Compendium:

Board Newsletter, October 2026

Dear Board Members:

Northeast Indiana Works has been at the forefront of discussions about workforce development in the region and state.

NORTHEAST INDIANA WORKS SHARES WORKFORCE INSIGHTS

Northeast Indiana Works President and CEO **Edmond O'Neal** was a panelist at a Greater Fort Wayne Inc. Economic Development Summit September 10 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum.

Joining him on the panel was **Marilyn Hissong**, superintendent of East Allen County Schools, and **Laura Macknick**, president and CEO of the Don Wood Foundation. The panel's focus: Advancing Workforce Development in Allen County.

Other speakers and panelists addressed topics such as growing a company's heritage; building the advanced energy of the future; Bombardier's investment in Allen County; the future of automotive; energy, growth and opportunity in the power industry; young entrepreneurs shaping the local economy, and the contributions of L3Harris to the defense and space industries.

Key messages from O'Neal's panel were giving young people access to opportunities and encouraging engagement from employers.

O'Neal also hosted a panel discussion on workforce development at an Indiana Economic Development Association conference in Fishers on August 13 and moderated a panel on workforce development at Brotherhood Mutual in Fort Wayne on September 2.

Annual Employer Seminar Conducted: Northeast Indiana Works and WorkOne Northeast hosted the annual Employer Seminar October 1 at Sweetwater.

Speakers included presentations by representatives of Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and the Don Wood Foundation. Additionally, **Pamela Cashdollar** of Mental Health America Northeast Indiana spoke about recognizing and preventing professional burnout; **Rob Moreland** of Rob Moreland Attorney at Law spoke about Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) compliance; **Allie Sutherland** of the Northeast Indiana Childhood Coalition spoke about the Tri-Share Plus Childcare Program; **Jennifer Spencer** of Education Consulting Services spoke about managing multiple generations in the workforce, and **Mark Cullnane** of NEI gave an economic outlook for 2027.

The free seminar has been a regional staple in providing essential information for the region's employers.

New IEDC Chief Named: Media executive **Mitch Frazier** will become the new president of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC).

Gov. **Mike Braun** announced that the LBJ Media president will take over as IEDC president Oct. 5. He will succeed **Josh Richardson**, who is leaving the position Oct. 2 to move to the private sector.

Frazier joined IBJ Media as president in 2025 after serving as president and CEO of AgriNovus Indiana. At IBJ Media, he oversaw the company's day-to-day operations, including its Indianapolis Business Journal and Inside INdiana Business operations.

Frazier previously served as CEO of Reynolds Farm Equipment. He also held leadership roles at ExactTarget, including during the company's initial public offering and acquisition by Salesforce.

Northeast Indiana Works has worked closely with the IEDC in serving the interests of the region's employers.

Education Summit Planned for November: The Don Wood Foundation and other community partners will host a Learn More Earn More Summit from 7:30 a.m. to noon November 9 at the Parkview Mirro Event Center.

Learn More Earn More is a regional initiative to encourage people to embrace lifelong learning. **Edmond O'Neal** is the vice chair of the Learn More Earn More Council.

Kenote speaker for the regional education and work-based learning summit will be **Teresa Lubbers**, senior advisor for the Sagamore Institute. She previously was commissioner of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and served in the Indiana Senate for 17 years.

More information about Learn More Earn More can be found at www.learnmoreearnmore.org

Connecting with the State: **Edmond O'Neal** and **Tom Kavanagh**, president and CEO of the Northern Indiana Workforce Board, met August 18 in Angola with **Mary Martin**, regional director for Indiana Gov. **Mike Braun**.

O'Neal and Kavanagh meet quarterly with Martin to share information about regional workforce activities and learn about workforce initiatives at the state level.

Camps Provide Hands-On Experience: Two Manufacturing Experience camps for middle-schoolers were conducted in June at Ivy Tech Community College in Fort Wayne.

Northeast Indiana Works has helped facilitate the hands-on manufacturing camps in Allen and other counties for the past four years, with help from the Don Wood Foundation, other funders, and community organizations.

The camps at Ivy Tech were part of the college's annual weeklong STEM camps.

(*The next board meeting will be from 9 to 10:30 a.m. January 8, 2026. It will be in person and virtual.)*