

Twenty-one young leaders under age 21 who have shown outstanding leadership, teamwork and achievement were honored at a May 28 ceremony at Ivy Tech Community College, in Valparaiso. All were high school students or recent graduates who have developed impressive resumes while enrolled in high school Career and Technical Education programs throughout Northwest Indiana.



JOHN J. WATKINS, THE TIMES

Twenty-one young adults received "21 Under 21" awards at Works Council of Northwest Indiana ceremony May 28 at Ivy Tech Community College in Valparaiso. The awards recognized 21 high-achievers attending or graduated from area career and technical education programs.

# 21 Under 21 stars shine

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## '21 Under 21'

lives every day," Springman said just before stepping up to receive his "21 Under 21" award.

Springman will enter the program for a bachelor's degree in cardiac catheterization at IUN this fall and also serves as a volunteer firefighter.

Cepriana Monteleone, who trained in criminal justice and law at the Hammond Career Center, expressed sentiments similar to Springman's when talking about her career in law enforcement.

"I'm really hoping to be a police officer and make a difference in my community," she said.

She is already well on her way to making that difference, working as a detention officer at the Lake County Juvenile Center and a Specialist with the Indiana National Guard.

Springman and Monteleone were just two examples of Career and Technical Education students at the event who stuffed their high school days with hands-on learning experiences in fields such as welding, nursing, machining, journalism, law enforcement and others. Many are now working jobs in those fields at places such as Urschel Laboratories, Fronius, Sterling Machine, area health care facilities and others.

The May 28 event was put on by the Works Council of Northwest Indiana, with the goal of recognizing outstanding students in career and technical education, many of whom combined real-life work experiences with their high school educations, said Kris Emaus, council chairwoman.

The Works Council of Northwest Indiana has focused on four skill areas to produce the trained workforce employers will need in Northwest Indiana, Emaus said. Those areas are construction; health care; mechanical and electrical; and transportation, distribution and logistics.

"We want to make sure we train people for good jobs that will keep talented folks in our state," Emaus said.

Keynote speaker R.D. Parpart II, team leader for steelmaker ArcelorMittal's Steelworker for the Future, told the crowd his company continues to need about 200 new maintenance technicians per year. He grabbed everyone's attention when he casually mentioned annual earnings for the position average \$90,000.

The Steelworker for the Future operates much like the Career and Technical training centers the young people assembled at Ivy Tech have attended. ArcelorMittal partners with several local colleges to offer the degree-granting program that takes two and a half-years and gives graduates the opportunity to land coveted jobs at its mills.

"You guys are the future of this country," Parpart said. "You are the answer to the needs of American business."

The Porter County Career and Technical Center, serving 10 high schools, is filled to capacity and must expand to meet demand, according to Principal/Director Jon Groth. He said that seems to be the wave of the future for his school and the three others represented at the "21 Under 21" awards.

"There is not only demand from kids," Groth said. "There is demand from employers. Our kids are getting jobs right out of high school."



**ALEXIS BERDINE**, Crown Point career and technical program



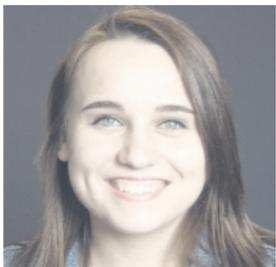
**PAUL BUI**, Porter County Career and Technical Center



**PAIGE COLLINS**, Porter County Career and Technical Center



**QUENTIN COULTER**, A.K. Smith Area Career Center



**KELSEA COSTELLO**, Crown Point career and technical program



**JENNA DAVIS**, A.K. Smith Area Career Center



**ROBERT FLEISHMAN**, Area Career Center



**EMMA-LEIGH FOSTER**, Porter County Career and Technical Center



**CORNELIUS JEMISON**, Area Career Center



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**JUSTIN MELVIN**, Crown Point career and technical program



**CEPRIANA MONTELEONE**, Area Career Center



**JOSEPH NEVEITT**, Area Career Center



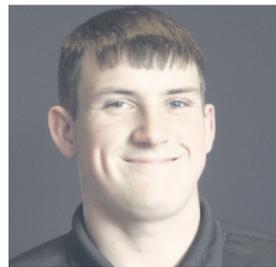
**DUSTIN OSTASZEWSKI**, Crown Point career and technical program



**COLE OZBOLT**, Porter County Career and Technical Center



**CEARA TRCKA**, Porter County Career and Technical Center



**AUSTIN WOODCOX**, A.K. Smith Area Career Center

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