



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

AGENDA

Thursday, February 8, 2018

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www.che.in.gov



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

FEBRUARY COMMISSION MEETING
AGENDA

Thursday, February 8, 2018

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Courtyard Indianapolis Downtown
601 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

COMMISSION MEETING

Vincennes University Aviation Technology Center
2175 South Hoffman Road
Indianapolis, IN 46241

WORKING SESSION & BREAKFAST

9:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
Room 1079

CALL IN INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS:

DIAL: 1 (605) 475-4700
PIN: 230295#

WORKING SESSION TOPICS

- Legislative Update
- IU Schools of Public Health
 - Dean Halverson, IUPUI
 - Dean Allison, IU Bloomington
- TransferIN Website
- Transfer Report
- Committee Report Outs

All events take place on Eastern Time

101 West Ohio Street, Suite 300 • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-4206 • 317.464.4400 • www.che.in.gov

COMISSION MEMBER AND STAFF LUNCH

11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Small Hangar

Room 1072

Presentation

President Chuck Johnson

BUSINESS MEETING

1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Large Hangar, Room 1040

CALL IN INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS:

DIAL: 1 (605) 475-4700

PIN: 230295#

I.	Call to Order – 1:00 P.M. (<i>Eastern</i>)	
	Roll Call of Members and Determination of Quorum	
	Chair’s Remarks	
	Commissioner’s Report	
	Consideration of the Minutes of the December 14, 2017 Commission Meeting	1
II.	Public Square	
	A. Insights from the Strada-Gallup Education Surveys.....	7
	1. Carol D’Amico, Executive Vice President, Mission Advancement and Philanthropy Strada Education Network	
III.	Business Items	
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	1. Master of Science in Environmental and Occupational Health to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington	
	2. Bachelor of Science in Psychology to be offered by Purdue University at Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne	
IV.	Information Items	
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	B. Academic Degree Program Actions Taken by Staff	19
	C. Media Coverage.....	23

V. Old Business
New Business

VI. Adjournment

The next meeting of the Commission is **March 8, 2018, in Indianapolis, Indiana.**

**State of Indiana
Commission for Higher Education**

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, December 14, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Commission for Higher Education met in regular session starting at 1:00 p.m. at Ivy Tech Corporate College and Culinary Center, 2820 N Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN with Chairman Chris LaMothe presiding.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Members Present: Dennis Bland, Jon Costas, Jud Fisher, Lisa Hershman, Allan Hubbard, Chris LaMothe, Mika Mosier, Chris Murphy, Kathy Parkison, Dan Peterson, Beverley Pitts, John Popp Alfonso Vidal and Caren Whitehouse

Members Absent: Chris Murphy

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chairman LaMothe began his report stating on behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank Ivy Tech Community College for your hospitality and hosting our meeting today. Chancellor Lee was invited to provide welcoming remarks.

On December 18-19, the Commission, in partnership with Strada Education Network, will host the third annual Student Advocates Conference. We have more than 400 individuals registered for the conference from institutions across the state (and some from surrounding states) and will have over 30 unique presentations. At the event, CHE will present three \$5,000 grants to innovative student support practices from institutions in honor of the late Stan Jones.

The Student Advocates Conference enables college and university mentors, advisors and student support staff to discover innovative practices, share student success stories, and learn about state policies and initiatives impacting student success. The event amplifies the learnings from existing Commission and Strada sponsored initiatives; showcases promising practices around student success from college partners; and promotes a collaborative network of student retention and success advocates across the state.

Chairman LaMothe turned to Caren Whitehouse for some comments she would like to make. Ms. Whitehouse stated that it is with mixed emotions that I would like to announce my resignation from the Commission for Higher Education today. Ms. Whitehouse informed the Commission that she had been approached by Indiana University School of Medicine in Evansville to be their Assistant Director of Clerkships and Volunteer Clinical Faculty Management. Ms. Whitehouse commented this decision was not a simple one as she had to weigh giving up being a member of the Commission. She continued saying, each of you, including our partners in the audience and the staff, have meant the world to me and has

learned so much from them. Ms. Whitehouse stated that it was deepest gratitude that she was able to sit on this Commission.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Lubbers began her report stating it's hard to believe that we're turning the page on another year- until I think about all we've done at the Commission during this time. Key to our success is your involvement, counsel and support. So, let me use this time to thank you for all you do to support Hoosier students and make our work better.

Today, you will be voting on recommendations for the performance funding formula, and you should see your fingerprints all over these adjustments. It has been our intent to refine the formula around the enduring principle of "paying for what we value" – namely student success. Likewise, we have consulted with institutional and legislative leaders and sought the input of performance funding experts. I want to take this opportunity to single out Dom Chase for his leadership and Gina Deom for her expertise.

As you know - and with your help – we have been focusing on the importance to students for institutions to adopt banded tuition. Following a resolution that you supported in 2014 encouraging institutions that charged by the credit hour to convert to a banded tuition structure – and with the support of institutional leadership, we continue to see progress. Recently, an op-ed I wrote on the topic appeared in several papers, highlighting the value of banded tuition and the progress that's been made. Some Indiana colleges, including Ball State, Indiana State, IU Bloomington and Purdue West Lafayette have offered banded tuition for years. More campuses are moving in this direction. IU's five regional campuses adopted banded tuition and Purdue announced that its two other campuses will transition to banded tuition this year. Bottom line: this is great news for students, resulting in significant savings for Hoosier families.

Hopefully, you saw President Daniels recent announcement of a new program to help Hoosier students through the Boiler Affordability Grant – which will cover any remaining tuition, fees and estimated book expenses for qualifying Indiana resident undergraduates after applying for need-based aid. President Daniels was quoted saying, "while our tuition freeze has been extended for six consecutive years, there are still many lower- and middle income Hoosier families that face difficulties in paying for their students' college education. We are committed to fulfilling our land-grant mission of making education accessible by tearing down as many financial barriers as possible." I try to highlight efforts like this that align for CHE's strategic plan, *Reaching Higher, Delivering Value*.

In another look at delivering value, President McRobbie highlighted IU's efforts to serve students through the IU Online Education initiative. This fall at IU, a record 5,066 students enrolled in more than 115 online degrees and over 2,000 online courses offered by IU, a 4 percent increase over last year. 29,000 students – nearly a third of total enrollment are enrolled in at least one online program. It's clear that IU is a national leader in developing quality online instruction.

As a result of our efforts around *You Can. Go Back.* and the Workforce Ready Grant, Indiana/CHE has been awarded a \$434,000 grant from Lumina, with support from SHEEO. The grant will run through late 2019 and will help Indiana institutions identify gaps in how they are supporting adult students and will fund pilot programs and other service enhancements to address these gaps. While we haven't confirmed all the campuses, we know for certain that Ivy Tech and selected four-year schools will be included.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER, 2017 COMMISSION MEETING

R-17-08.1 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education hereby approve the Minutes of the October, 2017 regular meeting (Motion – Fisher, second – Hubbard, unanimously approved)

II. PUBLIC SQUARE

A. Credential Engine

1. Holly Zanville, Senior Advisor for Credentialing and Workforce Development, Lumina Foundation
2. Scott Cheney, Executive Director, Credential Engine
3. Lisa Lutz, President, SOLID, LLC

Yesterday was the launch of the Credential Engine rollout held at Regions Tower. In March 2017, Indiana became the first state to attempt a statewide scale-up Credential Engine, with an initial focus on incorporating health-related credentials into the Credential Registry, allowing the Commission to leverage the work of other initiatives and to provide an in-depth understanding of how Indiana might expand this work to other areas and how other states might approach statewide CE scale-up initiatives. Indiana's scale-up now also includes some non-health credentials and a focus on military training into the Registry as well. Today we have the opportunity today to hear from four experts to discuss the power and potential of this new tool.

Dr. Ken Sauer facilitated the public square discussion.

III. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Performance Funding

R-17-08.2 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the following Performance Funding Formula, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Hubbard, second – Whitehouse, unanimously approved)

B. Approval of Financial Aid Grid

R-17-08.3 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the

following Financial Aid Grid, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Peterson, second – Vidal, unanimously approved)

C. Academic Degree Programs for Full Discussion

1. Doctor of Public Health in Population Health to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington

Dr. Debra Burns and Dr. Meganne Masko presented this program. Dr. Ken Sauer provided the staff recommendation.

R-17-08.4 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the following degree program, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Vidal, second – Hubbard, unanimously approved)

D. Academic Degree Programs for Expedited Action

1. Master of Science in Computer Information Systems to be offered by Indiana University Northwest
2. Master of Science in Management to be offered by Indiana University Southeast
3. Master of Social Work to be offered by Ball State University
4. Bachelor of Arts in International Law and Institutions to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington
5. Bachelor of Science in Molecular Life Sciences to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington
6. Master of Science in Athletic Training to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington

R-17-08.5 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the following degree programs, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Fisher, second – Hubbard, unanimously approved)

F. Capital Projects for Full Discussion

1. Purdue University West Lafayette – Jischke Hall of Biomedical Engineering Addition

Mr. Tony Hahn presented this item. Mr. Dominick Chase provided the staff recommendation.

R-17-08.6 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the following capital project, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Hubbard, second – Fisher, unanimously approved)

2. Indiana State University – Renovation of Sycamore Towers Dining

Ms. Diann McKee presented this item. Mr. Dominick Chase provided the staff recommendation.

R-17-08.7 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the following capital project, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Hubbard, second – Fisher, unanimously approved)

F. Capital Projects for Expedited Action

1. Vincennes University – John Deere Diesel Technology Expansion Plant
2. University of Southern Indiana – Physical Activities Center, Classroom Expansion and Renovation Phase Two
3. Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis – Sports District Planning Study
4. Indiana State University – Academic Facility Renovation Phase One – Fine Arts & Commerce

R-17-08.8 RESOLVED: That the Commission for Higher Education approves by consent the following capital projects, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item. (Motion – Hubbard, second – Fisher, unanimously approved)

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Academic Degree Programs Awaiting Action
- B. Academic Degree Program Actions Taken by Staff
- C. Media Coverage
- D. Schedule of Upcoming meetings of the Commission

**V. OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:52 P.M.

Chris LaMothe, Chair

Lisa Hershman, Secretary

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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PUBLIC SQUARE:

Insights from the Strada-Gallup Education Surveys

Background

As the Commission considers the importance of listening to consumers and engaging employers, it will have the opportunity to hear from Carol D’Amico, Executive Vice President for Mission Advancement and Philanthropy with the Strada Education Network.

Since June 2016, Gallup has interviewed nearly 250,000 U.S. adults from more than 3,000 postsecondary institutions about their education experiences, decisions and outcomes. Through the Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey (a daily poll of 350 U.S. adults on their education experiences) together with focused surveys of alumni (Gallup-Purdue Index) and now current students (Strada-Gallup College Student Survey), the Strada Education Network is gaining actionable insights from consumers across all education attainment levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, races/ethnicities, ages and more.

The purpose of Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Insights is to listen to and empower the voice of the consumer to strengthen education to employment pathways for all Americans. Working with institutions, employers, students and government leaders, the Strada Education Network believes the insights gathered from this partnership can shape the future of the postsecondary education experience and lead more Americans to realize their purpose and potential through meaningful careers and fulfilling lives.

About Strada Education Network

In 2017, USA Funds® exited its historic role as a student loan guarantor helping 22 million students gain financial access to higher education and launched a new chapter as Strada Education NetworkSM. Today, Strada is a national nonprofit dedicated to improving lives by strengthening the pathways between education and employment.

Supporting Documents

Carol D’Amico Bio

Carol D'Amico

Executive Vice President, Mission Advancement and Philanthropy
Strada Education Network

Carol D'Amico is a nationally recognized expert in designing and leading strategies related to higher education, workforce development, and business-led involvement in education reform. As Strada Education NetworkSM executive vice president, Mission Advancement and Philanthropy, D'Amico plays a key role in developing national and state-based philanthropic initiatives involving the higher education, business and workforce development sectors. Strada Education's philanthropic and investment activities advance its guiding principle of Completion With a Purpose®, enhancing student success in college — or other postsecondary programs — and connecting graduates to rewarding careers and fulfilling lives.



She joined Strada Education, then known as USA Funds®, in August 2013. D'Amico served in the U.S. Department of Education as assistant secretary for adult and vocational education from 2001-2003. While serving as a senior fellow in education and co-director of the Center for Workforce Development at the Hudson Institute, she co-wrote "Workforce 2020." The book describes the demographics of the future U.S. workforce and the challenges in preparing the American workforce to prosper in the global economy.

She also previously was executive vice president and chancellor of Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana, where she was responsible for the development of statewide strategy and programming and workforce development to boost the state's economy. Additionally, D'Amico has served as president and chief executive officer of Conexus Indiana, a manufacturing and logistics initiative.

D'Amico has chaired and served on several national- and state-level boards, including a multi-term appointment by President George W. Bush to the Institute for Education Sciences and appointments to the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity and the National Assessment Governing Board. She serves on The U.S. Conference of Mayors Business Council and the boards of the Indiana Secondary Market, Indy Chamber and Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee. She is a past member of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

D'Amico holds a doctoral degree in educational leadership and policy studies and a master's degree in adult education and organizational development from Indiana University.

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BUSINESS ITEM A:

State Financial Aid Annual Report

Staff Recommendation

For discussion only.

Background

Each year the Commission staff provides an overview of financial aid expenditures and statistics as well as the various financial aid program requirements.

The Commission for Higher Education is dedicated to making college affordable through need-based financial aid awards, and to allow choice by granting awards to those attending public, independent and proprietary colleges. Indiana is a national leader (5th in the nation) in the need-based grant aid per undergraduate full-time equivalent enrollment, dispersing over \$330 million in FY 2017 alone.

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BUSINESS ITEM B:

Academic Degree Programs for Expedited Action

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education approve the following degree programs, in accordance with the background information provided in this agenda item:

- Master of Science in Environmental and Occupational Health to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington
- Bachelor of Science in Psychology to be offered by Purdue University at Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

Background

The Academic Affairs and Quality Committee discussed these programs at its January 22, 2018 meeting and concluded that the proposed programs could be placed on the February 8, 2018 agenda for action by the Commission as expedited action items.

Supporting Document

Academic Degree Programs on Which Staff Propose Expedited Action January 22, 2018.

Academic Degree Programs on Which Staff Propose Expedited Action

January 22, 2018

CHE 17-33 Master of Science in Environmental and Occupational Health to be offered by Indiana University Bloomington

Proposal received on October 19, 2017

CIP Code: 51.2202

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 30, FTE – 23

Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 15

The proposed Master of Science in Environmental and Occupational Health would be offered through the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health in the School of Public Health. IU Bloomington already offers a B.S.P.H. and a Ph.D. in Environmental Health, both of which are relatively recent degrees approved by the Commission (April 2016 and March 2011, respectively). The School of Public Health also offers a Master of Public Health (M.P.H.), which enrolled 123 headcount or 103 FTE students in FY2016 and had 46 graduates that same year. The M.P.H., which is a professional degree, offers many specializations, including an Environmental Health specialization that requires 21 semester hours in specialized coursework. The proposed M.S. is more research oriented and requires 36 semester hours in the specialization or closely related to it.

CHE 17-34 Bachelor of Science in Psychology to be offered by Purdue University at Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

Proposal received on December 8, 2017

CIP Code: 42.0101

Fifth Year Projected Enrollment: Headcount – 229, FTE – 190

Fifth Year Projected Degrees Conferred: 20

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PU) would be offered through the Department of Psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Purdue Fort Wayne campus already offers as well subscribed B.A. in Psychology, which enrolled 388 headcount or 258 FTE students and had 73 graduates in FY2016. The B.A. and proposed B.S. curricular are similar, except that the B.S. requires an Applied Psychology course, places more emphasis on STEM and social science supporting courses outside the major (instead of foreign languages and humanities), and has a different math requirement. This program will be classified under CIP code 42.0101 (General Psychology), instead of 42.2799 (Research and Experimental Psychology), which the University had requested.

The B.S. in Psychology requires 120 semester hours of credit, thus meeting the standard credit hour expectation for baccalaureate degrees. The Transfer Single Articulation Pathway (TSAP) in Psychology will provide opportunities for the graduates of the Ivy Tech Community College A.S. in Psychology and the Vincennes University A.A. in Behavioral Sciences with a concentration in Psychology, to transfer and apply all of their credit to the B.S. in Psychology.

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INFORMATION ITEM A: Academic Degree Programs Awaiting Action

	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Status</u>
01	Indiana University Bloomington	Master of Science in Environmental and Occupational Health	10/19/2017	On CHE Agenda for Action
02	Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne	Bachelor of Science in Psychology (PU)	12/08/2017	On CHE Agenda for Action
03	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis	Doctor of Philosophy in Exercise Science	01/16/2018	Under Review
04	Indiana University Kokomo	Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy	01/16/2018	Under Review
05	University of Southern Indiana	Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering	01/17/2018	Under Review

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INFORMATION ITEM B: Academic Degree Program Actions Taken By Staff

	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
01	Ivy Tech Community College	Technical Certificate in Medical Assisting	01/22/2018	Changing the number of credit hours
02	Indiana State University	Master of Arts/Master of Science in Biology	01/22/2018	Adding distance education
03	Purdue University West Lafayette	Bachelor of Science in Economics	01/22/2018	Splitting a degree
04	Ivy Tech Community College-South Central	Certificate in Hospitality Management	01/22/2018	Eliminating a program
05	Indiana University Bloomington	Graduate Certificate in Sexual and Reproductive Health	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
06	Indiana University Bloomington	Master of Science in Cybersecurity Risk Management	01/22/2018	Adding distance education
07	Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne	Bachelor of Science in Music (IU)	01/22/2018	Changing the name of a program
08	Purdue University West Lafayette	Graduate Certificate in Managing Information Technology Projects	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
09	Purdue University West Lafayette	Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate

	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
10	Indiana University Bloomington, Kokomo, Northwest, Southeast, and South Bend	Graduate Certificate in Composition Studies	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
11	Indiana University Bloomington, East, Kokomo, Northwest, Southeast, and South Bend	Graduate Certificate in Language and Literature	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
12	Indiana University Bloomington, East, Kokomo, Northwest, Southeast, and South Bend	Graduate Certificate in Literature	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
13	Indiana University Kokomo, Northwest, Southeast, South Bend	Graduate Certificate in Mathematics	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
14	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis	Undergraduate Certificate in Intercultural Health (IU)	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
15	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis	Undergraduate Certificate in Social Justice Organizing (IU)	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
16	Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne	Bachelor of Arts in Sociology (IU)	01/22/2018	Adding distance education
17	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis	Undergraduate Certificate in Intergroup Dialogue (PU)	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
18	Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne	Master of Public Administration (IU)	01/22/2018	Changing the CIP code

<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
19 University of Southern Indiana	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology	01/22/2018	Splitting a degree
20 Ivy Tech Community College	Certificate in Pharmacy Technician	01/22/2018	Changing the number of credit hours
21 Purdue University West Lafayette	Master of Science in Pharmacy	01/22/2018	Changing the CIP code
22 Purdue University West Lafayette	Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmacy	01/22/2018	Changing the CIP code
23 Vincennes University	Certificate of Graduation in Culinary Arts, Restaurant and Food Services, and Hotel/Motel Management	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
24 Vincennes University	Certificate of Graduation in Agribusiness	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
25 Vincennes University	Certificate of Graduation in Agribusiness Agronomy	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
26 Vincennes University	Certificate of Graduation in Accounting	01/22/2018	Adding a certificate
27 Vincennes University-Vincennes and Jasper	Bachelor of Science in Nursing	01/22/2018	Suspending a program
28 Vincennes University	Associate of Science in Assistive Technology	01/22/2018	Suspending a program
29 Vincennes University	Certificate of Graduation in Surgical Technology	01/22/2018	Suspending a program
30 Vincennes University	Associate of Science in Pre-Art Therapy	01/22/2018	Suspending a program
31 Ivy Tech Community College	Certificate in Elder Care Professional	01/22/2018	Changing the number of credit hours

	<u>Institution/Campus/Site</u>	<u>Title of Program</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Change</u>
32	Ivy Tech Community College	Certificate in Interdisciplinary Industrial Workforce	01/22/2018	Changing the number of credit hours
33	Ivy Tech Community College	Technical Certificate in Interdisciplinary Industrial Workforce	01/22/2018	Changing the number of credit hours
34	Ivy Tech Community College	ACSM Certified Personal Trainer Certificate	01/22/2018	Changing the number of credit hours

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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INFORMATION ITEM C:

Media Coverage

Staff has selected a compilation of recent media coverage related to the Commission for the February meeting. Please see the following pages for details.

South Bend Tribune
Take your job skills to the Next Level
By Teresa Lubbers
January 8, 2018

Many people begin the New Year with hopes of improving their lives over the next twelve months. Jogging off holiday cookies, paying down debt or giving up a costly habit are all worthwhile resolutions. But most of us know from experience that, as the year progresses, the benefits of those good intentions can fade.

There is one resolution that produces a lifelong reward: returning to school. Like any other resolution, going back to school takes determination. But the cost of a certificate or degree shouldn't prevent you from returning to school. If you are ready to put in the work to advance your skills and build your workplace value, Indiana stands ready to help.

If you haven't yet earned a degree or certificate beyond high school, enroll now in a high-demand certificate program at Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University, and Indiana will cover your costs. Visit NextLevelJobs.org to learn more.

In 2017, Gov. Eric Holcomb introduced Next Level Jobs, a campaign to pay for the education of Hoosiers who want to skill up for careers in Indiana's fastest-growing industries — advanced manufacturing and logistics, technology, healthcare, in-demand business services (like accounting) and skilled construction trades. Next Level Jobs provides free tuition for more than a hundred programs at Ivy Tech and Vincennes, ranging from technical certificates requiring a few months of study to longer, high-value certificate programs.

Our state enters 2018 with a strong economy, but we continue to hear from employers who are unable to find qualified workers for the kinds of skilled positions that are becoming increasingly common in our state.

According to the Department of Workforce Development, Indiana will need to fill more than a million job openings over the next decade — most of which will require some kind of education after high school.

There are good jobs available for prepared Hoosiers in these fields, and the training available at Ivy Tech or Vincennes can be tailored to fit your personal schedule. And while many people may use Next Level Jobs to boost their earning power, we also know some will return to school to fulfill a lifelong personal goal or to chart a new path for their family that includes higher education.

Whatever your reason, Indiana has made it easier than ever for you to receive the training you need to move to the next level of your career in one of the state's hottest careers. This is one resolution you will not regret.

Fort Wayne News-Sentinel
Purdue University Fort Wayne's music technology program to be at Sweetwater
By Kevin Kilbane
January 10, 2018

Purdue University Fort Wayne and Sweetwater officials announced Wednesday afternoon that, beginning this August, a majority of the university's music technology program will be housed at the Sweetwater campus at 5501 U.S. 30 W.

Sweetwater founder and President Chuck Surack announced he and his wife, Lisa, will donate use of an 8,000-square-foot building on the Sweetwater campus to the music technology program at what is now Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. The university is expected to become Purdue Fort Wayne on July 1.

Once renovated, the building will contain facilities and equipment needed to prepare students for a career using technology in music and sound recording and production. Those features will include a large music recording studio, expansive control room, rehearsal room, editing booths, a sound-isolation booth, classroom and offices, a design plan shows.

As part of that donation, Purdue Fort Wayne students and faculty in the music technology program also will have full use of all amenities on the Sweetwater campus, including its restaurants, health clinic and personal services, Surack said.

The university values the in-kind donation of the building and campus amenities at nearly \$1.5 million, he added.

Surack said he and his wife also will provide \$1.6 million to pay for renovation and construction so the music technology program can move in by August, Surack said.

The university, which already hires a number of Sweetwater employees to teach part time in its music programs, will pay back the Suracks on a lease basis over six years, said Greg Jones, music department chairman and a professor of music.

The Indiana General Assembly also has approved providing \$1 million for the creation of a School of Music at PUFW. The English Bonter Mitchell Foundation also has pledged \$1 million toward that effort.

PUFW will use the state money for the music technology program, Jones said, for which costs also include about \$750,000 to buy and install music technology equipment and the wiring to operate it.

The English Bonter Mitchell donation will be used for music technology and other music programs offered by the new School of Music, which will be the first in the Purdue University system, he said.

The collaboration with Sweetwater also marks a change in focus for the music program, Jones said.

In the past, IPFW's music programs have focused heavily on classical music, he said. The Purdue Fort Wayne music programs will emphasize popular music of the past three generations, such as jazz, blues and rock.

Surack said the music technology partnership will prepare students to work in high-demand jobs in the music industry.

“Students, when they graduate, will be instantly employable,” he said.

In addition to being candidates for jobs at Sweetwater, he said graduating students will be prepared for music technology jobs in performance halls, religious congregations and with tech companies, such as Apple and Google.

Jones expects the music technology program to have about 40 students enrolled when it starts this fall at the Sweetwater campus. He believes that enrollment total will triple within five to seven years.

If enrollment in music technology keeps growing after about seven years, Jones said Purdue Fort Wayne will have to discuss finding more space for its School of Music programs because it has reached capacity at Rhinehart Music Center on the university’s Coliseum Boulevard campus.

Looking into the future, Jones said the Purdue Fort Wayne School of Music also hopes to launch its own record label to record and release music. The university will use the label to give students hands-on experience with recording albums and related work, such as scheduling concerts and marketing work to promote a show or new music release.

University of Saint Francis already has launched its own record label and music technology program, and the Purdue Fort Wayne program hopes to collaborate with it, Jones said. But he believes the Purdue Fort Wayne program will be more expansive than the USF program because it offers more music degrees, faculty and support classes.

The Chronicle of Higher Education
Offspring of Purdue's Controversial Kaplan Purchase Now Has a Name
By Chris Quintana
January 11, 2018

The offspring of Purdue University's purchase of Kaplan University has been christened Purdue University Global. In a news release, Purdue said the name would become official if the regional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, approves the deal.

That review is scheduled for February 22, according to the news release. The Indiana Commission for Higher Education and the U.S. Department of Education have already signed off on the deal.

"Our campuses are typically named after the physical locations where they hold classes. Purdue University Global can be accessed from anywhere in the world, at any time," said Purdue's president, Mitch Daniels. "The name proved appealing and meaningful to our various stakeholders – most importantly prospective students."

The new name omits mention of Kaplan University, which currently serves 29,000 students online and in person in Iowa, Indiana, Nebraska, Maryland, Maine, Missouri, and Wisconsin.

Betty Vandebosch, president of Kaplan University, would become chancellor of Purdue University Global.

"The name is respectful of Purdue's exceptional reputation, but also distinct from Purdue's other campuses," she said.

Purdue's decision to buy the for-profit university has stirred debate since news of it broke in April. Faculty members and students questioned the public university's motives, with one equating the deal to selling the university's brand to Wall Street. Others have raised concerns that Kaplan would retain control over the institutions it currently has while receiving a facelift from the Purdue brand.

Chalkbeat
Indiana's federally required education plan wins approval
By Shaina Cavazos
January 21, 2018

U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has signed off on Indiana's federally required education plan, ushering in another era of changes—although not exactly major ones—to the state's public school system.

The U.S. Department of Education announced the plan's approval on Friday. Like other states, Indiana went through an extensive process to craft a blueprint to comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA, which was signed into law in 2015.

"Today is a great day for Indiana," state Superintendent Jennifer McCormick said in a written statement. "Our ESSA plan reflects the input and perspective of many stakeholders in communities across our state. From the beginning, we set out to build a plan that responded to the needs of Hoosier students. From our clear accountability system to our innovative, locally-driven approach to school improvement, our ESSA plan was designed to support student success."

The federal government highlighted two aspects of Indiana's plan. One is a pledge to close achievement gaps separating certain groups of students, such as racial and ethnic groups, from their peers by 50 percent by 2023.

Another is a staple of other states' plans, as well: adding new ways for measuring how ready students are for attending college or starting their careers. Indiana education officials and lawmakers have made this a priority over the past several years, culminating in a new set of graduation requirements the Indiana State Board of Education approved late last year.

Under Indiana's plan, high schoolers' readiness will be measured not just by tests but also by performance in advanced courses and earning dual credits or industry certifications. Elementary school students will be measured in part by student attendance and growth in student attendance over time. Test scores and test score improvement still play a major role in how all schools are rated using state A-F letter grades.

In all, 35 states' ESSA plans have won federal approval.

Advocates hope the law will bring more attention to the country's neediest children and those most likely to be overlooked—including English-learners and students with disabilities.

Indiana officials struggled to bring some state measures in line with federal laws, such as graduation requirements and diplomas.

Under the state's ESSA plan, A-F grades would include these measures:

- Academic achievement in the form of state test scores.
- Test score improvement.
- Graduation rate and a measure of "college and career readiness" for high schools.

- Academic progress of English-language learners, measured by the WIDA test.
- At least one aspect of school quality. For now, that will be chronic absenteeism, but the state hopes to pursue student and teacher surveys.

The last two are new to Indiana, but represent ESSA's goal of being more inclusive and, in the case of chronic absenteeism, attempting to value other measures that aren't test scores.

Because the Indiana State Board of Education passed its own draft A-F rules earlier this month—rules that deviate from the state ESSA plan—it's possible Hoosier schools could get two sets of letter grades going forward, muddying the initial intent of the simple A-F grade concept parents and community members are familiar with.

The state board's A-F changes include other measures, such as a "well-rounded" measure for elementary schools that is calculated based on science and social studies tests and an "on-track" measure for high schools that is calculated based on credits and freshman-year grades. Neither component is part of the state's federal plan. The state board plan also gets rid of the test score improvement measure for high-schoolers.

While that A-F proposal is preliminary, if approved it would go into effect for schools in 2018-19.

The state can still make changes to its ESSA plan, and the state board's A-F draft is also expected to see revisions after public comment. But the fact that they conflict now could create difficulties moving forward, and it has led to tension during state board meetings. Already, the state expected schools would see two years of A-F grades in 2018. If both plans move forward as is, that could continue beyond next year.

Inside Higher Ed
'Anemic' State Funding Growth
By Rick Seltzer
January 22, 2018

States' financial support for higher education grew only slightly between the 2017 and 2018 fiscal years, with more than a third of states decreasing their funding and another dozen increasing it only slightly, according to an annual survey released today.

Across the country, state fiscal support for higher education grew by just 1.6 percent, according to the Grapevine survey, which provides an early look each year at states' funding for higher education. That was down sharply from a 4.2 percent increase last year and represents the lowest annual growth in the last five years.

"We've seen only anemic growth nationwide, with the exception of a few states," said James Palmer, Grapevine editor and a professor of higher education at Illinois State University. The Grapevine survey is a project of the university's Center for the Study of Education Policy and the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association.

"This probably suggests the struggle of many states to sustain the revenue needed to increase funding for colleges and universities," Palmer said of this year's slow growth in higher ed funding. "In other words, the fiscal capacity to increase funding for colleges and universities doesn't seem to be there."

Still, funding conditions vary significantly from state to state. A total of 19 states reported decreases between the 2017 fiscal year, which spans 2016-17, and the 2018 fiscal year, which spans 2017-18. Ohio was home to the smallest of the decreases, 0.1 percent. North Dakota's was the largest, a drop of 14.6 percent.

Another 12 states increased funding by less than 2 percent, and 18 reported increases of more than 2 percent. Florida showed the largest increase in funding -- the Sunshine State boosted higher ed funding by 11.3 percent.

Meanwhile, funding in one more state, Maine, was essentially flat. Washington, D.C., which is being included in the survey for only the second year, increased funding by 2 percent. Data for Puerto Rico, which was included for the first time last year, was not yet available following the upheaval there caused by Hurricane Maria.

This year's survey did include data for Illinois, which broke out of a multiyear budget impasse that prevented it from being included in Grapevine tables last year.

Regardless of whether 2018 funding is sufficient for the year, the national picture could cause some concern for those worried about adequate money for public higher education over the long run. The national economy performed well last year, which theoretically should have provided more tax revenue for states and allowed them to spend more. Some of the connection might be lost in individual state budgeting and timing details, but the fact remains that higher ed funding generally rose only incrementally.

And reporting last year from the National Conference of State Legislatures found that for the first time since the Great Recession, a significant number of states were facing budget shortfalls. Most states' budgets were stable, but growth in state revenues was often not keeping pace with demand for government services. Nor have revenues been keeping pace with the rest of the economy.

"It's really hard, sometimes, to be optimistic about increased funding for higher education when we juxtapose the anemic growth this year against the background of what seems to be an otherwise OK economy," Palmer said.

Many states seem to be stuck between competing priorities. On one hand, the free tuition movement has grown from two-year colleges to include a free four-year program in New York State. On the other hand, states generally do not seem to be inclined to raise taxes to pay for free tuition.

"Much will depend on the political will," Palmer said. "How do you balance those competing priorities?"

Amid that discussion, it should be pointed out that New York's support for higher education only grew by 1.9 percent between 2017 and 2018, to \$5.9 billion. The fall semester was the first for the state's Excelsior Scholarship, a free-tuition program for full-time students from families earning less than certain income thresholds. The scholarship is being implemented over several years with income limits increasing, but nonetheless it has gone to tens of thousands of students.

When pushing to enact the scholarship program last year, Governor Andrew Cuomo's office budgeted a cost of \$87 million in its first year because New York already has other generous grant programs for students. The estimate seemed low to some, meaning the state's spending on higher ed will be closely watched.

Cuomo has already drawn fire from education advocates over funding for public universities, both at the end of last year and after he unveiled a new budget proposal this year.

The Down States

Of course, New York did increase funding in 2018 -- something not every state can say. Officials in North Dakota attributed the fact that the state had the largest year-over-year higher ed funding drop in the country to a state budget hurt by the energy and agricultural sectors.

"The largest economic drivers in our state are agriculture and energy, which includes oil and coal," said Tammy Dolan, vice chancellor of administrative affairs at the North Dakota University System. "As the last few years have not been kind to those industries, they have had an impact on the amount of state funds that are available."

North Dakota has a biennial budget, so officials know state funding will not increase next year. They've put in place several strategies to deal with the decreased funding, including task forces to find efficiencies at the system and institutional levels. Since 2016, about 500 full-time staff positions have been cut across 11 institutions, Dolan said. The university system has a total of about 7,000 full-time employees.

Examining several years of data for North Dakota shows the state's higher ed funding dropping back down after a brief increase. The state's higher ed funding totaled \$358.5 million in 2018 after coming in at \$419.7 million in 2017 and \$405.7 million in 2016. Funding is now closer to its 2013 level, which was \$343.8 million.

Nationally, comparing the latest state funding picture to one from two years prior shows some long-term gains in state funding. State appropriations to higher education across the country grew by 5.9 percent between the 2016 and 2018 fiscal years. The growth is skewed upward because of an extreme 30.2 percent two-year increase reported by Illinois, which rebounded from its institutions receiving a diminished amount of stopgap funding during the state budget standoff.

A total of 34 states besides Illinois show two-year gains in funding, with Arkansas recording the lowest increase, 0.1 percent, and Hawaii reporting the highest, 18.7 percent. The other 15 states decreased support for higher ed between 2016 and 2018 by amounts ranging from a slip of 0.1 percent in New Jersey to a drop of 13.3 percent in Mississippi.

Comparing the 2018 data to figures from five years in the past reveals that, nationally, state support for higher education has risen by 20.7 percent. A total of 40 states had five-year increases since 2013. The smallest increase, 1.1 percent, was in Arizona. The largest, 52.5 percent, was in California.

The other 10 states dropped funding for higher ed over the five-year span. Of that group, New Mexico had the smallest decline, 0.5 percent. West Virginia had the biggest plunge -- 20.6 percent.

Grapevine data cover tax and nontax state support for college and university operations. They also include support for other higher ed activities. States are asked for information on their funding for four-year institutions, community colleges and vocational-technical colleges, as well as appropriations to coordinating and governing boards, appropriations to state student financial aid, funding bound for higher ed but appropriated to other state agencies, and appropriations for private higher ed institutions. They are asked not to include appropriations for capital costs, debt service, money drawn from most federal sources, funds drawn from student fees and auxiliary enterprises.

Grapevine warns that the data are an early, tentative look at higher ed funding and that some estimates are subject to change. The data are broad -- figures don't indicate any single institution's funding.

Nor does the survey account for changes in the number of students enrolling, which can vary significantly from state to state and institution to institution. That means per-student analyses aren't possible -- an important point since declining funding can mean a very different thing in a state where overall enrollment is falling than it does in a state where enrollment is rising. Nationally, college enrollment has been declining for six straight years, although four-year public institutions have fared much better than other types of institution. Community colleges and especially for-profit institutions have seen the most significant loss of students.

The report typically comes a few months before a more comprehensive State Higher Education Finance report issued by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education
Indiana helps Hoosiers get “Cash for College”
January 24, 2018

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education launches its annual statewide Cash for College campaign this week to encourage high school seniors and college students to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the state’s April 15 deadline.

The Commission is committed to increasing the number of Hoosier students who file the FAFSA on time—a requirement to receive state financial aid. Last year, the Commission moved Indiana’s filing deadline from March 10 to April 15 to give students more time to file. About 4% more students have applied for the FAFSA this year compared to the same time last year.

“Indiana has one of the most generous need-based financial aid systems in the country—giving out more than \$300 million dollars every year,” said Lubbers. “But too many Hoosiers miss out by failing to file the FAFSA by Indiana’s April 15 deadline. With Cash for College, we’re sending a clear message to students and families that there are financial resources to make college an affordable option.”

Members of the Commission will host a Cash for College launch event at Southport High School in Indianapolis. Junior 21st Century Scholars at Southport will receive help searching for scholarships and three students will receive \$100 CollegeChoice 529 Direct Savings Plans.

Throughout the winter months, the state is encouraging schools and communities to host regional events with financial aid experts to help students open a CollegeChoice 529 Direct Savings Plan, apply for Indiana’s 21st Century Scholars program, search for scholarships, and—of course—file the FAFSA.

Learn More Indiana

Learn More Indiana offers a variety of helpful tips and resources for K-12 students, current college students and returning adult students, including the Indiana College Costs Estimator. Available online at IndianaCollegeCosts.org, the free tool offers side-by-side cost comparisons that show how much students should expect to pay out-of-pocket at each Indiana college once various sources of financial aid are applied, as well as details on local scholarship opportunities.

Hartford City News Times
Back on track: Once homeless, Ivy Tech student leader determined to succeed
By Michael Reschke
January 28, 2018

It took four days for the reality of being homeless to catch up with Joshua Johnson.

In the spring of 2015, Johnson woke up in the driver's seat of his 2002 Chrysler Sebring. He started the car and drove from the Target parking lot to Ivy Tech Community College's Bloomington campus.

Before other students arrived, he brushed his teeth in the school's restroom, put dry shampoo in his hair and used baby wipes to make himself as presentable as possible.

When he wasn't in class, Johnson sat in the common areas, studying. When his work was done, he walked a few laps through the building and found a new place to sit.

Being homeless during the day wasn't so bad. The school was a positive environment. There were people to talk to. Sometimes, there was even free food. But in the evening, when the building started to empty out, Johnson's mindset began to change.

As the sun was setting, he got into his car and drove back to the Target parking lot. Under a lamppost, Johnson's mind raced.

"I just began to think, this is endless," he said. "After the first three days, the mind can stay strong, but then it starts to wear down, and I began to feel like this could be an endless situation."

Johnson eventually pulled himself out. He worked so hard volunteering for a political campaign he was offered a paid position. He used that money to rent a room and move out of his car.

That fall, he went through the Ivy Tech Student Leadership Academy. He found a job in the community college's work-study program, answering enrollment questions and leading campus tours. He ran for president of the Student Government Association and won.

If he hadn't been homeless, that might not have happened.

Johnson is now one of the most recognizable faces on Ivy Tech's Bloomington campus. He works at the Express Enrollment Center, greeting new students and helping them meet with advisers. The work he does with student government, such as delivering gift packages to new and expecting mothers in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at IU Health Bloomington Hospital, is featured in Ivy Tech newsletters.

"Any opportunity we've put in front of him or that he's found out about that we've offered, he does," said Beth Warner, director of student life and support services.

A rough start

Johnson wasn't always willing to get involved on campus. He originally saw the community college as a place to earn a degree, nothing more. Ivy Tech wasn't even his first choice.

Johnson graduated in 2012 from Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis. That summer, he participated in Indiana University's Groups Scholars Program for students who are the first in their family to attend college. The summer classes are designed to prepare students for college life, but Johnson was nervous. He didn't feel ready for IU, so he enrolled at Ivy Tech instead.

But things didn't go well. After three years, he was still working on a paralegal studies degree that was supposed to take four semesters to complete.

Then he lost his job at Target, just a few weeks before the lease on his apartment ended. He was planning to move, but didn't understand how far in advance he needed to start looking for a new place.

"I was the sole person under the impression that once it gets closer to the lease coming up, that's when you should start searching for places," he said. "So that was all on me."

With no income and only a few days left in his apartment, he started preparing for what he thought would be a short period of precarious living. He got rid of everything that wouldn't fit in his car, selling what he could and throwing out the rest. He bought some crackers and fruit — food that didn't need to be cooked or refrigerated — and started looking for jobs.

Financial aid and the 21st Century Scholars program covered Johnson's tuition, allowing him to continue taking classes.

Once his lease ended, Johnson spent as much time as possible on campus. It was better than sitting in his car.

Being on campus all day, he started to notice fliers for student organizations. Some of them offered scholarships that could help with his living expenses.

The position of Student Government Association president came with the largest scholarship — \$1,200 a semester. Johnson went to the student development office to apply, but he didn't meet the minimum GPA requirement to run.

Warner suggested he go through Ivy Tech's Student Leadership Academy in the fall to help him prepare for the next election cycle. At the time, she didn't know he was homeless.

"Students don't always share that, I think, because they're concerned at the response they're going to get," she said.

Desperate times

As days turned into weeks, Johnson was running out of money and starting to panic. He tried to sell his plasma, but was turned away because he didn't meet BioLife's weight requirement. Johnson had always been skinny, but he was down to less than 140 pounds at 5 foot, 11 inches, thanks to his meager diet.

None of the jobs he applied for panned out. This started to weigh on him, especially at night. Sitting in his car with a blanket pulled over his face, he wondered why employers weren't getting back to him. Did they think he wasn't qualified? Could they sense that he was homeless?

He also worried about his safety. What would he do if someone knocked on his window in the middle of the night? What if it was the police? Was he even allowed to spend the night in a parking lot? If they told him to leave, where would he go?

It was a horrible experience, but it motivated him. Determined to get past this point in his life, Johnson forced himself to start thinking positive.

“OK, once I get back on track, I’m going to keep going,” he said. “I’m not going to come back to this situation.”

Keeping busy

In June of 2015, Johnson got an interview for an unpaid volunteer position with U.S. Rep. Todd Young’s Senate campaign. It wouldn’t pay the rent, but it did provide an opportunity to learn about politics, something that had piqued Johnson’s interest since he was a child. Growing up, he was fascinated by C-SPAN. The more he learned about government in school, the more he wanted to watch the legislative process in action.

Volunteering also helped him pass the time.

“I was there early in the day and at night because, you know, it was something to do,” he said, “besides me going back in the car.”

Johnson’s hard work began to pay off. Sometimes the campaign manager bought him meals. Eventually he was offered a paid internship. It was only temporary, but, as soon as Johnson got his first paycheck, he started looking for a room to rent. He found a house on Bloomington’s northwest side through a classified advertisement. He’d be living with three strangers, but that didn’t bother him.

“If anybody wants to test it out and try maybe three days living in your car, anything after that will seem like a divine heavenly gift to you,” he said. “You have a new respect for everything.”

In that house is where he met Nicola Begovic, a graduate student at IU’s Jacobs School of Music. The two became friends and now share an apartment together.

“We kind of felt each other right away,” Begovic said. “He was always really honest and really like a guy that you can depend on.”

Begovic is from Serbia. Traveling there and back can be a hassle. It takes three flights that cross multiple time zones. Trying to arrive in Indianapolis at a time when shuttles are still running to Bloomington is difficult. After one trip, Begovic thought he was going to be stuck at the airport for six hours, but Johnson was there waiting for him.

“He tries to make everyone happy,” Begovic said.

Leadership training

Johnson went through the Student Leadership Academy in the fall of 2015. The 10-week development program was the first activity at Ivy Tech Johnson participated in, outside of classes. He got to know the other students and made friends.

“That was totally like a refresh for me,” Johnson said. “Any negative baggage I had was uplifted.”

With his internship ending, Johnson applied for a work-study position in Ivy Tech’s student development office. Warner hired him, and he turned out to be one of the hardest workers in the office. Any time she asked if he was busy, he responded by asking what he could do to help.

“I think that says a lot about who he is,” Warner said.

He started taking advantage of every opportunity he could find. He joined the campus activity board. He entered Ivy Tech’s Duke It Out Business Pitch competition, and his idea for a concierge service that helps international students find housing, transportation and grocery stores in Bloomington earned him second place. He got his GPA up so he could run for student government. He was even named Distinguished Student Leader for the campus.

Johnson, 25, has made some changes in his personal life, too. He keeps a detailed personal budget, mapping out his expenses a year in advance. And with the exception of a couch and a TV stand, he doesn’t buy things that can’t easily fit into his car.

“Just in case,” he said. “It scared me so bad.”

Johnson’s life wasn’t easy during the past two and a half years. He had to support himself financially while taking classes and juggling all his leadership activities. He changed his major to software development and essentially had to start over. Despite those obstacles, Johnson expects to graduate with an associate degree in May.

Living in his car was a nightmare at the time. Today, Johnson has a different view.

“It was a blessing in disguise,” he said.