



## Press Release

For Immediate Release:

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# State Officials Designate Indiana Uplands as 21st Century Talent Region

**BLOOMINGTON, Ind.** (November 18, 2019) – Indiana Secretary of Career Connections and Talent Blair Milo and Secretary and CEO of the newly established Indiana Destination Development Corporation Elaine Bedel joined Indiana officials today at Cook Medical to announce the [Indiana Uplands](#) as the state’s third [21st Century Talent Region](#), a statewide designation awarded to Indiana communities focused on working collaboratively to attract, develop and connect talent.

“Home to world class manufacturing, research and innovation assets, Indiana Uplands is uniquely positioned to attract, develop and connect talent as the state’s third 21st Century Talent Region,” said Secretary Milo. “Working collaboratively across geographic lines, southwest central Indiana leaders have demonstrated a dedication to advancing economic and community prosperity, developing the necessary partnerships for growing the population, increasing educational attainment and raising household income.”

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 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.

During the event, Secretaries Milo and Bedel presented Tina Peterson, President and CEO of [Regional Opportunity Initiatives, Inc.](#) (ROI), and its regional partners with the official 21st Century Talent Region designation. The Indiana Uplands is an 11-county area encompassing Brown, Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange, Owen and Washington counties.

"The Indiana Uplands is a region of hardworking makers, entrepreneurs, artisans, students, scientists and engineers, growing world-shaping ideas into remarkable products and thriving businesses," said Peterson. "Over the past four years, we have cultivated meaningful partnerships and collaborated thoughtfully to align our communities, our key industry sectors and our educational assets. Being recognized as a 21st Century Talent Region is acknowledgement of the shared commitment we've made to regionalism and advancing economic and community prosperity in the Indiana Uplands. Like our hills and forests that reach to the heights, the Indiana Uplands is a region on the rise, and we are excited to continue this momentum to make it an even better place to learn, live, work and play."

Spearheaded by ROI, the region identified key priorities through the 21st Century Talent Region initiative, including:

- ROI will establish and maintain a regional dashboard intended to serve all partners across the region to deepen consistent regional collaboration through shared goals and operating practices.
- The Indiana Uplands will establish and advance short and long-term goals for achieving a 10 percent increase in the number of citizens with a post-secondary credential by 2025.
- The region will adopt an equity focus with the intention of narrowing the achievement gap for disadvantaged and/or minority populations that are underserved across the region.

“I am proud to be here today for this announcement, and I applaud the Indiana Uplands region for taking a vested interest in preparing their workforce to meet the demands of both our current and future business needs,” said Secretary Bedel. “Their partnerships throughout the southwest central community will unlock numerous new opportunities for success in the region and, ultimately, will attract talented individuals to our state and make Indiana a place people want to work, live, play and thrive.”

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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