish operations in Kokomo, creating up to 75 new, high-wage jobs by the end of 2025.

"This investment in Indiana will allow soulbrain MI to increase production of our advanced electrolyte solutions, powering batteries that are critical to the next generation of vehicles," said Joonsung Park, president of soulbrain MI.

"We are excited to join Indiana's growing ecosystem of manufacturers that are developing the future of mobility and implementing sustainable, environmentally-friendly solutions."

soulbrain MI plans to break ground on its new Indiana facility in March 2023 and begin hiring for new positions, including engineers and technicians in early 2024. New positions are expected to offer average salaries higher than the Howard County average.

"We are excited and honored that soulbrain MI has chosen to invest in Kokomo," said Kokomo Mayor Tyler Moore. "This additional development shows that Kokomo and Howard County are at the forefront of the emerging EV industry. I am confident that our talented local workforce will be poised to fill these positions and help



soulbrain MI succeed."

The company, which is headquartered in Michigan and is a subsidiary of South Korea-based Soulbrain Holdings, will invest \$75 million to construct and equip a 30,000-square-foot manufacturing facility on 22 acres at 2141 N Touby Pike in Kokomo. The new facility will allow soulbrain MI to increase production of high purity electrolyte for lithium-ion batteries, helping to power Stellantis' and Samsung SDI's new next-generation electric vehicle battery manufacturing plant being built nearby.

"Indiana is uniquely positioned to be a leader in innovating the future of mobility and producing new, electric solutions that will power the world," said Indiana Secretary of Commerce Brad Chambers. "Our state's electric vehicle industry continues to grow and attract like-minded, future-focused companies like soulbrain MI, and I'm confident that Indiana will be at the center of tomorrow's global mobility industry."

soulbrain MI, which was established in 2010,

has been advancing R&D and producing cutting edge electrolyte for the advanced lithium-ion battery industry for more than 10 years. The company is a tier one supplier for the electric vehicle industry, supporting companies like LG, SK and Samsung SDI which produce batteries for the next generation of transportation and energy storage. soulbrain MI is the company's North American research and development center, a full-production facility dedicated to researching and manufacturing high purity electrolyte for the advanced lithium-ion battery industry. The company is committed to creating a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly energy source, providing customers and producers a quality product for the next generation of transportation.

Based on the company's job creation plans, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) committed an investment in Soulbrain MI of up to \$1.1 million in the form of incentive-based tax credits and up to \$100,000 in training grants. These tax credits are performance-based, meaning the company is eligible to claim incentives once Hoosiers are hired. The city of Kokomo will consider additional incentives, and Duke Energy offered additional incentives.

Spartz, Jayapal Introduce Bill to Help Stop Hospital Anticompetitive Behavior

U.S. Representatives Victoria Spartz (IN-05) and Pramila Jayapal (WA-07) today introduced the bipartisan Stop Anticompetitive Healthcare Act. The bill would amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to expand antitrust enforcement to non-profit hospitals. Currently, the FTC has no ability to stop anticompetitive actions by non-profit hospital systems.

"Hospital consolidation and lack of competition is a major factor driving unsustainable health care prices," said Congresswoman Victoria Spartz.

"More than one of eight Americans and one of six Hoosiers are in collections due to medical debt, which is unacceptable. Non-profit hospital status should not be a loophole to avoid antitrust enforcement."

"Being able to access quality, affordable



Rep. Victoria Spartz

healthcare is crucial to living well and to thriving. There is no question that hospital consolidation hurts patients by causing healthcare costs to jump and removing choice," said Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal.

"My bipartisan bill with Congresswoman Spartz would put in important guardrails to prevent corporations from putting profits over proper patient care without changing anything else about a hospital's non-profit status. We are saying enough is

enough with corporate profiteering off people's illnesses in our healthcare system."

A 2020 report by the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission found that hospital mergers lead to higher healthcare prices for patients. An analysis by the New York Times also found that hospital consolidation virtually eliminated competition and caused hospital admission costs to rise. Areas with the highest rate of hospital consolidation had prices go up between 11% and 54%.

Working Americans bear the brunt of hospital mergers, with higher costs and diminished quality of care. Preventing hospitals from engaging in anticompetitive behavior that stifles choice and the ability to seek affordable, quality care will be crucial to lowering healthcare costs for working families.

State Keeps Tik Tok Pressure on Apple, Google

Less than a week after launching two separate lawsuits against TikTok, Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita now is calling on Apple and Google to change their age ratings for the app when making it available to consumers.

"Sexual content, profanity and drug references run rampant in TikTok videos," Rokita said. "This kind of material threatens the mental and physical health of young Hoosiers, and not only TikTok but also vendors must make it clear to families that TikTok is wholly inappropriate for kids."

Specifically, Indiana is demanding that Apple update the TikTok rating from "12+" to "17+" in its App Store and that



Attorney General Todd Rokita

Google update the TikTok rating from "Teen" to "Mature" in the Google Play Store.

The current ratings are misleading and deceptive to consumers, as explained in two multistate letters — one sent to Apple and the other to Google.

On Dec. 7, Rokita filed two lawsuits against

TikTok.

One lawsuit alleges that TikTok lures children onto the platform through a variety of misleading representations.

The other asserts that TikTok — which is owned by a Chinese company — has reams of highly sensitive data and personal information about Indiana consumers and has deceived those consumers to believe that this information is protected from the Chinese government and Communist Party.

"We are determined to hold this company accountable," Rokita said. "And that goes for its enablers as well. We're ready to pursue further legal actions if necessary."

Indiana GPS Dashboard Launches

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) launched its new Indiana Graduates Prepared to Succeed Dashboard (Indiana GPS), which displays a transparent, robust view of school and student performance over multiple measures. The dashboard can be accessed directly online at indianagps.doe.in.gov

"Through the launch of the Indiana Graduates Prepared to Succeed dashboard, Indiana is re-envisioning how we strategically display school and student performance," said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. "This dashboard considers a number of indicators of student success, focusing on both knowledge and skill development across all grade levels and making clear connections between a student's K-12 journey and their post-graduation outcomes. By showcasing this information in one easily accessible location, our educators, families and communities will be empowered to make informed decisions that help drive continuous improvement for students across the K-12 continuum."

When first accessing the Indiana GPS dashboard, users will scroll through a landing page that tells the story of a student's journey from Pre-K through high school and beyond, displaying specific knowledge and skill development and why those knowledge and skills matter for future success. From there, users can see statewide-, corporation- and schools-level summary pages that display performance over multiple measures.

The development of this dashboard is an iterative process and will continue to be improved over time, with new data and



features added. Over the last month, school leaders have had access to an embargoed pre-release of the dashboard, providing an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback prior to the public launch.

As a result of this feedback, several updates have already been made or are underway to ensure the dashboard is as comprehensive and as easy to use as possible. Additional enhancements will continue, as this dashboard is designed to be transparent and nimble.

The data displayed and tracked through the Indiana GPS dashboard centers around five key characteristics which best indicate a student's preparation for success after high school. These characteristics are:

- Academic mastery;
- Career and postsecondary readiness: credentials and experiences;
- Communication and collaboration;
- Work ethic; and
- Civic, financial and digital literacy.

Last year, the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) unanimously approved multiple indicators (available for Pre-K through grade eight here and grades nine through 12 here) to measure each of these characteristics on the dashboard, signaling students' performance across all grade levels.

Some of these indicators were based on data already maintained by IDOE or other state agencies and are the basis for this initial dashboard launch.

Looking forward, IDOE will continue to add additional measures to the dashboard, including some new indicators which will require collaborative development, to provide a more comprehensive view of school and student performance.

The development of Indiana GPS follows the enactment of House Enrolled Act 1514, passed in 2021 directing IDOE and the SBOE to develop a school performance dashboard that promotes transparency and multiple student measures, including longitudinal measures. The first iteration of the dashboard is launching one and a half years in advance of the statutorily-required July 1, 2024 date.

Over the last year, IDOE has collaborated with stakeholders statewide on the development of the Indiana GPS characteristics and dashboard.

"Indiana GPS is a one-stop-shop, displaying information and data that matter to individual students and families, as well as the economic success of communities across Indiana," said Jenner.

"By coming together with educators, families, community leaders and employers, we have built a dashboard that transparently displays where our schools have been and, most importantly, where we are going. As we continue to work together on future iterations of the dashboard, Indiana GPS will continue to be updated so that it best reflects our progress for Indiana's students."

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Photo courtesy of Senator Todd Young's Office

Young Recognizes Hoosier Students Interning in Washington this Fall

On Tuesday, Senator Todd Young recognized Hoosier students who participated in the fall session of his internship program in Washington, D.C. The students assisted legislative and communications staff with daily activities and special projects. The intern class included (from left to right) Mason Pickett, a junior from Fort Wayne attending Indiana University; Jasmine Saini, a junior from Fishers attending Butler; Mia Schul, a junior from West Lafayette attending Indiana University; and Katelyn Rickert, a junior from Brownsburg attending Georgetown University. Senator Young's office offers internship opportunities year-round, in both his Washington and Indianapolis offices. The internship program offers students the opportunity to experience the legislative branch of government and serve Hoosiers. Students interested in applying can visit Senator Young's internship webpage or call (202)-224-5623 to learn more.

IDEM to Celebrate Environmentally Friendly Hoosier Projects, Groups

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management yesterday announced that the agency is now accepting nominations for the 2023 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence. This marks the 30th year the awards have been given to celebrate innovative projects with measurable environmental benefits. Watch the Governor's call for nominations video.



"It is always an honor for IDEM to recognize these outstanding Hoosiers who are choosing to go above and beyond to make a difference in Indiana's environment," said Commissioner Brian Rockensuess.

"I encourage Hoosiers to submit their applications for their innovative projects, and I look forward to celebrating this year's honorees and their many contributions to our state."

Presented annually since 1994, the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence has become one of Indiana's most prestigious environmental awards. In 2022, award winners included: Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, LLC, Paramount Schools of Excellence, AstraZeneca Mount Vernon Operations, Indianapolis Public Schools, Big Pine Creek Watershed, Cummins Inc., and the City of Monticello.

This year, IDEM and Governor Eric J. Holcomb's office will present seven awards, one in each of the following categories: Energy Efficiency/Renewable Resources; Environmental Education/Outreach; Five Year Continuous Improvement; Greening the Government; Land Use/Conservation;

Pollution Prevention; and, Recycling/Reuse.

Citizens, government agencies, businesses, organizations, and educational institutions are invited to submit nominations. Self-nominations are encouraged. Nominated projects must have occurred in Indiana and been implemented in 2021 or 2022.

The deadline for nominations is March 6, 2023. Awards will be presented in September. A panel of conservation, environmental, and academic professionals review nominations. The awards will be based on project innovation, measurable results, and transferability. Nomination forms and instructions are available at idem.IN.gov/partnerships/governors-awards-for-environmental-excellence/.

About IDEM: Established in 1986, IDEM (idem.IN.gov) implements federal and state regulations regarding the environment. Through compliance assistance, incentive programs and educational outreach, the agency encourages and aids businesses and citizens in protecting Hoosiers and Indiana's environment.

DNR to Increase Lake Michigan Chinook Salmon Stock

Indiana DNR will increase Chinook salmon stocked in Lake Michigan by 50,000 starting this spring, per Lake Michigan Committee agreement.

The change will increase the annual production target for Chinook from 225,000 to 275,000.

Baitfish populations have rebounded from an all-time low in the mid-2010s after lake-wide stocking reductions made by all state agencies during the past decade.

Ben Dickinson, Indiana DNR's Lake Michigan biologist, says the improved predator-prey balance in the lake allows for the increase, which



should benefit anglers, but biologists will be monitoring for the need for future adjustments.

"Anglers should realize increasing stocking does increase predation pressure and may increase future risk to baitfish populations," he said. "We will

continue to closely watch the predator-prey balance to help ensure the long-term health of the fishery."

Staff from Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery recently traveled to Michigan to obtain Chinook salmon eggs to meet the new production target.

"Indiana doesn't have the infrastructure to take salmon eggs, so partnerships are crucial for our Lake Michigan program," said Rob Ackerson, Mixsawbah hatchery manager. "We're grateful to our Michigan DNR partners for providing us with the opportunity to obtain eggs."

Fish from the eggs will be raised at Mixsawbah to be stocked in April 2023. They will spend one to three years feeding in Lake Michigan before returning to their stocking sites as mature spawning adults in the fall.

More information on the hatchery is at on.IN.gov/mixsawbah-sfh.

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BBB Tip: 6 Steps to Stop Porch Pirates This Holiday Season

The rise of online marketplaces and expedited delivery services is a convenient service for many consumers across the nation, allowing holiday purchasers to search for the perfect gift for friends and family. Unfortunately, purchasing and having the item delivered to the proper address does not guarantee you will receive it. According to market research firm C+R Research, package theft continues to be an issue for many Americans, with approximately 14% of consumers experiencing package theft in 2022.

Package thieves, also known as “porch pirates,” often take advantage of an opportunity and may frequent a neighborhood or community multiple times before moving on to another. They will often target houses that provide a quick in-and-out route, especially if the porch or area where packages are delivered is within 25 feet of the street and are easily visible. Over the past five years, internet searches using the keywords “package stolen” nearly doubled during December, demonstrating the impact of this crime on households across the nation.

As a crime of opportunity, preventing or discour-

aging package theft can be accomplished in several ways, depending on the location of your residence, type, and community. For instance, preventing package theft at an apartment complex in the middle of the city differs from a suburban residential community. However, consumers can use specific strategies to discourage the act no matter where they live.

BBB provides the following tips to prevent package thieves from affecting your holiday plans (and the rest of the year):

- Check with neighbors. Sometimes, your package may not be stolen, just simply at the wrong address. Before filing a report or contacting the sender, check with your neighbors and see if the delivery service may have dropped off your package at the wrong address. Many delivery companies will take pictures of your package in the designated location – be sure to check for the photo and verify it is at the right spot.
- Don't leave unattended packages. When possible, do not leave delivered packages unattended for long periods. If you are expecting a package, attempt to schedule its delivery when you know you will be home. Ask your



neighbors if they would mind holding on to packages delivered if you plan to be gone for an extended time during the holidays.

- Ship to store. If purchasing an item from a retailer that has a physical location near your home, consider shipping it there instead. Retailers will

require proof of purchase or identification before releasing packages they have received, and this is a sure way to avoid porch pirates.

- Use a security camera. Installing a home security system with cameras or simply a camera-enabled doorbell is a great way to

deter package theft, especially when highly visible. Consider including a sign that specifically states that the residence is under surveillance. Even if a package is stolen from your porch, the video evidence will help law enforcement track down the thieves (but be wary of the risk of internet-connected devices and research before you purchase).

- Require a signature. Many delivery companies include the option to require a signature before leaving a package, letting you take physical possession of the item as soon as it is delivered. While this option works well for those who are often at home, especially for expensive items, it may create difficulties in receiving packages if your schedule and the delivery service are different. Be sure to check with the delivery company on their policy for packages that are not signed for; they may return it to the sender after a certain number of attempts.
- Consider a package receiving service. Some major retailers, such as Amazon, offer secure package receiving locations away from your home that you can access with a key or code. Some independent

businesses also specialize in this service, allowing you to designate a different delivery location for your packages and the ability to pick them up on your way home.

If you fear that your package has been stolen, file a report with your local police department and the delivery company. Depending on which delivery service you use, they may offer insurance or other policies to reimburse you for your losses.

For more resources and tips on how to avoid scams this holiday season, visit BBB.org/Holiday.

Report scams to BBB Scam Tracker.

About BBB Serving Central Indiana:

The Better Business Bureau has empowered people to find businesses, brands and charities they can trust for over 110 years. In 2021, people turned to BBB more than 200 million times for BBB Business Profiles on 6.3 million businesses and Charity Reports on 25,000 charities, free at BBB.org. Local, independent BBBs can be found across the United States, Canada, and Mexico, including BBB Serving Central Indiana, which was founded in 1916 and serves 46 counties.

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Indiana Basketball HOF Announces 2023 Induction Class

Women's basketball in Indiana has always seen the top players in the nation, historically. The 2023 Induction class of the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame is no different. The board of directors of the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame proudly announces their 2023 women's induction class, to be honored at the 21st annual Women's Awards Banquet on April 29, 2023.

Kasia (McClendon) Campbell was a 1993 graduate of Gary West Side, averaging 17.4 points, 5.5 assists and 8.5 steals a game her senior season, while helping her team to a 24-1 record. Her Gary West Side teams won 3 sectionals, 2 regionals and 3 conference titles while she earned team MVP her sophomore, junior and senior seasons. Campbell was an Indiana All-Star, Indiana East/West All Star and Gary Post-Tribune Player of the Year. She continued her playing career at Southern Illinois where she set the league and school record for steals. She was a 3 time MVC Defensive Player of the Year and 2 time 1st Team All MVC. She played for one year after graduation in Tel Aviv Israel. She was a 2005 inductee into the Southern Illinois HOF, and a 2018 member of the IBHOF Silver Anniversary Team. She has been a case manager for 20 years, and a real estate broker for 4.

Bruce Dockery earned 502 wins as a longtime coach at Evansville Reitz Memorial High School. While at Reitz Memorial, Dockery was SIAC Coach of the Year 8 times, District Coach of the Year 5 times, won 8 conference, 14 sectional, 6 regional, 2 semi state and 1 state runner up honor. In 2011 his team went 28-1 and won the 3A State Championship over Benton Central 58-50 in overtime. He was a 1969 graduate of Evansville Bosse, while also attending Charleston Southern and University of Southern Indiana. Dockery was inducted into the Reitz Memorial Hall of Fame in 2020 and in 2021, he was honored with the Hoosier Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Excellence Award.

Katie Douglas was a 1997 Indiana All-Star, having played at Perry Meridian High School. In her senior season, Douglas averaged 19.3 points while amassing 177 rebounds and 118 steals. She was named team MVP, 1st Team All State, All County, and All Conference, while her team collected the sectional and regional title her senior season. After graduating from high school, Douglas went on to help lead Purdue to the 1999 NCAA National

Championship. Douglas was honored to play for the USA Basketball Team. She was Big Ten Player of the Year both her junior and senior seasons, along with earning Kodak All American, and Purdue Female Athlete of the Year honors both years. She was a 2nd Team Academic All-American her junior year, and a 1st Team Academic All-American her senior season. Douglas was the 10th pick in the WNBA draft, played in the WNBA for 14 seasons earning multiple All Star game honors and 2009 All-WNBA honors, while also playing summer basketball in Europe during the WNBA off season. Her number 23 was retired by the Connecticut Sun. Currently, Douglas is the owner of Orangetheory fitness franchise in Greenwood.

Jennifer (Marlow) Drudge was not only a standout basketball player at Rushville, but also a 1994 State Tennis Doubles Runner-up. Graduating from Rushville in 1995, Drudge scored a career 1,306 points, averaging over 20 points per game her senior season. She was selected as 1st team All sectional, Regional and All-State her senior season, while also being named an Indiana All-Star. Drudge played collegiately at Butler where right away, she was honored on the All-Newcomer Team her freshman season. Her junior and senior seasons she was named 1st Team All-Conference and All-Defensive Team as a senior. Drudge was the Head Coach at Carmel from 2001-2004 and an assistant with the Greyhounds in 00-01 and again from 2009-13. She was inducted into the Butler Hall of Fame in 2013, while being named to their All-Centennial team. She has taught Chemistry at Carmel High School since 2000, while being their department chair since 2010.

Ruth (Riley) Hunter was USA Today Honorable Mention and a 1st Team All-State member in 1997, while leading North Miami to a 20-1 record her senior season. She holds the school record for rebounds per game, season, and career; blocks in a season and career, along with points per game in a season and career. She followed her high school playing days by going to Notre Dame where she graduated with a B.A. in psychology and Exec MBA (both Summa Cum Laude). Ruth was a 3 time Big East Defensive Player of the Year, and a 2 time Academic All-American. Her senior year, Notre Dame won the NCAA Championship, where she averaged 18.7 points a

game that year, and was National Player of the Year, Final Four MVP, Naismith Player of the Year, NCAA Verizon Academic All-American of the Year and Sports Illustrated Player of the Year. She was the 5th overall pick in the WNBA Draft and MVP of the 2003 finals. She is the first player to be MVP of the NCAA and WNBA Finals. After two WNBA Championship seasons in 2003 and 2006 with the Detroit Shock, Ruth continues to wear many hats including being the 1st Vice President of WNBPA, United Nations Foundation Spokesperson, Share Our Strength Spokesperson and on the Notre Dame Monogram Club Board of Directors. Since 2002, she was a radio and TV analyst for Notre Dame Women's Basketball, since 2018 is a color analyst for Miami Heat TV/radio, and 2019 to present is an analyst for the ACC Network. She was inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2019, and in 2006 was named to ESPN.com's 25 greatest Women's college basketball players of the last 25 years.

Sheila (McMillen) Keller led the Rochester Zebras with 28.2 points her senior season, which ranked #2 in Indiana that year. Her senior season stats earned her All Conference, South Bend Area Player of the Year, Parade All-American, a Nike All-American, North/South All-Star, and a member of the Indiana All-Star team. She holds the all-time scoring record, for boys and girls, at Rochester with 1,696 career points. She was a member of the Hall of Fame's 2020 Silver Anniversary Team. Following her time at Rochester, she went to Notre Dame, where her senior year was highlighted by being named team captain, MVP, Francis Patrick O'Connor Award (best displays total embodiment and inspiration to their team) and being named to the Big East All Tourney and Academic All-Star Team. She was also a participant in the ESPN College 3-point Championship. Sheila is currently a Varsity Assistant at Carmel High School, after numerous other coaching positions since graduation. She is also a black belt in taekwondo.

Diane (Hoereth) Metz, was 1986 Indianapolis Star's "City Athlete of the Year" as a senior on the Roncalli basketball team that went 22-5 where she averaged 17 points and 12.5 rebounds a game and were Sectional, Regional and Semi-State Champions. She was 1st team All-State, All-Metro, along



with being named Marion County Coaches of GSA Outstanding Senior Athlete. She was a member of the 2011 Silver Anniversary team, along with being the Roncalli Athlete of the Year in 1896. Diane was also a standout volleyball player where she was a 3 time All City and All-State award winner. After graduating from Roncalli, she went on to play collegiate volleyball at Texas, IUPUI and Indiana where she holds the career record for most matches with 20 or more kills (17). Since 1991, Diane has worked for Aldi, Inc. where she is currently the Director of Administration in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.

Charmonique Stallworth was on the 1992 historic South Bend Washington squad that was the first in school history to win a Sectional, where she averaged 26.3 points and 10.5 rebounds that season. She was an Indiana All-Star along with being named to the 2017 Silver Anniversary Team. Charmonique graduated from South Bend Washington in 1992, and continued her academic and athletic endeavor at Northern Illinois University where she averaged 23.1 points per game her senior season, 2nd highest in school history. She holds the school record of scoring 19 baskets in one game and sits 10th on the career scoring list at Northern Illinois with 1,415 points. Charmonique was a 2001 inductee into the South Bend Washington Hall of Fame, and a 2015 inductee into the Northern Illinois Athletics Hall of Fame. Since 2010, she has worked in MSD Warren Township as a

Special Education Teacher and Department Chair at Creston Middle School.

Lisa (Shepherd) Stidham was the 1997 Miss Basketball, an Indiana All-Star, Gatorade Player of the Year, Nike WBCA All-American and Parade All-American 1st team, in her senior season at Richmond High School. As a senior, Lisa averaged 29.9 points per game while accumulating 132 rebounds, 80 assists, and 87 steals during that campaign. She holds the career scoring record for boys or girls at Richmond High School with 2,140 career points. Following her playing days at Richmond she went to Penn State University where she was named to the Big Ten All-Freshman team. She was named 3 time Academic All-Big Ten and 2 time All-Big Ten honoree. Following playing at Penn State, she was an assistant coach at North Central from 2011-2020 where they were the 2012 State Champions. Lisa has been an activities director in different nursing homes and has been the owner of Dream Makers Basketball since 2008, and co-owner of S & S Elite Sports since 2016. Stidham is currently on the Hamilton South-eastern coaching staff.

The Indiana Fever Silver Medal Award, including induction for contributions other than as an Indiana high school basketball player or Indiana high school basketball coach, is presented to Denise McClanahan. With over 35 years of experience as a high school coach, AAU director and coach and noted for creation and leadership

of Lady Mac summer leagues, McClanahan was Director of Lady Mac high school summer league for 34 years and director for 33 years of Jr. Lady Mac middle school league. Over the years, these leagues have provided opportunities for countless central Indiana girls players, recently involving 700 players per summer (36 high school teams and 38 middle school teams). As director, she schedules teams and officials for approximately 400 games per summer. As a high school coach, a career record of 347-292 including six sectional titles, one regional title, three Marion County championships and was twice Marion County Coach of the Year and 2002 Indiana All-Star assistant coach. AAU involvement includes creation of Lady Mac AAU Club as well as coaching roles with Indiana's Finest, Indiana Faith and Indiana Elite programs, coaching teams to numerous national appearances including 2002 17U AAU National Champions with Indiana's Finest. She also created and ran the High Intensity Basketball Camps. A member of two Marion County championship teams as a player, at Perry Meridian H.S., she also played at Central Michigan, Butler and IUPUI.

The Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame's 21st Annual Women's Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2023. The day's events will include a free reception at the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame Museum that afternoon and a banquet that evening at the Primo Banquet Hall in Indianapolis. Reservations will be available online, over the phone or through mail order in early 2023. Call the Hall at (765) 529-1891, visit hoopshall.com or email kayla@hoopshall.com for more information.

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Thanks for reading The Times, Hamilton County!

LOCAL From Page A1

consumers to create a restaurant quality meal at home for their families, according to the company.

Joining Maple Leaf Farms and Polywood in the semifinals were Hiker Trailers in Columbus and Kidstuff Playsystems in Gary. Rounding out the top eight: Grinds Coffee Pouches in Westfield, Hard Truth Distilling Co. in Nashville, Hudson Aquatic Systems in Angola and Wag'n Tails Mobile Conversions in Granger.

The field began with 154 makers that represented 43 Hoosier communities and a wide variety of products made – from racing tires to children's car seats to wine and video notes – and even Batmobile replicas.

Brinegar reports the battles were often fierce, with thousands of votes cast in every round.

"Indiana is fortunate to be home to companies that grow and make all kinds of things," he enthuses. "We are thrilled to recognize and bring attention to some of the state's best and most innovative manufacturers. We especially congratulate Maple Leaf Farms on its well-deserved victory."

Learn about all the companies in the tournament at indianachamber.com/coolestthing.

An online randomizer generated the initial Cool-

est Thing Made in Indiana matchups, with online voting determining the winners in each round. There was no entry fee to participate. A company did not need to be headquartered in Indiana, but the product submitted had to be manufactured in the state.

The inaugural Indiana's Best Places to Work in Manufacturing program saw 14 companies recognized with Kalenborn Abresist Corporation of Urbana coming in at the very top. The Wabash County company develops and manufactures custom solutions for the protection of industrial facilities from wear and impact damage to ensure the proper flow of materials in the production process.

"Manufacturing workplaces must adhere to various safety and other regulations. Every company on the list not only is committed to those standards but goes above and beyond for its workers and is a leader in its community," Brinegar offered.

"Kalenborn Abresist, in particular, showed how it values its employees and frequently recognized them and jobs well done."

The 2022 Indiana Best Places to Work in Manufacturing companies range in Hoosier employee count from 39 to over 7,600. The list by

- ranking:
1. Kalenborn Abresist Corporation in Urbana
 2. Nucor Steel Indiana in Crawfordsville
 3. IBC Materials & Technologies LLC in Lebanon
 4. Nix Companies in Poseyville
 5. Nexxt Spine LLC in Noblesville
 6. CrossPoint Polymer Technologies LLC in Evansville
 7. Oliver Winery in Bloomington
 8. Wag'n Tails Mobile Conversions in Granger
 9. Major Tool and Machine in Indianapolis
 10. MCP USA, Inc. in Portage
 11. SMC Corporation of America in Noblesville
 12. Lippert in Elkhart
 13. Functional Devices, Inc. in Sharpsville
 14. Kelco Industries in Fremont

Wag'n Tails Mobile Conversions pulled off a double – also being honored as a Coolest Thing Made in Indiana company quarterfinalist.

Recognized Best Places companies were determined through employer reports and comprehensive employee surveys. The Workforce Research Group handled the selection process.

Learn more about Indiana's Best Places to Work in Manufacturing in the current issue of BizVoice magazine at bizvoicemagazine.com.

LOCATION From Page A1

home."

HerMD has a unique model that sets it apart from other providers specializing in two areas of women's health that are often overlooked, underserved and stigmatized: menopause and sexual health. Providers allocate more time to each patient visit, including 60 minutes for all new patient consultations. In addition to gynecological services, HerMD offers on-site ancillary services such as: in-office surgical procedures, minimally invasive treatment options, ultrasound imaging, and phlebotomy/lab testing.

HerMD was founded by Dr. Somi Javaid, a board-certified OBGYN and thought leader in women's sexual health and menopause.

"The fight to improve women's healthcare is ongoing and essential," said Javaid. "I founded HerMD because I could no longer stand by and watch women be dismissed by



the healthcare system."

"We are thrilled to welcome HerMD, a female-founded organization, to Carmel City Center," said Melissa Averitt, senior vice president at Pedcor Companies. "Fifty-five percent of the businesses at Carmel City Center are women-owned or operated and HerMD is the perfect complement to the businesses in the Center. The services and care that they offer to women is so important and we look forward to their opening in January."

To learn more about the Carmel office, visit hermd.com/locations/indianapolis-in

About HerMD: Physician-founded, patient-forward, and mis-

sion-driven, HerMD is revolutionizing the future of women's healthcare through an integrated, evidence-based model. By leading female-focused research and integrating cutting-edge technologies and treatment options into the care model, HerMD is leading the movement in transforming women's healthcare. Follow HerMD on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. For more information, visit hermd.com

About Carmel City Center:

Carmel City Center is a one million square-foot, \$300 million, mixed-use development located in the heart of Carmel, Indiana. A destination like no other in central Indiana, the project offers the appeal of a neighborhood and the vibrancy of a downtown. Carmel City Center features luxurious residences, specialty retail and restaurants and premier office space.

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I Indiana & Facts Fun



14
Daviss

Number % Stumpers

1. What is the population density of the county?
2. What percentage of the county population is the Amish community?
3. What fraction of land does Washington possess?
4. How old is Daviss County?

Answers: 1. About 76/square mile 2. 14.6%
3. About 1/92 4. 200 years
4. 200 years

Did You Know?

- Founded in February in 1818, Daviss County is the 29th oldest county in the state.
- The county has an estimated population of 33,113 individuals.
- Washington, the county seat, is 4.77 square miles and has a population of 11,509 residents.
- The total amount of land in the county is 436.87 square miles.
- The Amish community in the county makes up 4,855 residents.

Got Words?

Washington contains numerous architecturally historic buildings, such as the Helphenstine House. What significance do you believe historic buildings have in towns, and how do they compare to modern buildings?

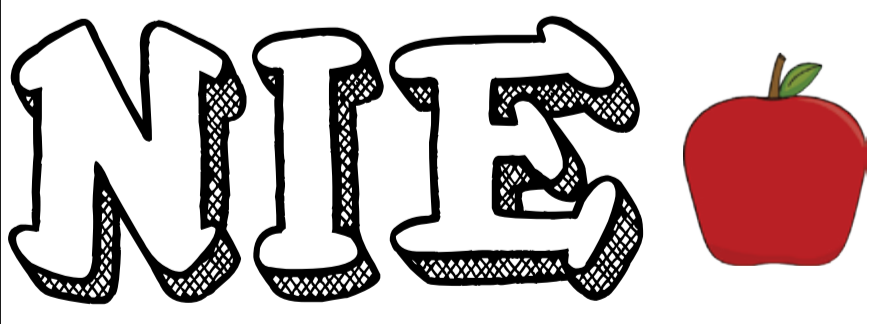
Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. GIWOSTHANN
2. CRSIOITH
3. MAHIS
4. SDVEIAS NYCOUT
5. HIETENNSPHLE

Answers: 1. Washington 2. Historic 3. Amish
4. Daviss County 5. Helphenstine

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Indiana the Strong

Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022

A9

Indiana State Department of Agriculture Announces Specialty Crop Projects Received Funding

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) announced four Indiana specialty crop projects received a total sum of \$414,051.89 through funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP).

"Agriculture is big business in Indiana and encompasses more than traditional row crops and livestock," said Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, who also serves as the state's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "Indiana is home to a robust specialty crop industry that is a critical piece of our agricultural economy. I look forward to seeing the good work these projects accomplish."

Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture and nursery crops. For a full list of specialty crops please visit ams.usda.gov.

Annually, Specialty Crop Block Grants are available to non-profit and for-profit organizations, governments, public or private colleges and universities for up to a three-year project term and will fund specialty crop research, education and market development. To qualify, projects must aim to benefit the industry as a whole, rather than one product, individual or organization. Applications undergo a competitive scoring process, including review by an external scoring committee.

Some of the projects awarded this grant cycle include City of Indianapolis Seed to Store, which is a farm-to-retail program that fosters connections between local minority-led urban farms and small businesses in Indianapolis and Marion County. A honey education trailer for youth education and a new method for growing and protecting strawberries in Indiana also received grants.

"This funding from USDA is critical to advancing our specialty crop sector, and each year many different research areas are supported," said Bruce Kettler, Director, Indiana State Department of Agriculture. "Everything from sourcing local food and aquaponics research and from youth development to increasing farmer



involvement, these awards will go far in enhancing our Hoosier specialty crop industry."

Indiana's funding is part of a total \$72.9 million in non-competitive fiscal year 2022 SCBGP funding awarded to 55 states, territories and the District of Columbia. The SCBGP funding supports farmers growing specialty crops, including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, and nursery crops. USDA's support strengthens U.S. specialty crop production and markets, ensuring an abundant, affordable supply of highly nutritious fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops, which are vital to the health and well-being of all Americans.

"USDA applauds Indiana's continued commitment to supporting our nation's producers of fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, and nursery crops through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt. "The projects funded will foster innovative research and new market opportunities within the specialty crop sector, while furthering USDA's goals of creating a more fair and equitable food system and supporting local and regional producers."

The following list includes the organizations that received funding for the 2022-2025 grant cycle:

Local Food Ecosystem Project + Seed to Store
Award: \$129,846

Project: The City of Indianapolis requested funding for its Local Food Ecosystem project, Seed to Store, which is a farm to retail program that fosters connections between local minority-led urban farms and small businesses in Indianapolis and Marion County. Indianapolis' Division of Community Nutrition and Food Policy will act as the lead agency in administering this project in partnership with farmers, grocers and other business owners. Seed to Store

aims to boost specialty crops sales, build capacity for the local food economy and improve access to and awareness of healthy specialty crops through direct-to-consumer marketing. Seed to Store partner farms grow specialty crops such as collards, watermelon, tomatoes, lettuce, peppers and eggplant. Now in its second year, Seed to Store will implement infrastructure improvements through cold storage, farm labor support and software for inventory management and ecommerce. Targeted marketing and promotions initiatives will also help develop connections between consumers and the specialty crop industry and provide education for increased accessibility.

Honey Education Trailer
Award: \$69,335.32

Project: At Ease Orchard will develop an education plan across the State of Indiana utilizing a Bee Demonstration Trailer and experience beekeepers. The demonstration trailer will consist of live bees in an enclosed demo box, harvesting equipment, hive equipment and the ability to demonstrate harvesting honey from the hives as well as multiple other beekeeping techniques such as sanitizing a hive and queen rearing. The trailer will be manned and attend events at 4H clubs, Farm Shows, Bee Club events and schools. The goal is to attend a minimum of one event per month. Similarly, the Bee Trailer will meet Indiana Health Department standards for honey harvesting and be available to support on-site training at residences to teach beekeepers how to properly harvest and bottle honey. The intended outcome of this grant is to increase education on honey food safety, to support beginning farmers and beekeepers and to increase the popularity and knowledge of honey as a specialty crop.

Leveraging Farm to ECE Partnerships to Increase Demand and Access for Specialty Crops

Award: \$87,413.90
Project: Green Bridge Growers will increase demand for locally grown produce through a Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) initiative that incorporates local food sourcing, food and agricultural education and family engagement to promote healthy eating practices right from the start for young children and their caregivers. ECEs are an important market for small farmers because of relatively low barriers to entry and have the added benefit of promoting household nutrition knowledge and the consumption of specialty crops. By partnering with ECEs to better understand and influence the role farmers can play in this market, our project will develop replicable models, outreach on best practices for other farmers entering the ECE market and expand food access for under-resourced families throughout the state.

Purdue University - Developing a Novel Multi-Year Production System for Strawberries Grown on Plastic Mulch in Indiana
Award: \$127,456.67

Project: Purdue University will address two of the greatest barriers to the profitability and sustainability of multi-year plasticulture strawberry production in Indiana by improving runner management through cultivar selection and chemical runner suppression and establishing safe and effective weed management strategies. There is increased demand for local pick-your-own strawberries and decreased access to the timely and abundant labor required to grow the crop. This project represents the first meaningful research effort into a multi-year plastic mulch production system for strawberries in Indiana and directly addresses the most pressing concerns identified by stakeholders. Recommendations generated from this project will be used to ensure that growers adopting multi-year plasticulture production have the greatest likelihood of sustainable success through cultivar selection and chemical control of runners and effective weed management strategies.

Visit www.isda.in.gov for more information about the Specialty Crop Block Grant program

Winter '22 Commencement Celebrate Giant Leap for Nearly 3K Boilermakers

Years of persistence and thousands of small steps together will culminate for nearly 3,000 Boilermakers at Purdue University's three Winter 2022 Commencement ceremonies Dec. 17-18 in Elliott Hall of Music.

Eligible to participate in Purdue's winter commencement are 2,957 students, including 1,679 undergraduates and 946 master's, 326 doctor of philosophy and six professional program candidates. And 67 Purdue alumni who were unable to participate in previous commencements — 18 baccalaureate, 25 master's and 24 PhD alumni — plan to take part.

From their first day at Purdue through these final months, these Boilermakers persisted in overcoming unexpected turns, difficult classes, brutal nights, a global pandemic. Big challenges and small victories. Again and again, they kept going, determined to reach this milestone in their academic journey.

Shelley M. MacDermid Wadsworth, Distinguished Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at Purdue and director of both the Center for Families and the Military Family Research Institute, will deliver the Division III commencement address for Sunday's ceremony.

The commencement ceremonies will take place as follows:

- Division I — Saturday, Dec. 17, 9:30 a.m. (ET). Undergraduate, professional and master's degrees for College of Health and Human Sciences, School of Management, College of Pharmacy, Polytechnic Institute, College of Science and College of Veterinary Medicine.

- Division II — Saturday, Dec. 17, 2 p.m. (ET). Undergraduate and master's degrees for the College of Agriculture, College of Education, College of Engineering and College of Liberal Arts.

- Division III — Sunday, Dec. 18, 9:30 a.m. (ET). Graduate School (doctor of philosophy only).

Deepak, Boes to give student responses

Giving the student response at the Division I ceremony is Eesha Deepak of San Jose, California, who is receiving a Bachelor of Science in computer science and data science with a focus on machine intelligence. Deepak will begin her professional journey as an entry-level software engineer with Intel in Santa Clara, California.

Kevin Boes of Great



Falls, Montana, who is receiving a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering, will be the student responder for the Division II ceremony. Boes, who worked as a Starship operations engineering intern at SpaceX in Texas, plans to continue his research in pursuit of a PhD through Purdue's Maurice J. Zucrow Laboratories.

About MacDermid Wadsworth

MacDermid Wadsworth directs Purdue's Center for Families and the Military Family Research Institute, both of which she co-founded. With an MBA in management and a master's and PhD in human development and family studies from Pennsylvania State University, she focuses her research primarily on the relationship between work conditions and family life, specifically for military families. She is an author of over 140 articles and chapters.

MacDermid Wadsworth has served on federal advisory committees for the National Academies of Science and the Department of Defense, and has testified before Congress regarding military and veteran families. She is a recipient of the Morrill Award, Purdue's highest faculty honor, for outstanding career achievements that have had an impact on society, and in 2019 was named a "Top Ten Extraordinary Contributor" among work-family researchers worldwide. Purdue received the Kellogg Award from the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities and the Higher Education Civic Engagement Award from the Washington Center in 2016 in recognition of the work of the MacDermid Wadsworth-led Military Family Research Institute.

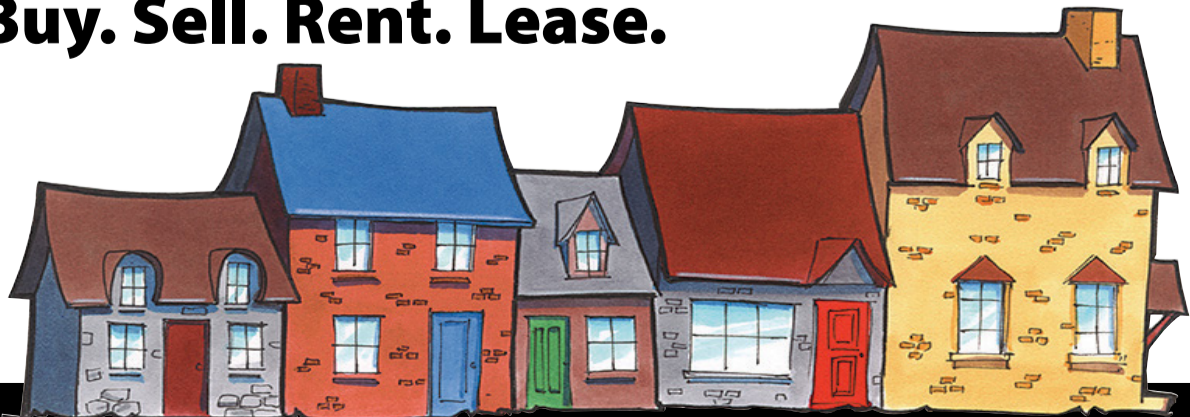
Admission tickets required

Tickets are required for admission into Elliott Hall. Doors open 90 minutes before each ceremony. Any bags attendees are carrying will be checked at the door before entry into the venue. All ceremonies will be livestreamed. For those who have tickets to attend in person, parking information is available online.

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THURSDAY

Indiana the Strong

Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022

A10

Ivy Tech Community College's Achieve Your Degree Program Provides State Employees With an Upfront Tuition Assistance

The State of Indiana and Ivy Tech Community College recently announced a new partnership that will offer state employees an affordable education with no upfront tuition costs.

"This is an investment in our state employees that provide them with more flexibility to pursue education opportunities that ultimately contribute to a stronger workforce," said Governor Eric J. Holcomb. "We are grateful for this partnership with Ivy Tech that will ease the up-front financial burden for our employees to enroll in courses."

The state will join Ivy Tech's Achieve Your Degree (AYD) program. Rather than paying for tuition expenses at the time of enrollment - which can be a barrier for some employees seeking to earn degrees and certificates - the state will pay Ivy Tech directly upon an employee's successful completion of a course. State employees already have education reimbursement of up to \$5,250 per year. Ivy Tech's full-time annual tuition is less than \$4,500, and the agreement with Ivy Tech means that employees won't have to be reimbursed, but rather can enroll and begin taking classes with no upfront costs. Additionally, the College will provide the state with a rebate of up to 5% of the net tuition paid, which means the state will benefit from an even lower education cost.

All Ivy Tech campuses across the state are participating in the program.

"The State of Indiana is once again leading by example, this time by providing tuition assistance to

employees, making it easier for individuals to pay for higher education," Ivy Tech Community College President Sue Ellspermann said. "Programs like Achieve Your Degree can help businesses build their own talent pipeline through recruitment of individuals without a degree and helping those individuals learn the skills necessary to advance."

Partnering with Ivy Tech Community College offers state employees access to more than 70 academic programs, as well as opportunities to receive associate degrees, short-term certificates and workforce certifications in various fields. Additionally, Ivy Tech's Ivy + Tuition and Textbooks model provides students with free textbooks for required courses through the spring 2023 and a flat rate tuition cost students who enroll in more than 12 credits.

On-site application assistance and academic advising are provided by Ivy Tech faculty and staff to accommodate state employees' busy work schedules and to ensure appropriate course schedules. Ivy Tech will also provide individualized advising, financial aid and tutoring to foster employee success.

Through partnerships such as the Achieve Your Degree program at Ivy Tech, the State of Indiana can skill-up its current workforce and encourage employees to earn free credentials through on-campus and online coursework.

Tuition reimbursement and assistance is available up to \$5,250, to all State of Indiana employees of

executive branch agencies who:

- have been employed full-time continuously with the state for at least 12 months prior to submitting their Education Reimbursement program application;
- have not received a disciplinary action in the 12 months prior to the end of the course; and
- have completed the course with a satisfactory grade of at least a "C" or above (or an equivalent "pass" grade).

As part of its NextLevel State Work initiatives, the State of Indiana will continue to pursue partnerships, policies and programs that continue to make the State of Indiana a competitive, engaged and flexible workplace.

About Ivy Tech Community College

Ivy Tech Community College is Indiana's largest public postsecondary institution and the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Ivy Tech has campuses throughout Indiana and also serves thousands of students annually online. It serves as the state's engine of workforce development, offering associate degrees, short-term certificate programs, industry certifications, and training that aligns to the needs of the community. The College provides seamless transfer to other colleges and universities in Indiana, as well as out of state, for a more affordable route to a Bachelor's degree. Follow Ivy Tech on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn for the most up-to-date information.

Lt. Gov. Crouch, IHCD Announce Participants for 2023 My Community, My Vision Initiative

Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch and the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCD) have chosen seven participants for the My Community, My Vision (MCMV) program, which connects high school students across Indiana to each other and to their neighborhoods, towns, and cities. The student groups are as follows: the Batesville Mayor's Youth Council, Frankton High School Students in Action, the Mayor's Youth Council of Greensburg, Mishawaka Youth Advisory Council, the Monticello Next Generation Youth Advocates, the Ripley County Youth Outreach, and the Warren County Foundation Youth Council.

"Maintaining strong and viable communities is important to the health of Indiana, and we need future leaders to begin thinking about their own visions for their cities and towns," said Crouch. "My Community, My Vision invites these future decision makers to share their ideas and plans with local officials. By their involvement, student leaders will learn about the planning process and the collaborative efforts required to create and maintain vibrant communities."

In collaboration with the Indiana Philanthropy Alliance (IPA) Youth Council program and the Associa-



Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch

tion of Indiana Municipalities (AIM) Mayoral Youth Council program, the seven selected cohorts of students representing communities across the state will participate in a four-month program consisting of in-person workshops and self-guided curriculum to assist them in planning and fundraising for a place-based community project. Utilizing elements of IHCD's crowd-granting CreatINg Places program, students who successfully strategize, plan, and raise a fundraising goal of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 towards their community project in the program's duration will receive a matching grant from IHCD.

"Placemaking is an important element of building stable communities where Hoosiers of all ages want to live, work, and play for years to come," said Jacob Sipe, IHCD Executive Director. "The My Community, My Vision

program gives young people a chance to invest in their hometowns and make their voices heard. These students are the future of Indiana's workforce, economy, and local leadership, and we can't wait to see what ideas they bring to life through this program."

Youth councils, alongside their foundation or local unit of government sponsor, will work throughout the spring semester to determine a project, craft a budget, develop a fundraising goal and strategy, and raise the needed funds for all materials during a 30-day fundraising campaign. Students will attend three required in-person workshops hosted by IHCD where they will learn about different subjects such as placemaking, fundraising strategies, and stakeholder engagement to give students knowledge about the aspects of community planning, help reach their set project goal and provide networking and leadership opportunities. At the final in-person workshop, students will present their work and success to their peers and Indiana's community development leaders.

More information on My Community, My Vision can be found on IHCD's website. The selected teams will officially kick off with a workshop event on Jan. 21, 2023.

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THURSDAY

Indiana the Strong

Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022

A11

Purdue, Ivy Tech Continue to Collaborate and Explore How to Prepare Workforce for Tomorrow's Economy

For Frank Dooley and Sue Ellspermann, the fact that 1.9 million employed Hoosiers lack some type of credential or college degree isn't a reason for despair. Instead, they see opportunities abound to help increase workers' mobility, skills and financial standing across Indiana through education.

More than 100 leaders from Purdue Global, Ivy Tech Community College, and state and local workforce and economic development groups came together on Nov. 9 to celebrate and expand those opportunities.

Dooley, Purdue Global chancellor, and Ellspermann, Ivy Tech president, celebrated the successful partnership between the two Indiana-based schools.

"The summit shined a light on the unique opportunities we have to impact the lives of adults, employers, the labor market and our communities by leveraging two amazing institutions," Ellspermann said. "We have a shared commitment to career pathways for adult students that lead to high-wage, high-demand careers that skill and reskill our workforce."

Citing numerous examples of the partnership, Dooley said both institutions are leveraging their resources for working adult learners, including recognition for prior learning and more pathways for credentials and degrees.

"Purdue Global is part of Purdue's land-grant mission. The essence of it is we're providing opportunity. We need to think broadly of our mission of public service to our communities," Dooley said. "We are always looking to expand access to education and help more students be successful in their career paths."

It's especially important as Indiana competes for new jobs in fields like electric vehicle components, semiconductors and defense-related industries, or as traditional Hoosier economic strengths, like agriculture and manufacturing, see increasing technological advancement. One example of a semiconductor company locating in Indiana is SkyWater Technology, which announced in July that it would build a new \$1.8 billion semiconductor fabrication facility in Discovery Park District at Purdue, creating 750 new jobs.

Purdue Global and Ivy Tech have several agreements in place to transfer students and their course credits seamlessly between the two institutions. A student earning an associate degree from Ivy Tech, which is the state's main provider of those degrees, can then seamlessly apply

their credits at Purdue Global to progress toward a bachelor's degree.

The close partnership between the institutions is leading the nation in best practices related to the exchange and acceptance of educational credit and credit for prior learning.

Talent development: the new frontier

Summit attendees learned more about what is going on in the areas of workforce development and economic development. A panel discussion, "The Indiana Workforce Landscape," was facilitated by Chris Lowery, commissioner for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. Lowery shared that policies, programs and partnerships are all key in expanding educational opportunities to Indiana residents "at the speed of business," especially for the 1.9 million working Hoosiers who want to pursue credentials and degrees.

Panelists included Kevin Brinegar, president and CEO of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce; Marie Mackintosh, president and CEO of EmployIndy; David Adams, commissioner of Indiana's Department of Workforce Development; and Tony Denhart, executive vice president of workforce and talent at the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Numerous reports have been issued by groups such as the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and Ascend Indiana and EmployIndy on talent-development needs from various stakeholders and industries so employers, employees and educators are prepared for changes in the economy. Both economic and talent development have added a new component, as Indiana state officials include education opportunities and partnerships as part of the portfolio to attract new employers to Indiana.

Denhart, who moderated the panel discussion "Our Role in Helping Shape the Future of Indiana," said the IEDC is focused on quality of jobs over quantity of jobs, as well as looking to diversify jobs across the state.

In addition to those partnerships, Denhart said the IEDC focuses on the "5Es" when talking with employers who are looking to expand or locate in Indiana: environment/quality of place, economy of the future, entrepreneurship, energy, and external engagement.

"For the economy of the future, we are looking at the workplace and what the workers of the future will need," said Denhart. "We're looking 10 and 20 years ahead. We are looking at life sciences, quantum computing, aerospace, defense, advanced

manufacturing, agriculture and artificial intelligence/machine learning. Relationships matter in both economic development and talent development."

Purdue Global and Ivy Tech are continually working together to be more responsive to the rapidly changing needs in the workforce that Denhart and others talked about during the panel discussions.

Those activities range from new classes to working with employers in providing affordable education opportunities to providing additional resources for working adult learners.

Purdue Global is rebuilding its teaching model to provide more support for student success, including adding coaching and mentoring for students.

Tiffany Townsend, vice president of organizational culture and chief diversity officer at Purdue Global, and Amber Williams, executive director for employee diversity, equity and belonging at Ivy Tech, presented "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Belonging: Building a Foundational Approach to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Together." They explored how Purdue Global and Ivy Tech both make students of all backgrounds feel like they belong. Responses were gathered and will be used to build plans that will be shared with faculty and staff in the future.

"If we start with the end in mind - thinking of the students and how they get their degrees - it affects how we approach our work together," Dooley said.

Ivy Tech is expanding its associate degree nursing program, addressing the shortage of health care workers across the state. To expand, they have worked with providers to have additional clinical sites to manage the increased enrollment.

"Working adult learners come to Ivy Tech and Purdue Global to find a better path forward, more prosperity and/or more fulfillment in their careers. These are our 'traditional' students, and we are committed to meeting them where they are and helping them succeed," Ellspermann said.

Both institutions teach at scale - Purdue Global by providing courses to more than 35,000 students, and Ivy Tech by teaching at 46 locations across Indiana.

"We've got to be responsive to opportunities that come forward to us," Dooley said. "If we - both Purdue Global and Ivy Tech - become aware of the need, we can adapt our programs and pathways to career quicker than others."

JUA Technologies International Earns \$600K Grant From USDA to Develop New Solar-Powered Crop Dehydrator

JUA Technologies International, an agriculture technology startup that manufactures solar-powered crop dehydrators, has received a two-year, \$600,000 Phase II Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to further develop its technology.

The goal of the Phase II project, titled Smart Multipurpose Solar Dehydration Device for Value Addition to Specialty Crops, is the successful proof of concept toward product-design improvements and design for manufacture of JUA Technologies' multipurpose solar dryer, called Dehymeleon™.

Klein Ileleji is co-founder and CEO/chief technology officer of JUA Technologies. He also is a professor of agricultural and biological engineering and an affiliate of environmental and ecological engineering at Purdue University. He said crop dehydration is one of the best ways to preserve the nutrients and extend the shelf life of food, but it has drawbacks.

"It is an energy-intensive process with huge operating costs because food dehydrators are typically powered by gas, electricity or fuel oil," Ileleji said. "The high operating cost limits the ability of small and midsize growers and processors in the U.S. to produce dehydrated foods. Small growers and processors are vital to the local foods and urban agriculture industry, which is currently a \$1 billion and growing industry in the U.S."

"In developing countries in the tropics, where postharvest losses of nutrient-rich horticultural produce can be as high as 50%, dehydrating foods hygienically using the abundance of solar energy available in these parts will not only help support nutrition security but also provide growers an opportunity to increase their income from value-added processing."

Ileleji said dehydrating fruits and vegetables, herbs and spices, and me-

dicinal plants still occurs using primitive, open, sun-drying methods on mats or trays that degrade nutrients and reduce food quality.

"While there are a lot of solar dryer designs available in the literature and online, none of them have been commercialized or utilized in large numbers," Ileleji said.

Ileleji said JUA Technologies' proposed high-efficiency, smart, multipurpose solar dehydrator fits the USDA's and National Institute of Food and Agriculture's priorities in four ways.

"It improves methods to process specialty crops to improve quality and nutritional value and provide healthy food options," Ileleji said. "It enables small and midsize growers to add value to their crops and increase their farm income. It provides those same growers with an affordable technology powered by renewable energy, which conserves energy and reduces operation cost. It also provides an energy-efficient technology to promote renewable energy use and support environmental sustainability."

The grant will cover four research and development goals:

- Modeling and simulation to optimize the solar dehydrator's performance.
- Determining the behavior and performance of the desiccant and heat-recovery system under various drying loads.
- Determining the field performance and validating the modeling effort for fruits, vegetables, spices and herbs in Indiana and California.
- Beta prototyping of the product for manufacture.

Ileleji said the goals will be addressed by JUA Technologies and contracted manufacturing and product engineering design firms.

In 2019 JUA Technologies received a \$100,000 SBIR Phase I grant from the USDA and a \$50,000 match from Elevate Ventures. In 2022 the U.S. Small Business Adminis-

tration recognized Ileleji as the Indiana and the Great Lakes Regional Exporter of the Year for its portable solar dehydrator, Dehydray™.

"Both the Dehydray and Dehymeleon technologies spun out from a United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-supported effort called Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Processing and Post-Harvest Handling," Ileleji said. "It was a multi-institutional effort led by Purdue University to reduce postharvest loss, promote economic growth, improve nutrition and enhance food security in Feed the Future target countries."

Ileleji disclosed his crop drying innovation to the Purdue Research Foundation Office of Technology Commercialization, which licensed it to JUA Technologies. The company is a client of the Purdue Foundry, an entrepreneurship and commercialization hub whose professionals help Purdue innovators create startups. Both are managed by the Purdue Research Foundation.

About JUA Technologies International

JUA Technologies International (JTI) is a mission-focused company developing technologies to efficiently harness solar energy to power agrifood systems. JTI was founded in 2016 in West Lafayette, Indiana, where it is headquartered, and is affiliated with Purdue Foundry. JTI develops and manufactures energy efficient multipurpose solar food dehydrators designed for households, small and midsize growers and processors. Its portable solar dehydrator, Dehydray™, won two prestigious awards in 2019 - the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineering AE50 Innovation Award and selection as finalist in the food category of Fast Company 2019 World Changing Ideas. The Dehydray™ has been sold in over 28 states in the United States and over 10 countries. For more information about the, please www.juatechnology.com.



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