



**Ignite the Future event is Indiana's Bicentennial finale**  
*Free event to culminate Bicentennial celebration*



*Kids Dance Outreach performing at Bicentennial event Hoosier Homecoming. Photo courtesy of Kirklyn Walker.*

**Indianapolis, Ind. Dec. 6, 2016** – December 11 marks Indiana's 200th birthday and the end of the Bicentennial year. To honor its 200 years of history, and the promise of the future, the final Bicentennial event will take place on Statehood Day, Dec. 11. This free, family event will be held at the [Indiana Farmers Coliseum](#) at the Indiana State Fairgrounds from 10 a.m. to noon.

*"Ignite the Future* is meant to inspire Hoosiers as well as celebrate the many facets of the Bicentennial year," said [Becky Skillman](#), Indiana Bicentennial Commission Co-Chair. "Since 2011 the Commission has worked to make this year special for everyone in the state. It's hard to believe the year is almost through, but *Ignite the Future* will leave Hoosiers with wonderful memories of this time in Indiana history."

The two-hour program will include speakers as well as music, dance and more. Entertainment includes The [Hunter Smith Band](#) –Smith will also serve as emcee – as well as the [Indianapolis Children's Choir](#), [Voices of Unity Youth Choir](#) and several others.

"I think it is always exciting any time an individual or organization can participate in a once-in-a-lifetime event," said Paula Bridges of Fort Wayne, mother of three Voices of Unity students. "My children have grown up in Indiana and participation in this celebration offers them the opportunity to hear and learn

more about the history of their state and what makes it great. It is also an absolute honor to be involved with an organization like Voices of Unity and be asked to perform and represent a part of the state of Indiana!”

A variety of speakers from diverse backgrounds will provide inspiration throughout the program. Speakers include [Rabbi Sandy Sasso](#), [KP Singh](#), [Ala’a Wafa](#), [Matthew Myer Boulton](#) and others.

“Over the 22 years that I have been part of this city, I have seen so much positive change and I believe that we have become a more diverse and welcoming city,” said Dr. Aarti Shah, senior vice president and CIO at Eli Lilly and Company, who will deliver the invocation at Ignite the Future. “I am thrilled to be part of this event as we come together from all walks of life to truly make each other better!”

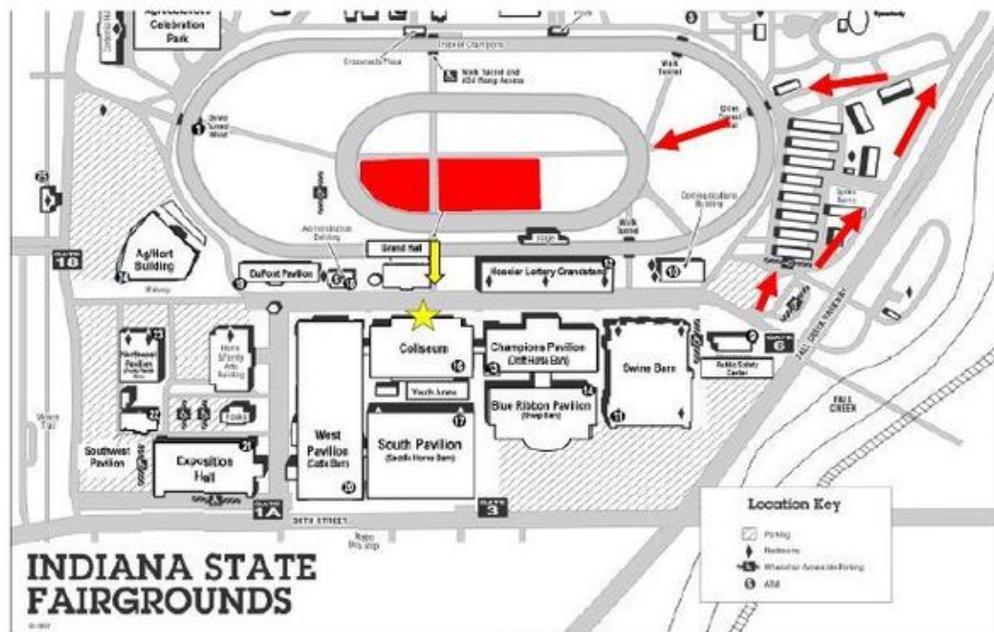
Indiana’s Bicentennial year kicked off on December 11, 2015. Hundreds of 4th grade students from around the state gathered at the Indiana Statehouse to take part in the festivities. Now, one year later the year will end with one last event, one last chance to celebrate this milestone in Indiana history.

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**Media Notes:** We request that media RSVP to this event with names or number of reporters to [JVigar@Indiana2016.in.gov](mailto:JVigar@Indiana2016.in.gov) by Thursday, December 8 at 5 p.m.

Admission and parking for this event are free. Tell the gate attendant you are attending the *Ignite the Future* event.

Please enter the Fairgrounds through Gate 6 (Fall Creek Parkway) and proceed to the infield to park (represented in red on the map). Enter the Indiana Farmers Coliseum through the North (lobby) doors (represented in yellow on the map). A media check-in table will be in the main lobby. At the check-in table reporters will receive press passes and will be directed to the media pen. There will be a mult box available in the media pen.





**About the Commission:**

Indiana's 2016 Bicentennial celebration aims to honor our state's 200 years of history, but to do so in a way that engages all 6.5 million Hoosiers and leaves a lasting legacy for future generations. The Commission has endorsed more than 1,600 Legacy Projects in all 92 counties that focus on the four Bicentennial pillars: youth and education, historical celebration, community involvement and nature conservation. A large emphasis throughout this year is on the health and well-being of Indiana children, as they are the true legacy of the Bicentennial. To learn more visit [www.indiana2016.org](http://www.indiana2016.org).