# Career Ready JOB SEEKERS INDIANA

BUILD YOUR JOB

Apprenticeships can be life-changing. | pg 6

JAG puts high school students on a winning path | pg 10





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# **UNIFIED MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the ABC Commercial Construction Prep Academy is to develop skilled and employable individuals and serve as an effective pipeline to aligned summer internships, employment, and ABC apprenticeship opportunities leading to essential careers in the construction trades.

## **VISION**

The ABC Prep Academy vision is to see all high school students graduate from our program as a prepared, diverse community of learners with access to a career in the skilled trades as a Craft Professional.

# **PURPOSE & CORE VALUES**

ABC's Prep Academy seeks to instill the values of merit, performance, and integrity in all students. These values give students a strong foundation upon which to begin their post-secondary education as craft professionals.

## **ACADEMICS**

The Prep Academy is a two-year program designed specifically for the hands-on learner and incorporates various industry recognized credentials that help facilitate students' entry into the construction trades.

# **Why ABC Construction** Prep Academy?

- ABC meets the unique needs of high school students
- ABC provides an opportunity for students to experience the trades first hand
- ABC is strongly committed to developing each student in preparing them for a career in construction
- ABC's Prep Academy is another first choice for students who enjoy hands-on learning

For information, contact

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# JOB SEEKERS

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# We want you to succeed!

e're on a mission to help Hoosiers find rewarding work that sets them up for long-term success. Whether you're looking for your first job or considering a mid-career change, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development is here to help you identify, train for, and thrive in whatever career you choose. Career Ready Indiana magazine is full of ideas to get you started.



Download the **2024-25 issue** and past issues online.



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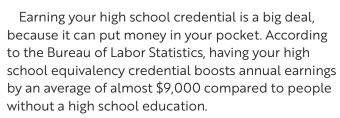
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# **Indiana Adult Education** is your path to higher pay and a better life

he more you know, the more you can grow—in work and in life. That's a message Hoosiers are embracing as more of us return to school to learn English, prepare for a High School Equivalency exam or take advantage of career training opportunities.

In fact, in the 12 months that ended June 30 of this year, Indiana Adult Education was No. 3 nationally, behind only California and Florida, in the number of adults who earned their high school credential. Almost 4,200 Hoosiers made that happen, according to preliminary data, and you could be next.



Indiana Adult Education isn't only for those interested in earning their High School Equivalency. Adult Education is also a resource for non-native English speakers and for anyone who's interested in earning a credential for a



specific job. The best news? Adult Education is usually free, and it's available in all 92 Indiana counties.

## How to get your High School **Equivalency**

Who's eligible: Anyone who is at least 16 years of age who doesn't have a high school diploma. If you've lived in Indiana for at least 30 days, you can register to take the HSE Exam and start preparing to pass it.

How to get started: Contact a local adult education provider at https://www.in.gov/dwd/ career-training-adult-ed/adult-ed/locations/ or email adulted@dwd.in.gov. After you've found the location that's best for you, sign up in person. All you need is one government issued ID.

What's next: After you've completed your classes, you'll be ready to take the test, which is based on five subject areas—math, reading, writing, science, and social studies.

Cost: Free

**Bonus:** Adults who study for the HSE Exam might be able to simultaneously earn an industryrecognized credential.

Find more information about Indiana's HSE programs at https://www.in.gov/dwd/careertraining-adult-ed/adult-ed/indiana-hse/

# Language and career training through Indiana **Adult Education**

The instruction available through Indiana Adult Education isn't limited to studying for the High School Equivalency. Programs are also available to help you prepare for college, learn English or participate in occupational certification programs.

In fact, you can find free career training and certificate programs in a range of industries from construction and logistics to tech and health care. Classes are available at a variety of places throughout the state, including public school districts, colleges, workforce- and community-based agencies, and the Indiana Department of Correction.

Indiana Adult Education is also available at companies across the state that have partnered with the state to bring training to the company floor. There are online options, too.

Find a local adult education provider at https://www.in.gov/dwd/career-trainingadult-ed/adult-ed/locations/ or email adulted@dwd.in.gov. Find examples of programs here https://www.in.gov/dwd/ career-training-adult-ed/student-recruitment/

# Adult Education **Success Stories**



Lori Ann Barnes (riaht) with instructor Lena Maldonado

#### **Lori Ann Barnes**

**Age:** 42

Jobs: Nurse's assistant at Beacon Medical, Elkhart General Hospital; Founder and operator of A Woman's Worth Creation Inc., a ministry she started

Lori Ann's story: She faced numerous challenges, including a failed foster care experience, teen homelessness, and a botched surgery that left her with partial paralysis. She was a single parent working at Walgreen's, but her lack of a high school diploma prevented her from getting promotions.

Making her move: After a failed first attempt at getting her High School Equivalency, Lori Ann finally succeeded thanks to the education and support she received at Horizon Education Alliance-Adult Pathways. She didn't stop there. She earned a certification in phlebotomy at Ivy Tech, landed a job at Head Start, and then earned a credential as a Certified Nursing Assistant. Along the way, she developed a faith that called her to start her own ministry to help people in her community who were experiencing some of the same struggles she endured.

What's next?: She is using the Beacon Scholarship Program at Ivy Tech to study to become an LPN. From there, she'd like to enroll at Indiana University-South Bend to study to become a registered nurse.

Advice: "Having a high school diploma breaks down a lot of barriers." Her faith in God and her High School Equivalency opened doors to jobs and a calling to help the sick. "I now have opportunities jumping out from every angle. I am thankful to the ladies at [Horizon Education Alliance] for all they do."

**Daniel Kelsav** 

**Age:** 27

Jobs: Full-time logistics position with Toyota Material Handling, Columbus; Parttime operations supervisor at Sans Souci Thrift Store, Columbus

Daniel's story: His addiction to drugs beginning at age 13 negatively affected every part of his life. He dropped out of high school at 16 and was in and out of jail for years. Daniel was in a workrelease program in 2019 when he walked into the Sans Souci Thrift Store to get clothing vouchers. A chance meeting with the store's operations supervisor that day led to a job, which Daniel started the next day, and he quickly advanced from donations receiver to truck driver.

A big setback: Like so many people, Daniel was dealt a bad hand by the COVID-19 pandemic. His isolation caused him to relapse, and Sans Souci had to let him go. He spiraled into addiction and crime and was eventually arrested and convicted.

The path back: Daniel knew that he had two choices. He could either spend the rest of his life in prison, or he could get help once again with his addiction and try to build a better life. He chose the second option and enrolled in a year-long program at the prison facility called Recovery Enables A Life For Men, or REALM. The year-long program worked, and Daniel inquired about getting his job back at Sans Souci. The store took him back and was flexible with his schedule so he could work around court appointments and addiction recovery meetings.

Adult Education at McDowell Education Center: Daniel found the McDowell Education Center through a Sans Souci program called Sans Souci Build You. Some of the workshops included in the program were held at McDowell, where he enrolled in a computer literacy workshop and a career exploration course. He also enrolled in a logistics course, got a promotion at work, graduated from his sober living program, and earned his High School Equivalency at McDowell.

Credentials: Eventually, Daniel earned two logistics certifications at McDowell and found out, through Sans Souci, about a logistics position at Toyota.

**Advice:** As Daniel continues working, his goal is to one day attend college and buy a house for his family. And he has advice for others who have struggled with whether to go back to school: "You are worth it, and when you achieve it you will feel so proud of yourself. The sky is the limit. If at first you don't succeed, try again until you do. It will open up so many doors for you."



**Carl Beasley** 

**Age:** 19

Jobs: Entry level position at Tradesmen International, a construction staffing firm in Indianapolis

Carl's story: After graduating from high school in 2023, he wasn't sure what he wanted to do with his life. He'd worked at grocery stores and in fast food restaurants, but he wanted work that would provide more consistent pay and opportunities for advancement.

Making his move: Family friends encouraged Carl to enroll in the BY Training program at Highlander Park, an adult education provider in Indianapolis. BY Training is designed to give students the skills and confidence they need to find jobs in construction. "There aren't really any limitations on who BY Training accepts, because this opportunity is for everyone," he said.

**New experience:** Carl said working on a construction site is the best work experience he's ever had. "I still have to follow my boss's directions. Construction is all about listening to the people who know what they're doing. But now I get to do more than sweep the floors after we close. I'm building parts of people's homes that they'll use for years after I leave."

Advice: "Jump right in. Don't be afraid. See if you like BY Training. Take the class. The teachers will get you excited to learn. And the construction industry is really fun to work in. I get to learn something new every day on the job!"

**Takeaways:** More than anything, Carl is thankful for how BY Training has helped mold his career goals. "Now that I've been working on different construction sites for a few months now, I'm excited to start and own my own company. I have a real vision for my future, and BY Training taught me how to succeed in my future goals."





# Here are a few facts about apprenticeships you should know:

- Apprenticeship offers training and a path to employment for many kinds of jobs.
- An apprenticeship offers guaranteed wages so that you earn while you learn.
- An apprenticeship is your path to earning a portable, nationally recognized work credential.

# An apprenticeship can be life-changing

If you have a vague notion of an apprenticeship being only for people interested in becoming an electrician, plumber or another job in the building trades, you should know apprenticeships are now available for a growing list of careers: from teachers to health care workers to people interested in advanced manufacturing.

An apprenticeship provides individuals with the opportunity to be employed while earning a nationally recognized credential. A Registered Apprenticeship is a structured career pathway that combines on-the-job learning, classroom learning,

and mentorship to train individuals to become experts in their field. Programs are well-defined and documented and are approved by the U.S. Department of Labor.



# **Apprenticeship definitions**

- Registered Apprenticeship: Programs approved by the U.S. Department of Labor that combine paid on-the-job training and related instruction for a skilled occupation resulting in a nationally recognized industry certification with wage increases at specified intervals. These apprenticeships typically last one to five years.
- Certified Pre-Apprenticeship: Preapprenticeships are state-certified programs that typically last six months to two years. Pre-apprenticeships give participants credit toward a Registered Apprenticeship.
- State Earn and Learn (SEAL) Program:
  SEALs are state-certified programs that, like apprenticeships, contain on-the-job training and related instruction that can lead to industry certifications.

# Apprenticeship **Success Stories**

#### Maureen Beckwith

**Age:** 51

Current situation: Media aid at Western High School, Russiaville, Howard County. Paraprofessional apprentice completing the first year of a four-year apprenticeship program offered by Ivy Tech-Kokomo and WGU Indiana.

Maureen's story: Maureen has known she wanted to be a teacher since she graduated from high school in 1991, but after completing one semester of college she quit and never went back. For the last 10 years she has been a classroom aid. A few years ago, she decided to finally pursue a teaching degree and applied to Ivy Tech. After checking education as her field of study, she heard from Tara Kaser, Program Chair and Assistant Professor of Education at Ivy Tech, who asked her if she'd be interested in participating in lvy Tech's new apprenticeship program for paraprofessionals.

Making her move: She and the other 13 students in her apprenticeship cohort just finished the first of two years at lvy Tech, where they attend class online or in person for an hour a day, Monday through Friday. Her day job at Western High School

complements her classwork. She'll finish her second year with an associate degree in elementary education and then transition to Western Governor's University-Indiana for the final two years. When she completes the program, including 12 weeks of student teaching, she'll

about the apprenticeship is that it allows her to work, go to school and still be a full-time parent to her two teenagers. "I can still be their taxi driver for band and tennis." She noted that all of the other students in her cohort are also parents.

**Advice:** "Give it a try. It's absolutely worth it. I think I learn as much from my peers as I do from the textbooks."



#### **David Miller**

**Age:** 25

**Current situation:** Apprentice at Jasper Engines, student at Vincennes **University Jasper campus** 

**David's story:** When David graduated from high school in his native couple of production jobs, but he didn't find a real career path until he and his fiancé moved from Arizona to Jasper in October 2022. They moved to be closer to his fiance's Godparents, and to take advantage of Indiana's lower cost of living.

Making his move: When a family member handed him a brochure about the Career Advancement Partnership at Vincennes University Jasper, he decided to pursue it. The CAP program started as an internship, but many of CAP's internships have grown into registered apprenticeship programs. That includes the one at Jasper Engines, where Miller works. The apprenticeship provides formal training that classes after the fall semester, he'll have an associate degree in electronics technology and continue with his full-time job in advanced manufacturing at Jasper Engines.

**Takeaways:** Knowing that your employer will accommodate your school schedule and that what you're learning on the job relates to what you're learning in class.

**Advice:** "A lot of people don't know what they want to do when they get out of high school. This is a great opportunity to figure





Indiana has a new financial tool to help high school students train for in-demand careers.

Career Scholarship Accounts (CSAs) were created by the Indiana General Assembly in 2023. They provide \$5,000 per student per school year to open the door to internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning experiences for students in 10th, 11th and 12th grade.

The funds help training providers offer a richer experience for students by paying for equipment like uniforms and tools. In some cases, a portion of the money can be used to cover the cost of earning a drivers' license or paying other transportation expenses that previously put training out of reach for some students.



High school students who work at Chariot Automotive get to keep their tools.



Chariot Automotive's program gives students a path to a career.

"Career Scholarship Accounts expand work-based learning opportunities for students," said Sam Rourke, Assistant Commissioner for Career and Technical Education at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. "CSAs address barriers such as transportation costs and expose students to additional programming options that may not be offered in their school or career center," Rourke said.

To learn more about Career Scholarship Accounts and how to apply in 2025, visit https://www. in.gov/tos/csa/resources/...

# Common myths and misperceptions about Career Scholarship Accounts

# Myth #1: CSAs are meant to replace CTE programs

The CSA program can and should work with Career and Technical Education (CTE); not compete with or replace CTE funding. CSA providers help create new programs that are not possible or are difficult to provide through CTE. For instance, the number of students pursuing a CTE program may prevent a school from offering the program, but these students could utilize a CSA to complete an experience aligned with their career interest.

# **Myth #2:** The CSA program has different goals than CTE programs

The goals of the CSA program are aligned to the goals of CTE. Enrolling in either means a student is focused on working towards a credential of value and participating in quality Work-Based Learning (WBL) experiences aligned to their career area of interest.

Both CSA and CTE programs include strong input from employers to ensure students are earning relevant skills that match industry demand. The CSA program provides additional opportunities to students by removing barriers for participating in existing CTE experiences.

# Myth #3: Schools always receive less money if a student enrolls in a CSA

While a student who enrolls in a CSA program is ineligible for CTE funding, a school corporation can be reimbursed out of the CSA account for eligible costs the school is providing. For example, if the school is providing the courses for a CSA experience, the school can be reimbursed at an equivalent rate to CTE funding. The CSA program can also cover expenses across multiple other categories, including transportation and equipment.

# Myth #4: The CSA program is just for Youth Apprenticeships

Youth apprenticeships are an option on which to utilize a CSA. However, many other types of programs are eligible, too. At minimum, all CSA programs must have a WBL experience that meets the Indiana Department of Education's definition of a Level 2 experience. WBL experiences can be through a Youth Apprenticeship or Registered Apprenticeship, but many approved CSA programs have an internship or other type of eligible experience as the required WBL element.



**Training provider/employer:** Chariot Automotive Group

**Location:** Tipton, Howard, and Tippecanoe counties

**Program description:** Chariot owns four car dealerships. It recruits high school sophomores to participate in its state-approved Ivy Tech automotive training courses during their junior and senior years. The teaching happens during the school week in classrooms at two of Chariot's dealerships.

How do students benefit: Students who complete the two-year program graduate with 32 credit hours and a Technical Certificate that gets them halfway to an associate degree in automotive technology. Students also earn safety related certifications and certifications specific to certain tool brands. These certifications are typically required by employers. At Chariot, students get to keep \$1,000 worth of tools that the company pays for with CSA funding. And they graduate from high school on the path to full-time employment at Chariot. The company's goal is to offer jobs to the students who complete the program.

**Training provider/employer:** ABC Construction Prep Academy

**Location:** Fort Wayne, Marion, Fishers, Lebanon and Crawfordsville

**Program description:** High school juniors and seniors spend part of their school week at one of the ABC Academy's, learning the basics they'll need for careers in carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC.

How do students benefit: Students who complete the program leave with federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration certifications and other basic certifications typically required by employers. They also leave the program having completed half of a federally approved apprenticeship program in one of the four trades that ABC teaches. Thanks to CSA funding, students get to keep the basic tools and personal protective equipment the program provides.



# A winning path for kids

JAG program leads high school students to diplomas, full-time jobs

Indiana is expanding a program with a long track record of putting high school kids on the road to graduation and life success.

Jobs for America's Graduates, known as JAG, is a national nonprofit dedicated to helping high school students graduate, pursue post-secondary education and secure quality, entrylevel jobs. The 44-year-old program came to Indiana in 2006 and since then has helped 45,000 Hoosier high school students achieve their goals.

In the 2022-2023 school year alone nearly 5,000 students participated in JAG programs. That number is sure to rise as the number of JAG programs in Indiana gradually doubles, from 125 to 250. As of fall of 2024, there were more than 200 JAG programs across the state spanning middle schools, high schools, and colleges. The numbers are growing as students and their families learn about the program's success.

"The JAG program transformed me," said Neva Verbik, who graduated from Avon High School in 2023. "When I started, I was the quiet one sitting in the back of the classroom. I was a follower who did what I was told. I had big goals and no idea how to reach them. Little did I know that JAG would change my life."

The program is officially for "students of promise who have experienced challenging or traumatic life experiences," but Bart Doan, Assistant Director of Youth Initiatives for Indiana's Department of Workforce Development, said that description applies to almost all Indiana students in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's essentially a 'how to do life' class that teaches kids employability skills," said Doan. Students are empowered to take responsibility and ownership of their future by learning critical thinking, team leadership, and effective communication skills that increase their marketability to employers.

In schools without a program, parents are encouraged to request that the school add one.

"The skills students obtain while in JAG go beyond just getting a job; they leave high school as leaders in their community, they're more confident and they have a sense of purpose," said Richard Paulk, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, which administers the program in Indiana. "The growth of Indiana's JAG program ensures opportunities for a new generation of student leaders across our state."

For more information on JAG Indiana, visit jagindiana.org.

JAG Indiana's Success (2023 results)

• 97% high school graduation rate JAG students vs 88.98% for non-JAG public high school students

- 84% of grads placed in full-time jobs vs a national goal of 60%
- 84% full-time \*positive outcomes vs a national goal of 75%

\*A positive outcome is defined as participation in at least one of the following life choices for at least a year postgraduation: full-time post-secondary education, full-time employment, part-time post-secondary education paired with part-time employment, or full-time military.

#### How JAG works

Along with standard high school studies, students take elective JAG classes that teach employability skills;

- Students master more than 37 core employability skills valued by Hoosier employers;
- Students are made aware of scholarship opportunities;
- Students are placed in post-secondary education, full-time employment or military service immediately after graduation; and
- After leaving high school, a student's JAG specialist follows up on goals for an entire year.





IU Health's Mosaic Center guides Hoosiers into high-demand jobs in health care.

Medical assistants, patient-care assistants, nurses, and other health care jobs are plentiful. All you need is the desire and the training to launch your career in health care.

One health system in central Indiana is going to extra lengths to make it easier for people to knock down the barriers standing between them and a future in health care.

The Mosaic Center for Work, Life + Learning at Indiana University Health serves individuals throughout Marion County. Its mission is to improve access to health care jobs that offer good pay and future growth.

"The program that started in 2021 has helped 600 people, so far. It's currently available to Indianapolis residents, but the goal is to expand it statewide," said Claudia W. Montes Salinas, who manages the Mosaic Center for IU Health.

She said the program is for both youth and adults and is focusing on three groups:

- High school students in Indianapolis Public Schools, especially the health sciences academy at Crispus Attucks High School. Students can work with the Mosaic Center as early as 10th grade to learn within a hospital setting and earn various certifications.
   Students can graduate from high school with health-related certifications that can lead to immediate employment at IU Health.
- Individuals who already work at IU Health but want to advance in their careers. The program is not limited to people who already work at IU Health. Employees of other health systems can also take advantage of the Mosaic Center.
- Individuals who are unemployed or underemployed throughout Marion County.

The Mosaic Center offers career and life coaching, financial coaching, transportation assistance, counseling that addresses family/work demands, and addictions counseling.

For more information, visit mosaiccenterin.org.



The Mosaic Center takes a holistic approach to career preparation.

# A quick route to a rewarding career

Training for a new career doesn't need to take years. In fact, you can often prepare for a career in a matter of weeks or months by taking classes from one of about 90 state-authorized institutions around Indiana that offer classes in everything from welding to crane operating to learning your way around a computer.

Some of the institutions are operated by employers who recognize the value of offering classes that can provide a pipeline of trained employees. It's not uncommon for graduates to land

jobs with those affiliated employers. Institutions that aren't affiliated with an employer often have industry connections that help graduates find work quickly.

Overseeing these institutions is the Indiana Office for Career & Technical Schools (OCTS), which is responsible for regulating non-credit bearing, non-degree granting post-secondary proprietary institutions.

The institutions represent approximately 15 careers, and in many cases, students can enroll at low or no

> cost. Most require that students be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or equivalent.





# **Institution Spotlight: Train for the Crane**



in the process of refining its regulations for crane operators, and he knew there would be increased demand for training.

So Humphrey began laying the groundwork for Train for the Crane, the Danville, Indiana, company he started in 2018 to train crane operators, riggers (the person who hooks a payload to a crane), and signalers (the person on the ground who communicates with the crane operator).

Who's taking classes?: Many of Train for the Crane's students are people who've been in the construction trades and are ready to leave behind the backbreaking work that sometimes happens on the ground at construction sites. But Humphrey wants to focus on recruiting kids coming out of high school. He said there is a dire need for crane operators as more people are retiring than coming

into the business. "We've got to be able to teach this to the younger generation," he said. Anyone 18 or older is eligible.

What are they learning?: Train for the Crane's standard class is the four-weeklong Crane I program that gives hands-on instruction in how to operate a mobile crane. It also includes instruction for riggers and signalers, who work on the ground "You've got to learn both sides of the hook," Humphrey said. "When you graduate from the program, you'll know how to operate a \$5 million crane," he said, "but an employer won't put you in the crane on your first day." Once someone gets work experience operating a mobile crane, they can come back for another class to get certified to use a tower crane, the ones used in the construction of high-rise buildings.

#### What credentials do they earn?:

Successful completion of the Crane 1 program earns the graduate a nationally recognized certification that's good for five years. Training for additional credentials is also available and typically takes less than four weeks.

# **Popular jobs**

These are some of the popular occupations for which people can train.

#### Welding

8 OCTS Institutions Estimated weeks: 8 Estimated cost: \$2,575

#### **Dental Assistant**

24 OCTS Institutions Estimated weeks: 12 Estimated cost: \$3,600

### **EKG Technician**

7 OCTS Institutions Estimated weeks: 8 Estimated cost: \$999

#### **Phlebotomy**

16 OCTS Institutions Estimated weeks: 8 Estimated cost: \$1,750

### **Massage Therapy**

16 OCTS Institutions Estimated weeks: 50 Estimated cost: \$9,700

#### **HVAC Certification**

2 OCTS Institutions Estimated weeks: 20 Estimated cost: \$9.000

#### **Crane Operator**

**1 OCTS Institution** Estimated weeks: 4 Estimated cost: \$8,000

## How much does training cost?: The Crane 1 class costs \$8,000, but Train for

the Crane works with each student to work out a payment plan that allows for payment over a period of time. Graduates often land jobs quickly and can make payments from their initial earnings.

# How much do crane operators

make?: Humphrey said crane operators typically make from the high \$20-range per hour to more than \$40 per hour.

**Does Train for the Crane place** graduates in jobs?: Yes! The company has many contacts in the industry. It also hires crane operators. The operators hired by Train for the Crane are paid \$42 an hour and join crane teams that the company contracts out to work for construction companies.

# **Institution Spotlight: Computer Education Institute**



Christine Turner worked as a computer programmer and taught computer classes on the side at lvy Tech in Merrillville when she decided to take the plunge

33 years ago and start her own computer training institute in Porter, Indiana.

More than three decades later. Computer Education Institute, or CEI, is going strong. It teaches a variety of hands-on classes to people who are both upskilling for their current employer or preparing to land their first job in a computer-related field. CEI offers various Microsoft Office Specialist classes and certifications. It also offers classes that help people prepare for a variety of certifications offered by the Computer Technology Industry Association, known as CompTIA.

Turner's company also provides classes at the Career Development Centers of several steel production facilities in northwest Indiana. And for the last few years has provided Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel training to students at NEO, an alternative high school in the area.

Turner said the demand for computer training has been especially strong in recent years.

Cost: One-day classes are \$195. Twoday classes are \$390. Certification classes last between 7 and 15 weeks and cost \$1,300 for Microsoft and between \$3,700 and \$4,000 for CompTIA. Almost all of CEI's classes are paid for by employers or by the state's Department of Workforce Development WorkOne centers, which send students to CEI on a regular basis. WorkOne also pays for a laptop and covers exam costs for each student.

Where do classes happen?: CEI teaches classes at its facility in Porter and at the facilities of corporate clients that maintain on-site classrooms.

How popular are CEI's classes?: The institution trains about 30 students a week. Excel training is its most indemand class.•

# **OCTS Success Story**

Kaleb Graef Columbus

**Age:** 31

Jobs: Crane & Rigging Superintendent, Performance Contractors Inc.



Right out of high school, Graef worked at a variety of factory and transportation-related jobs. Eventually he landed a job as a helper at Duke Energy's Gibson Station plant in Owensville, Indiana, where he saw cranes in action on a daily basis. "When I was out there in the heat or cold turning wrenches, I wanted to be up there in that air-conditioned [crane] cab," Graef said.

Making his move: Graef took the four-week Crane 1 class at Train for the Crane in 2020. His team at Duke Energy had worked long hours restoring service after a power outage, and he'd banked lots of overtime pay, giving him the cushion he needed to take the plunge. He later returned to get a lift operator certification. "I loved the classes," Graef said, noting that his initial class was a combination of classroom work and actual crane operation.

**Current situation:** After getting his certification, Graef returned to Duke Energy as a helper, knowing that he'd soon be bumped up to work on a crane. "I knew they needed crane operators, and the certification definitely helped me get the job." His company, Performance Contractors, has the contract to do crane work for Duke Energy.

Advice for others: "I've told many people, 'go for it.' They're nervous to do it, but if you do it will change your life."

# **OCTS Success Story**

# Angela Lebron, **Valparaiso**

**Age:** 37

Jobs: medical staff assistant at Franciscan Health, Michigan City

Background: Lebron was a stayat-home mom and wanted to rejoin the workforce. She had restaurant experience but wanted to go a different direction with her new job.

Making her move: Her first step was to visit a nearby WorkOne office, which recommended she try taking classes at Computer Education Institute. She enrolled in CEI's Word, PowerPoint, and Excel classes. The classes each lasted six weeks. After Lebron had completed the 18 weeks of instruction, CEI owner Christine Turner offered her a job there as a trainer. She accepted and took extra classes on the side, earning an expert certification in Excel. Lebron left CEI because she needed more hours, which she found at a nearby BMW

dealership. "Having those certifications is what got me in the door at BMW," she said. She worked

with Excel spreadsheets every day and made enough of an impression that the owner of the company asked her to help with his spreadsheets.

**Current situation:** Lebron left BMW for higher pay, an easier commute and opportunities for growth and advancement at Franciscan Health, where she continues to use the skills she learned at CEI.

**Advice for others:** "Get something under your belt—get a certificate that will get you started. You can only grow from there. The certificates in Word and Excel really stick out. The companies that use Word and Excel really want that. They know they won't have to train you."



# Career info at your fingertips

Exploring possible careers and how to pursue them doesn't have to be difficult-or expensive. Thanks to Indiana Career Explorer, Hoosiers of all ages have a free resource that takes their interests, skills, and values into account and then matches those with careers that are in demand across our state.

Created and managed by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development in partnership with Futures Inc., Indiana Career Explorer helps you decide what careers to pursue and then tells you about the education and training you'll need to land the job that's right for you. •

#### Here's how you can put **Indiana Career Explorer** to work for you:



- 1. Go to Indianacareerexplorer.com to register.
- 2. Sign up as an adult, young adult or K-12 student. Remember, it's free!
- **3.** Based on the information you enter, Indiana Career Explorer will direct you to one of four dashboards: the Grades K-5 dashboard for elementary students, the Grades 6-8 dashboard for middle school students, the Grades 9-12 dashboard for high school students, or the Adult dashboard for adult education students and other job seekers.
- 4. Take the three career exploration assessments: the Career Interests **Assessment** to determine what you're interested in (K-5 has access to this assessment only), the Agile Work **Profiler** to assess your current skills and strengths, and the Work Values Matcher to help you discover what's important to you in a career. The assessments will match you with careers in 17 different industry sectors, including the military.
- 5. Find out what high-demand careers Indiana Career Explorer recommends for you.
- **6.** Explore the educational pathways associated with the recommended careers that interest you.

"Indiana Career Explorer INCE) is a free, user-friendly, and Indiana-centric career exploration platform helping Hoosier students and jobseekers find and create their own career pathways. Utilized by many parts of Indiana's workforce ecosystem, **INCE** provides support from various local career coaches. local labor market information. and step-by-step guidance on how to find your new career.'

Morgan Walker, Director of Career Exploration & Advising, State of Indiana

# **Indiana Career Explorer features**

- A digitized Graduation Plan for users in grades 6-12 that will lead you to the degree or industry credential you need.
- A built-in resume builder.
- A direct-messaging function for communicating with your counselor or career coach.



# Hoosiers—and even those outside the state are using Indiana Career Explorer

Total number of users (as of July 2024): 203,000+

Number of K-12 students using Indiana Career Explorer: 163,000+

Number of schools that offer Indiana Career Explorer: 400+

# **WorkOne Career Centers**

Region 1 – Offices in Rensselaer, 219-866-4330; Gary, 219-981-1520; Hammond, 219-933-8332; LaPorte, 219-362-2175; Michigan City, 219-809-0575; Morocco, 800-661-2258; Portage, 219-762-6592; Winamac, 574-946-6300; and Knox, 574-772-6882. Covers Jasper, Lake, LaPorte, Newton, Porter, Pulaski and Starke counties.

**Region 2 –** Offices in Elkhart, 574-295-0105; Rochester, 574-223-8542; Warsaw, 574-269-3050; Plymouth, 574-936-8919; and South Bend, 574-237-9675. Covers Elkhart, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall and St. Joseph counties.

Region 3 – Offices in Decatur, 260-301-5610; Fort Wayne, 260-745-3555; Auburn, 260-925-0124; Marion, 765-668-8911; Huntington, 260-356-2858; LaGrange, 260-499-4835; Kendallville, 260-599-1000; Angola, 260-624-2004; Wabash, 260-563-8421; Bluffton, 260-824-0855; and Columbia City, 260-248-8611. Covers Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley counties.

Region 4 – Offices in Logansport, 574-722-6652; Kokomo, 765-450-3019; Peru, 765-472-3562; Lafayette, 765-474-5411. Covers Benton, Carroll, Cass, Clinton, Fountain, Howard, Miami, Montgomery, Tippecanoe, Tipton, Warren and White counties.

Region 5 – Offices in Lebanon, 765-482-0160; Noblesville, 317-841-8194; Greenfield, 317-462-7711; Plainfield, 317-838-9335; Franklin, 317-736-5531; Anderson, 765-642-4981; and Shelbyville, 317-392-3251. Covers Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Morgan and Shelby counties.

Region 6 – Offices in Muncie, 765-289-1861; Connersville, 765-825-8581; New Castle, 765-529-3010; Rushville, 765-932-5921; and Richmond, 765-962-8591. Covers Blackford, Delaware, Fayette, Henry, Jay, Randolph, Rush, Union and Wayne counties.

Region 7 – Offices in Brazil, 812-448-2636; Rockville, 765-569-2021; Greencastle, 765-653-2421; Sullivan, 812-268-3358; Clinton, 765-832-3523; and Terre Haute, 812-234-6602. Covers Clay, Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo counties.

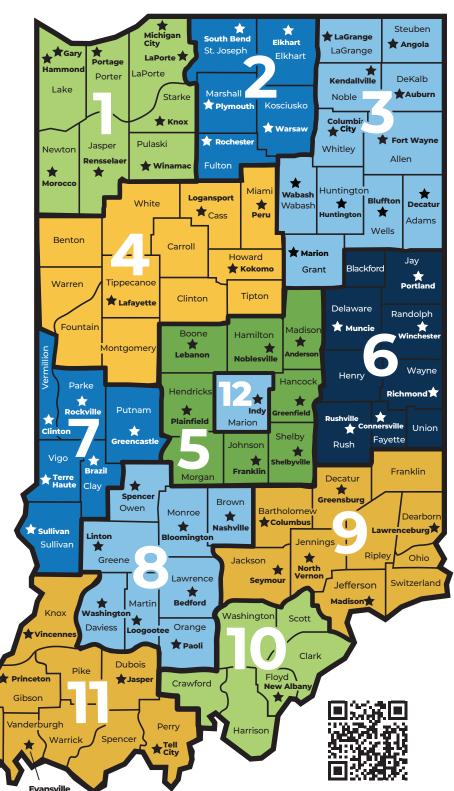
Region 8 – Offices in Nashville, 812-988-6968; Washington, 812-254-7734; Linton, 812-847-4479; Bedford, 812-279-4400; Loogootee, 812-295-2722; Bloomington, 812-331-6000; Paoli, 812-723-2359; and Spencer, 812-829-6511. Covers Brown, Daviess, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange and Owen counties.

Region 9 – Offices in Columbus, 812-376-3351; Lawrenceburg, 812-537-1117; Greensburg, 812-663-8597; Seymour, 812-522-9074; Madison, 812-265-3734; North Vernon, 812-346-6030; Rising Sun, 812-438-2437; and Batesville, 812-537-1117. Covers Bartholomew, Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Ripley and Switzerland counties.

Region 10 - Office in New Albany, 812-948-6102.

Region 11 – Offices in Jasper, 812-634-1599; Princeton, 812-386-7983; Vincennes, 812-882-8770; Tell City, 812-548-4870; and Evansville, 812-424-4473. Covers Dubois, Gibson, Knox, Perry, Pike, Posey, Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick counties.

**Region 12 –** Office in Indianapolis, 317-798-0335. Covers Marion County.





about a WorkOne near you.

Use the QR code to find more details

Pivot gives you personalized ob recommendations

Anyone who is currently jobseeking has a powerful new Al-based tool at their disposal thanks to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

The new tool, called Pivot, an Indiana Workforce Engine, was launched by DWD in November of 2023. It uses artificial intelligence to recommend the next career move for anyone using the state's unemployment insurance portal, even those who are ineligible for unemployment. Pivot personalizes the recommendation by averaging exclusive data about the individual's education and work history, the Hoosier job market, and the experiences of similarly trained/educated individuals.

"Our job is to make it as easy as possible for [job seekers] to figure out what they're supposed to do," DWD Chief of Staff Joshua Richardson said in a story published in May 2024 in Government Technology magazine.

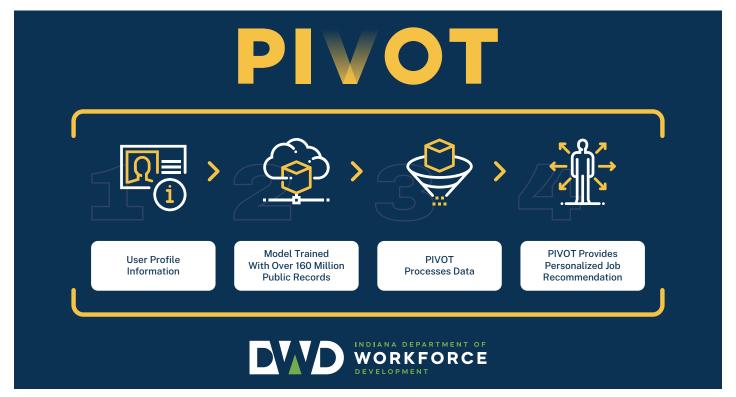
The highlight of what Pivot brings to the user is in the key-word recommendation. Pivot takes the combined data from the Department of Education, the Commission for Higher Education, and more from Indiana's statewide longitudinal data system to recommend 15 potential jobs to the user. While doing so, it also highlights key factors concerning job seekers, such as: median wages, the



training duration/completion information.

Pivot doesn't require signing up for anything new; it's part of the unemployment insurance site that jobseekers are already using. There's no obligation to act on Pivot's recommendations, but DWD is seeing high participation rates so far. Over 70% of initial unemployment claimants are voluntarily engaging with Pivot and more than half are providing feedback on the career recommendations that Pivot provides.

In the future, Pivot will also provide training and education recommendations. If you are a current unemployment insurance claimant, Pivot is available to you now. Login to your Uplink account portal and talk to a call center agent today for more information.



# **Unemployment Insurance application** process is now faster, more efficient

Applying for Unemployment Insurance was a clunky process in the past. Customers let the Department of Workforce Development know about their concerns and DWD listened.

In late 2023, DWD deployed a new document upload feature that has simplified procedural requirements for applicants, minimized the need for follow-up communication, and helped streamline the DWD internal review process.

"Before this was in place, claimants had to fax or deliver their paperwork," said Project Manager Jeremie Dexter. "In the past, the review process could have taken 24 hours or maybe several days or even weeks during high-volume periods. We released the document upload feature to make things easier for them."

According to Dexter, the document upload concept has been a priority for DWD since 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a delay in the process of implementation.

"Like other agencies around the country, we were backlogged as a result of the pandemic," he said. "The [U.S.] Department of Labor said states weren't prepared, so they made money available to help correct the problem, and Indiana was one of the first to submit a request."

The Department of Labor dispatched a team to assess Indiana's system in late 2022. The team reviewed DWD's processes and made 13 recommendations. One of those was to provide document upload capabilities for claimants. That became DWD's top priority.

We're trying very hard to meet customers where they want to be met. That is a focus for all of us.

Justin Davis, DWD's associate chief of customer experience

Now claimants have a modern and more efficient way to file required paperwork for the unemployment insurance adjudication process.

"We're trying very hard to meet customers where they want to be met. That is a focus for all of us," said Justin Davis, DWD's associate chief of customer experience. "We want to get better every day."

Now the state can receive significantly more documents than in the past and review them more quickly. Previously, many items had to be faxed. Many of those were hard to read and required follow-up.

While not all claimants reach the adjudication process, having the ability to electronically submit paperwork lessens a major headache for those who do.







#### Flexible Classes

Choose from course formats designed to fit your life, with online, in-person, or a combination of both and timelines that range from one day to several weeks.

# **Workforce Preparation**

lvy Tech's classes can prepare you to earn industry-recognized certifications in topics like food safety through ServSafe, CPR through the American Heart Association, and cybersecurity through CompTIA.

# **Employer Partnerships**

If you're an employer looking to skill up your workforce, Ivy Tech can help with that too! Choose from available employee skills training classes or work with the Ivy+ Career Link team to create customized training.



# Help yourself while helping others

# AmeriCorps Indiana can be a path to a rewarding career

Whether you're just getting started, looking for a midcareer change, or a senior who wants to stay active in your community after retirement, AmeriCorps Indiana is a great way to develop your skills and find your path while doing important work. There are 20 programs across the state that are recruiting for more than 600 national service volunteers.

Serving your community through AmeriCorps is a proven pathway to gaining specific skills, such as teaching, conservation, and emergency management, while also learning general skills like leadership, teamwork, creativity, and problem solving. And it can lead to permanent employment in many high job-growth sectors, including education, public health, conservation, and nonprofit management.

AmeriCorps service isn't without monetary benefits. Full-time volunteers receive a living stipend and health benefits at no cost. AmeriCorps members also can receive up to \$7,395 in an educational award, making college/ post-secondary training more accessible and affordable for those who serve. Some colleges and universities will match the award.

AmeriCorps is open to all, but it's especially beneficial for young adults from underserved communities facing the toughest employment prospects.

Research and surveys of AmeriCorps alumni have found positive effects on future employment:

- 80 percent of AmeriCorps alumni say AmeriCorps benefited their career path.
- 82 percent of alumni report that AmeriCorps was a defining professional experience.
- 42 percent of alumni employed within six months of service found a job through a connection made in AmeriCorps.



Serve Indiana, a division of the Department of Workforce Development, oversees AmeriCorps Indiana funding, so scan the QR code to find the list of AmeriCorps programs with open positions.

#### Who's taking advantage of AmeriCorps Indiana?

- Young adults interested in exploring career pathways while also growing their skills.
- Hoosiers looking to change career fields or pursue mission-driven, service-oriented work.
- Older Hoosier adults who want to bridge the gap to retirement (access to health insurance) or serve after retirement to stay active in their communities. Adults 55+ who serve may transfer their educational award to immediate family members.

•••••••

# **AmeriCorps programs** in the spotlight

#### Hoosier Health Corps, Indiana University School of Medicine

- Launched in 2021, only program of its kind in the country.
- First year medical students are enrolled as AmeriCorps members over the summer.
- Matched with nonprofits around the state to gain a critical understanding of public health issues in Indiana.
- Serve a variety of populations ranging from youth to people experiencing homelessness to recently incarcerated individuals.
- Prepares students to become physicians who are culturally competent, critical thinkers, trauma-informed and understand healthcare disparities on a system level.

#### Michiana Area Council of Governments

- Launched in 2022.
- Anyone can apply to be an AmeriCorps member with this program. Recent members include a high school senior using it as internship hours, and current Goshen College students and other area residents interested in addressing local environmental community needs.
- Participants implement key environmental sustainability and capacity building strategies identified by local governments, nonprofits, and other stakeholders in Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall and St. Joseph Counties that serve both urban and rural areas.
- Participants also engage in community education and/or service projects to increase energy efficiency.

#### New service-to-career programs for 2024-2025

- Family Scholar House recruits and places AmeriCorps members who provide health care support to hospitals and nonprofit healthcare facilities in rural and urban southern Indiana counties with identified poor health outcomes. Participants are part of a service-to-career pathway that enables them to work in the public health field following their term of service.
- The Indiana University School of Education recruits and places AmeriCorps members (IU School of Ed. students) who provide academic interventions in south central Indiana. The goal of the program is to prepare future educators to enter the field more prepared and, therefore, less likely to burnout in their early years during their teaching careers. This positively impacting Indiana's teacher shortage.
- American Connection Corps, a program of Lead for America, engages AmeriCorps members in bridging the digital divide in communities throughout the state and helping Hoosiers improve their digital job readiness.

# Indiana's need for childcare can launch your career

In Indiana and across the country, families desperately need convenient, safe, affordable childcare so that parents can hold down jobs. That need has created an opportunity for Hoosiers to pursue careers in childcare.

In early 2024, the state officially recognized the need—and the opportunity—by adding early childhood education and childcare credential training options to the state's workforce training programs. That means the state is pledging financial aid dollars to pay for training in early childhood professions.

That includes training for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education. Almost 200 individuals in Indiana enrolled in classes to get their CDA credential in the last year, and about 170 credentials have been earned.

The Indiana institutions listed below provide training for Hoosiers interested in pursuing a career in childcare and early childhood education.

Blue River Career Center Adult Education, Shelbyville Taylor Beller, Adult Education Program Coordinator 317.392.2197 tbeller@brcp.k12.in.us

YMCA of Greater Indianapolis Adult Education, Indianapolis Meresa Creekmore-Armor, Vice President 317.554.1040

mcreekmorearmor@indymca.org

**Monroe County Community School Corporation, Bloomington** Chris Harmon, Director of Adult & Alternative Learning Ty Mungle, Assistant Director 812.330.7731, ext. 50757

charmon@mccsc.edu

tmungle@mccsc.edu

Fort Wayne Community Schools, Fort Wayne

Lonnie Heck, Manager, Continuing Education, lonnie.heck@fwcs.k12.in.us

Chelsea Harris, Career Coordinator, chelsea.harris@fwcs.kl2.in.us 260.467.1060

Center for Workforce Innovations, Valparaiso Samantha Smith, Director of Adult Education 219.266.6167 ssmith@cwicorp.com



# Julie Sturgis, **Fort Wayne**

**Age:** 26

Jobs: Interim Assistant Director. The Goddard School

Background: Sturgis started at Goddard in August of 2022 after previous jobs as a pharmacy technician and hair stylist. She started as a teacher at The Goddard School, where she discovered that childcare can become a career

Current situation: To continue to grow in her job, she decided to pursue training and is now getting hands-on training by working under the school's director. The training program lasts a minimum of six

Best part of the job: Learning from the director. "I like the interactions and being able to help not only the children but the teachers as well."

# Chelsi Jordan. **Fort Wayne**

**Age:** 32

Job: Education Coordinator. The Goddard School

Background: Jordan started at The Goddard School in November of 2023 as the lead junior kindergarten teacher. Before that, she had been a preschool teacher, a family support specialist for Stop Child Abuse & Neglect, and a youth advocate.

**Current situation:** Jordan is receiving hands-on training provided by The Goddard School. "In my interview process, I knew immediately that I wanted to grow within the school and saw great potential for that. I expressed this to the directors and owners and they supported and encouraged training that provided me the opportunity to grow."

Best part of the job: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my hands-on training. This has provided me the opportunity to learn things in real time."



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You can earn your high school equivalency, increase your annual earnings, receive free job training, or even get a better job at your current workplace. Make a little change today, it could go a long way in your future.





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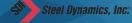
















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LIFT Academy has helped countless students reach the skies and attain the careers they've always wanted. Being founded by Republic Airways Holdings Inc. allows students to not only become successful commercial pilots but also gives them a defined pathway with a direct route to flying with Republic Airways.

Graduation is just the beginning of the journey; what comes after is the real adventure. Listen to Republic Airways First Officer and 2022 LIFT Academy graduate Jules Hurley talk about her experience.

Learn more about your path to success at flywithlift.com

#### To take right off, tell us a little bit about yourself.

**Jules:** My name is Jules, and I'm a PHL-based First Officer at Republic. February 2020 marked the beginning of my aviation journey. I became an instructor in September 2021 and went on to fly for Republic in October 2022.

#### What was your favorite part of the LIFT program?

**Jules:** I liked that I was always moving forward and had a goal for the next stage. Even if you finished your ground school ahead of schedule, there was always the need to dedicate time to studying for an upcoming stage check or oral examination.

#### Do you have a favorite memory that comes to mind?

**Jules:** My first solo in the traffic pattern at Crawfordsville is still my favorite memory. Getting to go solo meant that my instructor trusted that I could fly independently.

What are you looking forward to in your career?



Jules: I am looking forward to flying more. There's so much more to learn every trip from going to new airports to hopefully upgrading to Captain soon.

#### What advice do you have for people considering a career in aviation?

Jules: Read and learn as much as you can. The airplane shouldn't be your only classroom, so spend at least double the amount of time learning on the ground.



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