



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

DEC
2022

State employees celebrate milestones at the Governor's Long-Term Employee Reception

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022, 243 of our long-term employees were invited to come together for the Governor's Long-term Employee Reception (GLTER) to celebrate 35, 40, 45, 50 and 55+ year milestones in their tenure with the state!

Notably, Joyce Crull with the Indiana State Personnel Department is celebrating a remarkable 55 years of employment with the State of Indiana! She still remembers her first day as an Attendant at Richmond State Hospital all those years ago. She recalls, "My first impression was to wonder, 'what have I gotten myself into?'"

Over the years, Crull says her motivation to come to work each day was in knowing that the State of Indiana was and would continue be a good place to work and that many good people were working alongside her. She shares, "Meeting and working with so many different people and agencies has given me lifelong friends all over the state."



Brent Barlow (center), Indiana Department of Transportation celebrating 50 years of service with Governor Holcomb (left) and INDOT Commissioner Michael Smith (right).

Following in Joyce's footsteps, six other state employees are celebrating 50-year milestones: Brent Barlow, Douglass Furness and Dale Rainbolt, all with Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT); Chuck Coffin with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG); Kenneth Urshel with Indiana Office of Technology (IOT); and Chuck Daube with Indiana School for the Deaf (ISD).

Barlow, currently serving as Project Manager with INDOT began his career with the state back in 1972,

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The Torch is published monthly by the Indiana State Personnel Department and is available online at on.in.gov/TheTorch.

Got a story?

Submit your story ideas to: spdcommunications@spd.in.gov

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State employees made SECC a success!

On Oct. 31, 2022, we wrapped up our 2022 State Employees' Community Campaign (SECC), pledging to support nearly 1,500 different nonprofits across both the Hoosier state and the U.S. And while final numbers are still forthcoming, we now know that state employees' contributions during this campaign put us very close to our ambitious goal of \$1.5 million in donations!

Our employees' generosity this season will mean that houses of worship, food pantries, shelters, schools and clinics will receive funding throughout 2023 to provide for the communities they serve.

Our agencies put on a wide range of creative fundraising events, from chili cookoffs to bake sales, basketball relays to 5k events, and silent auctions to dog art sales—and yes, the canvasses were actually

painted by furry friends from Indiana Canine Assistance Network (ICAN).

Also of note are those teams who made donations and entered to compete in a number of feature fundraising competitions this season: teams from the Department of Transportation, who took home first prize in the Paddle Battle and the Cornhole Tournament; members of the Indiana Office of Technology, who won both the Tug of War and the 3x3 Basketball Tournament; and creative employees of the Department of Financial Institutions, who are once more the reigning Lip Sync Battle champions.

With over 40 agency and statewide events, hundreds of people around the state participated in raising thousands for sponsored nonprofits.



As we wrap up this season's campaign and prepare to begin a new year, we want to thank you again for your generosity this year and every year during our State Employees' Community Campaign.

Article submitted by Indiana State Personnel Department



SECC Tug of War Champions, Indiana Office of Technology



State employees during the Cornhole Tournament



Teams participating in the 2022 SECC Paddle Battle



SECC 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

Team building: Medical surveyors' friendship, consistency help Hoosier kids

Learning “on the job” is a part of most vocations but taking over an already-expansive program -- and finding just the right personnel for it -- is something else entirely.

That’s where Nicole Tipton, BSN, RN found herself about two and a half years ago as the Indiana Department of Health’s (IDOH) Home and Community-Based Care division began the transition to surveying childcare institutions that previously were solely under the purview of the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS). Such locations included group homes, child caring institutions, emergency childcare shelters and other similar institutions.

Fast forward to today and Tipton has assembled a team that, collectively, is responsible for surveying approximately 120 such facilities, spanning from South Bend to Evansville and everywhere in-between. The three women and their supervisor tasked with that important duty have forged a bond that has helped them not only excel at their work but also to lean on one another as the best of friends, through the good times and the bad. And because of those close connections, the team is thriving and making a real difference in the lives of Hoosier kids.

Article submitted by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health



IDOH’s Nicole Tipton, Ashley Nevins, Grace Griggs, and Jennifer Hasbrook have formed a bond that has bolstered their working relationship and personal friendship and has helped them provide the best possible service to Hoosier children.

[Read the full article on Employee Central >](#)

Longtime Reds fan Rose throws out first pitch at Major League game

Lifelong Cincinnati Reds fan Holley Rose stepped on the pitcher’s mound at Great American Ballpark and fired a strike that might have been the envy of the late, great Joe Nuxhall.

Well, almost.

Mr. Red, one of the team’s mascots, didn’t field the pitch cleanly and it bounced in the dirt. Rose, District and Local Readiness manager for the Division of Emergency Preparedness (DEP), insists it wasn’t a wild pitch, however; it was a passed ball on the part of the apparently not-exactly-Johnny-Bench costumed catcher.

Despite jest to the contrary from DEP director Megan Lytle, that’s Rose’s story—and she’s sticking to it.

“I was just happy the ball made it to my catcher, Mr. Red, however it landed in sand right at his feet,” said Rose. “He brought the ball over and high-fived me, and that was amazing. I also got to keep the ball.”

Thankfully, no game was on the line and the effort was all in good fun.

Article submitted by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health



[Read the full article on Employee Central >](#)



Indiana Department of Health Division of Emergency Preparedness District and Local Readiness manager Holley Rose was selected to throw out the first pitch at a Cincinnati Reds game in September.

Visit Indiana wins four prestigious MarCom awards for new IN Indiana Campaign, Pie Day-to-Pi Day Campaign

[MarCom Awards](#) announced [Visit Indiana/Indiana Destination Development Corporation](#) as a 2022 winner in the international creative competition for marketing and communication professionals.

MarCom Awards recognize outstanding achievement by creative professionals involved in the concept, direction, design and production of marketing and communication materials and programs.

Visit Indiana received two Platinum (highest) awards, one in the Advertising Campaign category of Print Media/Marketing/Ads and another in the Branding category of Strategic Communications/Marketing/Promotion Campaign for [IN Indiana open-source campaign](#). Visit Indiana also took home a Gold (second highest) award in the Marketing category of Digital Media/

Web Video for the [‘There is More to Discover IN Indiana’](#) tourism video.

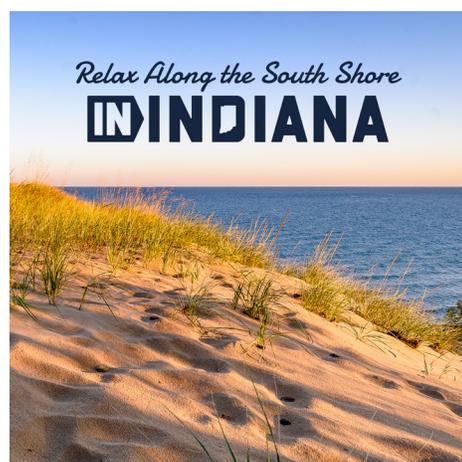
Visit Indiana received another Platinum award in the Social Campaign category of Digital Media/Social Media for the [Pie Day-to-Pi Day campaign](#). From Jan. 23 (National Pie Day) through February (National Pie Month) to Mar. 14 (Pi Day), Visit Indiana teamed up with the [Indiana Foodways Alliance](#) to reward anyone who checked in at two restaurants on the [Hoosier Pie Trail](#) with a custom “Pie-oneer” T-shirt.



For more information about the IN Indiana campaign, click [here](#). To learn more about the MarCom Awards or to see the winners, [click here](#).

Article submitted by the Indiana Destination Development Corporation

[Read the full press release here >](#)



Calling all cyclists for RAGBRAI 2023!

David Bourgeois, INDOT, is forming a team of state employees to ride in next year’s 50th annual RAGBRAI—the oldest, largest, and longest multi-day bicycle touring event in the world! David is looking for individuals who currently cycle or would be interested in long-distance cycling to train in the coming year and bike through Iowa next July for the seven-day RAGBRAI rolling festival.

[Click here to learn more about RAGBRAI >](#)

Then, read [David’s journey](#) with cycling and why he’s decided to form a State of Indiana team for next year’s ride. If you’re interested in training for RAGBRAI with your colleagues, reach out via email at dbourgeois@indot.in.gov to join the team.



Help at home, work, and beyond



Take advantage of your Optum Employee Assistance Program (EAP) today.

Call 1-800-886-9747 to talk with an EAP consultant, available around-the-clock. The Optum EAP is a free service for all full-time state employees and those in their household and can be a beneficial tool to improve your overall well-being. Optum EAP can help with the following topics.



Emotional health support

Your emotional health is how you feel about work, relationships, health and more.

You're eligible for confidential support to help with any issue you may face, big or small. You can talk by phone with a professional, anytime.



Work & life balance

Need support to help keep it all balanced? You're not alone. Many of us are struggling to manage work, home and family.

As part of your program, you can talk to a professional who can work with you on strategies to help you feel in control. You can also access a no-cost counseling benefit, a personalized self-help app and more.



Financial and legal services

You're eligible for a no-cost consultation from an attorney or two calls with a Money Coach. You can also access a library of videos, calculators, and forms to help with your legal and financial questions.

You can learn ways to boost savings, lower debt, improve credit, or become better at budgeting. You can also get help with legal forms related to traffic tickets, contracts, wills and more.

Getting started

To access the Optum EAP online resources, visit liveandworkwell.com. Once on the homepage, click the "Browse as a guest with a company access code" link and enter access code Indiana. Once you've logged in, you will have access to all the online tools and resources.

To connect via phone, call 1-800-886-9747. This will get you connected to a trained EAP representative. The representative will then help you find a provider that fits your specific situation and will even assist you in scheduling your initial appointment.

Download the myLiveandworkwell app though the App Store or Google Play. Log into the app and enter access code: Indiana. Use it to learn about your EAP services, find providers for face-to-face counseling and get authorizations for your free visits. You can even connect with an EAP specialist instantly via the click-to-call and chat features.

Learn more >

Don't forget to redeem your gift cards by Dec. 31!

You earned your ActiveHealth rewards in 2022, so don't let them slip away!

You have until 11:59 p.m. Dec. 31 to redeem any gift cards you earned this year from ActiveHealth before the portal resets for the 2023 program on Jan. 1. State employees and spouses enrolled in an Indiana State Personnel Department sponsored medical plan were eligible to receive a \$100 gift card for completing a wellness visit, a \$50 gift card for completing a dental cleaning, and a \$25 gift card for completing a health assessment.

To redeem a card, simply visit the [ActiveHealth portal](#) and navigate to the "Rewards" tab. Then click "redeem" and follow the prompts. You may select up to four cards for redemption.

When the portal resets, make sure you log in to see program details and the rewards that will become available in the new year. And while you're thinking about your 2023 resolutions, remember that health coaches are available to help you reach your wellness goals this holiday season – and all year long! Just call 855-202-4219 to learn more.

If you want it, go get it – It's never too late to start again

Most of my coworkers know me as Youth Development Specialist (YDS) Bishop, but I recently got married and changed my name to YDS C. Linder. Early on in my life, I fell in love with sports and always wanted to participate in t-ball, baseball, basketball and softball.



Side by side with head coach in 2010 and again in 2012.

Now, I am 34 years old and over the past 12 years I've found a new passion for health and nutrition. I enjoy reading about other people's health journey's and I absolutely love to talk all things nutrition and exercise. As I was reading through other stories in The Torch, I saw an opportunity to share mine, so here it is.

As I grew up, my love for softball surpassed any other sport. Therefore, I decided to play the game for nearly sixteen years, including junior high, high school and most of my college years. It wasn't until my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer that I decided to quit the sport I love to focus on my studies. Once I made that difficult decision, I kept hope alive in me to keep softball as a part of my life.

In 2010, I accepted a graduate assistant position as a softball coach in the state of Texas, where I also worked on obtaining my Master of Education. Accepting the position, I remembered what I thought about my own coaches, who ran us ragged while they stood on the sidelines critiquing us and making us run harder. Yet, they couldn't live up to their own expectations, and I used to despise them for it. How could they make us do all these drills and run us all into the ground when they, themselves, couldn't even do it?

Article submitted by C. Linder (Bishop), Indiana Department of Correction

Read the full story
on the Invest In Your
Health blog >

IDHS Main Entrance Moving

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) is in the process of remodeling its offices, which means changes for the public and state employees.

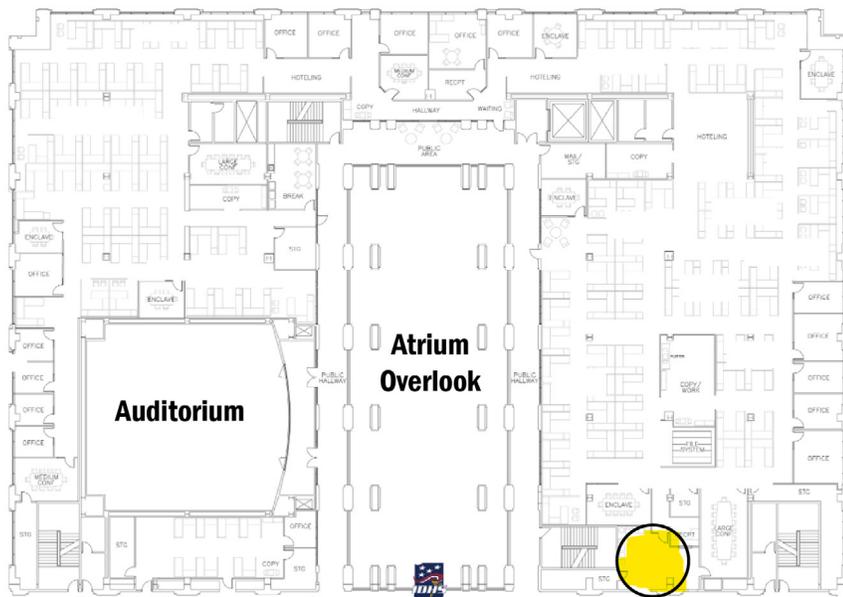
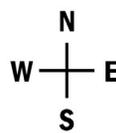
The main entrance to IDHS has moved. It now is located by the east escalators on the second floor (see map below). The main entrance is keeping its address of 302 W. Washington St. Room E208, Indianapolis, IN 46204. IDHS

is getting new signs installed by the main entrance to make this transition clear.

This remodel is an important step that began several months ago but was more than a year in the making. It is designed to improve collaboration and provide unity to the agency by getting most employees under one roof.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Homeland Security

Indiana Government Center South 2nd floor



IDHS Public Lobby

2022 Performance Appraisal Self-Assessments DUE Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022

If you have not yet completed your 2022 self-assessment, please schedule time to complete it before the end of the week.

The Employee Self-Assessment is your chance to share feedback you've received and to quantify your achievements throughout the year. Cataloguing your accomplishments in writing, respective to each of your goals, allows you to demonstrate just how effectively you have accomplished each of your goals this calendar year.

Your comments in the self-assessment will be used by your manager to rank your performance toward each of your goals as Unsuccessful, Needs Improvement, Successful, Exceeds or Exemplary. These rankings will help determine your eligibility for future positions, so it's important that you provide very specific examples of your success in your self-assessment.

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INDIANA STATE MUSEUM AND HISTORIC SITES

If you'd like to better understand what each of these rankings means, watch this short video explaining what "Successful" performance looks like: Watch ['Ep. 12 - What is Success?'](#)



Ivy Tech Community College's Achieve Your Degree Program provides state employees with upfront tuition assistance

The State of Indiana and Ivy Tech Community College announced a new partnership that will offer state employees an affordable education with no upfront tuition costs.

By joining Ivy Tech's Achieve Your Degree (AYD) program and adding Tuition Assistance to the Education Reimbursement policy, employees can apply, enroll, and take courses at Ivy Tech without paying upfront and then applying for reimbursement. This partnership will allow the state to pay Ivy Tech directly upon an employee's successful completion of a course.

Eligible state employees have education reimbursement of up to \$5,250 per year through the Education Reimbursement policy.

Ivy Tech's full-time annual tuition is less than \$4,500 and all Ivy Tech campuses across the state are participating in the program.

"The State of Indiana is once again leading by example, this time by providing tuition assistance to employees, making it easier for individuals to pay for higher education," Ivy Tech Community College President Sue Ellspermann said. "Programs like Achieve Your Degree can help businesses build their own talent pipeline through recruitment of individuals without a degree and helping those individuals learn the skills necessary to advance with the company."

Partnering with Ivy Tech Community College offers state employees access to more than 70 academic programs, as well as opportunities to receive associate degrees, short-term certificates and workforce certifications in various fields. Additionally, Ivy Tech's Ivy+ Tuition and Textbooks model provides students with free textbooks for required courses through the spring 2023 and a flat rate tuition cost students who enroll in more than 12 credits.

On-site application assistance and academic advising are provided by Ivy Tech faculty and staff to accommodate state employees' busy work schedules and to ensure appropriate course schedules. Ivy Tech will also provide individualized advising, financial aid and tutoring to foster employee success.

Through partnerships such as the Achieve Your Degree program at Ivy Tech, the State of Indiana can skill-up its current workforce and encourage employees to earn free credentials through on-campus and online coursework.

Tuition reimbursement and assistance is available up to \$5,250, to all State of Indiana employees of executive branch agencies who:

- have been employed full-time continuously with the state for at least 12 months prior to submitting their



Education Reimbursement or Tuition Assistance program application;

- have not received a disciplinary action in the 12 months prior to the end of the course; and
- have completed the course with a satisfactory grade of at least a "C" or above (or an equivalent "pass" grade). The State of Indiana will continue to pursue partnerships, policies and programs that continue to make the State of Indiana a competitive, engaged and flexible workplace. More information on how to apply for Tuition Assistance will be available on the INSPD: [Education Discounts and Partnerships \(in.gov\)](https://www.in.gov/inspd/education-discounts-and-partnerships) page.

Your tuition benefits go further at WGU!

Western Governors University (WGU) offers students the opportunity to start their program on the first of any month. Tuition is a flat rate charged every six months—what WGU calls one term—so students get a full six months of learning for that flat fee, no matter how many courses they take. On average tuition cost per six-month term at WGU is \$3,726 for a bachelor's degree and \$3,921 for a master's degree. Students also have the ability to accelerate their studies to finish faster, saving time and money.

To help you achieve your highest potential, the State of Indiana is now offering \$5,250 every calendar year in tuition reimbursement for eligible

state employees, which, at WGU, can cover a minimum of one term each calendar year.

Use this pro tip to make the most of tuition reimbursement at WGU:

As a state employee, if you start your program at WGU on July 1, you can use tuition reimbursement to cover the first six-month term, which would run from July-December. Then, your second term would begin on Jan. 1 of the following year, for which calendar year you would be eligible again for up to \$5,250 in education reimbursement, meaning you could potentially have your first year at WGU fully reimbursed.

Additionally, state employees are eligible for a 5% tuition discount and may apply for a myriad of [scholarships](#) through WGU, which can lower out-of-pocket cost and stretch the state's tuition reimbursement to cover all or most of the tuition cost for two terms in the same year.

Don't let money be the limiting factor in your career development. Find out how you can earn your degree at WGU without draining your savings. [WGU Indiana University with Online Degrees and Programs.](#)

To learn more about these benefits, contact Lindsay Taylor at lindsay.taylor@wgu.edu.



Artwork by
Jerry Williams

Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs Military Family Relief Fund



OPERATION HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Assisting veterans and their families that are experiencing financial hardship this holiday season.

**\$300 per dependent child in the household
\$200 per household for a holiday meal**

Program ends Dec. 31, 2022

You Will Need:

- DD-214
- W-9
- Proof of Income
- Bank Statement
- Direct Deposit form
- Proof of child's dependency
- Proof of child's residency



Details and application:

CLICK HERE

The Indiana Geographic Information Office hosts its 12th GIS Day event

The Indiana Geographic Information Office, with support from fantastic volunteers from the State of Indiana, returned to the Indiana Government Center for its 12th annual GIS Day. GIS Day is an internationally celebrated event for GIS communities to help each other learn about geography and real-world applications of GIS.

Attended by approximately 300 members of the Indiana GIS community, this event included 25

unique presentations, a GIS learning lab and more than a dozen partner showcases, with lunch and snacks provided by our great partners.

This event's presentations were organized into 3 unique tracks – collaboration, strategic planning and technical. Many state employees presented on their recent work, along with other presentations from local governments, private companies and educational institutions.

Indiana's Geographic Information Officer Megan Compton says, "GIS Day is a fantastic opportunity for members of our Indiana GIS community to come together to share advancements in our work from a variety of sectors, meet new practitioners and reconnect with ones we already know. As the GIO, GIS Day also serves as a place to share and receive input on our



Indiana Geographic Information Office team at GSI Day.

office's vision for Indiana's direction and priorities for spatial data. This vision includes the methods in which we conduct the statewide data harvest, orthophotography and the dissemination of those datasets, and many more, through IndianaMap. We are proud to be able to have hosted another successful GIS Day, and certainly want to thank all who made this possible and everybody for attending."

Article submitted by the Indiana Office of Technology



Indiana Geographic Information Officer Megan Compton giving the keynote speech

DNR holiday gift packs available for limited time

Cross those hard-to-buy-for people off your shopping list in a snap by giving them a 2023 holiday gift pack from the DNR.

A gift pack can be used the whole year, whether the recipient enjoys camping or sleeping in the comfort of an Indiana State Park Inn after enjoying the outdoors. The gift pack also saves you up to \$31 over buying the items individually. A limited quantity of gift packs is available.

The \$99 gift pack includes a 2023 resident annual entrance permit, a one-year subscription to Outdoor Indiana magazine (six issues), and one of two \$65 gift card options. One gift card option can be used at the campgrounds — another gift card option is a \$65 State Park Inns gift card. You also have the option of upgrading either to \$100 by paying \$35 more.

The offer is available through Dec. 31, 2022, or when sold out. Gift packs can be purchased only at shopINstateparks.com.

BUY YOUR '23 INDIANA STATE PARK HOLIDAY GIFT PACK TODAY!



A GIFT PACK INCLUDES:
2023 STATE PARK ENTRANCE PERMIT (REG \$50)
\$65 GIFT CARD (CAMP OR INN)
1YR SUBSCRIPTION TO OUTDOOR IN MAGAZINE

JUST \$99 - SAVE UP TO \$31

SHOPINSTATEPARKS.COM

OFFER ENDS 12/31/22 - LIMITED QTY AVAILABLE OFFERING A VARIETY OF PACK OPTIONS



Indiana Statehood Day Essay Contest

The Indiana Statehouse Tour Office, in conjunction with the Indiana Center for the Book, holds an essay competition for Hoosier fourth graders to commemorate Indiana Statehood Day each year. Winners of the essay contest are honored at celebrations both in-person and virtually and receive prizes including CollegeChoice 529 Deposits for the top four winners totaling over \$1,000 made possible by the Indiana Education Savings Authority. The theme of the 2022 contest is "Living IN Indiana." Judges always accept a wide interpretation of the theme. Whether students chose to consider Indiana's people, seasons, landforms, plant and animal life, social and cultural groups, and even food and fun activities, the hope is for the contest to build awareness and appreciation for the Hoosier state.

This year over 1,200 essays were submitted to the contest from 37 Indiana counties all over the state including Warrick, Lake, Dekalb, Jefferson and many others. Essays were judged by librarians and staff at the Indiana State Library on the following categories: spelling and grammar, essay organization, voice and personality, and essay content. "These essays are meant to be read aloud," said contest organizer Suzanne Walker. "I love an essay that sounds like it was written by a kid but also talks about Indiana in interesting ways. We want to draw the listener into the essay in under 300 words. It's a tall order, but the students did a great job this year."

First place winner Yuto H. from Warrick County wrote about moving to Indiana from Japan and said,

"Indiana people warmly accept me. I really recommend to anyone to move to Indiana." Third place winner Antonio Z. from Marion County also wrote about moving to Indiana, but focused on the seasons saying, "I rushed outside but my mom stopped me and forced me to put on a coat, hat, and gloves. This was new to me since I'd never experienced winter." Reading second place winner Nora J.'s essay from Johnson County will make anyone's mouth water with her great descriptions of Indiana foods: "If you haven't tried buttery corn, the crispy pork tenderloin, or rich and buttery sugar cream pie, you should try them. They might become some of your favorites too." Fourth place winner Caleb C. from Monroe County focused on building community and pulled some heartstrings saying, "I moved here at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. I had no friends except for my dog. Now just three years later...I make friends wherever I go... Nowhere makes me feel as happy as Indiana."

The winning essays will be read aloud at three Statehood Day Ceremonies. The fourth place essay will be read at the Indiana History Center on Dec. 9, the third place essay will be read at the Indiana State Museum on Dec. 9, and the first and second place winning essays will be read at the Statehouse on Dec. 12th. The ceremony starts and noon. Seating is limited, but all state employees are welcome.

ICHLA Community Survey



Community Survey



The Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA) would like to invite all state employees who are Hispanic/Latin@ to fill out ICHLA's first Community Survey. Your answers are completely anonymous and will be used by the Commission to inform community leaders what the community needs most. It will also guide the commission's upcoming strategic plan. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to ICHLA by phone or email.

Phone: 317-232-2624

Email: INFO@ICHLA.IN.GOV

Website: in.gov/ichla/home/community-survey/



"The Latin@ voice matters. Your participation in the ICHLA Survey will bring awareness to the current needs of Hispanic/Latin@ Hoosiers."

Daniella Jordán Gonzales
Chairwoman

Indiana Statehood Day Trivia

Indiana Statehood day is Dec. 11. Indiana was admitted to the United States as the 19th state on Dec. 11, 1816.

Think you know your Indiana facts? Answer the questions below for a chance to win a prize!

Submit your answers here >

1. Where was the original state capital?
2. What actor, born in Indianapolis, IN, has had a number of roles, including in “The Mummy” trilogy and “George of the Jungle”?
3. Who was Indiana’s first state governor?
4. In what city, on May 4, 1871, was the first professional game of baseball held?
5. 90% of the world’s _____ comes from Indiana.
6. What theme park, originally known as Santa Claus Land, was the first true theme park in America, opening in 1946?
7. Which criminal is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis, IN?
8. In which venue of Indiana did Elvis Presley perform his last concert, in 1977?
9. What doll was created in Indiana in 1914?
10. Which was the first permanent European settlement in Indiana?



Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Indianapolis, IN 1911, W.H. Bass Photo Co., Indianapolis, IN.



Ray Harroun in his Marmon “Wasp,” Bass Photo Co Collection, Indiana Historical Society.

Disability Determination Bureau ends federal fiscal year as a national leader

In October, the Disability Determination Bureau (DDB) held a staff celebration to celebrate the end of a very successful federal fiscal year. DDB, an FSSA agency with around 250 staff members, works with the Social Security Administration, a federal agency, to determine Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income eligibility.



The DDB Special Projects and Employee Engagement Committee

During the fiscal year, DDB received 81,604 cases and was able to close 81,154 of them. They also finished the year with a “Production per Work Year” number the average number of cases processed per staff member of 318.6. This is the highest in their region and among the top three in the nation! With such a high rate of cases processed, DDB met their initial and reconsiderations targets and were able to provide assistance to other states in their region to help them reach production goals.

Social Security Disability Insurance covers workers who have established eligibility through prior work and Supplemental Security Income has a

needs-based income and resource eligibility requirement. The purpose of these programs is to identify people who have disabilities that preclude the ability to work, or for children, preclude the ability to fully participate in learning activities. These programs have two desired outcomes. The first is to correctly identify disabled adults and children and the second is to have adults with potential referred to a public or private vocational rehabilitation services, through the Social Security Administration’s Ticket to Work program.

In order to accomplish its mission, the DDB must work closely with the 26 SSA field offices throughout the state, and the Social Security Administration at the regional and national levels.

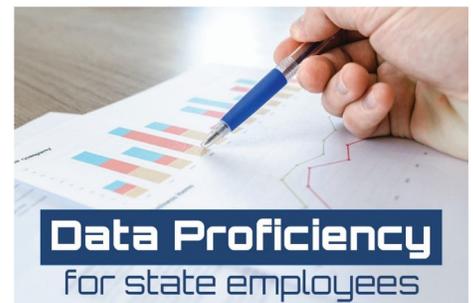
Earn your data proficiency program badges from Indiana MPH

Have you earned your Data Proficiency Program Badges yet? The Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH) is helping employees across the state understand their role in data and to skill-up. That’s why we’ve created the statewide data proficiency program that engages employees at different knowledge levels and shows how data can impact all of our jobs every day.

We’ve sent out ten lessons so far, along with two opportunities to earn learning badges. The eleventh lesson

covering data privacy is going out in early December, so check your state email inbox or visit in.gov/mph/data-proficiency-program for the latest updates.

After completing lesson 5, you can take a short 10-question knowledge check to earn your Data Proficiency Program Green Badge. After lesson 10, you can take another quiz to earn your Blue Badge. After you earn a passing score, MPH will send you an email containing details on how to collect your badge.



If you are new to state government or have not started your data proficiency training, there is no time like the present. You can catch up on all lessons on the Data Proficiency Program website at in.gov/mph/data-proficiency-program.

State Museum's tree gets a new look

The Indiana State Museum's 92 County Tree is getting a facelift – 60 new ornaments from counties across the state will appear on the tree this year, with another 32 to follow next year.

Mark Ruschman, the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites' senior curator of art and culture, has been approaching artists around the state since the beginning of 2022 to design and make new ornaments that reflect their county – “to bring recognition to things that were understated about the county or of interest to the artist.”

“The response has been great,” he said. “The artists like the challenge, but also, they're honored to be considered for this project in the first place. They take a great deal of pride in the fact that their piece is going to be hanging on the museum's tree. We're creating a digital kiosk with a catalog so people can come in and look up their county and not only see the ornament on the tree but also read

what the artist has written about the ornament – what inspired them, how they made their ornament and who they are as an artist.”

Some of the new ornaments highlight the county's topography or its most famous sites. Others, like Delaware County's tell stories about the county. Delaware County artist Brent Cole used the ornament to serve as a tribute to “the nonstop flight to nowhere,” an October 1939 excursion that began and ended at the airport in Muncie when pilots Kelvin Baxter and Robert McDaniels flew a J-3 Piper Cub for 536 hours and covered 34,828 miles. Down below, the ground chief supplied them with food, water, fuel and oil.

Ruschman said he's been impressed by the quality of artists who have participated so far as well as the different ways they approached the project. David Cunningham, for example, won first place in this year's Hoosier Art Salon competition in the still-life category and designed Johnson County's ornament.

Wyatt LeGrand, a public school teacher at Bloomfield Junior Senior High School, involved his student art club in the project. Doug Calish, who taught at Wabash College for 33 years, created the ornaments for Parke, Montgomery and Putnam counties. He put his designs on social media to show what he was working on and solicit comments.

“These ornaments are going to be around for a long time,” Ruschman said. “As the fine arts curator, my job is to curate the tree as an exhibition, and I want to make sure we have the best work for it.”



The Indiana State Museum's 92 County Tree

Ruschman said trying to locate an artist in every county who could participate in this project certainly had its rewards but also has had its challenges.

He needed artists who could work in three dimensions. Who could supply a sketch of what the ornament would look like and a narrative explaining the message of the ornament. Who could meet the specifications (basically, 10 inches by 15 inches and no more than five pounds). Who could meet deadline.

“It's not that there aren't plenty of artists out there,” he said. “It's that this project requires a certain skillset, and sometimes you have to have a few different conversations to figure out whether this is going to work.”

(Continued on [page 20](#))



Delaware County ornament

Does bias affect your relationships?

Bias is a very natural part of the human brain, but it operates on incomplete stereotypes. If we don't bring those stereotypes into our conscious awareness, our biases can lead to unintentionally harmful interactions with coworkers and friends.

Do you know what biases your brain might operate on? Read on to find out.

Affinity Bias – When you walk into a room, do you gravitate towards people who are similar to you in appearance, hobbies, beliefs, etc.?

Appearance Bias – When you walk by someone in the hall, do you catch yourself making judgements, positive or negative, about their beauty, clothing, weight, height, etc.?

Confirmation Bias – You have your own thoughts, beliefs and values. When you come across information that challenges those thoughts, do you feel uncomfortable? Do you put off digging into them? Do you google information that supports your ideas?

Attribution Bias – Human brains unconsciously correlate actions with value judgements. When people around you use particular language or gestures in a conversation, do you find yourself attributing positive or negative values to that person? Might you make an assumption about their political leanings, personal beliefs or other values?

Gender Bias – You likely hold your own beliefs about gender and gender norms. When you encounter

someone of a particular gender, do you expect them to act, think or perform a certain way? Do you expect different types or levels of performance based on a person's gender?

Age Bias – You've likely also learned to anticipate what a person can do based on their age. If you managed a team, might you expect better/worse performance from a Millennial than you would from a Baby Boomer?

Authority Bias – Your coworker presents an approach that differs from your director's approach. Does the director's perspective carry more weight than that of the employee in an entry-level position?

The Halo Effect – Your team just hired a new employee who appreciates your taste in shoes and offers to bring you a coffee. Are you likely to assume positive things about this person's attitude or work performance?

The Horn Effect – You meet someone for the first time, and they make an insensitive joke. Do you assume negative things about their attitude or work performance?

Did you answer yes to any of these questions? Click below to learn more about bias and how awareness can help you build better relationships—and not just in the workplace.

[Read the full article on Employee Central >](#)

Update personal information in PeopleSoft 9.2

Did you know that you can now update personal information in PeopleSoft 9.2 at any time?

It is a very easy process that only takes a couple of minutes and helps us ensure that our workforce data is up-to-date and accurate. All you have to do is:

Login to PeopleSoft --> Select Employee Self Service (ESS) --> Select Personal Details.

In "Personal Details" you can now update your mailing address (please check for accuracy as this is where your W2 and other important documents are mailed), contact details, emergency contacts, ethnic group, disability status, veteran status, and more.

It is important that you update identifier information (ethnic group, disability status, and veteran status) before the end of the year because annual identifier data for 2022 is pulled on Dec. 31 for Federal reporting efforts. In addition, our own reporting for state programs and grants needs the most accurate data to be successful.

Thank you for taking a moment to make sure that your information is up-to-date before Dec. 31, 2022.

[Update your information on the "Personal Details" tab in PeopleSoft >](#)

Dec. 10, 2022

Breakfast with Santa | Shakamak State Park

Christmas happenings with Santa. Come out to the Group Camp Mess Hall and enjoy pancakes, waffles, eggs, sausage, milk and juice. There will also be crafts, and a visit from Santa!

[More Information >](#)

Christmas at the Bronnberg Home | Mounds State Park

Celebrate Christmas like the pioneers did! Wander through the restored home, discover old Christmas traditions, enjoy treats and cider, and create your own ornament.

[More Information >](#)

Create a Christmas Ornament | Clifty Falls State Park

Come to the Nature Center anytime between 11 a.m. and noon, and make some fun ornaments to hang on your tree at home.

[More Information >](#)

Make and Take Bird-Feeder Ornaments | Chain O'Lakes State Park

Would you like to attract birds to your home this winter and make a fun nature-themed gift to give? Join us in the warm historic Stanley Schoolhouse and make a homemade suet pinecone feeder using basic ingredients.

[More Information >](#)

Winter Photo Scavenger Hunt | Clifty Falls State Park

Stop by the Nature Center to pick up your list and then head out onto the trails to see if you can get a picture of everything. Return to the Nature Center and show us your photos to win a prize!

[More Information >](#)

Winter Workshop: Tree Cookie Ornament | Spring Mill State Park

This is a beginner's wood working workshop that will supply the tools and stencils you need to burn a design into your tree cookie.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 17, 2022

Christmas Carol Clue Hunt Kick-off | Chain O'Lake State Park

[More Information >](#)

Winter Tree ID Hike | Clifty Falls State Park

Meet at Clifty Shelter to go on a 45-minute easy walk to discover how to identify trees without seeing their leaves.

[More Information >](#)

T'was the Hike Before Christmas | Falls of the Ohio State Park

T'was the hike before Christmas, and all through the park, the naturalist led an outing, before it got dark... River level permitting, naturalist Alan Goldstein will lead a hike on the fossil beds. Meets on the deck and moves to the wheelchair turnaround before we head towards Fisherman's Point by hiking through the barren undergrowth.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 21, 2022

Winter Solstice Luminary Walk | Fairfax State Recreation Area

Enjoy a relaxing, luminary-lit walk to celebrate and reflect on the winter solstice. Stops along the ½-mile path will invite you to decorate a tree with wildlife-friendly ornaments, learn about winter solstice traditions, make a candle lantern, stargaze, complete a winter scavenger hunt and more!

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 23, 2022

CCC History Talk: Holiday Edition | Brown County State Park

Come to the upstairs lobby of the Abe Martin Lodge for a chat about the Civilian Conservation Corps! Indiana State Parks have a lot to thank the CCC for, and on Christmas weekend, we'll talk about how the CCC celebrated Christmas!

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 24, 2022

Christmas Eve Morning Walk | Pokagon State Park

Join us for this one-of-a-kind Pokagon tradition! Bundle up and take a self-guided stroll through the wintry landscapes of Pokagon. Along the trail, look for holiday-themed stations that will fill you with the Christmas spirit.

[More Information >](#)

[View all DNR special events >](#)

This Month WITH



Dec. 9-11, 2022

Dec. 16-18, 2022

**Metamora Old Fashioned
Christmas Walk | Whitewater
Canal State Historic Site**

Visit Indiana's Canal Town during one of the prettiest times of the year. Enjoy festive decorations, live music, shopping and more. Visit the Grist Mill to see corn-grinding demonstrations and purchase freshly ground cornmeal to take home.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 10, 2022

Dec. 18, 2022

**Santa's Holiday Breakfast in the
Tea Room | Indiana State Museum**

Experience an elegant buffet breakfast full of holiday nostalgia in the L.S. Ayres Tea Room™. Enjoy live holiday music and décor. Plus, children will receive a special holiday gift from Santa's helpers and may choose a surprise from the toy chest! Reservations are required and space is filling up fast!

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 13, 2022

**Snowflake Pajama Party | Indiana
State Museum**

Explore Celebration Crossing during a night full of fun just for the little ones at the Indiana State Museum. Take a ride on our Snowfall Express and see woodland animals preparing for wintertime. Get a special photo moment and one free printed photo with Santa.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 14-16, 2022

**Holiday Sounds | Indiana State
Museum**

Enjoy the sounds of the season in a spectacular holiday atmosphere as school and community choirs, bands, ensembles and soloists perform holiday music in the Great Hall.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 16, 2022

Dec. 23, 2022

Dec. 30, 2022

**Magical Mornings | Indiana State
Museum**

During this early-opening hour for families with young children, visit with Santa, engage in two interactive story times with North Pole elves, experience Santa's Front Yard, check out the interactive Reindeer Barn to learn more about these four-legged wintery friends, plus take a ride on the Snowfall Express through a winter wonderland!

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 17, 2022

**Home for the Holidays in
Vincennes | Vincennes State
Historic Site**

Discover holiday traditions from the bygone days during this family-friendly program. Adults will join local historian Richard Day to learn about holiday customs of early Vincennes – including traditions of the early French settlers, American settlers and German immigrants.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 17-18, 2022

**Krampusnacht | Culbertson
Mansion State Historic Site**

Naughty or nice? Find out during our annual Krampusnacht – a night with Krampus, the mythical holiday beast. Join the ghouls from "Literally, A Haunted House" to find out if you've made the naughty or nice list during this holly, jolly – and horrifying! – holiday haunt in the mansion's Carriage House.

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 21, 2022

**The Spirits of Christmas - Victorian
Ghost Stories | Culbertson
Mansion State Historic Site**

Join the popular Victorian tradition of sharing ghost stories during the holidays with Friends of Culbertson Mansion. Listen to tales of spirits during an evening of storytelling by the fireplace in the formal parlor while sipping hot chocolate and enjoying traditional Twelfth Cake near the sparkling holiday tree.

[More Information >](#)

[View all Indiana State
Museum and Historic
Sites events >](#)

This Month WITH



WHITE RIVER STATE PARK
INDY'S URBAN ESCAPE

Dec. 10, 2022

Red Nose Romp | Indiana State Museum Lawn

Grab your family and friends, and get to Indy's most festive Holiday Race: The Red Nose Romp in beautiful Downtown Indianapolis! This race is gleaming with cheer as we have Christmas Carols playing throughout the course and at the start/finish!

[More Information >](#)

Dec. 18, 2022

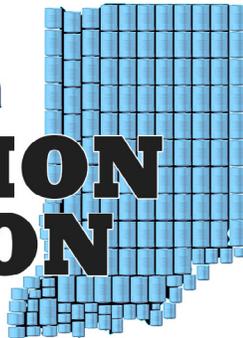
Santa Hustle | Celebration Plaza

Let's get comfy and cozy this Christmas season. Join us on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022 at White River State Park for the Santa Hustle® Indy Half Marathon, 5k and Kids Dash.

[More information >](#)

[View all White River State Park events >](#)

2023 State of Indiana **CANSTRUCTION COMPETITION**



It's almost time to bust out those Canstruction hard hats and to start thinking about the 2023 Canstruction competition.

What is Canstruction?

Canstruction is a structural design competition and a canned food drive in one! We pit agency against agency looking for the most creative design made entirely of donated cans. And most importantly, it's a fun and creative way to help food pantries restock their shelves after the holidays! With a little bit of creativity — and a lot of canned goods — state employees CAN make a difference in their communities.

Registration for the 2023 Canstruction competition will open on Jan. 3, 2023. The time to collect and create your Canstruction masterpiece is Jan. 17-31, 2023.

Look for more information coming soon!



2022 Canstruction "Best Structure" winners, the Indiana State Fair Commission.

MICROSOFT 365 LEARNING

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend the Fall Learning Conference in person and virtually. If you were not able to attend, most training sessions are available in SuccessFactors Learning. Simply search for "Fall Learning", the title of the training you are looking for, or the name of the Microsoft Tool. Direct links to trainings and more information can be found at the [WorkSmart 365 page](#).

For more information on available trainings and resources, contact Elisa Phillips at ephillips@iot.in.gov.



(Continued from [page 1](#))

State employees celebrate milestones at the Governor's Long-Term Employee Reception

when INDOT was still called the Indiana Highway Commission. He recalls, "In June of 1968 after high school graduation, I signed up for the Indiana Highway Technician Program at the Purdue Fort Wayne Campus. After completing this program in August, I went to work in the Fort Wayne Construction Department on an asphalt resurface contract."

"At that time, I thought I was in the right place to start a career, and as



it turns out I was." After 50 years with the state, Barlow cites having the ability work outside most of the time and to

Chuck Coffin, Office of the Inspector General celebrates 50 years of service.

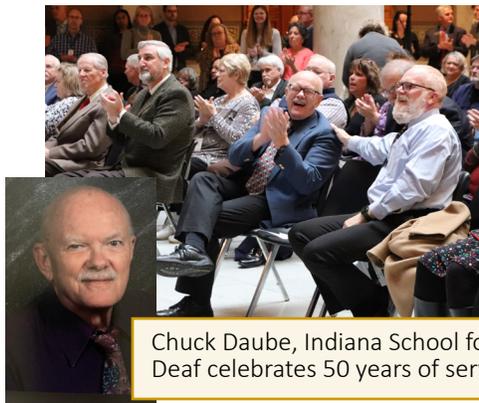
work with great people as the main reason for his many years of service.

Coffin, when reflecting on his fondest memories in the last 50 years, also cites relationships with his teammates: "Collectively, the fondest memories from a half a century are based on relationships with coworkers as well as experiences with the public, business, and other branches of government." He continues, "Another type of most rewarding memories has been guiding fellow employees with personal development that helped the person grow personally and professionally."

Coffin likewise shares that he's had ample opportunities for personal and professional development, both in soft skills and through formal education. These development opportunities, and subsequent opportunities for advancement, were a huge motivating factor for him.

Daube, too, has dedicated his career to education and development at ISD. "I'll never forget my first day at the Indiana School for the Deaf," Daube shares. "Even though I didn't know sign language yet, I was welcomed warmly by the staff and students." Now, having earned his master's in Deaf Education and having served as a teacher, guidance counselor, coordinator and the Academic Bowl Coach, he's only recently retired from ISD—or at least he tried to. He shares, "Even though I have officially retired from full-time teaching at ISD, I continue to substitute teach because I love being around the Deaf students and my colleagues. I still learn so much from them every day."

While we're astounded by the accomplishments of each of these



Chuck Daube, Indiana School for the Deaf celebrates 50 years of service.



Governor Holcomb (left) with Keith Beesley (right), Indiana State Personnel Department celebrating 45 years of service.

team members and the other 243 employees, with whom we're celebrating 9000+ combined years of service, we're equally proud of the enduring work culture that's inspired such dedication from individuals like these.

Each of these employees' hard work, dedication and enduring commitment to our fellow Hoosiers exemplifies what it means to be a public servant, and we are grateful for their continued contributions to the State of Indiana.

In the future, we look forward to inviting you and your colleagues to GLTER celebrations as you mark your own long-term employment milestones! Thank you for all you do each and every day, and for your dedication to providing great government service.

[View or download high quality photos of the reception >](#)

(Continued from [page 14](#))

State Museum's tree gets a new look

The 92 County Tree has been a staple of the state museum since 2008. At the time, the three-stories-tall tree was decorated with a combination of ornaments created by artists or purchased through local historical societies.

"The ultimate goal is to represent all 92 counties," Vice President of Experience Adam DeKemper said. "We're the Indiana State Museum; we're not the Indianapolis State Museum, so we want to have people from Indiana come in to enjoy the holiday season and have their county represented on this tree just like they're represented on the building's exterior with the 92 sculptures."

Article submitted by the Indiana State Museum



Allen County ornament



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM?

TELL US HOW YOU *REALLY* FEEL ABOUT CHILD SUPPORT.

- ✓ Your responses are anonymous
- ✓ Your opinion matters
- ✓ We want to know how we can improve

TAKE THE SURVEY



★ State office holiday closures

Washington's Birthday Friday December 23, 2022*
Saturday December 24, 2022**

Christmas Day ★ Sunday December 25, 2022**
Monday December 26, 2022*

*For operations regularly scheduled Monday – Friday.

** For operations regularly scheduled on Saturday/Sunday





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Take Care of Your Relationships

Did you know that taking care of your relationships may be just as important for your long-term health as genetics, exercise or diet¹? Below are some key steps to strengthen your bond with the people you love:

- Open, honest, two-way communication
- Making important decisions as a team
- Enjoying activities together or just hanging out
- Listening without judgment
- Supporting each other's goals or hobbies
- You're there for each other in good and tough times

Wellness Webinar Series



Let's get real about relationships: We humans are social creatures for the most part. Being connected to people around us is a big part of our well-being. In this session, we'll discuss the art of communicating. And ways to build better connections.

December 13, 2022 | 10:00 AM, 12:30 PM and 4:30 PM, ET
<http://go.activehealth.com/wellness-webinars>

1. The Harvard Gazette, "Good Genes Are Nice, But Joy Is Better," April 11, 2017.

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/04/over-nearly-80-years-harvard-study-has-been-showing-how-to-live-a-healthy-and-happy-life/>



Coach's corner

with **Coach Sarah, BA**

Sarah has a BA in health and kinesiology and is a certified health coach and weight loss specialist through the American Council on Exercise. She enjoys helping people make their plan to living a healthy life easy. Her way of thinking is "One size does not fit all. Each journey is a collaborative effort."

Sarah's well-being tips:

One way to make your relationships stronger is to spend time together. During the hectic holidays, take a breather. Try these tips to relax and reconnect with the people you care about most²:

- Game night: play cards, trivia, board games or multi-player video games together
- Go for a hike and snap photos of scenery
- Listen to a mystery audiobook together and discuss
- Stay in and cook a pot of stew or veggie chili



Chicken Tinga Bowls with Zucchini & Brown Rice

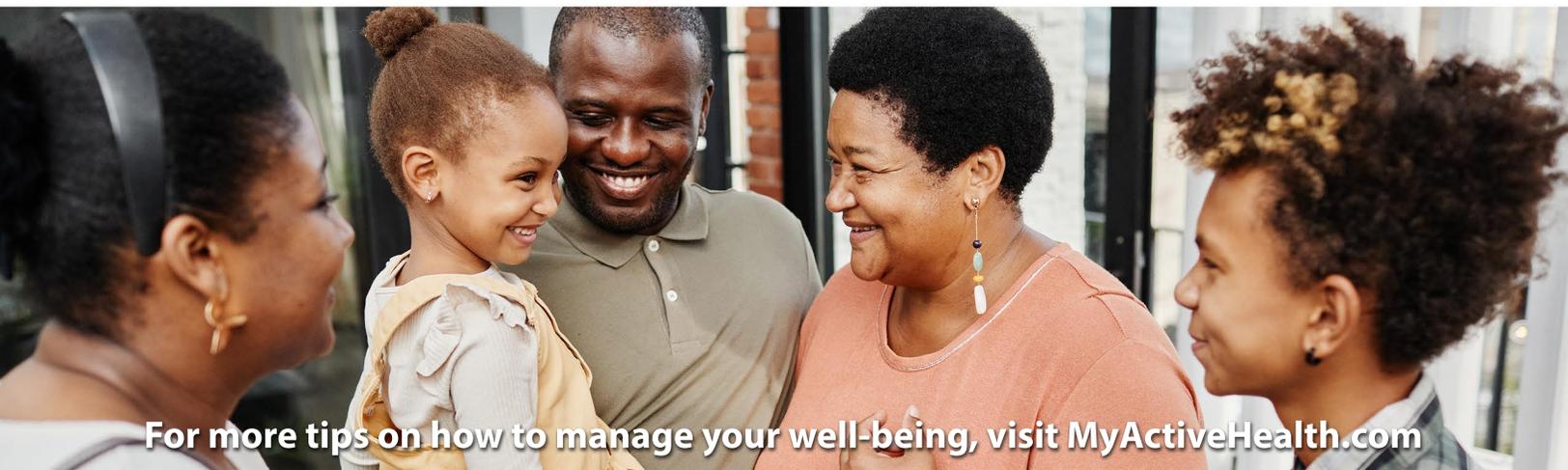
Hearty, slightly spicy chicken stewed with colorful veggies and filling brown rice is the perfect way to warm up on cold winter nights. Serve up a bowl to your loved ones or better yet, cook it together.

[MyActiveHealth.com](https://www.myactivehealth.com/resources/learning-center) > [Resources](#) > [Learning Center](#).

Non-verbal cues matter

Good communication is more than just the words you say. Take a moment to think about non-verbal cues when you're having a discussion³:

- Make eye contact often. Don't scroll your phone or fold laundry while you're talking or listening. Give them your full attention.
- Keep your body stance open. Don't fold your arms in front of you like a barrier.
- Avoid angry, defensive body language like pointing your finger, waving your arms or eye-rolling.
- Try to stay calm and still. Don't wiggle in your seat or move around the room. This makes it seem like you're bored or want to cut off the conversation and leave. Listen with respect and patience.



For more tips on how to manage your well-being, visit [MyActiveHealth.com](https://www.myactivehealth.com)

2. VeryWellMind, "17 Fun Things to Do as a Couple," January 24, 2022. <https://www.verywellmind.com/fun-things-couples-can-do-together-3129598#toc-relax-together>

3. National Council for Mental Wellbeing, "6 Ways to Improve Your Non-Verbal Communication Skills," June 18, 2018. <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/external/2018/06/6-ways-to-improve-your-non-verbal-communication-skills/>



INDIANA PACERS



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GAMES



DEC. 18
5:00PM



DEC. 31
3:00PM

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BALCONY LEVEL: **STARTING AT \$28.60**

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Questions? Contact Christian Evans as (317) 917-2766 or email cevans@pacers.com

