

## PRESS RELEASE

Thursday, December 5, 2019



# Secretary Milo Designates Hamilton County Indiana's Next 21st Century Talent Region

**CARMEL, Ind.** – Indiana Secretary of Career Connections and Talent Blair Milo joined Indiana officials today in Carmel to announce Hamilton County as the state's fourth [21st Century Talent Region](#), a statewide designation awarded to Indiana communities focused on working collaboratively to attract, develop and connect talent.

“Home to more than 330,000 Hoosiers, Hamilton County has been recognized as one of the fastest growing counties in the country, as a ‘Best Place to Live and Raise a Family,’ and now, as a 21st Century Talent Region,” said Secretary Milo. “As a 21st Century Talent Region, Hamilton County continues to collaborate with leaders in and around Carmel, Fishers, Noblesville and Westfield, and to develop the partnerships necessary to further grow the region.”

In partnership with the Office of Career Connections and Talent, the [Indiana Economic Development Corporation](#) 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 their 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.

“The Hamilton County Board of Commissioners understands the importance of workforce development. Attracting and retaining qualified talent in our county continues to be a challenge with a competitive market,” said Hamilton County Commissioner Mark Heirbrandt. “This prompted the Commissioners to perform a strategic study to understand Hamilton County’s specific workforce opportunities. This year-long effort of collaboration with all four Hamilton County cities – Carmel, Westfield, Noblesville and Fishers – as well as the county will help us in developing a creative workforce initiative to assist our employers but also spur continued economic development.”

During the event, Secretary Milo presented Carol Sergi, Director of Workforce Strategy for [Hamilton County Economic Development Corporation](#) and its regional partners with the official 21st Century Talent Region designation.

“Preparing our students for the jobs of the future and attracting and retaining qualified talent is an ongoing challenge when we have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country at 2.7 percent,” said Sergi. “This past year it has been an honor to work alongside key workforce partners in the county in a collaborative effort to discover our greatest challenges and bring solutions to Hamilton County’s workforce for the future.”

Spearheaded by Hamilton County Economic Development Corporation, the region identified key priorities through the 21st Century Talent Region initiative, including:

- Increase employer engagement with the education and workforce system to be measured by the number

of internship or apprenticeship opportunities available to youth and adults.

- Increase on-time graduation rates for individuals pursuing post-secondary credentials.
- Create a review method for supporting students after high school graduation to remove barriers keeping them from achieving a post-secondary credential.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to collaborate with neighboring counties on shared goals to attract, develop and connect talent.

Secretary and CEO of [Indiana Destination Development Corporation](#) Elaine Bedel noted, “This recognition adds to the region’s already long list of accomplishments and achievements, and shows commitment to continuous improvement on behalf of the over 330,000 Hoosiers who call this region home. The region’s efforts and innovative thinking truly embody our pioneering Hoosier spirit, and I look forward to watching as more and more talented individuals take notice and come to our state.”

For more information on how to receive the designation, visit [in.gov/cct/21CTR.htm](http://in.gov/cct/21CTR.htm) or contact the Office of Career Connections and Talent at [secretary@cct.in.gov](mailto: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.*

### **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.*

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