

Press Release

For Immediate Release:
Thursday, June 20, 2019



Northeast Indiana Receives First 21st Century Talent Region Designation

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (June 20, 2019) – Governor Eric J. Holcomb joined state and local leaders today to announce the northeast Indiana region as the state’s first [21st Century Talent Region](#), a statewide designation awarded to Indiana communities focused on working collaboratively to attract, develop and connect talent.

“Workforce is the critical issue of our time, and teamwork is essential to ensuring Hoosiers are skilled and ready,” Gov. Holcomb said. “By bringing everyone to the table with the 21st Century Talent Region designation, local leaders will create a plan intentionally designed around the strengths of their communities.”

In partnership with the Office of Career Connections and Talent, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and [with technical assistance from CivicLab](#), the 21st Century Talent Region initiative encourages local governments, businesses, educational institutions, nonprofits, and economic and workforce development partners to create and implement a plan to increase educational attainment, raise household income and grow the population in a region. By taking a comprehensive, systems approach, participating regions will identify strategic priorities and projects aimed at helping its communities create a better quality of place, develop and skill up its workforce, and connect talented Hoosiers with businesses seeking to fill high-demand, high-wage jobs.

“Regional and local collaboration is key for Indiana communities when it comes to attracting, developing and connecting talent,” said Indiana Secretary of Career Connections and Talent Blair Milo. “Northeast Indiana is a leader in cultivating 21st Century Talent by seamlessly connecting community team members together to grow the population, increase educational attainment, and raise household income.”

At the Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana’s annual meeting, local leaders were presented with their official 21st Century Talent Region designation. The 11-county region encompasses Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley counties.

Ryan Twiss, vice president of regional initiatives of the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, said the state’s designation aligns efforts through common metrics, goals and efforts to provide maximum impact for the state and Northeast Indiana.

“We are excited and humbled to be the first 21st Century Talent Region in the state. It is an honor to help organize the truly collaborative work that led to this designation. This is the result of regional collaboration with many people coming together to provide input and expertise. We think this designation will be an important step as Northeast Indiana works to become a magnet for talent and one of the most prosperous regions in the country,” said Twiss. “This statewide collaboration is critical to our region’s success in the global war for talent and jobs.”

Spearheaded by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, the region identified key priorities through the 21st Century Talent Region initiative, including:

- Developing similar collaborative relationships within the region;
- Encouraging implementation and adjustment of initiatives to meet the goal of growing the region's population to 1 million residents by 2031;
- Increasing post-secondary education and credential attainment to more than 60 percent; and
- Raising per capita personal income to 90 percent against the national average by 2030.

“To build on Indiana’s economic success, the state is committed to encouraging communities to plan for their future by promoting regional collaboration and creating long-term strategies focused on quality of place and talent attraction,” said Elaine Bedel, president of the IEDC. “We’re excited that northeast Indiana is forging ahead with its strategic plan under the 21st Century Talent Region initiative, and look forward to working hand-in-hand with communities in other regions to promote the same goals under the program.”

As part of the initiative, the Office of Career Connections and Talent recently unveiled the [21st Century Talent Region Data Display](#) to increase data accessibility, organize data across a customizable geographic region, and inform conversation among regional and local leaders to identify and prioritize collaborative efforts.

For more information on how to receive the designation, visit in.gov/cct/2427.htm or contact the Office of Career Connections and Talent at secretary@cct.in.gov to communicate your interest and discuss next steps.

About the Office of Career Connections and Talent

As part of his Next Level Indiana Agenda, Governor Eric J. Holcomb established the Secretary of Career Connections and Talent as a new cabinet-level position in state government to serve as Indiana’s chief talent and recruiting official. Secretary Blair Milo and the Office of Career Connections and Talent is dedicated to continuously assessing needs, identifying promising practices, connecting Hoosier workers to employment opportunities, and coordinating future priorities to improve the quality and quantity of Hoosier workers to ensure a skilled and talented workforce within the state of Indiana.

About the Indiana Economic Development Corporation

The Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) leads the state of Indiana’s economic development efforts, helping businesses launch, grow and locate in the state. Governed by a 15-member board chaired by Governor Eric J. Holcomb, the IEDC manages many initiatives, including performance-based tax credits, workforce training grants, innovation and entrepreneurship resources, public infrastructure assistance, and talent attraction and retention efforts. For more information about the IEDC, visit www.iedc.in.gov.

About CivicLab

CivicLab is a nonprofit institute dedicated to advancing the practice of civic collaboration. CivicLab emerged from the Community Education Coalition (CEC) in Columbus, Indiana, a nationally recognized partnership of education, business, and community leaders focused on aligning and integrating the community’s learning system with economic growth and a high quality of life. Since its inception, CivicLab has partnered with over 275 communities and organizations across the U.S. and trained more than 10,000 leaders of foundations, educational institutions, community government, corporations, and community development organizations.

Media Contact:

Amber Robinson

Email: ARobinson1@cct.in.gov

Cell: 317- 409-6060