



INDIANA COMMISSION for
HIGHER EDUCATION

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State Higher Ed Commission Announces Gerald Bepko Award Winners

The [Indiana Commission for Higher Education](#) announces today that faculty members from Ball State University and Purdue University are the winners of the inaugural Gerald Bepko Faculty Community Engagement Grant Award. The award was established to honor the legacy of Dr. Gerald “Jerry” Bepko and his decades of service to Indiana University and the Commission for Higher Education.

“We are pleased to present this award to faculty members and programs whose service exemplifies outstanding community engagement at their institution, thus honoring Jerry’s ongoing service to the Commission and Hoosier students,” said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Teresa Lubbers.

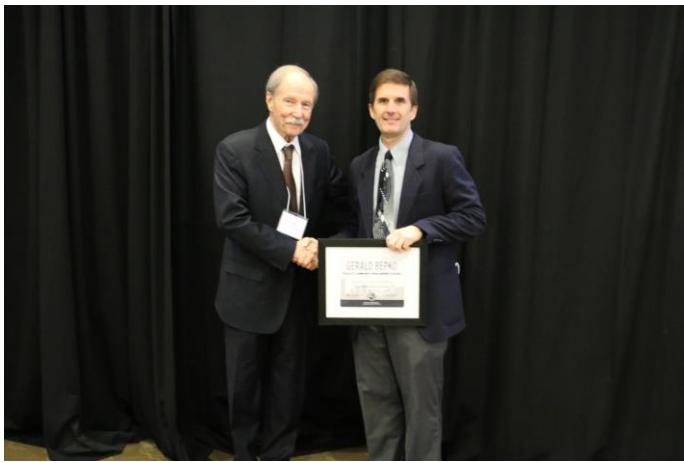
Ball State University’s “Schools Within the Context of Community” is a teacher preparation program focused on closing the achievement gap by creating culturally responsive and prepared teachers. Through an immersive-learning experience, students are placed in historically marginalized communities where they will learn about the factors that influence children’s learning. The program has successfully prepared 200 future teachers—nearly 70 percent of whom are currently teaching in diverse classrooms throughout the state and in the world. The program’s faculty team includes Dr. Kristin Cipollone, Dr. Kathryn Fletcher, Dr. Sheron Fraser-Burgess, Dr. Dorshell Stewart, Dr. Susan Tancock and Dr. Eva Zygmunt.

“By providing future teachers this hands-on experience with students of all backgrounds—particularly students of color—Ball State’s Schools Within the Context of Community program is making progress toward closing the educational achievement gap in our state,” said Commissioner Lubbers.

Dr. William Oakes leads Purdue University’s “Engineering Projects in Community Service” (EPICS) program. EPICS is a service-learning program in which teams of students partner with local and global organizations to develop engineering-based projects that address human, community and environmental needs. The EPICS model has been adopted by dozens of other institutions, furthering engagement with their local or global communities. There are currently 35 colleges and universities with EPICS courses globally as well as 112 EPICS high school and middle school programs in 17 states.

“Through its unique program model, EPICS is equipping Hoosier students with competitive skillsets that will lead to success in the workforce” said Commissioner Lubbers.

The winners were announced at an award ceremony last week during the Commission’s 2019 Faculty Leadership Conference at Ivy Tech Community College. Award recipients received a \$500 grant to help further their community engagement work.



Dr. Gerald Bepko presents the inaugural Gerald Bepko Faculty Community Engagement Grant Award to winning faculty members from Purdue University and Ball State University.

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About the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education is a 14-member public body created in 1971 to define the missions of Indiana's colleges and universities, plan and coordinate the state's postsecondary education system, and ensure that Indiana's higher education system is aligned to meet the needs of students and the state. The Commission includes representatives from each Congressional district, three at-large members, a college faculty representative and a college student representative.

Learn more about the Commission's *Reaching Higher, Delivering Value* strategic plan at www.in.gov/che/.