



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

JULY 2023

July is Health & Wellness Month!

Take time to focus on YOUR health and wellness this month.

Your health — whether physical, mental, or emotional — affects you, the people who care about you, and the many areas where your lives are intertwined. So, let's talk about it!

Maintaining or improving your health and wellbeing takes intention, time, and energy. So, when you're ready to invest in your health, the Invest In Your Health program is here with resources to help you make the most of your investment.

So, what is Health & Wellness Month?

Health & Wellness Month is a time to focus on your personal health, set goals and make changes to improve your overall wellness, and to connect you with the resources available through the Invest in Your Health program that can help you achieve your goals.

What to expect

Each Monday in July you'll receive an email from the Invest In Your Health program with information on a specific health topic along with resources you can use to improve related aspects of your health and wellness.

[Learn more about Health & Wellness Month](#)



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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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Governor's Public Service Achievement Award returns to honor exemplary state employees

Governor Eric J. Holcomb announced on June 28, that his administration will reintroduce the Governor's Public Service Achievement Awards. The awards were first established in 2005 by Governor Mitch Daniels and are the highest recognition for exceptional public service among State of Indiana employees and teams. They celebrate those who have made a significant and positive impact on their agency's finances, operations, or the communities they serve.

"Indiana state employees serve as our number one resource, assisting citizens all across our great state," Governor Holcomb said. "It's important to acknowledge their meaningful ongoing contributions, which in turn inspires others to hear the call and strive for excellence in service to others. I always look forward to the opportunity to show

just how proud I really am of these exceptional public servants."

Governor Holcomb will publicly acknowledge awardees for their outstanding contributions in a special ceremony, and individual award winners will receive up to \$1,000 in recognition of their exceptional achievements. Agency Heads or designated representatives are encouraged to submit nominations by August 1, 2023. To be eligible, nominees must have started their full-time employment before January 1, 2023, and still be employed by the state at the time the award is announced.

[Click here for more information](#)

Artwork below by Tracy Jones (Indiana Department of Administration)



Artwork below by Cathy Draeger-Williams (Indiana Department of Natural Resources)



6th Annual Auditor & Investigator Conference



Hosted by the Office of Inspector General

June 8, 2023, 1 – 4:30 p.m.

Indiana Government Center South Auditorium

The conference will have content geared towards Indiana state government auditors and investigators, and there is no cost. This year's speakers are from the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Inspector General, the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office, the State Comptroller's Office, and the Indiana office of Inspector General.

Seating is limited, so register today!

Indiana Prosecuting Attorney's Council 50th year

The Indiana Prosecuting Attorney Council (IPAC) started with only five attorneys in 1973 but has now expanded to a team of 20 individuals. The team aids the 91 prosecuting attorneys in the state by creating manuals, conducting legal research and organizing training seminars. The council acts as a bridge between local, state, and federal agencies, study commissions, and community groups to promote law enforcement and ensure justice is administered fairly. As they mark their 50th anniversary this year, there is much for them to celebrate!

The IPAC organization conducts two annual conferences, one in June and one in December, providing training and legal education to prosecuting attorneys. This summer, they held a three-day conference in Fort Wayne, attended by over 150 people. The conference had an impressive lineup of speakers from both local and national levels, discussing various topics including digital evidence processing and better ways to

serve domestic violence victims. In honor of this milestone, the speakers were presented with a special challenge coin designed by Erica Dobbs, featuring the 50th-year IPAC logo. Attendees enjoyed a 70s-themed reception during the June conference. Additional 50th-year programming is planned for the upcoming winter conference.

In discussing his vision for IPAC's future, Executive Director Chris Naylor, who has been with the organization for a decade, highlighted their ongoing efforts to support and provide resources for Indiana's prosecuting attorneys. Specifically, they plan to address the current challenges these attorneys face in terms of workload and compensation. Naylor emphasized the importance of advocating for increased compensation levels and adding additional team members



to lighten the burdens faced by the underpaid and overworked young prosecuting council.

IPAC takes pride in the work and resources they provide to these individuals, which ultimately contributes to the safety of our communities. We look forward to seeing how IPAC continues to achieve its goals and support our prosecutors.

Article by Rogel Cuevas-Portilla, Indiana State Personnel Department



IPAC's summer conference in Fort Wayne

From athlete to coach: One employee's passion for Special Olympics

Taylor Richardson is a building custodian with the Adjutant General's Office (AGO) and is an active participant in Special Olympics of Indiana. In 2022, Taylor competed in his first Special Olympics at Indiana State University and during the games he competed in shot put, the long jump, the 100-meter dash, and soccer. Taylor placed 5th in the 100 meters and won the bronze medal with his soccer team!

This year Taylor has been participating in the Special Olympics Athlete Leadership University at Butler University and is learning leadership techniques and public speaking skills. While in the program, he has enjoyed networking with business professionals and forming connections with others. Because of the leadership program, Taylor decided to try his hand at coaching at this year's Special Olympics, held at Indiana State University June 16 - 18. Taylor coached the Track and Field team by helping the kids exercise, eat well, and made sure they were where they needed to be. Taylor describes the experience as fun, but exhausting. One athlete he coached came in second in the 50-meter dash!

Comparing the experiences, Taylor enjoyed both, but he plans to go back to competing at next year's games. As a coach, he said the most rewarding part was getting to know the kids, but it was difficult getting them to listen. As an athlete, he enjoys competing against others who may be better than him because it makes him work harder. He said the biggest obstacle to overcome when competing is the "self-doubt and self-critique when you think someone may be better at something than you are."

Taylor is a big advocate for the Special Olympics and would like others to volunteer their time, if they are interested, as the organization really needs volunteers who are going to be dedicated and committed. The AGO is very proud of Taylor and we wish him best of luck in his leadership program and at next year's games!

If you would like to know more about the Special Olympics or volunteer your time, please visit soindiana.org.

To find out more information about the Athlete Leadership University please visit soindiana.org/athlete-leadership.

Article submitted by the Adjutant General's Office.



The Adjutant General, MG Lyles, presenting Taylor with a coin for his accomplishment in 2022.



The Adjutant General, MG Lyles, and Taylor with his bronze medal from 2022.



Taylor with soldiers he met at the 2023 Special Olympics.

Governor's Public Service Summer Interns Update

Every summer, the Indiana State Personnel Department (INSPD) administers the Governor's Public Service Summer Internship program.

This internship program was created in 1989 to introduce bright and motivated college students to the operations and officials of state government. This program provides interns the opportunity to work with state agency officials, as well as participate in co-curricular components to enrich their experience.

This summer, the internship program has hit the floor running and with close to 150 Interns, there are plenty of opportunities for them to connect, serve the community and gain insights into various local government agencies. From meeting Governor Eric J. Holcomb to volunteering at the White River State Park, 2023 interns will have a fulfilling summer learning about state government and gaining valuable work experience. It promises to be a rewarding summer for all involved.

Recently, interns had the privilege of attending a meet and greet with

Governor Holcomb, where they learned about his contributions to the State of Indiana and asked him questions about pursuing a career in public service.

They also had the opportunity to meet Joseph Pinnell, the Deputy Chief and Executive Director of Workforce Engagement. During the event, Pinnell discussed his role for the state and emphasized the significance of equity, inclusion, and opportunity. The purpose of this event was to provide interns with a chance to network with peers from various agencies and connect with Indiana State House employees who are passionate about their work. It is highly recommended that interns make the most of these opportunities to discover what makes the State of Indiana exceptional.

Interns also had the opportunity to step outside of the office and participate in volunteering activities at White River State Park. They helped clean up the Urban Wilderness Trail, which is a vast oasis spanning over 250 acres in the heart of downtown Indianapolis. It was a great bonding experience for

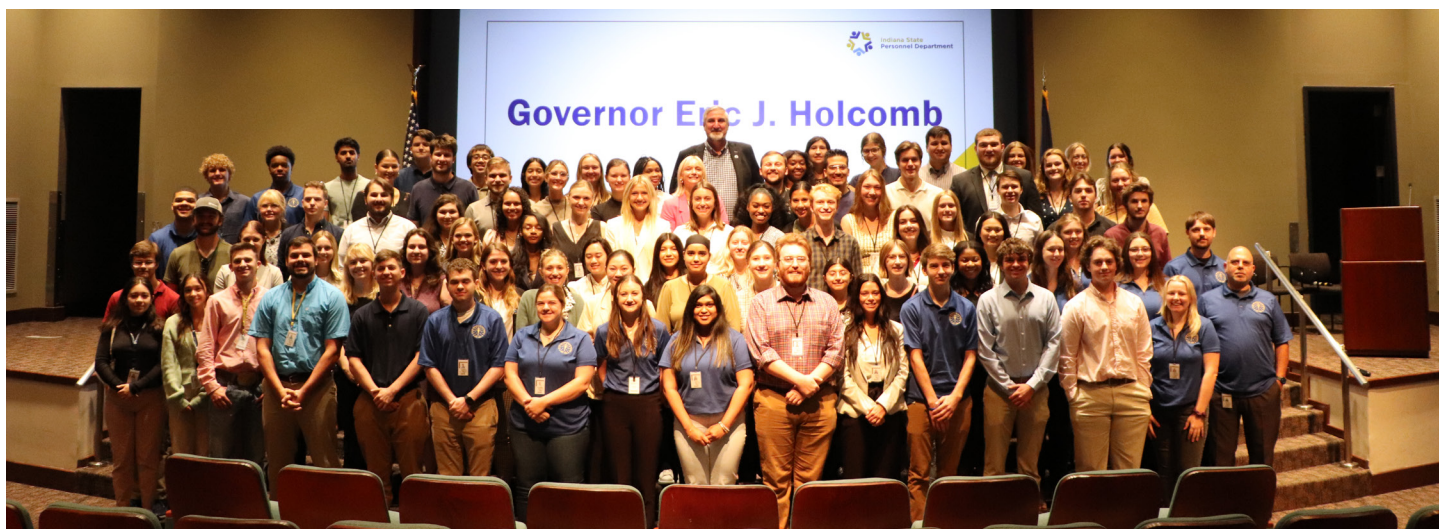


Joseph Pinnell speaking to the interns at the EIO visit.

the interns and their colleagues.

We also have some exciting events lined up for our interns in the coming weeks. They will have the opportunity to attend an Agency Leadership Panel where they can gain insights from various agency leaders about working for the state and receive valuable advice. Additionally, they can look forward to a question-and-answer session with Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch, where they will learn about her journey toward public service. Lastly, we have organized a

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Interns with Governor Eric J. Holcomb

BMV honored with three AAMVA awards in 2023

AAMVA (American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators) is celebrating 90 years and this year brought a record-breaking number of AAMVA awards submissions. The BMV was honored to be recognized with the following AAMVA awards for 2023:

Service Awards, Community Service for Indiana BMV Tricycles for Underserved Youth.

The BMV held their Branch Manager Meeting in 2022, bringing together talented leaders from throughout the state. This three-day meeting gave attendees an opportunity to learn, share stories, spend time together outside of an office setting, and participate in several team building activities. The most impactful team building activity was building tricycles for underserved children. More than 100 BMV team members had a great time collaborating on this project. When the activity was finished, the associates had assembled 25 tricycles. These were then donated by multiple sponsors and the response from the groups who received them was overwhelming. This event symbolized what the BMV is all about: hard work, problem solving and meeting the needs of those they serve.

Communications Awards, Website for Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles Virtual Breakroom.

The Virtual Breakroom is an innovative and informative internal website that was introduced during the 2020 pandemic. The site was created for employees to stay connected while enjoying engaging activities and content. This includes work anniversaries, puzzles and trivia, branch and central office news, and cooking and travel tips. It has served a great purpose, sharing both pertinent, and fun information

with branch and central office staff. Further, it has provided staff a great way to stay in touch with each other.

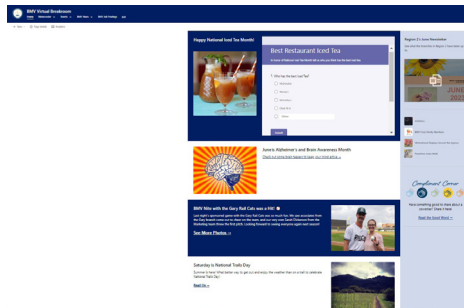
Communications Awards, Special Events for Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles and the Indiana State Fair.

The Indiana BMV hosts a booth each year at the Indiana State Fair with a goal of providing transaction opportunities to its customers in a fun and engaging environment. The booth housed a mobile branch, where customers could complete transactions normally available at a branch location, and a BMV Connect kiosk, where customers could complete more than a dozen of the most common transactions. The kiosk and mobile branch completed almost a thousand transactions during the fair. During this time, the BMV also had the opportunity to host a BMV Discount Day, offering fairgoers an opportunity to attend the fair at a discounted ticket price, another way of showing our customers our appreciation. Additionally, each year the BMV looks to create an inviting booth environment for customers and 2022 was no different. For example, in addition to helping Hoosiers complete transactions, visitors could ask questions of our RSI staff and ride the RSI motorcycle simulator (a huge draw for our visitors). With fair attendance just over 800,000, the booth provided a wonderful vehicle for the BMV to meet Hoosier citizens.

Article by the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles



BMV team members building tricycles to donate



BMV's Virtual Breakroom



BMV's State Fair booth

Three agencies received IndyStar's Top Workplace awards in 2023

In May, Governor Eric J. Holcomb and the Indiana State Personnel Department announced three state agencies that received the 2023 Top Workplace award. The agencies include the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) and the Indiana Department of Revenue (DOR).

In partnership with Energage, IndyStar conducts an annual survey of more than 2000 Indiana businesses, learning about their leadership, values, work culture and employee engagement. The results of those surveys showed that IEDC, BMV and DOR all ranked in the top 10% of surveyed businesses.

"As one of Indiana's largest employers, I'm proud of the outstanding agencies that are being recognized as some of the best," Governor Holcomb said. "We strive to make the State of Indiana one of the best places to work – and we're continuing to build on the momentum for competitive salaries and policies that promote work-life balance."



IEDC

Under the leadership of Secretary of Commerce Brad Chambers, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) was recognized as a top small organization on the IndyStar's 2023 list of Top Workplaces in central Indiana, based on an employee-driven survey focused on the agency's leadership, values, work culture and employee engagement. Additionally, the IEDC team was recognized by Energage as the most spirited organization during this year's awards ceremony.

"It starts with great people," said Sec. Chambers. "I'm impressed every single day by the talent and drive I see from the IEDC team. Since day one on the job, I've encouraged this group to shoot higher and run faster, and they've come together, risen to the challenge and continued to break records for economic investment and wages. The team at the IEDC is winning for Hoosiers, and I'm energized by their level of engagement and am proud to see the IEDC receive this recognition."

BMV

The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) was honored to receive this Top Workplace designation in its first year of participation.

Key survey benchmarks including training, management support, benefits and pay ranked high among BMV employees and highlight some of the reasons the agency received this honor.

"Our employees are the heart of the BMV," stated Commissioner Joe Hoage. "Whether working in a branch, in our processing center or in Central Office, each person on our team contributes to the agency's success. It is our mission to provide good government service to Hoosiers and we can do that every day because of our dedicated team. I am grateful for their commitment to support one another and the communities they serve. This Top Workplace award is a celebration of their success."

DOR

For the fifth year in a row, the Indiana Department of Revenue (DOR) landed on the IndyStar's list of 2023 Top Workplace award winners, making it the agency's eighth award for its culture, organizational health and employee engagement.

Honest employee feedback sets the course for success at DOR. By driving informed organizational improvement action, and through continuous listening, the agency builds and nurtures a strong culture.

Top Workplace USA has also nationally recognized DOR for three consecutive years, and this year, DOR received a special "Culture Excellence" award for innovation, worklife flexibility, compensation and benefits, leadership, and purpose and values.

"Our team has poured itself into building a very special culture that we care deeply about. This recognition represents our amazing team and the environment we have built that helps us provide great services to Indiana and the Hoosiers that count on us," stated Commissioner Bob Grennes.

July Team Challenge begins July 10 – sign up today!

TEAM CHALLENGE: JULY 10 - 24

Team up and track your activity to win.

Learn more



Invest In Your Health Wellness Rewards Program
Get Rewarded for What Matters

Team up with your coworkers & track your activity to win!

Give your all in the July Statewide Team Challenge! Team up with coworkers and get moving July 10 - 24.

Help your team beat the competition by working toward daily goals of 10,000 steps AND 15 active minutes. The team with the highest percent completion to the goal wins!

The competition is open to all full-time state employees. Join an existing team or create your own, then log your steps & active minutes to help your team win the top spot!

The Team Challenge runs July 10 through July 24.

How to participate

Registration is open for all full-time state employees!

To participate, log in to ActiveHealth (or create an account) and select “Challenges” from the navigation.

Then join or create a team using the steps below:

- Join an existing team. Use the search bar to look up a team name or person on the team. After finding a team, click the “Join” button.
- Create your own team by clicking “Create a Team.” Invite others to join your team by sending the link to your team to coworkers. Note: It is recommended that teams consist of at least 10 members and can have up to 100 members.

The competition starts July 10, so make sure you are registered, and your device is connected before the Team Challenge begins.

Daily goal

10,000 steps and 15 active minutes. The team with the highest percent completion to the goal wins! Every 25% completed toward your daily goal moves your team forward in the challenge. Reaching 125% of your daily goal gives your team a bonus to help claim the top spot in the

leaderboard. The Team Leaderboard will refresh every morning, showing which teams are in the lead.

Earn wellness rewards

Employees and spouses who are enrolled in a State Personnel Department sponsored medical plan can earn [\\$10 in rewards](#) for participating in a team challenge, up to a max of \$20 annually.

Register for the
Team Challenge

Team Challenge Resources

- [Team Challenge FAQ](#)
- [Log in to ActiveHealth to register](#)
- [Team Challenge webpage](#)

Nominate your coworkers for a feature on Invest in Your Health

This health and wellness month, we want to showcase State employees who are making strides to improve their health. If one of your coworkers has made a health achievement, give them a shout out! You can send your nominations to SPDcommunications@spd.in.gov with a brief explanation of why you think they should be celebrated. Just put “health and wellness shoutout” in the subject line and include your coworker’s email so we can contact them about being featured on the Invest in Your Health website. And if you’d like to share your own story, we’re happy to accept those, too! You can submit your story to investinyourhealthindiana.com/send-us-your-story. Here is a list of things we’d love to feature, but feel free to submit anything related to health and wellness that you think deserves a shout out.



Medical Insurance learning assignment coming in July for health plan members

Ever wonder how your medical plan costs are determined? Or what the differences between a deductible and coinsurance are? Or if there’s a cap on the medical expenses you pay annually? Get answers to these questions and more through a new learning module on medical insurance terms, costs and concepts with real-life examples.

All members of a State Personnel Department-sponsored medical plan will be enrolled in a training through SuccessFactors and will be required to complete it by July 31, 2023. If this required training applies to you, you will receive an email with more details.

- Beating cancer or any other major health concern
- Making progress in physical therapy
- Tackling a challenging hike
- Committing to quitting smoking
- Running a marathon or 5K



Artwork by Brenda Jackson (Family and Social Services Administration)

Federal Student Loan Payments Resume Soon – What You Need to Know

Most federal student loan payments and interest have been suspended since March 2020. After numerous extensions and introduction of a federal student loan forgiveness plan that is currently facing legal challenges, **student loan interest will resume on September 1, 2023, and payments will resume starting in October.**

What does that mean to federal student loan borrowers, and what steps do you need to take to prepare for repayment? Below we outline several key items to help ease the stress of restarting your federal student loan payments. For the latest updates, visit the [Federal Student Aid website](#). (Keep in mind that these guidelines apply to your **federal student loans** only; if you have private student loans, your payments have not been affected and you can access your loan information via your servicer's website.)

Log in to your student loan servicer's account to review your loan details and your contact information.

Servicers will notify borrowers before payments resume, so it's important to make sure your contact information — including email address, mailing address and phone number — is up to date. Not sure who your servicer is? Visit your [Federal Student Aid](#) dashboard and log in to view your loan details. You can also contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (800) 433-3243. Keep in mind that servicers changed for about 2 million borrowers during the time payments

were paused, so be sure you know who currently services your loan(s) and watch for correspondence about exactly when your payments will resume.

While payments are slated to resume in October, not all borrowers will need to restart their payments at exactly the same time. There are many factors that affect when your first loan payment will be due, and your loan servicer will communicate those details to you.

Review communication about your loans carefully to avoid scams.

Unfortunately, many scammers take advantage of borrowers in times like these. Do not provide any personal information via phone or email unless you are certain you are communicating with your loan servicer. If you're unsure, look up the contact information on your servicer's website, and reach out to them directly.

This also goes for promises of student loan forgiveness — remember, if an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is. Learn more about how to spot student loan scams in [this article](#).

Prepare your finances for repayment.

If you have not been making payments during the pause, you will need to incorporate student loan payments back into your budget. Once you know when your payments will resume and how much your payments will be, review

your expenses and plan accordingly.

[Studentaid.gov](#) provides a [loan simulator](#) where you can learn more about repaying your federal student loans, or what to do if you cannot afford your payment. You can also contact your servicer to discuss what options may be available, including income-based repayment plans. Don't wait until the last minute.

Roughly 44 million borrowers will be resuming payments this fall, and there could be long waits for personal assistance. Take care of as much as possible as SOON as possible to set yourself up for a smooth transition, especially if you believe you will need to change repayment plans, or if you were in forbearance on a loan prior to the pause.

Consider Student Loan Consolidation or Refinance

Once you've gotten all the pieces in place, you may also want to consider [Federal Student Loan Consolidation](#) or private student loan refinance* to simplify your loan repayment. Both options could potentially lower your monthly payment, and private student loan refinance could help you pay back your loans sooner to save on interest over time.

Learn more about the [student loan refinance options](#) available from our credit union partners, or download our [Guide to Refinancing Your Student Loans](#) for more information.

Learn more at : [Federal Student Loan](#)

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Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair to offer more than \$3,500 in free health screenings

Event runs July 13-16 at the Indiana Convention Center

The 37th annual [Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair](#) is set to bring nearly 10,000 Hoosiers to the Indiana Convention Center for free health screenings, immunizations, entertainment and much more.

“Healthful Living” is this year’s theme for the fair, which runs Thursday, July 13 to Sunday, July 16 in the downtown Indianapolis convention center’s halls J and K.

Here are the dates and times:

- 4-8 p.m. – July 13
- 1-7 p.m. – July 14
- 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. – July 15
- Noon – 6 p.m. – July 16

No registration is required, and you can see the full event list [here](#).

As always, the event is jam-packed with a long list of activities.

The [Indiana Department of Health](#) (IDOH) is bringing 60 vendors to the four-day fair, offering more than [\\$3,500 in free health screenings](#). Hearing, blood pressure, and vision screenings are only a few of the health screening options available to visitors. Available immunizations/vaccinations include MMR, DTaP, COVID-19 and many more alongside educational materials centered

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IBCF to welcome acclaimed musician A.J. Croce for 2023 No Limits Celebration

The Indiana Blind Children’s Foundation (IBCF) is excited to welcome acclaimed musician [A.J. Croce](#) to Indianapolis on Saturday, July 22 for the foundation’s annual [No Limits Celebration](#). Held in the historic 1930s-style auditorium at Indiana School for the Blind and the Visually Impaired (ISBVI), the concert will be preceded by a pre-concert reception featuring local jazz artist Steven Jones and a meal catered by the Jazz Kitchen — all of which is included in the price of admission.

The [No Limits Arts Series](#) aims to strengthen inclusiveness and remove social barriers in the arts for individuals with disabilities. In keeping with the goals of No Limits: An Arts Series Focused on Access for All, made initially possible by the Strengthening Indianapolis Through Arts and Cultural Innovation grant from Lilly Endowment, IBCF in partnership with ISBVI, brings artists

of all abilities to the stage that mirror the strengths and abilities of students at ISBVI. The public is invited onto the school grounds to not only experience internationally known artists and musicians but learn about the programs at ISBVI helping students succeed academically and socially.

“The Indiana Blind Children’s Foundation is passionate about bringing high-caliber artists to the ISBVI auditorium stage each year whose career and artistry shine a light on abilities and confront perceived notions surrounding those with vision impairments. A.J. Croce is a multi-talented performer - pianist, singer, and songwriter, who will transform the audience musically and challenge any limiting perceptions,” says IBCF Executive Director Laura Alvarado.

A virtuosic piano player, A.J. Croce toured with B.B. King and Ray



Charles before reaching the age of 21, and throughout his career, he has performed with a wide range of musicians, from Willie Nelson to the Neville Brothers; Béla Fleck to Ry Cooder. Son of the late Jim Croce, A.J. has blazed his own trail as an artist, releasing 10 studio albums including 2021’s *By Request*.

Following his performance, A.J. Croce will take part in a Q&A with event emcee Kathy Nimmer, reflecting on his life’s journey as a musician. Concert attendees are also encouraged to attend this intimate sit-down conversation at no additional fee.

Tickets can be purchased at [bit.ly/2023NoLimits](#) for the 2023 No Limits Celebration.

Article by Seth Johnson

Governor's Challenge to prevent suicide among service members, veterans, families kicks off this month

Beginning this month, the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA), along with several state partners will launch the Governor's Challenge. The initiative is aimed at preventing suicide among service members, veterans, their family members and care givers.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs created The Governor's and Mayor's Challenge to stem rising suicide rates across the country, especially in the veteran community. So far, 49 states and five territories are participating in the initiative to build interagency action plans to prevent veteran suicide.

Effective suicide prevention takes a combination of people, effort and imagination. Leading the effort here in Indiana, IDVA, the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration (FSSA), the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) and the Indiana National Guard (INNG) are working with the Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to educate and provide tools to participating communities across the

state.

"IDVA is committed to supporting the Indiana veterans community," said Joseph DeVito, Outreach Director at IDVA. "The Governor's Challenge is a crucial piece in these efforts, as we are devoted to ensuring Indiana continues to be the state where veterans Live, Work and Thrive."

The Governor's Challenge will have priorities for success within communities: identifying veterans and uncovering at-risk persons in the veteran community through the Ask the Question program; creating and promoting connections between veterans, organizations, and community events; and lethal means safety, planning and training. Each pathway will be supported by the state leadership team through a variety of resources, including technology, data, education, messaging, funding and best practices.

"This plan gives the Indiana veteran communities flexibility to choose the pathways that suit their needs the best," said Bryan Schmidt, IDVA Health and Wellness Coordinator. "It provides the tools, resources,



and support that will promote well being and safety, as well as creating important connections that could save a life."

Each of the pathways and specific tools have specific metrics in place for measuring the progress and success of efforts to prevent suicide among veterans, servicemembers, families and caregivers. Together, we can achieve far-reaching statewide improvements in policy, practice and implementation.

Join us, Join IN. For more information about the Governor's Challenge, click [here](#).

Article by Kirsten Clark, Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs

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Federal Student Loan Payments Resume Soon – What You Need to Know

[Payments Resume Soon – What You Need to Know - StudentChoice.org](#)

**Federal student loans may qualify for payment and interest rate benefits that private student loans*

do not. Carefully consider your options before refinancing federal student loans, as they will no longer qualify for current and future federal benefits once refinanced with a private lender. For more information,

visit [studentaid.gov](#) or contact your federal student loan servicer.

Article by Elements Financial

You've applied for Achieve Your Degree – now what?

Congratulations to the 200+ state employees who have taken the first step toward participating in Ivy Tech's Achieve Your Degree (AYD) program! If you have already applied, this is your reminder to complete the next steps needed to ensure you are enrolled in courses in the fall. Create your Ivy Tech login, check your Ivy Tech email, and make sure you:

- Complete the AYD consent form
- Sign your Deferred Tuition Request form
- Upload the Approval Document provided by INSPD

If you haven't yet applied and are interested in attending one of Ivy Tech's 70+ academic programs at zero tuition cost to you, there's still time to apply. Complete the Education Reimbursement Application for your agency and apply to the Ivy Tech AYD program to begin.

AYD allows you to take Ivy Tech courses without upfront tuition costs. Moreover, you gain access to invaluable benefits such as application assistance, academic advising, career coaching and much more. Fall classes begin August 21, so take the next step today toward achieving your academic and career goals.

Ready to learn more? Visit on.in.gov/EducationRP or visit ivytech.edu/ayd-in.



Who is the State Comptroller?

Who is the State Comptroller – do you know? It's Tera Klutz.

As of July 1, State Auditor Klutz became State Comptroller thanks to House Enrolled Act 1001. Why the change? In a nutshell, it makes the most sense for Indiana. Majority of states that share the same responsibilities refer to the office as State Comptroller. After all, the Indiana Department of Revenue is tasked with auditing individual taxpayers while the State Board of Accounts audits the State and other local governments. Updating the title better aligns with the current responsibilities of the office, which includes balancing the state's checkbook, paying state bills and employees, distributing tax dollars and providing year-end financial reporting.

Does this impact state employees? Yes and no. The office will continue to provide the same services we do today, for example processing your payroll check. However, how you communicate with us may change. We have already updated our website and are collaborating with IOT to update our email addresses. Please be patient with our team as this update is completed and know that your saved AOS sites (or bookmarks) should automatically forward you to the new site and eventually our email addresses will do the same.



State Comptroller Tera Klutz

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to our office at Comments@auditor.in.gov.

Electrofishing: IDEM team learns about fish sampling at Fall Creek

On June 1, approximately 20 Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) staffers and interns took a field trip to Fall Creek to learn about macroinvertebrates and participate in an electrofishing demonstration. Fish and other aquatic organisms are significant water quality indicators, and electrofishing is IDEM's primary method of collecting fish from rivers, streams and lakes.

Electrofishing is a safe and effective way of sampling fish populations. IDEM staffers use battery-powered electrofishing backpacks for small wadeable streams, canoes with generators and shockboxes to sample larger, wadeable streams, whereas electrofishing boats are used for large rivers and lakes. Using other equipment, such as hoop nets or gill nets, sometimes takes longer and has a higher mortality rate. Electrical current in the water briefly stuns the fish and results in the loss of muscle control, specifically the fish's swim bladder. Fish will float up to the water's surface, where they are caught and held in livewells (containing fresh water) until sampling is complete. Fish are identified, sorted, counted, measured and released safely back into their habitat. Sometimes, IDEM will keep some fish to analyze them for contaminants such as PCBs and mercury. Sampling a single site can take 1-8 hours, depending on the size and location of the site.

Data collected during these excursions can be used to calculate Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) scores. The IBI is a tool to assess river and stream health across the state and whether or not streams are impaired and results are reported to the EPA and used by watershed groups and universities. Data also supports the Indiana Department of Health's (IDOH) [Fish Consumption Guidelines](#) (FCG).

Participating in the demonstration gives IDEM employees a better understanding of the agency's work in rivers and streams and Governor's Public Service Summer Interns serving in IDEM's Watershed Assessment and Planning Branch also participated. They will spend the majority of their internship in the field utilizing electrofishing equipment, identifying fish and conducting habitat assessments. "We couldn't complete all our field sampling activities without their help," said Environmental Manager Kayla Werbianskyj.

Article by Indiana Department of Environmental Management



IDEM staff and interns at Fall Creek for electrofishing demonstration.

Indiana State Library announces genealogy Summer Lecture Series

This summer, the Indiana State Library will host two lectures featuring genealogy and local history speakers. The Summer Lecture Series is free and open to the public, but registration is required.

On Saturday, July 8, at 11 a.m., join the Central Indiana DNA Interest Group for an introductory DNA workshop. This in-person program is geared toward those who have taken a DNA test and are asking themselves, "Now what? What does this all mean? How can I use my DNA results to answer my genealogy questions?" The workshop will be presented by Steven Frank.

Many people find the ethnicity

estimates provided as part of their DNA test results to be confusing, surprising or just plain bad. The presentation will go behind the scenes to explain the science behind ethnicity estimates and genetic communities. Learn about the benefits and limitations of ethnicity estimates, along with techniques to use ethnicity estimates as a tool in genealogy research.

Angela Guntz will also explore the Thrulines tool available at AncestryDNA. Thrulines helps visualize common ancestor links to your DNA match.

Andrea Ackermann will wrap up the day focusing on shared matches. The shared match list is the go-to DNA tool. Shared matches are the common matches between two DNA relatives and all major companies offer a shared match.

Additionally, on Saturday, Aug. 12, at 11 a.m., the Indiana State Library will host a land use workshop. Platting an ancestor's land can help answer questions and add much-needed context to a family's story. The presentation will help attendees

understand the differences and similarities of the Metes and Bounds Survey and the Public Land Survey Systems. This interactive workshop with Genealogist John Barr will help attendees learn how to read land descriptions and teach how to draw a plat of an ancestor's property and place it on any map.

Needed for the workshop are common items, such as a ruler and a protractor. A ruler that measures tenths of an inch and a land protractor are preferred, but not essential. A limited number of rulers and protractors will be available at the workshop for use to practice platting land descriptions. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own land records if they need help deciphering them.

The workshops are eligible for LEUs for Indiana library staff.

Article submitted by the Indiana State Library



[Click here to learn more and register](#)

Serve Indiana Awards for Excellence Ceremony

The Serve Indiana Awards for Excellence Ceremony is an opportunity to honor individuals in Indiana communities who volunteer or serve. The goal of the Serve Indiana Awards for Excellence is to recognize outstanding and extraordinary volunteer service efforts. The ceremony will take place

on Nov. 15, 2023 at the Indiana Historical Society at 6 p.m.

There are eight nomination categories open to all Hoosiers that can be found on the Serve Indiana Awards for Excellence webpage. The nominations are open until Aug. 31.

[Click here to nominate](#)

[Click here to reserve free tickets](#)

2023 Data Day recap

The Indiana Management Performance Hub and Indiana Chief Data Officer Josh Martin hosted the sixth annual Data Day on April 26. The event welcomed more than 400 attendees from 20 state agencies and organizations to the Indiana Government Center in downtown Indianapolis. The day consisted of live presentations and breakout sessions on topics such as health, education, child welfare, equity, water quality and more.

MPH presented how their innovative approach to data-driven decision-making has fostered a culture of collaboration between state agencies and key trusted partners. The event also consisted of several workshops conducted by MPH employees designed to help attendees stay up to date with the latest trends and best practices in

data. These sessions were recorded and are available to view on the Data Day website at in.gov/mph/mph-data-day along with other presentation slides.

The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. John Keller, the Indiana Department of Education's Chief Information Officer. Keller discussed the DOE's recent release of the dashboard "Indiana Graduates Prepared to Succeed (GPS)". GPS uses data from Indiana's education and workforce systems to foster and prioritize individual student growth and development. The dashboard creates access to opportunities that prepare students for either employment, enrollment or enlistment leading to service.

If you missed Data Day this year, we invite you to join us in 2024! Join the



[Data Day mailing list](#) to learn more about how data continues to play an increasingly important role in state government.

Article submitted by Management Performance Hub



INDIANA UNCLAIMED RETURNS
\$1 MILLION

IN UNCLAIMED PROPERTY TO HOOSIERS EVERY WEEK

SEARCH NOW FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES!

START MY SEARCH

Smokey Bear's Birthday Celebrations

Save the date to help us celebrate Smokey Bear's Birthday!

June 8, 2023

Mounds State Recreation Area

[More Information >](#)

June 8, 2023

Quakertown State Recreation Area

[More Information >](#)

June 8, 2023

Whitewater Memorial State Park

[More Information >](#)

Christmas in July Celebrations

July 15, 2023

Mississinewa Lake

[More Information >](#)

July 21, 2023

Whitewater Memorial State Park

[More Information >](#)

July 21-23, 2023

Tippecanoe River State Park

[More Information >](#)

July 22, 2023

Ouabache State Park

[More Information >](#)

Versailles State Park

[More Information >](#)

Salamonie Lake

[More Information >](#)

July 8, 2023

DJ Joe | Harmonie State Park

Dance the night away at the OEP in the campground to the tunes of DJ Joe! Come on over to the Outdoor Education Pavilion and have a great time!

[More Information >](#)

Rock and Mineral Fest | Brown County State Park

Join the Brown County Rock and Mineral Club for an eventful day of geology. Learn about geodes, fossils, bedrock and more! View demonstrations of craftsmanship and artistry. Participate in gold panning, arts, and crafts. A diversity of activities are available throughout the day suitable for all ages.

[More Information >](#)

July 15, 2023

Star Party | Patoka Lake

Our annual astronomy event is held at the nature center and beach. Telescopes are set up by Evansville and Louisville Astronomical Societies for viewing the night sky and programs including solar bead bracelets.

[More Information >](#)

26th Annual Sand Sculpture Contest | Indiana Dunes State Park

Watch the sand come alive at this year's contest! The theme is "Games," but sculpting groups are not limited to sand art with this theme. Whether building or not, come vote for your favorite in the "People's Choice Award" between Noon and 1:00 p.m. Park volunteers will be judging sculptures for the funniest, most creative and most

thematic awards in both an adult and child category.

[More Information >](#)

Snakefest 2023 | Brown County State Park

Details and schedule to come!

[More Information >](#)

July 22, 2023

Floating Campfire | Chain O'Lakes State Park

Meet at the beach and be prepared to wade out to the fire in the water and roast your s'mores. We will provide s'mores fixings and roasting sticks as supplies last, but feel free to bring your own goodies to cook. This is a fun time for all ages!

[More Information >](#)

July 29, 2023

Hardy Lake 50th Anniversary Celebration | Hardy Lake

Join us for a day full of talks, games and activities celebrating the 50th anniversary of Hardy Lake.

[More Information >](#)

Tippy - Tri Challenge | Tippecanoe River State Park

Hike it: 1-mile hike/run along Trail #1. Bike it: 4-mile ride along a paved road to the River Tent Boat Launch. Paddle it: 3-mile kayak/canoe along the Tippecanoe River.

[More Information >](#)

[View all DNR special events >](#)

This Month WITH



July 8, 2023

Historic Tour of Angel Mounds | Angel Mounds State Historic Site

Explore the archaeology of Angel Mounds and learn about the history, how the mounds were used, who lived here and how they shaped this gem of Indiana.

[More Information >](#)

Harmonist Games and Crafts | New Harmony State Historic Site

This children's program consists of crafts and games from 19th-century America. Find out how to make a mini-Harmonist sundial and paper bonnets or top hats. Take part in a weaving project, play a game of graces and more. Along the way, kids will also learn about the history of New Harmony.

[More Information >](#)

Clue Party | Culbertson Mansion State Historic Site

Navigate the mansion to find the clues and solve the murders, all while dressed as your favorite Clue character. This costume party includes batch cocktails and light hors d'oeuvres associated with the film. Prizes will be awarded to the winning team. Ages 18+.

[More Information >](#)

July 9, 2023

Family Clue Party | Culbertson Mansion State Historic Site

Bring the kids and navigate the mansion together as you find the clues and solve the murders, all while dressed as your favorite Clue characters.

[More Information >](#)

July 14, 2023

Roaring Twenties | Indiana State Museum

Step into our Cardinal Club Speakeasy and snack on swell eats, tip a few giggle waters, peep some vintage cars, play games and pose inside the photo booth. Cut a rug with the Naptown Fantasy Swingers featuring Rob Dixon.

[More Information >](#)

July 15, 2023

Nesting Warblers of Indiana | T.C. Steele State Historic Site

Join us for a bird walk and presentation about the 18 species of warblers that nest here in Indiana. While warblers will be the focus, all species of birds will be identified and enjoyed.

[More Information >](#)

Wildflower Woods Scavenger Hunt | Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site

Appreciate nature as Gene would have 100 years ago as you work your way through this exciting scavenger hunt.

[More Information >](#)

July 21, 2023

The Architecture of Limberlost | Limberlost State Historic Site

Learn about the architecture of the Limberlost cabin as we delve into the Queen Anne style and discover what makes Gene's cabin so unique.

[More Information >](#)

July 22, 2023

Cedar Hill Stroll | Corydon Capitol State Historic Site

Take a walk with us through Cedar Hill Cemetery and learn about the individuals buried there and the lives they lived in Corydon.

[More Information >](#)

July 29, 2023

Introduction to Building Survival Shelters | Angel Mounds State Historic Site

Learn the basics of how to build your own effective shelter as we explore three basic shelters – debris huts, wiki-ups and lean-to's – and when to use them. Safety, bedding, insulation, season, fire and reflector walls will also be covered.

[More Information >](#)

What We Can Learn from the Dead: Willow Grave Cemetery Tour | Levi and Catharine Coffin State Historic Site

Hear the stories of soldiers and doctors, business owners and Underground Railroad heroes, and the early African Americans who settled here and made this the first integrated cemetery in the community. Plus, learn the techniques and challenges in the art of gravestone rubbing.

[More Information >](#)

View all Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites events >

SECC is just around the corner!

Mark your calendars — the State Employees' Community Campaign (SECC) is just around the corner!

This year's campaign, Crossroads of Change, launches on Thursday, Sept. 14 with a charity fair at the Statehouse Market on Robert D. Orr Plaza.

SECC offers state employees the opportunity to pledge donations through payroll deduction to the 501(c)3 nonprofits of their choice.

Watch for more information coming soon!



Get ready for the 2023 Indiana State Fair!

July 28 - Aug. 20, 2023



In partnership with Pacers Sports & Entertainment, we're tipping off a statewide celebration of two Indiana icons: basketball & the State Fair.

We'll pack in the fun with your favorite fair traditions mixed in with immersive basketball exhibits, courts, players and more!

[Buy discounted advance tickets today! >](#)

Artwork below by Emilee Alaoui (Indiana Department of Child Services)



Artwork below by Tiana Bumps (Indiana Department of Transportation)



continued from page 5

Governor's Public Service Summer Interns Update

workshop with the Indiana State Personnel Department to guide our interns through professional development and resume-building sessions to help prepare interns for a successful career.

Interns also stay connected through a weekly newsletter published by INSPD's Communications intern Rogel Cuevas-Portilla. Through this newsletter, interns can read about their peers in the Intern Spotlight section that showcases different interns every week. It also includes reminders for upcoming events, alumni tips, fun polls and a chance for interns to acknowledge colleagues, supervisors or anyone who has made their state experience memorable.

Article by Rogel Cuevas-Portilla, Indiana State Personnel Department



Interns volunteering at White River State Park.

continued from page 11

Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair to offer more than \$3,500 in free health screenings

around health insurance, medication costs and substance use, among others.

IDOH Office of Minority Health Director Antoniette Holt has participated in the fair for 22 years and has served as its coordinator since 2008. She said she was initially drawn to the fair as a volunteer borne of a desire to help others.

"I always want to be a help to those in need," she said, adding she hopes to "empower and help the communities" IDOH serves.

At its core, the Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair seeks to address health disparities among marginalized populations.

"It also addresses access [to care] which is a broad social determinant that affects so many," Holt said.

She called the fair "a great example of intersectionality" where the public can "interact with statewide agencies and organizations, from hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, grocery stores, community-based organizations, and others who will offer their expertise and resources."

The ultimate goal is to help "ensure those participating have better health outcomes and are empowered to make better decisions about their health," said Holt, who stated her belief the fair will give those participating "the necessary tools for better health." She hopes health fair visitors will share their experiences with others and encourage them to attend as well.

"We will have cooking demonstrations, healthy activities,

panels, vaccinations and so much more," she said. "I guarantee there is something for everyone."

All State of Indiana employees are encouraged to attend the fair as well.

The 37th annual Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair is sponsored by Lilly, Johnson & Johnson, Community Health Network, Indiana University Health, Eskenazi Health, MDwise, WISH-TV, UnitedHealthcare, CenterWell, Colgate, Indiana Family & Social Services Administration, Managed Health Services (MHS), Anthem, CareSource and the Marion County Public Health Department.

Article by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health



Simple steps to be more active

You've heard it many times: Exercise is really good for you. It helps you manage your weight, lower blood pressure, sleep better and reduce stress¹.

Even with such amazing benefits, 1 in 2 adults don't get enough activity². Maybe exercise seems boring. You're too busy to add a workout to your schedule. You haven't exercised in years and just don't know how to get started¹.

Here are ways to work activity into your current lifestyle¹:

- Keep it simple. Go for a walk or take a bike ride after dinner.
- Find a league sport you enjoy: practices and games are set on your calendar.
- Download workout apps for quick routines you can do anywhere.
- Make it a date. Invite your partner to go dancing or hike to a picnic spot.
- Stuck at a desk? Take short breaks during the day to stretch³.

Wellness Webinar Series:

Blow away your exercise routine. Do you want to be more active, but don't know where to start? This session will teach you the difference between aerobics and muscle strengthening exercises. We'll talk about how to use both to create a routine that works for you.

July 18, 2023 | 10:00 AM, 12:30 PM and 4:30 PM, ET

**The Wellness Webinar classes are not offered in Spanish.*

[Click to Register](#)



Use your camera app to register

1. CDC: "Getting Started With Physical Activity." Last reviewed June 16, 2022
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical_activity/getting_started.html

2. CDC: "Physical Inactivity." Last reviewed Sept. 8, 2022
<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/physical-activity.htm>

3. Cleveland Clinic: "6 Desk Exercises That Help You Get Stronger While Working." Jan. 19, 2023
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/desk-exercises/>



Coach's corner

with **Coach Jose Ramirez**

Coach Jose has helped hundreds of individuals to achieve their personal wellness goals. Jose believes that anyone can achieve a healthy lifestyle and that everyone's journey toward well-being is different.

Coach Jose's well-being tips:

Exercise does not need to be complicated or take a long time! The best exercise routine is the one that you follow consistently. Keep it simple with these tips:

- First, always ask your doctor if exercise is safe for you.
- Look for easy exercises to start, like walking or weights.
- Check your schedule for available blocks of time.
- Start out with 10-minute sessions a few times per week.
- Challenge yourself as you get into better shape.



Slow-Cooker Quinoa-Summer Squash Casserole

Before you take your family to the park, toss ingredients into a slow cooker. Hours later, dish it out and top with cheese. Serve with a green salad or a crusty bread.

Time to prepare: 30 minutes prep, 4 hours in slow cooker

Calories: 111 per serving

MyActiveHealth.com > Resources > Learning Center.



Move outdoors

Tired of the treadmill? Work out in nature instead. Spend more time outdoors to lower stress and sharpen your focus⁴. Try any of these outdoor exercises:

- Play pickleball in the park
- Jump rope in the backyard
- Work in your garden for an hour
- Run the bases at a local ball field
- Plan a family canoe or kayak day
- Off-road biking on a nature trail



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

4. American Psychological Association: "Nurtured by Nature." April 1, 2020
<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/04/nurtured-nature>

