

# Compendium:

NORTHEAST  
INDIANA  
WORKS



Board Newsletter, January 2024

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Dear Board Members:

The Manufacturing Begins with Me career awareness campaign reached a significant milestone in 2023, registering more than 2.5 million social media impressions.

Impressions represent the number of times viewers see a social media post.

The career awareness campaign, anchored by a website ([www.manufacturing.beginswith.me](http://www.manufacturing.beginswith.me)), focuses on reaching middle-schoolers throughout northeast Indiana. The social media posts, including 30-second videos, are digitally streamed into the homes of middle-schoolers in 11 counties.

Manufacturing  
Awareness Campaign  
Blankets Region

The manufacturing campaign, supported by the Don Wood Foundation, is one of three career awareness campaigns facilitated in whole or in part by Northeast Indiana Works. The other two: Your Future: Make It Your Own (YF:MIYO) and a healthcare career awareness campaign expected to debut in 2024.

YF:MIYO is supported by funding from the Dekko and Schwab foundations. The healthcare campaign is being made possible through an Indiana Department of Education Explore, Engage and Experience Grant secured by the Region 8 Education Service Center.

At the core of the healthcare planning is a Northeast Indiana Healthcare Consortium founded by Northeast Indiana Works and made up of more than 50 representatives of healthcare providers and educational entities.

**Northeast Indiana Works Recognized for NGL Leadership:** Northeast Indiana Works was honored at a celebration in November for the organization's present and future commitment to Fort Wayne Community Schools' Ford Next Generation Learning (NGL) program.

The program will empower students to reach their potential through equitable and relevant community-connected experiences.

Northeast Indiana Works will help the school system develop and expand business connections, including helping facilitate work-based learning opportunities. Northeast Indiana Works President and CEO **Edmond O'Neal** is leading the organization's efforts and traveled to Arizona in late November to attend an NGL conference, as well as a conference hosted by the Association of Career and Technical Education.

In an NGL newsletter, Executive Director **Cheryl Carrier** said: "I have full confidence that Fort Wayne is a capable and inspired community, determined to make a meaningful difference in the future of its students. Fort Wayne is indeed a community to watch."

**Manchester Student Tapped for Statewide JAG Post:** **Braylon Judy**, a senior at Manchester High School, has been elected president of the newly created Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Indiana Career Association.

Also elected to the slate of JAG association officers were a president-elect, secretary, and parliamentarian. Northeast Indiana has 13 JAG programs at 12 high schools, including Manchester. JAG is overseen by Northeast Indiana Works and administered by Brightpoint.

Judy, vice president of leadership for JAG at Manchester, joined JAG in his junior year and said it has helped him develop leadership skills and improve his public speaking.

"I was not who I wanted to be," he said. "I wanted to be this person people would look up to, but I never really had the skills to be that person."

**Rachel Bryant**, youth involvement manager for Brightpoint, said she is looking forward to watching Judy lead JAG students throughout the state to the next level.

"I could not be prouder that he has been selected to represent not just the state of Indiana but (our region) as well," said Bryant. "Being voted as JAG state president will give Braylon the opportunity to be the voice and make an impact for our students on a national level."

**Christine Shaffer** of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and manager of professional development for JAG Indiana said the four state association officers went to the JAG National Leadership Academy in Washington, D.C., at the end of November.

She said she will be meeting with the officers soon to discuss what they'd like to do in leading the state JAG. She said activities may include carrying out a state service project or finding ways to support local career associations.

Judy will also be charting his college path, which likely will include majoring in theater arts with a minor in communications.

**Communications, Operations Associate Hired:** **Megan Voirol** of Fort Wayne has been named communications and operations associate for Northeast Indiana Works.

Voirol is a recent graduate of Purdue University Fort Wayne, where she majored in arts and humanities with a minor in communications.

She has extensive internship and work experience, holding marketing and/or communications positions with SCORE Northeast Indiana; Fort4Fitness; Michiana Wine Festival; Better Business Bureau of Northern Indiana; University of Saint Francis, and the Indiana Department of Transportation.

Her experience has included creating and posting social media content; creating talking points for media interviews; writing news releases; managing day-to-day operations; leading diversity and inclusion initiatives; documenting and tracking information, and attending to various aspects of customer service.

Voirol joined the Northeast Indiana Works team on December 4.

**O’Neal Attends ETA Vision 2030 Conference:** **Edmond O’Neal** attended the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Vision 2030 conference in November.

The conference was held at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place in Chicago.

O’Neal was one of three Indiana representatives of workforce boards to attend the conference. Other attendees included representatives from state workforce agencies, federal and government partners, and other workforce boards from around the country.

The two-day conference focused on investing in America’s workforce and fostering partnerships. It was the last of three conferences in the ETA Vision 2030 series.

Presenters from numerous organizations nationally presented a wide variety of information pertaining to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other workforce development initiatives.

Among the key topics: information on Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), developing a talent pipeline, and funding sources.

**WorkOne Veterans Specialist Honored:** **Jesse Streets**, a disabled veterans outreach program specialist with the WorkOne Northeast career center in Auburn, has been named an outstanding performer by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

Streets is an Auburn native, a DeKalb High School graduate and a U.S. Air Force veteran.

In the last year, Streets has supported 67 veterans with significant barriers to employment and provided them with more than 1,700 services.

Streets received recognition during the annual Jobs for Veterans State Grants Conference .