

Compendium:

NORTHEAST
INDIANA
WORKS



Board Newsletter, June 2023

Dear Board Members:

Providers of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs observed northeast Indiana's CTE Awareness Month in May with signing ceremonies.

Northeast Indiana Works and its partners designated the month in 2019. This will be the fourth year for the initiative. The onset of COVID forced the cancellation of awareness month activities in 2020.

Signings Highlight
Northeast Indiana
CTE Awareness Month

CTE programs teach specific career skills to high school students that prepare them for work after graduation or serve as a bridge to post-secondary education. Often, students in CTE programs earn industry-recognized certifications.

At the signing ceremonies, CTE graduates signed letters of intent to work for area employers. Among the ceremonies in the region:

- The Adams Wells Manufacturing Alliance hosted a signing ceremony May 8 at the Wells County Commerce & Visitors Centre in Bluffton.
- Fort Wayne Community Schools' Career Academy held signing ceremonies May 16 in the Anthis auditorium.
- The Impact Institute in Kendallville conducted signing ceremonies May 17 at Impact's administrative offices.
- Garrett High School and its Career Development Program held an outdoor signing ceremony May 26 at 1001 Joanna Court in Garrett, IN.

"We are grateful that various entities continue to hold these signing ceremonies and highlight the importance of preparing students for skilled occupations after high school graduation," said **Edmond O'Neal**, president and CEO of Northeast Indiana Works. "Equally important is giving recognition to those students who have worked hard to learn skills that will position them for bright futures."

Northeast Indiana Works Campaign Nets Award for Agency: Fort Wayne Marketing, which has assisted Northeast Indiana Works with two awareness campaigns, won two silver awards from the American Advertising Federation of Fort Wayne for its work on an outreach campaign touting the services of Northeast Indiana Works and WorkOne Northeast.

Part of the campaign involved debuting a "Northeast Indiana Works for Me" brand.

Fort Wayne Marketing has also been spearheading a manufacturing awareness campaign for Northeast Indiana Works.

Former JAG Student Becomes JAG Specialist:

At 16 years old, **Ani'a Walker** started her own business. She baked with her great grandmother and brought the cupcakes they made to her family's Sunday dinners. One day, a family friend offered to pay Ani'a to make cupcakes, and her journey of entrepreneurship began.

About the same time, as a student at Snider High School, Ani'a had friends involved in JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) and spent time in their classroom thanks to a welcoming JAG specialist. She developed a connection with that specialist and eventually enrolled in the program. She says it was a "no brainer" to request the class for her junior year. She saw so many advantages to JAG, which builds talent pipelines to Indiana's employers by helping high school students achieve success through high school graduation. Northeast Indiana Works oversees 14 JAG programs at 13 high schools. The programs are administered by Brightpoint.



Ani'a Walker, left, was interviewed by WPTA's Krista Miller during a segment of Opportunity Knocks. The program is a partnership between the station and Northeast Indiana Works.

In addition to the mentorship and guidance Ani'a received from JAG, she experienced a depth of personal and professional development. She had a vision for her future after high school, and participation in JAG helped her strengthen the skills she already had to further her success.

As a senior, Ani'a had the opportunity to demonstrate the leadership skills she gained as president of the Snider High School JAG Chapter. She was also able to further explore her passion for entrepreneurship, drafting her first business plan and placing in the regional Entrepreneurship Plan event at the JAG Career Development Competition.

Ani'a says the JAG program felt like one of the only classes that was preparing her for success in the next chapter of her life. It also gave her a safe space and a sense of community with the other chapter members.

Shortly after graduating Ball State University with a bachelor's degree in entrepreneurial management, Ani'a started looking for employment opportunities. She knew she did not want just any job— she wanted a job that would impact the youth in her community. She came across a job posting for a JAG specialist position with Brightpoint, knew immediately that it was a perfect fit, and she was hired.

And about that business she started in high school? Puff's Pastries is still rolling along.

Wabash WorkOne Center Relocating: Effective June 5, the Wabash County WorkOne Northeast career center will relocate to the Area Five Agency on Aging at 105 Olive St. in Wabash.

The center, which was previously at the Wabash County Community Learning Center, will be open Mondays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

WorkOne Assists Displaced Wabash Workers: Northeast Indiana Works and WorkOne Northeast participated in a community response event May 15 at the Honeywell Center to offer guidance and support to 117 workers who will be displaced by the closing of the Owens Corning Thermafiber plant in Wabash.

Final day of operations at the plant will be October 31.

In addition to WorkOne Northeast, prospective employers, educational entities and other resource providers attended the May 15 event, which was organized by Grow Wabash County and the city of Wabash.

WorkOne will continue to offer services to the workers, including conducting four workshops at Grow Wabash County: Identifying Your Skills and Interviewing with Confidence on June 12 and Organizing a Successful Job Search and Resume Development on July 10.

Gap/Asset Analysis Wraps Up: A gap/asset analysis of healthcare career pathways and programs in northeast Indiana has been completed by Inspire Success.

The analysis, made possible by a grant received by the Region 8 Education Service Center, was one of the goals of the Northeast Indiana Healthcare Consortium, formed by Northeast Indiana Works in late 2021.

The results of the analysis will be presented to the nearly 60-member consortium on July 11.

Tempel Attends Economic Development Confab: **Kim Tempel**, Northeast Indiana Works senior director of business services/human resources, attended an Indiana Economic Development Association conference April 20-21 in Indianapolis.

Among the key topics was diversity, equity and inclusion in the workforce. **Isaac Lee**, executive director of the Steuben County Economic Development Corporation, moderated a panel on the topic at the conference.

The Indiana Economic Development Corporation also presented on talent attraction and retention initiatives in the state.

Farrant MCs Huntington Robotics Competition: **Rick Farrant**, Northeast Indiana Works director of communications, served as MC for a robotics scrimmage April 15 at Huntington North High School involving 28 elementary school teams and eight middle school teams.

The VEX IQ Slapshot challenge featured head-to-head competition over six hours involving robots designed, built and operated by the students.

(The next board meeting will be from 9 to 10:30 a.m. June 2, 2023. It will be in person and virtual.)