2026 Indiana Workforce Summit

October 14-15 | Wyndham Indianapolis Airport

PRESENTED BY



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



October 14, 2026

8:30 a.m. **Registration and Continental Breakfast/Expo Opens**

9:00 a.m. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Dr. Todd Hurst, Senior Vice President of Strategic Partnerships, Indiana Chamber of Commerce; Tony Waterson, President & CEO, Southern Indiana Works & Indiana Workforce Alliance Board Chair; and Meta

9:15 a.m. **Opening Keynote Presentation: Current State of AI: What's Now, New and Next**
Building Indiana's workforce doesn't happen in one lane. HR professionals, educators, policymakers, and economic development leaders are all pulling the same rope, through skill shortages, shifting technology, and the pressure to close the gap between what employers need and what the pipeline produces. Gallup reports 76% of the global workforce is experiencing some degree of burnout, and the people building Indiana's talent pipeline feel it from every direction: the classroom, the boardroom, and the state house.

Workforce Futurist Josh Davies introduces Resility, a seven-principle framework built on one idea: stability that moves, the subject of his new book, *The Resility Effect: Seven Principles to Thrive in an Era of Unrelenting Change*, releasing this October. The summit's own premise, that strong public programs and private-sector leadership are the essential ingredients for a highly skilled workforce, only holds up if the people building that partnership can stay steady through constant change. This session gives attendees provides the framework to make that a reality, with tools built to go to work the moment the summit ends.
Josh Davies, Workforce Futurist

10:15 a.m. **Expo Break**

10:45 a.m. Educational Session One

A. Indiana Career Apprenticeship Pathway (INCAP) Update
This presentation provides an overview of INCAP, highlighting its mission, strategic priorities, key initiatives and measurable impact. Attendees will gain insight into current programs, partnerships, outcomes and future opportunities for growth and innovation. The session is designed to inform stakeholders, showcase successes and facilitate discussion around strategies that drive sustainable results and organizational excellence.
Panelists: Melanie Vuynovich, Senior Director of Workforce Development, Life Sciences, BioCrossroads; Chris Price, President, Indiana Construction Roundtable Foundation; and Scott Hartman, Director of Insurance Apprenticeship, Financial Services Academy. Moderated by: Kami Nielsen, Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation.

B. Upskill to Outperform
Upskill to Outperform shows how strategic workforce education can transform organizational performance, strengthen employee retention and build a future-ready talent pipeline. When employees gain new skills, productivity increases through improved efficiency, confidence and adaptability. A culture of continuous learning also boosts retention by helping employees feel valued and by providing clear pathways for advancement.

Structured upskilling and reskilling programs allow organizations to grow talent internally, reduce hiring costs and prepare employees for future roles. The presentation includes a real case study of an organization that implemented a tiered training model to equip front-line employees with the skills needed for promotions. Participants will learn how this organization used available grant funding to support its training strategy and achieved measurable gains in performance, engagement and internal mobility.
Jennifer Skene, Vice Chancellor of Workforce and Economic Impact, Ivy Tech Community College

C. Building Indiana's Mid-21st Century Workforce: AI Literacy, Education, and Strategic Partnerships

Join education and industry leaders as they explore how strategic cross-sector collaboration is preparing Indiana students for an AI-driven future. Discover how Google, Project Lead The Way (PLTW), and East Allen County Schools (EACS) have teamed up to deliver cutting-edge AI coursework, comprehensive teacher professional development, and high-impact career pathways. Panelists will share actionable insights, direct educator and student experiences, and strategies for empowering local educators while building a skilled workforce to fuel Indiana's long-term economic growth.
Panelists: Dr. Robby Goodman, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, East Allen County Schools; Rocky Valadez, Senior Vice President of Engagement, Project Lead The Way; and Kelly Rentschler, Community & Workforce Development Manager, Google. Moderated by: Tiffany McCree, Google.

11:45 a.m. Expo Lunch Buffet

1:15 p.m. Educational Session Two

D. Tracking the Workforce That Accelerates Local Economic Prosperity

Invest Hamilton County (IHC) and the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) at IU are collaborating on a workforce dashboard built for every Indiana county and Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) region. IHC's intellectual property and IBRC's economic expertise merge into a data tool accessible to all of Indiana's workforce stakeholders. Every county has tradeable industries that compete for national and global customers. These industries host a locality's highest-paying jobs and drive its fastest income growth – ensuring sufficient talent for the occupations behind them defines an optimal workforce strategy. A practical dashboard supporting that strategy does two things: First, it assesses current and future demand for industry-specific talent, by occupation, against current and future supply, identifying the specific talent gaps a strategy must fill. Second, it reports labor productivity and average hourly earnings by industry and geography – the measures that must rise for prosperity to advance. The result keeps local stakeholders focused on what matters most for economic growth and makes the quality of job creation matter more than the quantity.
Mike Thibideau, Invest Hamilton County; Philip T. Powell, Ph.D., Indiana Business Research Center; and Carol Rogers, Indiana Business Research Center

E. One Front Door for Employers, Seven Districts: Building Elkhart County's Work-Based Learning (WBL) Hub

Indiana's new work-based learning expectations are creating urgency for schools, employers and workforce partners. But without shared infrastructure, employers can receive separate asks from multiple districts, districts can build tools independently and student access can depend too heavily on transportation, family networks, staffing and self-sourcing. This interactive session shares the emerging Elkhart County Work-Based Learning Hub: a workforce-board-backed, countywide model anchored by all seven public school districts, the Elkhart Area Career Center, Northern Indiana Education Service Center, employer partners and programmatic supports. Presenters will describe how Northern Indiana Workforce Board (NIWB) serves as backbone/convener, how the Hub contract creates shared vision and partner commitment, and how the region is building one clearer employer front door, common WBL tools, data routines and healthcare/manufacturing collaboratives. Using countywide asset-map findings, Beacon Health's inaugural Indiana Employer Provided Innovation Challenge (EPIC) challenge, 48 student credentials and early governance lessons as proof points, participants will learn how one Indiana region is moving from disconnected WBL activity to shared talent.
Lauren Hall Riggins, Braided Futures; Tom Kavanagh, Northern Indiana Workforce Board; Byron Sanders, Baugo Community Schools; and Kayla Alvarez, Beacon Health Systems Representative

F. Workforce Pell Updates

Workforce Pell presents a transformative opportunity to expand access to high-quality, short-term education and training programs that lead directly to in-demand careers. As Indiana continues to strengthen its talent pipeline, collaboration among workforce, education, and employer partners is essential to ensuring learners can access affordable pathways to economic mobility.

Join leaders from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Ivy Tech Community College, and Vincennes University for a discussion on the implementation of Workforce Pell in Indiana. Panelists will explore how short-term Pell eligibility can increase access for adult learners, incumbent workers, and underserved populations while supporting employers' growing workforce needs. Attendees will gain insights into program design, learner support strategies, and the partnerships needed to maximize impact across the state.

This conversation will highlight Indiana's unique opportunities and challenges as stakeholders work together to connect more Hoosiers with credentials of value and career advancement opportunities.
Panelists: Lara Pastore, Associate Chief, Talent Development, Indiana Department of Workforce Development; Molly Dodge, Senior Vice President Workforce and Careers, Ivy Tech Community College; and David Tucker, Vice President, Development/Community Services, Vincennes University. Moderated by: Sally Saydshoev, Executive Director, Institute for Workforce Excellence.

2:15 p.m. Expo Break

2:30 p.m. General Session

Federal Workforce and Education Policy Review
Gain insights into the latest federal workforce and education policy developments, including funding priorities, legislative updates and emerging trends. This session will explore policy implications for workforce, education, and employer stakeholders and highlight what to watch for in the evolving federal landscape.
Chris Andresen, Senior Vice President, Dutko Government Relations

3:15 p.m. Expo Break

3:30 p.m. Closing Session

A Strategic Workforce Conversation
Commissioner Kate Shelby, Indiana Department of Workforce Development. Moderated by Lesley Weidenbener, Editor, Indianapolis Business Journal

4:45 p.m. Indiana Workforce Networking Reception

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8:30 a.m. **Continental Breakfast**

9:00 a.m. **Day Two Welcome**
Vanessa Green-Sinders, President and CEO, Indiana Chamber of Commerce

Opening General Session Discussion
Mitch Frazier, Indiana Economic Development Corporation and Vanessa Green-Sinders

10:00 a.m. **Break**

10:15 a.m. Educational Session Three

G. Erskine Green Training Institute (EGTI) – Untapped Talent – Expanding Postsecondary Vocational Training Opportunities for People With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Established in 2016 by The Arc of Indiana, the EGTI is a postsecondary vocational training program for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) pursuing careers in hospitality, healthcare and manufacturing. The program combines classroom instruction, hands-on training and employment readiness skills to prepare graduates for competitive employment. EGTI has served nearly 400 students and built strong employer partnerships with organizations such as Allison Transmission, IU Health and General Hotels Corporation. These partnerships have provided valuable insights into both the opportunities and barriers individuals with IDD face when entering the workforce.

The Arc of Indiana team will share how individuals with IDD can help address workforce shortages when provided with the right training, support and opportunities. The presentation will highlight lessons learned in developing training pathways from healthcare to manufacturing, explore common employment barriers and provide strategies for employers to leverage the strengths, skills and potential of this qualified, often-underutilized talent pool.
David Dalton, Chief Program and Engagement Officer and Daniel Gurule, Community Outreach Manager, The Arc of Indiana

H. AI Is Changing Work: What It Looks Like in Practice

AI is changing work, but what does that actually look like inside a company? This session moves beyond predictions about the future of work to examine AI adoption in practice. Ting Gootee will open with a brief look at AI trends, Indiana's AI adoption landscape and how companies progress from experimentation to transformation. Then, a fireside chat with Selflessly CEO Joshua Driver will share shed light on that transformation looks like inside a company that has integrated AI deeply into its operations, from how daily work gets done and where employees spend their time to changing roles, skills, hiring and workforce needs.

For HR leaders, the question is no longer simply what AI might do to work. It is how work is already changing, and how organizations should prepare their people for what comes next.
Ting Gootee, CFA, CAIA, EVP, Digital Adoption, Managing Director, Crossroads Health Ventures and Joshua Driver, CEO, Selflessly

I. Measuring What Works: Proving Durable Skills in Work-Based Learning

Most workforce reporting can tell you whether a participant finished a program and how many questions they got right, but stays silent on whether they can think through ambiguity, communicate evidence or coordinate with a team. Those durable skills are exactly what employers say they need, and exactly what completion certificates fail to prove. This session walks through a fully instrumented work-based learning cohort: 80 learners across 16 squads, six weeks and 86,080 behavioral signals – where critical thinking, communication and collaboration were measured as rigorously as content knowledge. We will show how the skills moved level over level, how a built-in validity check keeps scores honest rather than inflated and how real-time flags caught struggling learners mid-cohort instead of at the end. Most importantly, we will show how the same data exports into the funder reports, dashboards and accreditation evidence Indiana workforce boards already produce, and

how to scope a co-branded challenge around your region's priority sectors. Attendees leave with a concrete model for turning skill development into defensible data.
Paul Kirk, thinccc

11:00 a.m. Break

11:15 a.m. Educational Session Four

J. From Classroom to Career: How Indiana Is Building the Nation's First Statewide Cybersecurity Talent Pathway
Indiana is building a first-in-the-nation cybersecurity pathway that connects high school coursework – AP Cybersecurity and PLTW Cybersecurity – to postsecondary credit, military service opportunities and employer-connected experiences. With more than 20,000 open cybersecurity roles statewide and documented cyber vulnerabilities across schools and local governments, Indiana is turning cybersecurity education into a scalable workforce strategy rather than a stand-alone course. This session offers an inside look at how the Indiana Department of Education, College Board, PLTW, the Indiana National Guard, the Indiana Cyber Network, Ivy Tech and employer partners are co-designing the pathway: defining what a cyber-ready graduate should know and be able to do, securing college credit articulation across Indiana institutions, building Guard and national security engagement, and preparing schools for a 2027-28 launch. Attendees will leave with a practical understanding of the pathway's design, the partner commitments that make it work and how the model can serve as a replicable template for other high-demand sectors.
Panelists: Alyssa Chudnofsky, College Board; Theresa Hall, College Board; Rocky Valadez, Project Lead The Way; David Hua, Ball State University; and Matthew Cambridge, Aramark Healthcare+. Moderated by: Andrea Holzwarth, College Board.

K. Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) Work Requirements
Beginning January 1, 2027, Indiana Medicaid will implement work requirements for new applicants and existing Medicaid members, ages 19-64, eligible under the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP). These requirements emphasize a balanced, values-driven approach: pairing compassion with member responsibility, ensuring that access to healthcare is supported by work, job training, education, and community participation. Division of Family Resources Director Sunshine Beam will discuss these new requirements and answer questions.
Tyson Runkle, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

L. Strategy to Infrastructure: How Indiana Became the National Model for Community-Based Talent Attraction
Indiana is no longer experimenting with talent attraction. It is leading it. While communities across the country struggle to grow their workforce in the face of aging populations, remote work migration, and shrinking labor pools, Indiana communities have spent the last several years building and refining a community-based talent recruitment model that delivers measurable results. This panel brings together the people who have been doing that work: economic developers, community leaders, and the platform that has helped connect them to thousands of relocation-ready professionals from across the country. Moderated by MakeMyMove CEO Mike Rutz, this discussion moves beyond theory and into practice. Panelists will share firsthand what it takes to attract new residents to communities of all sizes, what the data shows about who is moving and why, and how Indiana's state-funded program has created a repeatable and scalable model that other states are beginning to replicate. Whether you represent a major metro or a rural county, this session will leave you with a clear picture of what community-based talent attraction looks like when it works and what it takes to build it
Panelists: Jeff Quyle, Radius Indiana and Mayor Dan Ridenour, Mayor of the City of Muncie. Moderated by: Mike Rutz, CEO, MakeMyMove

12:15 p.m. Dan Elsener Workforce Leader of the Year Awards Luncheon

Dan Elsener Workforce Leader of the Year Award
Presented by 2025 Recipient, Tina Peterson, President and CEO, Regional Opportunity Initiatives

Workforce First Employer Program Recognition
Presented by Sally Saydshoev, Executive Director, Institute for Workforce Excellence

1:30 p.m. Educational Session Five

M. Labor Market Information: Creating a Framework for Education to Employment
Mara Klaunig, Senior Vice President Data Strategy and Adeline Hatfield, Project Manager, Data Strategy, Indiana Economic Development Corporation

N. From Employer Signals to Talent Solutions: Aligning Education and Training With Indiana's Advanced Industries
Indiana's advanced industries are changing rapidly as technology, automation, data, quality systems and new production processes reshape how work is performed. Employers often recognize these changes before education and training systems can respond, but they may struggle to communicate changing skill expectations in ways that can be translated into curriculum, training and talent development strategies.

This interactive session will share how Conexus Indiana and Ascend Indiana are using employer-informed workforce research to identify changing skill needs and translate those signals into practical implications for employers, educators and workforce partners. Presenters will highlight findings from Indiana's Advanced Industries Workforce Report and explore how intermediaries can help bridge the gap between employer demand and education and training response. Participants will engage in a brief polling activity and apply a simple skill-signal framework to a sample advanced industry role. They will leave with a clearer understanding of how employers, intermediaries and education partners can work together to strengthen talent pipelines and improve alignment between work.
Jeremy Eltz, PhD, Senior Director of Talent, Conexus Indiana and Alex Maggos, Vice President of Workforce Strategies, Ascend Indiana

O. Work-Based Learning Policies and Strategies for Indiana
This session provides attendees with a clear and practical foundation for implementing high-quality WBL programs within their schools or districts. Participants will gain a solid understanding of Indiana's state requirements for WBL, including the policies, documentation expectations and key compliance considerations that ensure programs meet established guidelines. In addition, the presentation highlights proven best practices for launching and sustaining effective WBL opportunities – covering program design, employer engagement, legislative updates, student preparation and strategies for creating meaningful, career-aligned experiences. Finally, attendees will learn what schools are required to report to the state for each WBL experience and what that means for employers.
Sam Rourke and Chris Deaton, Indiana Commission for Higher Education

2:20 p.m. Break

2:30 p.m. Educational Session Six

Think Tank: Moderated Workshop Session
Sponsored and guided by Resultant
Michael Schmierer, Sr. Director Public Sector, Mike Hughes, Executive Vice President, Professional Services, & Amy Smigielski, Sr. Manager, Public Sector

Themes:

- Future of Work and Talent – Workforce 2035
- AI and Technology – Impact on Workforce Development
- Strategy and Policy- Indiana's Workforce Competitive Advantage

3:30 p.m. 2026 Indiana Workforce Summit Adjourns