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50,000 Hoosiers Have Enrolled in High-Demand Certificate Programs

Next Level Jobs Initiative Skills Up Indiana's Workforce

(INDIANAPOLIS) – Gov. Eric J. Holcomb announced that more than 50,000 Hoosiers have enrolled to complete a high-demand certificate program through Indiana's [Next Level Jobs](#) Workforce Ready Grant, which provides tuition-free certificates in five of the state's most sought-after sectors, including health and life sciences; IT and business services; building and construction, transportation and logistics; and advanced manufacturing.

"The Workforce Ready Grant has helped thousands of Hoosiers develop the right skillsets to realize their true potential and connect to available opportunities with Indiana employers," Gov. Holcomb said during the Aug. 19 meeting of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in June 2020, Indiana created the [Rapid Recovery for a Better Future](#) initiative in which Next Level Jobs temporarily expanded to include certain high-demand training programs. Accompanied with strategic marketing and outreach, nearly 25,000 Hoosiers enrolled in a certificate program through the Workforce Ready Grant during the initiative.

Since Gov. Holcomb introduced Next Level Jobs in 2017, more than 25,000 Hoosiers have completed a high-demand certificate program through the Workforce Ready Grant. Of those, more than 12,000 Hoosiers completed the program during the Rapid Recovery initiative. Hoosiers who earn a Workforce Ready Grant certificate see an annual median wage increase of \$6,800.

"Hitting the 50,000 mark with the Governor's Workforce Ready Grant is a remarkable achievement in just four years, and a true testament to the Hoosier work ethic," said Department of Workforce Development Commissioner Fred Payne. "It's also a validation to the employers who continue to look forward in developing a robust workforce not only for today, but for tomorrow. As our economy continues to grow and more and more Hoosiers return to work, we are committed to helping working Hoosiers and employers alike get to that next level."

Next Level Jobs supports Indiana's goal of having at least 60 percent of Hoosiers with a quality credential beyond a high school diploma by 2025, a goal aligned to projected future workforce needs. Currently, 48.3 percent of Hoosiers hold an industry certification, short- or long-term credential, associate or bachelor's degree or higher. That attainment level has increased nearly 15 percentage points since the state began tracking educational attainment in 2008. Industry certifications and short-term credentials, such as those earned through the Workforce Ready Grant, account for nearly 10 percent of Indiana's rate.

"Ninety-nine percent of jobs created in the last decade require education and training beyond high school," said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Teresa Lubbers. "Achieving 50,000 enrollments through the Workforce Ready Grant

is a major step toward meeting the state’s educational attainment goal and building a talent pipeline for Indiana’s high-demand jobs of today and tomorrow.”

To apply for the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant, individuals can go to www.NextLevelJobs.org and complete a quick survey that gathers information about their needs and interests. Once submitted, individuals are contacted by an education or training provider within their desired program. This direct and individualized outreach ensures that people are connected to the best programs and resources to suit their unique needs.

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About Next Level Jobs

[Next Level Jobs](http://www.NextLevelJobs.org) provides free training for Hoosiers and reimbursements for Indiana employers for training employees in high-demand fields. Next Level Jobs is part of Governor Holcomb’s Next Level Indiana agenda to continue the positive momentum of our state. Under his leadership, with support from the General Assembly, Indiana is taking the state’s workforce to the next level with a focus on the high-priority industries and in-demand, high-paying jobs driving Indiana’s 21st Century economy forward.

About the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet

The Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) was formed in 2018 with the mission of addressing current and future education and employment needs for individuals and employers, strengthening Indiana’s economy by integrating and aligning state and federal resources, and ensuring a talent-driven education and workforce system. The membership of the GWC includes the business community, K-12 representatives, postsecondary institutions, Indiana lawmakers, and leaders from Indiana state agencies.