

**State of Indiana  
Governor's Workforce Cabinet**

**Thursday, October 26, 2023**

**Meeting Minutes – Warsaw/Region 2**

**I. Call to Order**

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet met in regular session starting at 10:00 a.m. ET at Zimmer Biomet, 1800 West Center Street, Building 4, Warsaw, IN 46580, with Chairman Ryan Kitchell presiding.

**Member Introduction & Roll Call**

*Members Present:* Rep. Bob Behning (virtual), Robert Coons, Tony Denhart, Dr. Sue Ellspermann, Jody French (virtual), Megan Glover (virtual), Joyce Irwin (virtual), Sherm Johnson, Mark Kara, Loren King (virtual), Ryan Kitchell, Teresa Koleszar (virtual), Chris LaMothe, Chris Lowery (virtual), Rebecca McCuaig, Richard Paulk, Fred Payne, Courtney Penn (virtual), Paul Perkins (virtual), Dan Peterson, Marilyn Pitzulo, Todd Richardson (virtual), Dr. Steve Rogers, Steve Schreckengast, Rebecca Schroeder, Tony Vespa

*Regrets:* David Adams, Maurice Coates Jr., Dr. Katie Jenner, Dr. Chuck Johnson, Sen. Jeff Raatz, Dave Shane

**II. Consideration of the Minutes**

Chairman Kitchell welcomed the group and asked for a motion to approve the GWC meeting minutes from August 24, 2023, in Region 8/Bloomington. The minutes were unanimously approved by the Cabinet.

**III. Opening Comments**

Chairman Kitchell provided welcoming remarks and invited the Mayor of Warsaw, Joe Thallemer, to the podium. Mayor Thallemer welcomed the Cabinet to Region 2, made brief remarks and introduced Jim Lancaster, President, Global Reconstruction Business of Zimmer Biomet.

**IV. Welcome**

Jim Lancaster, President of Global Reconstruction Business at Zimmer Biomet, welcomed the Cabinet to Zimmer Biomet and shared their mission or orthopedics and beyond. Zimmer Biomet is a global organization with 18,000 team members around the world, operations in 25+ countries, and sales in 100+ countries making them a Fortune 500 company with 6.9 billion in revenue in 2022. They are on a transformational journey taking into consideration how technology, the workforce and more play into their operations.

**V. Advancing the Orthopedic Capital of the World for Generations to Come**

Bob Vitoux, President and CEO of OrthoWorx, introduced himself along with guest panelists including Andrea LaBarbera (VP of Global Talent & Engagement, Zimmer Biomet), Mallory Trusty (VP of the OP Experience, OrthoPediatrics), Dr. David Hoffert (Superintendent, Warsaw Community Schools) and Dr. Drew Flamm (President, Grace College).

Bob shared that OrthoWorx is a nonprofit organization funded by a \$7 million investment from the Lilly Endowment. The organization is meant to be a replica of Bio Crossroads (located in Indianapolis) to serve the orthopedic industry in Warsaw.

OrthoWorx is focused on talent and recently conducted a study in the Warsaw community that led to the creation of a STEM program in local schools. They are primarily focused on advancing a few specific action areas:

1. Equipping the Next Generation
2. Enriching the Community
3. Accelerating Industry

Bob Vitoux recognized Representative Snow, Senator Mischler, Chairman Thompson and other individuals who helped OrthoWorx receive \$30M dollars in next year's fiscal budget for the orthopedic industry's retention and attraction. The organization is working on several programs and initiatives that Bob shared:

- DiscoverME
- BTE (Bridge to Employment)
- Ortho Academy
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Ecosystem Study (with Don Wood Foundation and TPMA)

Lastly, Bob shared insights on what we can do differently to teach the next generation and how we can instill essential employability skills.

## **VI. The Power of an Entrepreneurial Mindset – *The STARTedUp Foundation***

Don Wettrick, CEO and Co-Founder, STARTedUP

Ali Curtis, Director of Development, STARTedUP

Don kicked off his presentation by sharing STARTedUP's mission and vision: to show young people that opportunities are everywhere. They want to encourage students to be problem solvers and to have an entrepreneurial mindset. STARTedUP is Indiana's Innovation Educator Fellowship – the program currently has 35 educators from across the state who use their network to connect students to resources and organizations within their communities. Through the program, selected educators are connected with leaders in their communities such as the mayor to further build their networks and resources. Educators in the program meet once a month to share information and best practices. This program is the first of its kind in the nation and is proving that teachers have more to do with economic development than we ever knew.

Ali shared high-level goals that the organization has.

**Goal #1:** Have a STARTedUP presence in all 92 Indiana counties.

**Goal #2:** Serve 10,000 students annually through STARTedUP programming.

Don shared an overview of the Innovate WithIN program that the STARTedUP Foundation created and a success story about a student, Kayla Davis out of Hobart, who participated in the competition. The program provides students with 20 online modules to learn about business models and, after completing the training, they submit their unique business ideas. Through the program, many students are creating actual companies and, even if they're not a finalist in the competition, they are learning and making connections in their communities, thinking creatively, and developing solutions.

The STARTedUP Foundation is partnering with universities which have started recognizing the value of getting students who are not typical classroom learners to discover alternative ways to learn and show what they are capable of outside of the classroom. Students who graduate from the program and who are regional finalists or state finalists of the Innovate WithIN program are invited to participate in the Alumni Association.

Ali encouraged all Cabinet Members to get involved by sharing the foundation with their networks and to think through how all the organizations with representatives in the room can align and continue to sustain the program.

**VII. Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) and Governor Holcomb’s Commitment to Expansion –  
*Indiana Department of Workforce Development***

Richard Paulk, Commissioner, Department of Workforce Development

Leslie Crist, Associate Chief of Field Operations & Service Delivery, Department of Workforce Development

Brianna Morse, Director of Youth Initiatives & Field Support, Department of Workforce Development

Commissioner Richard Paulk provided a high-level overview of the DWD JAG program: to help equip at-risk high school students with leadership and job skills to overcome challenges they may be facing.

Commissioner Paulk introduced Leslie Crist and Brianna Morse to provide more details about the JAG program and how they are working to expand.

The JAG program originally started in Delaware in 1980 and Governor Daniels wanted a similar program in Indiana. JAG launched 12 programs in Indiana in 2006 with a focus on dropout prevention – it has since grown to 125 programs across the state thanks to Governor Holcomb’s support and service on the JAG National Board. Governor Holcomb’s goal is to increase the size to 250 programs during his final 18 months in office.

Leslie Crist shared that there are 38 states that currently participate in the JAG program and Indiana has been at the very top statistically every year. JAG Indiana has a 95% graduation rate which exceeds the JAG National goal of 90%. JAG Indiana has also been number one for the last 10 years in accessing scholarships.

Brianna Morse gave an overview of the JAG model and the opportunities that exist within the program. JAG has predominantly worked with high school juniors and seniors but they are looking to expand their offerings to different age groups. The team at JAG would like to focus on some of the obstacles that middle school students face including building self-confidence, learning about different career pathways and preparing them to transition to high school. Young high school students could also benefit from the program by learning more about career pathway planning, study skills, etc. The JAG program could also be expanded to post-secondary institutions by helping JAG students who have matriculated on campus to have a safety net and resources to help them be successful during their college experience.

JAG students experience a range of barriers that make them “at risk” students which includes everything from academic, personal, environmental and income/work related. JAG provides students with opportunities to help overcome those barriers including skill building, leadership activities, field trips, job shadowing, mentorship and follow-up from the JAG team after graduation. Cabinet Members and meeting attendees can help spread the word about the JAG program by having conversations with local schools and reinforcing the benefits of the program. Brianna and Leslie requested that all attendees review the handout in their folders to see where there are gaps in their communities where JAG could be beneficial.

**VIII. WIOA Planning Update**

GWC Executive Director Whitney Ertel shared that the steering committee has been working on the WIOA plan and will be meeting offsite to review the surveys that closed recently. The group is still on target to

produce a first draft in December with the intent of having an open public comment period in January. The plan itself will be due to the Department of Labor sometime this spring (March 4, 2024).

Additionally, there is a news release printout for all attendees in their folder which contains info on a recently approved \$25M grant for employer daycare needs. The FSSA team presented on the grant back in August with limited information at the time but they now have all the details ironed out and can help answer questions about who qualifies and so on. Please direct any employers you know to read up on the grant.

**IX. Group Discussion**

Chairman Kitchell shared that the next meeting will take place in Sellersburg/Region 10 at Ivy Tech South. McKinsey will be presenting on what the future workforce looks like during the next meeting in December. The next meeting marks one-year since the GWC brought forward 30 legislative recommendations – updates and next steps on those items will be discussed at the December meeting.

Chairman Kitchell also provided a brief overview of where the past nine GWC meetings have been held and the benefits of hosting in various regions around the state. Region 1/Northwest Indiana and Region 3/Northeast Indiana will be our next stops in February and April as they have not been visited yet. After April, all 12 Indiana regions will have hosted the GWC's meetings. Chairman Kitchell asked the Cabinet for recommendations on facilities and presenters for Region 1 and Region 3 meetings and asked if there is interest in continuing to meet in regional settings.

Local employer Matt Davis with Itamco, a small manufacturer from Argus, IN, challenged the idea of the apprenticeship model and how unrealistic it is for high school and college students to choose their career path at such a young age. Employers (especially small employers) put a lot of time and resources into students only for them to realize that this is not what they want to do as a career. They have connected with their local schools to bring students into their organization and have been enlightened by their experiences with young students and the difficulties they are having with making these big decisions. The Cabinet should consider why employers aren't coming to the table and offering these apprenticeships because it is a heavy lift.

**X. Adjournment at 12:00 p.m.**