Diversity in Ag Day opens doors for Hoosier students

For many in the Hoosier Heartland, the idea that an Indiana kid could grow up without ever seeing a cow – or any other typical barnyard inhabitant – in person probably sounds “udderly” ridiculous.

But for students in largely urban areas, that’s often the case, and those kids may never know the disparate and far-reaching careers that could await them in the (sometimes literal) agricultural field simply by virtue of having never learned much about it. A newly-developed program by the office of Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch is hoping to help change that by spreading the message that careers in agriculture are profitable, enjoyable, plentiful, and perhaps most importantly, available.

“In urban areas, particularly, agriculture often falls by the wayside when career discussions are taking place,” Crouch said in a news release. “This is something we want to change and hope that today’s experience will inspire these students to think about pursuing a career in this field.”

That “experience” was the second annual “Diversity in Agriculture Day” at the Indiana State Fair – a program that is planting the seeds that will help grow some of the state’s future agricultural leaders by giving students a firsthand look at how ag careers continue to help shape the future of Indiana.

(Continued on page 2)
Diversity in Ag Day opens doors for Hoosier students

Planting seeds
There couldn’t be a more perfect location to extol the virtues of agriculture than the Indiana State Fair.

From livestock exhibitions to interactive exhibits, the annual celebration is a love letter to the state’s past, present, and future agricultural presence.

But there’s far more to the industry than the work in the fields. In fact, agriculture in 2019 is home to a range of careers including scientists, salespeople, educators, technicians, legal experts, business professionals and many, many more. None may be the first career that springs to mind when one thinks of the farming industry, but that’s a testament to its diversity.

Approximately 200 students were able to see the array of ag-related jobs, duties, and responsibilities for themselves when they traveled to the fairgrounds Aug. 14. While there, they heard from ag professionals, other students, and educators, who explained how jobs they may never have known existed could someday open up all new doors for them.

Bruce Kettler, Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) director, dared the students to dream. He asked them to open their minds, tossing aside any preconceived notions. If there were such assumptions, they likely didn’t last long. The students and adult chaperones were quickly broken into groups for a fairgrounds tour unlike any other.

Around the ‘world’ in a day
Students from Batesville High School, Christel House Academy, Southport High School, Arsenal Tech High School, Perry Meridian High School, and the Evansville Boys and Girls Club petted and fed livestock, tried their hands at a virtual reality farming game, visited the Indiana Grown store, and heard from several ag experts along the way.

One of the most popular locations (and not just because it was air conditioned) was the Indiana Department of Natural Resources building. There the visiting students learned about invasive species, marveled at a variety of freshwater fish, and even had the opportunity to pet a black rat snake.

Interpretive naturalist Amy Hellon had the honor of showcasing the serpent, which seemed to draw approximately equal amounts of fascination and muted terror from the visiting students – and other passersby.

Hellon has worked for DNR for only a few months, but she’s greatly enjoying her career, particularly due to the opportunity her job gives her to share her love of nature and conservation. In this case, she had the chance to do so with some students who were eager to learn more.

Similarly, Kaitlyn Young has been part of the DNR team at Turkey Run and Shades State Park only since May, but she’s been interested in the work since her time at Purdue University.

“I’ve always been passionate about conservation,” said Young. “I hope I can inspire others in our state to think about careers in conservation.”

It was fitting that students spent some time in the DNR building, as agency staff were integral in bringing the Diversity in Ag program to fruition.

DNR Customer Service Center events manager Shelley Reeves worked as the contact between Lt. Gov. Crouch’s office and the State Fair in 2018 and 2019. It’s been satisfying, fulfilling work for her.

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Diversity in Ag Day opens doors for Hoosier students

“I was really glad to be part of it,” she said.

Living history
The trip around the fairgrounds also introduced students to Stanley Madison, founder of the Lyles Station Historic Preservation Corporation. Madison gave the students a brief history lesson on Lyles Station, a Gibson County farming community founded by free African Americans prior to the Civil War.

There was also time for fun. A virtual reality game allowed kids to plant and water seeds, while another video game put them in the driver’s seat of a tractor. When they returned from the tour, the students learned how to make pico de gallo using fresh ingredients. Chef Tony of Eskenazi Health led students in the creation of their salsa.

Room to grow
Lieutenant Gov. Suzanne Crouch created the program via a partnership between ISDA and the Indiana State Fair in 2018. She spoke to students following the tour, keynoting for a small group of speakers hoping to spark something new in the “city kids” who got a real taste of Hoosier ag in a short amount of time.

“We wanted these students to know that you don’t have to grow up on a farm to work in agriculture,” Crouch said. “There are so many careers to choose from—good paying, high-tech jobs—and what better place to learn about those than the great Indiana State Fair?”

Myron McClure knows a thing or two about those jobs. The assistant director of student recruitment and retention for the Purdue University College of Agriculture, McClure sought to inspire the students by talking about his roots in Los Angeles and how agriculture created new opportunities for him. He hopes the same will happen for a group of Indiana kids who got their first look at an industry that continues to fuel “The Crossroads of America.”

McClure’s thoughts echoed those of ISDA director Kettler.

“My hope is that in the future someone from this group will be standing where I am now,” he said, “encouraging the next generation of future agriculture leaders in the state.”

Education was a major component of the event, which sought not only to encourage children to think about a future in an ag-related field, but also to understand a bit about its history in the Hoosier State. From vintage farm equipment to real-life Hoosier-grown produce, the literal fruits (and veggies) of Indiana farm labor were difficult to miss. The Indiana Grown Marketplace was a popular stop on the tour as well. With home-brewed coffee, popcorn, and even the famous Albanese gummy bears stocking the shelves, students could see for themselves just how many food products are made in Indiana. And that, of course, doesn’t include numerous other goods like candles, soap, and body products.
Family, friends, fun run through 2019 5K/hike series

At only 10-months-old, William Thompson was certainly in the running to be the youngest participant in this year’s Run the State 5K events at Fort Harrison State Park.

What people may not know about William (who slept through at least some of the run, pushed along at a brisk pace in his stroller by his father John) is that the Aug. 17 race was actually his second visit to the park.

“He was here last year, too,” Mom Betsy Thompson joked as the family of four posed for a photo. “He just wasn’t in the pictures.”

William was still a couple months away from being born in August 2018 when Betsy, John, and their elder son Henry (now 6) ran and walked the 3.1 mile course at the treasured Hoosier state park. Betsy, a program coordinator for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) Office of Air Quality, and John, an employee of the Johnson County Highway Department, are making getting out and getting moving a regular activity for their family.

The Run the State series fits that bill nicely, and looks to be part of the family’s fitness agenda in the springs and summers to come.

“We did three or four [Run the State] runs last year,” said John. “We really enjoyed it.”

The family has previously been part of Run the State events at Turkey Run State Park and Clifty Falls State Park as well, but the grand finale to the 2019 series was anything but old hat; if anything it was yet more feathers in the caps of a family focused on staying well.

“The family has previously been part of Run the State events at Turkey Run State Park and Clifty Falls State Park as well, but the grand finale to the 2019 series was anything but old hat; if anything it was yet more feathers in the caps of a family focused on staying well.

“From a personal standpoint, I want to stay as active as I can,” John said.

The Thompsons are showing that the family that runs together has fun together, and that appeared to be a common trend at Fort Harrison. As an approaching storm threatened to dampen the festivities a bit, several dozen state employees, their families, friends, and more than a few dogs tackled the course at any pace they chose. Some pushed themselves to improve their times while others turned the 5K into an extended summer morning walk. There was no wrong way to be part of the pair of 5Ks, which, along with the series’ previous events, married some of the Hoosier State’s finest state parks with a popular fitness activity.

“I’d love to be part of even more,” said Indiana State Board of Accounts Chief of Staff Matt Light. “I try to do as many 5Ks as I can.”

Light was among the first finishers in the 8:30 a.m. iteration of the 5K, crossing the finish line with a small group of men and women who ran all – or nearly all – of the course.

The fastest finisher was a retired carpenter from Muncie, who visited the park that morning and decided to join the fun. The 5K itself was nothing new for Chet Paskiewicz, an avid runner with nearly two dozen Ironman triathlons to his credit. A triathlon involves completing a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bicycle ride, and a 26.2-mile marathon – all in the same day.

Nurse Practitioner Tammy Lightner accompanied Paskiewicz and was the first female participant to finish the race. Though not employees of the state of Indiana, Paskiewicz

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Family, friends fun run through 2019 5K/hike series

and Lightner praised the Run the State series as a positive way to keep employees engaged in their individual wellness journeys.

Nick and Sarah Staller were another couple who didn’t waste time on the trail Saturday morning.

The Stallers said they are not regular runners, but both enjoy sports and outdoor activities. Sarah jokingly defined their completion times as simply “fine” in this year’s event.

Sarah works for Elements Financial while Nick, who enjoys playing basketball recreationally, is section chief for the IDEM Office of Land Quality. This was the third year in a row they finished the course at Fort Harrison.

“IT was a good way to start the Saturday off with a good workout,” Nick said.

Those sorts of Saturdays are already the norm for Pu Han, an IT project manager for the Indiana State Department of Health. Like the Thompsons, Han has been part of previous Run the State events at Clifty Falls and Fort Harrison. She hopes to add Turkey Run to the list at some point in the future.

Han’s precocious companion Aug. 17 was Bruno, an energetic Labrador retriever who appeared to be as excited as any other participant – four legs or two – on race day. Bruno was part of a caravan of canines of all shapes and sizes who joined their human family members for a jaunt around the park.

Exploring the parks is a goal of each Run the State event as the Hoosier State is home to some of the nation’s most beautiful nature preserves. Venetta Keefe, an Indiana Department of Transportation employee for more than 20 years, said she thinks hosting the series in state parks incentivizes employees to show up. There is always so much to do.

“It’s a great way for the state to promote the state parks,” said Keefe.

To that end, this year’s series visited the previously mentioned Clifty Falls and Turkey Run State Parks, while also making stops at Indiana Dunes and Angel Mounds State Historic Site. The weather wasn’t always cooperative (a snowstorm threatened Dunes runners, while a heat advisory made Turkey Run a sweltering affair), but the many who joined the events this season proved that fun can be had anywhere in Indiana – and in any sort of weather.

All it takes is setting aside an hour or two for a Saturday in the park. Venetta Keefe thinks the benefits are more than worth it.

“It’s not really about the time,” Keefe said. “It’s about your health.”

Story by Brent Brown
Indiana State Personnel Department
LaPorte Juvenile Correctional Facility takes ‘Step Up Your Game’ steps challenge crown

After three months, four rounds, and many thousands of steps, a winner in the latest steps challenge has finally been crowned.

After the literal and proverbial dust had cleared, it was the team at LaPorte Juvenile Correctional Facility who took top honors in the inaugural “Step Up Your Game” challenge. Round 4 concluded late last month and saw the remaining 14 squads compete in a leaderboard challenge.

To come out on top, LJCF racked up an average of more than 360,000 steps per competitor, outpacing the second place Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS) who collected in excess of 285,000 steps per person, on average.

The rest of the field didn’t go down without a fight, with the three lowest finishers in the top 10 ending up separated by only about 10,000 steps per person.

The marathon event began in May and continued throughout the summer. Some rounds pitted agencies toe-to-toe while others tallied the steps to stand atop a leaderboard.

Bragging rights were on the line, of course, but the most important goal of the program was to create a fun way for state employees to get their steps in on a daily basis.

Check out the top 10 from the final Round 4 standings below, along with the average number of steps per person.

1. LaPorte Juvenile Correctional Facility – 360,137
2. Indiana Public Retirement System – 286,516
3. Plainfield Correctional Facility – 255,072
4. Indiana Department of Correction Parole Division – 225,593
5. Indiana Utility Consumer Counselor – 186,023
6. Indiana Department of Labor – 179,293
7. Indiana Department of Insurance – 159,548
8. Office of the Indiana Attorney General – 155,211
9. Indiana Department of Transportation – 146,473
10. Rockville Correctional Facility – 145,057

Last month to finish your premium discount for 2020. Finish strong!

September 30, 2019 is the deadline to complete one of the four activities to earn the premium discount for 2020. Remember, both covered employees and spouses must each fully complete one of the designated activities by September 30, 2019 to earn any amount of premium discount for 2020. If only the employee or only the spouse on a family plan completes an activity, no premium discount will be awarded.

Use the ActiveHealth portal Rewards center to check your progress. Find the “Your Premium Reduction Incentive” section and verify that it shows “1 Activity Complete” for both covered employees and spouses.

There are still opportunities to earn e-gift cards for completing your health assessment and biometric screening. Make sure to complete your health assessment in the ActiveHealth portal by November 30 to earn a $50 e-gift card. Biometric screening results also need to be loaded into your ActiveHealth portal by November 30, in order to earn the $100 e-gift card. Please note, it can take up to four weeks for biometric results to be loaded into your ActiveHealth portal. If you cannot attend a worksite biometric screening, there are two other ways to complete your biometric screening. You can complete a physical with your primary care physician or schedule a screening through Quest Diagnostics. For detailed instructions, check out the Biometric Screening Guide found on InvestInYourHealthIndiana.com.

All e-gift cards must be redeemed by December 31, 2019. Don’t miss out on your opportunity to take advantage of this reward!
The importance of staying mindful

Everyone needs a break, and when that time comes, it’s important to make the most of it.

Check out this information from ActiveHealth Management to learn how staying mindful can make your getaway relaxing, memorable, and stress free.

**Remind yourself to be fully present**
So often, you go on vacation to get a break from your busy schedules and daily routines.

But being on vacation can sometimes create more stress and chaos than peace of mind. That’s why practicing mindfulness is key. Just remind yourself to be fully present. Soak in each and every moment — whether it’s with your loved ones or just yourself. You’ll make your time off more enjoyable. And more memorable, too.

**What is mindfulness?**
It’s paying full attention to what’s happening with an attitude of openness and curiosity.

Even on vacation, you could find yourself focusing on something in the past or in the future. Maybe it’s something related to money or work. Mindfulness can be a powerful way to help you get back to where you are and what you’re doing and feeling.

**Here are some tips for staying mindful.**
- Ditch your devices! Unplug and free yourself from emails and social media.
- Have a real conversation. Be fully engaged when speaking with someone.
- Drop the “to-do” list. Relax! Let go of all expectations and keep it simple.
- Make time to meditate. Use this time to explore and create other healthy habits, too.
- Tune in. Be aware of the sights, sounds, and smells of everything around you.
- Focus on the positive. Notice when you feel love, gratitude, or joy, and linger in those moments.

*Note: This information is general in nature. It is not meant to replace the advice or care you may receive from your doctor or other healthcare professionals. If you have specific healthcare needs, or would like more complete health information, please see your doctor or other healthcare provider.*
2019 Information Resources Use Agreement training

Beginning September 4, 2019, the state of Indiana will refresh its workforce on the acceptable use of technology. The Information Resources Use Agreement (IRUA) is an important policy that, when adhered to by state employees and contractors, safeguards confidential citizen data. The content of the IRUA is so critical that a training module has been developed on each component of the agreement. Only after taking the training and thoroughly understanding the material will state workers be able to “accept” the agreement. After rollout on Sept. 4, employees will have until Sept. 25 to complete this mandatory training.

Workers will be automatically enrolled and can begin accepting the agreement on Sept. 4 by following these steps.

Additional resources pertaining to locating and completing the IRUA training may be found here: https://www.in.gov/iot/IRUA.htm

Deadline for Adult Promise Grant approaching

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education is accepting applications for the second Indiana Adult Promise Grant, but the Sept. 9 deadline is swiftly approaching.

The grants, funded by the Lumina Foundation, are designed to pilot, expand, and enhance promising practices for supporting adult learners at Indiana’s colleges and universities.

The goal of the Indiana Adult Promise Grant is to significantly increase the number of adult Hoosiers with a postsecondary credential by developing easy-to-use resources and sharing best practices to serve adult learners. In determining the organizations or institutions potentially receiving the grant, preference will be given to providers who are participating in the state’s “adult promise” financial aid program, the Workforce Ready Grant.

“The Indiana Adult Promise Grant is one way we can help move the state closer to reaching Indiana’s big goal of 60 percent of Hoosiers with a quality postsecondary degree or credential by 2025,” said Teresa Lubbers, Indiana’s Commissioner for Higher Education. “We cannot reach that goal without focusing on Indiana’s population of credential-seeking adult learners as part of our efforts.”

Proposals will be accepted from organizations intending to develop or expand new or existing programs and services that address the needs of adult learners on Indiana’s postsecondary campuses.

Eligible organizations include Indiana institutions that administer state financial aid and community-based organizations focused on educational attainment.

The maximum award amount is $50,000 and the grant period will end March 2020.

See the Request for Proposal and full details here.
The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) in August announced that Zionsville resident Jay Chaudhary, J.D., will serve as the next director of the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA).

Chaudhary (pronounced CHAW-dree) begins his new role Sept. 9. He replaces Kevin Moore, who retired in April after 35 years of state service. FSSA also announced Rachel Halleck will serve as DMHA deputy director and the division's chief of staff.

“We are excited to welcome Jay and Rachel to continue to build on the momentum of DMHA in serving Hoosiers in a more comprehensive and evidence-based manner,” said FSSA Secretary Jennifer Walthall, M.D., M.P.H. “Jay is a committed patient advocate and expert on innovative system design in mental health and addiction. His willingness to serve as DMHA director couldn’t have come at a better time as Indiana focuses on integrated care and improved health outcomes.”

Chaudhary is currently the managing attorney for Indiana Legal Services where he’s served in several key positions including Midtown Medical Legal Partnership’s founding director. In his current role, Chaudhary focuses on improving health outcomes by addressing the individual and systemic legal needs of Hoosiers with mental health and substance use disorder. He is a graduate of Ball State University and the Indiana University Maurer School of Law.

Halleck, who lives in Indianapolis, is a licensed mental health counselor and a licensed addiction counselor who most recently served as the senior director of behavioral health strategy and innovation for Volunteers of America Ohio and Indiana. She completed her undergraduate education at Hanover College where she was named Distinguished Psychology Student of the Year. Halleck earned a master’s degree in clinical psychology from the University of Indianapolis.

“After a comprehensive and competitive national search, we couldn’t be more pleased that we found such a dynamic leadership duo right in our own backyard,” added Secretary Walthall. “Jay and Rachel both possess the invaluable combination of great talent and the desire to serve others. I have no doubt they will deliver on Governor Holcomb’s direction to attack the drug epidemic through prevention, treatment and enforcement.”
SAP SuccessFactors scheduled quarterly maintenance

SAP SuccessFactors has scheduled quarterly maintenance planned for Saturday, Sept. 7 from midnight to 6 a.m. ET.

During this time, SuccessFactors will experience brief interruptions in service that could impact state of Indiana employees. Users attempting to access SuccessFactors during this time will receive a scheduled maintenance notification page if the system is unavailable. Some of the quarterly maintenance includes new enhancements and fixes that will impact various roles within the state, including:

**Recruiters**
- Recruiters will be able to perform actions on job postings directly from the Job Posting Table
- Recruiting Posting’s autoposting feature will help accelerate the posting process by creating a job board rule based on job requisition fields.
- Additional job boards have been added for future consideration to automatically post to.

**Agency HR/Hiring Managers/Recruiters**
- The Job Requisition Audit Trail will be enhanced to provide more detailed information about the requisition.

**Additional information and training materials are being developed and/or are being updated to reflect these changes within SuccessFactors.**

Women’s suffrage celebrated on Women’s Equality Day

Equality is defined as the concept of being equal, but what that actually looks like is unique to the individual.

It is easy to take the concept of equality for granted, forgetting that not all rights, accesses, and privileges were originally equal to all— and still aren’t today.

The United States celebrated Women’s Equality Day Aug. 26. This day is dedicated to commemorating annually the 1920 adoption of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which prohibits states and federal governments from denying U.S. citizens the right to vote on the basis of sex.

This was a long-fought battle for social, economic, and political reform. When we think about what Women’s Equality Day means, we should think broader than voting. A vote is a voice; it’s your opinion being counted.

Consider the power and weight that our opinions and voices have. Women’s Equality Day serves as a reminder that we can’t take for granted the rights to which we have become accustomed. Someone fought for our voice, and knowing this can serve as fuel for when efforts to make change seem futile.

The pursuit of equality can’t start and stop on Aug. 26. It has to become part of our conversations, plans, and programming. Equality is unique to the individual, but a commitment to using our voices to promote equality for all, supported by all, is universal.

Story by Shayla Pulliam, Indiana State Personnel Department
World Humanitarian Day honors those who gave all in pursuit of equality

How do you define equality?

Often, many of us immediately think “equal,” but beyond just knowing the basic definition, what does equality actually look like? What does it feel like?

What we often miss is that equality is the result of an intentional effort to put people on an equal playing field. Equality is lifting up those who have a societal disadvantage through no fault of their own.

World Humanitarian Day was celebrated around the globe Aug. 19, with the purpose of “advocating for the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers, and for the survival, well-being and dignity of people affected by crises.”

World Humanitarian Day was a day to celebrate those who are self-sacrificing and willing to risk their well-being to ensure there is equality in care. The special day demonstrated to a world divided that it truly is possible to care equally about each person we encounter.

World Humanitarian Day also served as a call to action, imploring us to care, not just about our own safety, security, survival, well-being and dignity, but that of others as well. World Humanitarian Day moves us to think about the fact that some things aren’t guaranteed, and to recognize that there are people who don’t just hang the poster, but actually “become the change they want to see.”

It then becomes more than a mantra, it’s a mission.

If we want equality, we must become humanitarians in our own right, and that means having compassion, being humane, and seeking to promote human welfare.

So, ask yourself, who can you lift up through mentorship, friendship or even a conversation? When we all lift, we can move toward real equality.
### 2019 Employee Assistance Program wellness webinar calendar

View the webinars on demand — anytime, anywhere. Submit a question and receive a response via email. Questions are logged in a FAQ section so you have the ability to browse and learn from the questions of others.

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<td>Workplace relationships</td>
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<td>Support for caregivers</td>
<td>The Sandwich Generation: Meeting the Challenges of Multigenerational Caregiving Available on demand starting Nov 19</td>
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<td>DEC</td>
<td>Creating stronger relationships</td>
<td>Examining Relationships: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Available on demand starting Dec 17</td>
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To view a seminar on demand go to [anthemmap.com](http://anthemmap.com) and enter **State of Indiana**

You’ll find these and other seminars in the Seminars Center.

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