Compendium:

NORTHEAST INDIANA WORKS

Board Newsletter, October 2024

Dear Board Members:

Forum Focuses on Healthcare:

Northeast Indiana Works hosted a 2024 Northeast Indiana Healthcare Forum at Electric Works in Fort Wayne as part of its healthcare career awareness initiative.

More than 50 community leaders attended the September 17 event, which featured presentations by **Holly Chaille**, college and career pathways/3E coordinator for the Region 8 Education Service Center, and **John Paff**, founder and CEO of Fort Wayne Marketing.

Chaille has served as grant coordinator for a state grant supporting the initiative, which has included conducting a gap/asset analysis of healthcare learning opportunities, a career awareness outreach campaign, and efforts to enhance work-based learning opportunities in the healthcare sector. Fort Wayne Marketing has spearheaded the career awareness outreach work, which has generated nearly 10 million social media impressions.

The healthcare forum also included a panel discussion featuring **Edmond O'Neal**, president and CEO of Northeast Indiana Works; Dr. **Josh Wenning**, executive director of the Region 8 Education Service Center; Dr. **Deborah Garrison**, vice chancellor and dean of Indiana University Fort Wayne; **Heather Schoegler**, director of strategic educational partnerships at Parkview Health, and **April Taylor**, assistant principal of Fort Wayne Community Schools Career Academy.

Rick Farrant, director of communications for Northeast Indiana Works, moderated the panel discussion.

The healthcare work is designed to enhance talent pipelines for the healthcare industry and is supported strategically by the Northeast Indiana Healthcare Consortium, which was formed by Northeast Indiana Works in late 2021. The consortium includes members from the healthcare industry, educational entities, and workforce and economic development organizations.

More about the healthcare initiative can be found at www.healthcarebeginswithme.com and on Northeast Indiana Works' YouTube channel.

Rep. Banks Job Fair Held at PFW: U.S. Rep. **Jim Banks,** R-IN, in conjunction with Purdue University Fort Wayne (PFW), Northeast Indiana Works and WorkOne Northeast, hosted a job fair August 14 in the university's International Ballroom at Walb Student Union.

More than 60 employers with a total of more than 1,800 job openings attended and more than 200 jobseekers showed up. The employers spanned a variety of industries, including manufacturing, healthcare, government, finance, law enforcement, and transportation.

Representatives of higher education institutions were also on hand for those people interested in furthering their education.

The annual job fair is one of the largest in northeast Indiana.

"The advanced training our students receive while on campus is only one of the ways Purdue Fort Wayne serves as an essential driver of economic development," said Purdue Fort Wayne Chancellor **Ron Elsenbaumer**.

U.S. Rep. Jim Banks and Northeast Indiana Works President and CEO Edmond O'Neal at the job fair.

"In addition to being the hub for public higher education across the region," he said, "we also take our role as a career facilitator very seriously. Hosting this annual job fair is another opportunity for the university to help those seeking gainful employment make these important connections."

In addition to the job opportunities presented at the fair, Northeast Indiana Works and WorkOne Northeast representatives were available to assist job seekers with resumes, provide guidance on job interview techniques, and offer information on short-term, certification-based training opportunities.

"The job market of late has become more competitive, not only in the number of open positions available but also in the skills required," said **Edmond O'Neal**, president and CEO of Northeast Indiana Works. "This job fair and the guidance provided by our representatives were terrific opportunities to start or enhance a career."

Workforce Development Plan Completed: Northeast Indiana Works has completed a strategic plan for Program Years 2024-2027.

The plan can be accessed at Northeast Indiana Works' website under Other Documents.

The document is designed to coincide with a statewide plan. Such plans are required every four years. The regional plan drives workforce development system activities in 11 northeast Indiana counties.

Two More Manufacturing Camps Conducted: Northeast Indiana Works partnered with Ivy Tech Fort Wayne in June to present two Manufacturing Experience day camps for middle schoolers.

The camps were conducted at the college's Steel Dynamics, Inc. Keith E. Busse Technology Center.
It is the first time Ivy Tech has played a role in Northeast Indiana Works' day camps, which debuted in Noble County in 2022 and have involved more than 100 students.

The latest manufacturing day camps were part of two week-long STEM activities organized by Ivy Tech. During the manufacturing segment, students built bird feeders, completed electrical circuits and welded toy metal airplanes. **O'Neal** delivered opening remarks.

The Manufacturing Experience camps are part of a larger awareness initiative encouraging young people to consider careers in manufacturing, which is the largest employment sector in northeast Indiana. The initiative is anchored by a website (www.manufacturing.beginswith.me) and has also featured a robust social media presence on Instagram, TikTok and Facebook.

Farrant, O'Neal Give Presentations: **Farrant** gave a presentation at an Indiana Talent Forum August 6 at Trine University sponsored by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Farrant's topic: "What Data Tells Us: Labor Market Demands." The forum also featured education and industry panel discussions.

O'Neal spoke at a Black Chamber of Commerce business symposium and at a news conference in which the Don Wood and Questa Education foundations presented a 165-page Advancing Postsecondary Education and Training Study.

Statewide JAG Graduation Rate 97%: Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Indiana, administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and overseen regionally by Northeast Indiana Works, reached a 97% graduation rate for the 2023-24 school year, higher than the overall state average.

While in pursuit of doubling its program count by 2025, JAG Indiana also received national recognition as a JAG "6 of 6" award recipient at the Annual JAG National Training Seminar in Las Vegas. The 6-of-6 Award is bestowed by JAG National to the state programs exceeding six goals relating to graduation rates, post-secondary education, job placement and other significant milestones.

(*The next board meeting will be from 9 to 10:30 a.m. October 4, 2024. It will be in person and virtual.)*