



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

MAY 2024

Public Service Recognition Week continues



State employees wearing colors representing their state years of service. Photo taken on the steps of the Indiana Statehouse, May 9, 2024. [Download photo >](#)

Since 1985, the first full week in May has been designated as Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW)—a time to honor those who serve as federal, state, tribal, county or local government employees. The State of Indiana is proud to have so many dedicated state employees that provide excellent service to Hoosiers statewide and several of our agency leaders expressed their gratitude for State of Indiana employees with these messages:

“I feel incredibly honored to serve among the talented staff at the Indiana Department of Health. Together we are accomplishing great things to improve health outcomes for all Hoosiers.” –State Health Commissioner Lindsay Weaver, MD, FACEP.

“As Lieutenant Governor, I am grateful to each of the public servants who work for the State of Indiana and serve Hoosiers. Your commitment to service is improving the quality of life that we all get to enjoy in Indiana. Thank you!” –Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch

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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

X



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Public Service Recognition Week continues

“Whether you are working on the front lines, behind the scenes or anywhere in between, your contributions are invaluable and essential to the well-being of communities across our state. Thank you for your continued service, dedication and commitment to making Indiana a better place for all. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, and I am grateful for all that you do.”
 –Executive Director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security Joel Thacker

“Thank you to all State of Indiana employees for your dedication and commitment to serving our communities. The work you do continues to make a tremendous positive impact in the lives of Hoosiers IN Indiana.” –Secretary and CEO of Indiana Destination Development Corporation Elaine Bedel

“Thank you all for being the heart of Indiana's success!” –Chief Operating Officer at the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) President and CEO Sherri Ziller

“I have the proud honor of leading over 800 men and women, who like me, have dedicated their careers to helping others and the environment through public service. Our IDEM staff is hard at work, in the office and in the field, to ensure a clean and healthy future for Indiana. To them and other state employees, I say “Thank You!”” –Indiana Department of Environmental Management Commissioner Brian Rockensuess

Find more information on PSRW here >



Conservation celebrations: Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves employee awards

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves recently presented awards to employees who provided outstanding contributions to conservation, mentoring and teamwork during the previous year.

Award winners were Tiffany Dunkel, Joe Caudell, Mary Hayes, Fred Phillips, Bob Bell, Andrew Reuter and the 2024 Annual Conference Planning team. The divisions also recognized employees for their years of service:

40 years: Tom Arthur, Jeff Malwitz, Dave Meuninck

35 years: Robert Greene, Earl Nading

30 years: Brad Feaster, Ray Shepard, Debbie Walter

25 years: Josh Griffin

20 years: Denise Brazel, Matthew Bredeweg, Randy Brindza, Debbie King

15 years: Sandy Clark-Kolaks, Amy Kearns, Donna Monroe

10 years: Kacey Alexander, Nicholas Echterling, Julie Gressley, Tim Pettifor, Joseph Simon

5 years: Jake Adams, Kenneth Ford, Phillip Kacmar, Emily McCallen, Bethany Rust, Seth Sanders, Kevin Shettle, Zachary Voyles, Kenneth Wetzel



Divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves 2024 Annual Conference Planning team.

[Read more details on the winning employees' contributions in DNR's news release >](#)

Celebrate PSRW with these State of Indiana employee discounts!

Visit an Indiana State Park for free!

Saturday, May 11

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources is offering free admission to state employees at all state parks and other DNR properties with entrance fees on Saturday, May 11. Just let the gate attendant know you are a state employee for free admission.

State of Indiana Employee Appreciation Weekend at Indiana Beach

Saturday, May 11 & Sunday May 12

On Saturday, May 11, and Sunday, May 12, state employees and guests can receive \$16.99 tickets to Indiana Beach Amusement & Water Park Resort! Employee must arrive by 6 p.m. Present your state ID at the group sales booth in the south parking lot for discounted rate. [Learn more >](#)

IDEM Office of Air Quality employees receive challenge coins for ambitious environmental improvement efforts

On Wednesday, April 17, employees in the Indiana Department of Environmental Management Office of Air Quality received special “challenge coins” from Commissioner Brian Rockensuess in recognition for their work on one of the state’s most ambitious environmental improvement efforts to date.

In addition to their normal workload, Branch Chief Scott Deloney, Section Chief Susan Bem and Environmental Manager Jessica Murray worked to implement a \$3 million planning grant for the U.S. EPA’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program. Their work included developing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and drafting Indiana’s Priority Climate Action Plan. The group also prepared Indiana’s application for the competitive CPRG grant process in which state governments, municipalities, tribes and territories will share \$4.6 billion to help implement projects proposed in the planning process.

The CPRG program provides federal funding to state governments, municipalities, tribes and territories to plan and implement strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollutants.



Office of Air Quality team (left to right) Section Chief Susan Bem, Environmental Manager Jessica Murray, Branch Chief Scott Deloney and IDEM Commissioner Brian Rockensuess.

As part of their efforts, IDEM hosted six community engagement meetings across the state to solicit feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders and industries to help shape Indiana’s proposal.

“The CPRG is extremely complex and with tight deadlines,” explained Commissioner Rockensuess. “This team rose to the challenge brilliantly and showed their dedication to the future of Indiana through their tireless work.”

You can learn more about the CPRG and see the work this incredible team has done so far at on.IN.gov/CPRG.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Environmental Management



WHAT'S IN

SPEED INTO MOTORSPORTS IN INDIANA

May is right around the corner, and with May comes the sounds of roaring engines and screeching tires on tracks across the entire state! Learn about Indiana's rich motorsports history and join in on the fun!

[JUMPSTART YOUR MAY ADVENTURES HERE](#)



Eight complete 'Bridging the Gap' training, become certified medical interpreters

The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) and the Office of Minority Health (OMH) are excited to announce the successful completion of the Bridging the Gap in Medical and Mental Health interpreting training program. Eight participants passed both the oral and written exams, becoming certified medical interpreters specializing in mental health interpretation.

This diverse cohort represents various languages, including four Spanish, one Burmese, one Creole, one Russian and one Karenni interpreter. OMH is thrilled to welcome these newly certified professionals to Indiana's language access workforce, further enhancing the ability to provide equitable access to health services for Indiana's diverse communities.

The Bridging the Gap program brought together a group of multilingual and multicultural individuals with unique professional backgrounds and life experiences. The dedicated group completed a

64-hour training course.

As OMH strives to promote health equity and address disparities in health care, the availability of qualified interpreters is crucial. These newly certified professionals will play a vital role in bridging communication gaps, ensuring that individuals from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds receive the support and care they need.

OMH expressed gratitude to Monica Blaisdell-Zarate, the training facilitator, and the organizers, who, along with IDOH and OMH, made the program a success. Their efforts in equipping these interpreters with the necessary skills and knowledge are invaluable investments in improving Indiana's language access



IDOH's new certified medical and mental health interpreters and two trainers are seen here. The eight team members completed a 64-hour training course to earn their certification.

and health care.

The newest certified medical and mental health interpreters are Maleni Aveja, Andrew Gonzalez, America Schubert, Veronica Daye, Albert Mang, Maria Marin, Aziza Mazitova and Naw Pow. Blaisdell-Zarate served as instructor and Dewy Almanzar was assistant instructor.

Article by Naw Pow, Indiana Department of Health

World TB Day conference packs the house as IDOH efforts gain state and national attention

The Fort Harrison Inn and Garrison Banquet and Conference Center was full-to-bursting as nearly 250 guests packed the room to learn about important tuberculosis prevention and care updates on March 20. IDOH TB and Care Division Director Kelly White (seen here capturing a selfie with the crowd) said IDOH's [World TB Day event](#) has continued to grow, setting record attendance numbers in 2023 and 2024.



IDOH employee's epic eclipse picture goes viral

Health Innovation Partnerships and Programs Grants and Contracts Manager Chandu Prem Lal snapped a literal once-in-a-lifetime photo of the Victory statue of the Indiana War Memorial Soldiers and Sailors Monument during the April 8 solar eclipse.

Prem Lal's photo, taken at or near totality of the celestial phenomenon, creates the illusion of the Victory statue's torch being lit by the sun.



IDOH's Chandu Prem Lal captured this amazing shot of the April solar eclipse on Monument Circle. The photo went viral online.

The image created a positive stir online as the shot garnered more than 2.1 million views on Reddit and caught the eyes of thousands of Facebook and Instagram users.

Though this shot wouldn't look out of place as an entry in a prestigious professional photo contest, Prem Lal only dabbles in photography.

"I'm just a hobbyist photographer who loves snapping away," he said.

"I started with my roommate's camera years back and got hooked."

Prem Lal pursues his hobby in the Circle City. He used a Sony A7IV for his epic eclipse picture.

"You'll usually find me doing street photography around Indy, especially downtown or at car events on weekends," he said.

As far as prep for this one-of-a-kind image, Prem Lal scouted out the best spot and

then let the magic of the moment happen.

"For this shot, I set my alarm at 3 almost every day when I was at the office to take a quick 10-minute walk around the circle," he said. "This helped me see where the sun was to frame the shot. I also used some apps to help."

Social media users left comments on the photo, calling it "beautiful" and "awesome."

The kind words were happily received by Prem Lal, who is grateful for capturing a moment in time as unique as the phenomenon that made it possible.

"I received a lot of responses saying, this picture is special as this moment of totality with Lady Victory cannot be replicated in a long time, making it even more interesting to me," Prem Lal said.

Check out this [Instagram reel](#) to see the process in action.

Article by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health

Education discounts and partnerships

Summer classes are right around the corner and as a State of Indiana employee, you may be eligible for education discounts! Whether you're interested in a bachelor's in human resources from Oakland City University, a master's in criminal justice and public safety from Indiana University Indianapolis (formerly IUPUI), or another program/certificate, there may be discounts available to support you. Visit our discount page to see how much you can save.

[View the discounts page >](#)

More than 60 celebrated at the latest Leadership at All Levels graduation ceremony

The Leadership at All Levels gold course closed out its session with a special graduation ceremony that honored more than 60 participants.

Deputy State Health Commissioner of Local Health Services Pam Pontones led the ceremony, noting that Leadership at All Levels has existed since 2008. It's among the state's longest-running training programs.

"I'm very passionate about this work, and I love it," Pontones said.

Assistant Commissioner (Health and Human Services) Eldon Whetstone provided a keynote address at the March 20 gathering, further encouraging the graduates.

"These are skills that are transferable, not just in public health," Whetstone said.

Article by Indiana Department of Health



A total of 61 graduates of the Leadership at All Levels gold course were honored during a graduation ceremony on March 20 at the Indiana Department of Health's 2 N. Meridian office in Indianapolis.

Over 10,000 pounds of e-waste recycled at collection event

You did it!

On Wednesday, April 17, **state employees recycled 10,939 pounds of electronic waste (e-waste)** at a collection event organized by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

Electronics contain heavy metals, including lead, mercury, cadmium and hexavalent chromium that can be harmful if released into the environment. Recycling electronics ensures these materials are safely managed and that valuable materials such as steel, glass and plastic, as well as precious metals such as copper, gold, tin, silicon and aluminum are reclaimed for the manufacturing of new products. Reusing and recycling raw materials from e-waste conserves natural resources and avoids pollution. Indiana's E-Cycle Program allows for many electronic devices to be kept out of landfills and incinerators and creates recycling opportunities for Indiana residents.

If you couldn't make it to the event, visit IDEM's website, idem.IN.gov/recycle/electronic-waste to learn more about how to dispose of your unwanted electronics safely. For additional assistance, contact IDEM Senior Environmental Manager Jacob Schmicker at jschmick@idem.IN.gov

Article by Indiana Department of Environmental Management



Whirlwind of support: IDOH emergency teams respond after tornadoes strike

Damaging tornadoes touched down in the Hoosier communities of Madison, Winchester and Selma in March, prompting a coordinated response effort from multiple [Indiana Department of Health](#) (IDOH) programs, other state agencies, local health departments and hospitals.

In Selma, a tornado damaged multiple homes, knocked over utility poles and uprooted trees. Delaware County experienced a pair of tornados that left similar destruction. Estimates from the National Weather Service put wind speeds of the tornados at as much as 165 miles per hour.

IDOH and other crews went into action almost immediately. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) was activated to a Level 3 status the same evening, which allowed for what [Planning and Preparedness](#) Manager Derek Sebold called “enhanced coordination between state agencies.” In particular, the response included the [Indiana Department of Homeland Security](#), [Indiana Department of Transportation](#), [Indiana State Police](#) and the [Integrated Public Safety Commission](#).

Within the SEOC, the Emergency Support Function (ESF) – 8 desk was staffed 24 hours a day through March 19. Sebold and Training and Exercise Coordinator Garrett Anderson covered ESF-8 by splitting 12-hour shifts.

Led by Director Angelo Soto, the [Division of Emergency Preparedness](#) (DEP) is part of the Public Health Protection Commission helmed by

Assistant Commissioner Megan Lytle, and the team was integral to the response, joining with healthcare entities and team members of the Consumer and Healthcare Regulatory Commission (headed by Assistant Commissioner Jordan Stover) to provide assistance to storm victims.

DEP’s District and Local Readiness Program coordinated with the Randolph County Health Department, Ascension St. Vincent Randolph, and IDOH’s District 6 [Healthcare Coalition](#), which included Holley Rose, Rick Brown, Susan Gross, Jennifer Denson, and Alyssa Bloomberg. Local Emergency Response Manager Andrew Wilson and [DEP mobile units](#) were part of Tdap vaccine administration via a “one-stop shop” organized by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

Further, FSSA’s [Division of Mental Health and Addiction](#) provided mental health services for people affected by the storms as well as emergency responders.

IDOH’s [Acute and Continuing Care](#) and [Long-Term Care](#) (LTC) divisions were vital to the response effort, too, and together helped ensure continuity of healthcare service delivery to the people who were impacted by the storms. Director Randy Snyder and Deputy Director John Lee in Acute Care coordinated with Ascension St. Vincent – Randolph, and LTC’s Director Brenda



Damaging tornadoes touched down in Delaware and Randolph counties in mid-March. The Indiana Department of Health partnered with other state agencies, local health departments and hospital systems to aid those affected.

Buroker and Deputy Director Tammy Alley worked with families impacted by the weather events to make certain residents of long-term care facilities’ care wasn’t interrupted.

The all-encompassing response was representative of how IDOH teams, as well as those from other agencies, come together to help others when disaster strikes.

“The events of the 2024 March severe storms affecting Randolph and Delaware counties made it apparent the level of commitment IDOH and our fellow state agencies exhibit to protecting the lives of Hoosiers before, during and after disasters,” Sebold said.

“The partnerships experienced throughout this event highlighted the continued need to foster capability building during non-emergency situations to enhance our state’s readiness for future disasters.”

Article by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health

Welcome 2024 Governor's Summer Interns!

We are excited to welcome nearly 200 interns this summer to state government as part of the Governor's Summer Intern program. The first group attended orientation this week.

Students and recent graduates from 42 colleges and universities are interning at more than 30 agencies.

The Governor's Summer Internship program was created in 1989 to introduce college students to the operations and officials of state government. The program not only offers exposure to the many facets of state government, but also the opportunity to network with other interns and state employees.

Interns will visit with Governor Eric J. Holcomb, Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, and State Comptroller Elise Nieshalla, They will also participate in a professional development workshop, as well as attend agency leadership panels to learn more about job opportunities within state government. As community service is part of the state employee experience, interns will also volunteer at Gleaner's Food Bank.

You can learn more at in.gov/spd/workforindiana/internships/current-interns/ and be sure to check out the intern Instagram account [@ingovinterns](https://www.instagram.com/ingovinterns).



First round of interns at orientation on May 6.

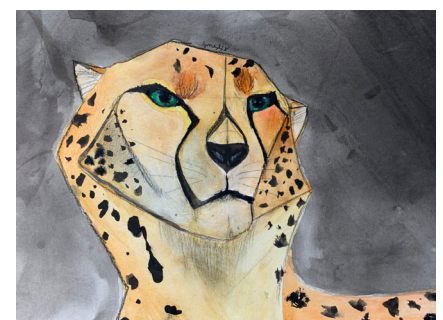
Visit the new Employee Experience webpage

We are excited to announce the addition of the Employee Experience page to the Indiana State Personnel Department's (INSPD) website. The site offers a one-stop shop for all things related to being a state employee. Benefits, compensation, career development and employee programs such as Community Service Leave and the Whole Policy are featured.

This page is also a great source of information for potential employees. "Why I Work for Indiana" videos are also posted and a link to the Work for Indiana website, among other resources.

[View Employee Experience webpage today >](#)

Artwork by Amelia, submitted by Ernani Magalhaes (Office of Administrative Law Proceedings)



Your racing guide to central Indiana

Motorsports and racing have always played a huge role in the State of Indiana. Visit Indiana has developed a place to discover the history of racing and the impact Indiana has had on the sport. The Motorsports Circuit IN Indiana provides a central location to find historic tracks, iconic races, heartfelt memorials, automobile museums and some of the most memorable experiences all dedicated to telling Indiana's racing story.

Indianapolis Motor Speedway

The [Indianapolis Motor Speedway](#) (IMS) has been home to the "Greatest Spectacle in Racing" for more than 100 years. Since 1911 on Memorial Day weekend, the Indianapolis 500 has attracted drivers and race fans from all over the world for the largest single-day sporting event in the world, bringing in over 300,000 visitors.

Do you want to experience the thrill of racing for yourself? The Indy Racing Experience offers race fans the exclusive opportunity to ride and drive in real NTT IndyCar Series cars! They are the exclusive racing

experience at IMS. Drive or ride in an IndyCar or a Stock Car at mind-numbing, heart-pounding speeds in cars that were purpose-built by Dallara, the NTT INDYCAR Series race car manufacturer, and are exclusive to the Indy Racing Experience Team.

City of Speedway

Located just under 6 miles west of downtown Indianapolis, Speedway is a hub for Indy's racing community,



and you'll see checkered flags in small businesses all year round. You'll also find a range of activities celebrating local businesses and a strong racing culture.

Get behind the wheel and try out [Speedway Indoor Karting](#). Just a few blocks south of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on the town of Speedway's Main Street, you can get in on the racing action without the high speeds. This state-of-the-art, indoor karting facility provides visitors of all ages and experience levels the opportunity to race on a European-style, multi-level road course as well as a banked oval.

Lucas Oil Indianapolis Raceway Park

Opened in 1961, Lucas Oil Indianapolis Raceway Park features a drag strip, an oval track and a retired road course. Owned by the [National Hot Rod Association \(NHRA\)](#), Lucas Oil Indianapolis Raceway Park and the surrounding area in Brownsburg, Indiana, have become a motorsports haven for



Read more on the Visit Indiana blog >

'Women and More in 2024' kicks off Minority Health Month

Minority Health Month's focus in 2024 is on obesity and its relationship to chronic disease.

The kickoff event, "Women and More in 2024," brought cultural entertainment, a panel discussion, informative booths and much more to Indianapolis on April 4.

Sponsored by the Office of Minority Health, "Women and More in 2024" was a success drawing a huge crowd. Yet, it was just the tip of the iceberg as the rest of the month was packed with events that covered a vast range of topics including health misinformation, LGBTQ+ health care, maternal health, substance use disorder and recovery, cancer, disproportionality, and much more.

Article by Indiana Department of Health



Office of Minority Health Director Antoniette Holt speaks at the "Women and More in 2024" kickoff event for Minority Health Month.



Vollie Ollivares and Mark Ollesca represented the Philippines Cultural Community Center by performing a Filipino dance at the Women and More in 2024 ceremony.

Indiana BMV night with the Indy Eleven on June 15

You're invited to BMV night with the Indy Eleven on Saturday, June 15 at 7 p.m. at Carroll Stadium. Purchase \$7 tickets (minimum of \$13 off single game price) exclusively via [this link](#). This deal is only available online ahead of the match. Inventory is limited.

Get your tickets now!

[Click here for discounted tickets >](#)

Cheer on the Eleven at **BMV Night!**

INDY ELEVEN



SAN ANTONIO FC



ICRC invites you to the Governor's Reception



THE GOVERNOR'S AWARDS

Now is the time to honor the incredible contributions and accomplishments of African Americans in Indiana. The Governor's Reception Awards are the perfect opportunity to celebrate the deserving Hoosiers who have made a significant impact in their communities. Submit a nomination today and recognize these exceptional individuals and their achievements!

In partnership with Indiana Black Expo (IBE) and Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA), the Indiana Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) will host the Governor's Reception on June 25, 2024. On behalf of Governor Eric J. Holcomb, five African-American Hoosiers and an ICRC employee will be honored for their exceptional efforts across diverse fields—including education, entrepreneurship and community leadership—at the awards celebration. The celebration acknowledges the outstanding achievement of African Americans throughout the State of Indiana and the awards recognize some of the community's unsung heroes who work tirelessly for the advancement of all Hoosiers.

ACHIEVEMENT IN BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

ACHIEVEMENT IN EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENT IN HEALTH AND WELLNESS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

HAROLD O. HATCHER AWARD

NEXT LEVEL AWARD

NOMINATIONS DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2024 AT 11:59 PM



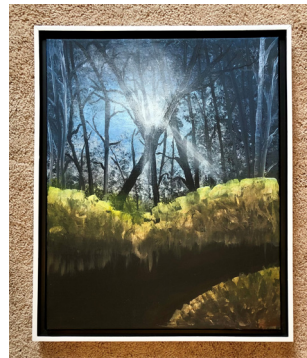
DAY
JUNE 25

TIME
2:30PM

Indiana Convention Center
500 Ballroom

Join ICRC, IBE and IDOA in celebration of the winners of the 2024 Governor's Awards. The event is free and open to the public.

Artwork by Rasesh Patel (Indiana Department of Environmental Management)



National Skilled Nursing Care Week – May 12 - 18

The Indiana Veterans’ Home Employee Engagement Committee will be hosting events throughout the week for residents and staff to celebrate National Skilled Nursing Care Week. There will be different events including pie-in-the-face, corn hole, an ice cream sundae building competition and residents will be using squirt guns to shoot water at staff in the inner circle.

“The week is a time to celebrate everyone at IVH. Without our residents, staff and volunteers none of what we do would be possible. This is the week we get to recognize and celebrate everyone with fun activities for all and to show how proud we are to be a part of IVH,” Amy Gibson, IVH Superintendent said.

National Skilled Nursing Care Week, formerly known as National Nursing

Home Week, is one of the most important events of the year for nursing homes.

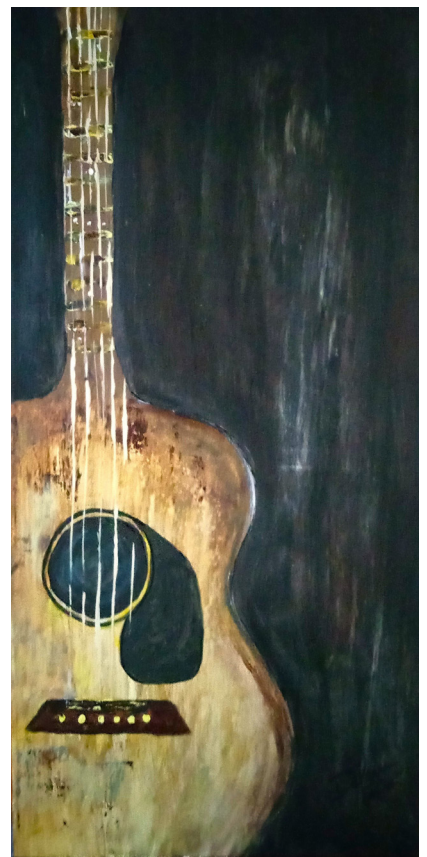
Held annually since 1967 and always beginning on Mother’s Day, National Skilled Nursing Care Week (NSNCW) is May 12-18, 2024. The observance is sponsored by the American Health Care Association and recognizes the role of skilled nursing care centers in caring for America’s seniors and individuals with disabilities.

2024 Theme: Radiant Memories – A Tribute to the Golden Age of Radio

“Radiant Memories – A Tribute to the Golden Age of Radio” is the 2024 theme for National Skilled Nursing Care Week (NSNCW).

Article by Indiana Veterans’ Home

Artwork by Delaura McCorkle (Indiana Department of Correction)



Hoosier Lottery celebrates beneficiaries during the month of May

May is a special time in Indiana as we welcome warmer weather, spring flowers bloom and Indiana is hosting the Greatest Spectacle in Racing. It is also a time when the Hoosier Lottery recognizes the many beneficiaries we support – retired teachers, police officers and firefighters. The month of May includes International Firefighters' Day (May 4), Teacher Appreciation Week (May 6-10), and National Police Week (May 12-18). Since its creation in 1989, the Hoosier Lottery has contributed more than \$7 billion to good causes, including \$30 million annually to local police and firefighters' pensions and \$30 million annually to the Teachers' Retirement Fund.

Sarah M. Taylor, Executive Director of the Hoosier Lottery, stated, "The Hoosier Lottery is thankful to our beneficiaries for their public service and support of their local communities. We are proud that our success helps ensure our retired teachers, police and firefighters have a strong and secure retirement."

Funds from the Hoosier Lottery also benefit citizens throughout the state. Each year, millions of dollars from the Lottery Surplus Fund are sent to all 92 counties to help offset the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax by up to 50 percent. Even if you don't purchase Hoosier Lottery tickets, proceeds from its sales benefit Hoosiers across the state.

To learn how the Hoosier Lottery has benefited your local community or to read additional beneficiary stories, check out Hoosierlottery.com/giving-back.

The Hoosier Lottery is committed to providing a Positive Play experience. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call 1-800-994-8448 or visit HoosierLottery.com/PositivePlay

You must be 18 or older to play the Hoosier Lottery. Please play responsibly.

Article by Hoosier Lottery

The graphic features a blue background with a white grid pattern. At the top left is the Hoosier Lottery logo, which includes a red outline of Indiana and the word "LOTTERY" in large, bold, white letters with a red outline. To the right of the logo is a green banner with the text "PROUD TO SUPPORT INDIANA SINCE 1989" in white. Below this are three green boxes, each containing a white icon and text: an apple icon for "\$1.0 Billion to the Teachers' Retirement Fund", a blue circle with a white outline of Indiana for "\$820 Million to local police and firefighters' pensions", and a blue circle with white numbers "00000" for "\$5.5 Billion to the Lottery Surplus Fund, used in part to lower excise taxes paid by Hoosier vehicle owners". A central green banner reads "HOOSIER HEROES/BENEFICIARIES". Below this are three circular portraits of beneficiaries: Marge M. (top left), Clifton D. (bottom left), and Dave W. (right). A large red and white "GIVING BACK" sign is positioned in the center, with a white outline of Indiana behind it. At the bottom left is a red and white "18+ TO PLAY" logo with the text "1-800-994-8448 PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE PLAY RESPONSIBLY". At the bottom right is the text "Learn more at HoosierLottery.com/givingback" and "All financial figures based on Fiscal Year 2023".

HOOSIER LOTTERY PROUD TO SUPPORT INDIANA SINCE 1989

\$1.0 Billion
to the Teachers' Retirement Fund

\$820 Million
to local police and firefighters' pensions

\$5.5 Billion
to the Lottery Surplus Fund, used in part to lower excise taxes paid by Hoosier vehicle owners

HOOSIER HEROES/BENEFICIARIES

Marge M. spent the first 11 years of her career teaching children between kindergarten and eighth grade at schools in Indiana, Ohio and Illinois. Her family then settled in Perry Township on the south side of Indianapolis, where she taught first grade at Homecroft Elementary for 38 years.

Clifton D. worked as a firefighter in Fort Wayne for just over 20 years and retired as a lieutenant in 2022. Some of Clifton's fondest memories took place in the fire house. "It's truly a brotherhood and sisterhood," he said. "They truly become your second family. That's why it was easy to stick around for 20 years."

Dave W. retired after a 42-year career in law enforcement. In 1983, he attended the academy and accepted a position as Deputy Sheriff with the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Office. Years later he was promoted to Chief Deputy and later successfully ran for Sheriff himself in the 2014 election. Throughout his career, Dave wore many hats and oversaw many different sections of the office. One of his favorite duties was working with the K-9 police dogs.

1-800-994-8448
PROBLEM GAMBLING
HELPLINE
PLAY RESPONSIBLY

Learn more at HoosierLottery.com/givingback

All financial figures based on Fiscal Year 2023

State employees kick off Run the State 5Ks at Indiana Dunes event



Over 200 participants got moving at the first 5K of the 2024 Run the State series at Indiana Dunes State Park on April 20. State employees, their families and a few furry friends enjoyed the race as well as lawn games like cornhole, giant Jenga and giant Connect Four on the Saturday morning. There were walkers and runners of all paces and the top finisher for the event was Alan Holderread from INDOT with a time of 20 minutes and 24 seconds. Congrats, Alan!



If you missed the 5K on April 20, there are more events to look forward to. You can find more information and register at these links:

June 8 | Hike at Spring Mill State Park **Registration full*

June 22 | [5K at Clifty Falls State Park](#)

July 13 | [5K at Fort Harrison State Park](#)

August 10 | [5K at Ouabache State Park](#)

There's no cost to register for these events, but there is a \$7 per vehicle entry fee that will be collected at the entrance for each state park. All Run the State 5K & Hike participants will also receive a free Run the State t-shirt and medal. T-shirts will be handed out during check-in and medals will be given at the end of each 5K or hike—be sure to select your preferred t-shirt size when registering.

Anthem will also be giving away \$25 gift cards to lucky participants at each event! Check in before the 5k or hike to be entered into the drawing!

[Learn more about the Run the State Series >](#)

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month and is a great opportunity to acknowledge and support the [1 in 5 adults in the U.S.](#) (nearly 60 million people) who are affected by mental illness. Anyone can be affected by mental illness regardless of age, ethnicity, background, etc. and it can

be difficult to discuss struggles with these conditions. Below are some tips from Mental Health America for starting a conversation and listening to others who may need to discuss their mental health. There are also resources listed below if you or someone you know is seeking support for their mental health.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Can't quiet your mind?
Take a moment to check in with yourself.

[Learn more about EAP](#)

OPTUM™

Tips for talking about your mental health

Start a conversation about mental health when there is an open window of time to have an in-depth discussion, and neither you or the person you're talking to will have to cut the conversation short to take care of other obligations. Plan to set aside at least 30 minutes to an hour.

Start with a text if a face-to-face talk is too intimidating. It could be a plain old text message with a note that says, "I have some important things on my mind and need to make time to talk to you about them."

Find and share info. Find important information online that might help you explain what you're going through. Print it and bring it with you when you're ready to talk.

Take a screening test at mhascreening.org. Print out your results to share with the person you plan to talk to.

What if someone talks to you about their mental health?

- **Listen.** Let them finish their sentences and complete thoughts without interrupting. After they have finished you can respond.
- **Let them know if you understand.** If someone has just spilled their guts and you've gone through something similar—tell them. It helps a lot for someone to know they aren't alone. Make sure you don't switch the topic of conversation to your struggles though; focus on their needs.
- **Avoid being judgmental.** Don't tell them they are being weird or crazy; it's not helpful at all.
- **Take them seriously.** Try not to respond with statements that minimize how they are feeling or what they are going through, such as, "You're just having a bad week," or "I'm sure it's nothing."
- **Make yourself available to talk again if needed.** While it can be a big relief for someone to share something they have been keeping secret, mental health struggles usually aren't solved with one conversation. Let the person who has spoken with you know that they can reach out to you again if they are having a tough time. It's ok to let them know if there is a time of day or certain days of the week that you aren't available.
- **Don't turn what you've been told into gossip.** If someone is talking to you about their mental health, it was probably tough for them to work up the nerve to say something in the first place and you shouldn't share what they tell you with other people. Let them share on their own terms.

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May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Resources:

Be Well Indiana

Managing mental health is essential for the well-being of Hoosiers across our state, and Be Well Indiana is here to help. The resources at [in.gov/BeWellIndiana](https://www.in.gov/BeWellIndiana) have been compiled by the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction designed to help Hoosiers stay connected and maintain their well-being. The information has been validated by local and national experts that you can trust.

- **Get Support:** Access information on free resources such as the Be Well Crisis Helpline, [Indiana 211](#), [Crisis Text Line](#), [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) and more.
- **Be Well Crisis Helpline:** Call: 211, enter your zip code and press 3.
- Speak with a trained counselor 24/7 regarding stress, anxiety, loneliness or mental health strains. Service is free and confidential.
- **Video Resources:** Watch videos featuring experts from around Indiana. These experts will offer advice, tips and coping mechanisms you can use to help maintain your mental health. Please note that while they are a great resource, these videos are not a substitute for professional help.

Optum EAP

The Optum Employee Assistance Program (EAP) program is a free service for all full-time state employees and those in their households and can be a critical tool to improve overall well-being. Calling the 24/7 hotline at (800) 886-9747 will immediately put you in touch with an experienced clinician that will help you get connected to counseling resources. Your call is completely confidential. Through Optum EAP you have access to up to 8 FREE sessions with a licensed provider for full-time State of Indiana employees and their households. Call Optum at (800) 866- 9747 to find a provider and get your Authorization Code to use with any in-network Optum EAP provider. You can also go online to liveandworkwell.com (access code: Indiana).

Through liveandworkwell.com (to browse the site, enter access code: Indiana) you can also access:

1. Mental health resources such as in-person therapy, virtual therapy, Virtual Behavioral Coaching and more.
2. Substance use support.
3. Family and parenting resources and support such as online coaching for families, Solutions for Caregivers and more.
4. Financial and legal counseling and support such as free and discounted legal consultations, mediation services, financial wellness benefits, identity theft assistance and more.
5. As part of EAP, you also have access to these apps
 - [AbleTo](#), an on-demand app for reducing worry, stress and improving mood.
 - [Talkspace](#), 24-hr phone and text resource for extra support from a licensed, innetwork EAP provider.

If you need longer-term mental health treatment, support or medication, members of the State Employee Health Plan have access to mental health coverage through their plan.

**Find 2024 Health Plan
Information Here >**

If you are struggling with your mental health, please know that you are not alone, and that help is available. Please reach out to Optum EAP at (800) 886- 9747 (24/7 support) or call the INSPD Benefits Hotline at: 317-232-1167 or 1-877-248-0007 (toll-free) for more information about the resources that are available to you.

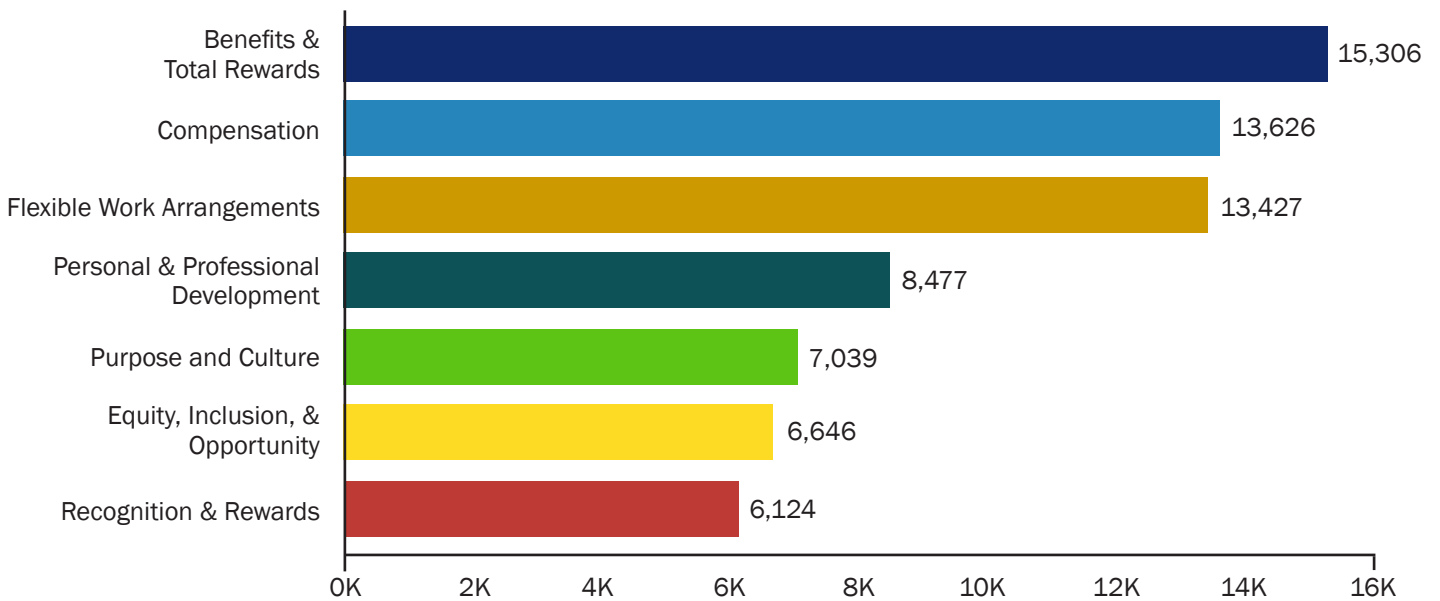
2024 Pulse Survey Summary



Year	Participation	Pulse Score*
Spring 2024	18,616 employees	3.97/5.0
Fall 2023	17,593 employees	3.94/5.0
Spring 2023	18,090 employees	3.98/5.0
Fall 2022	13,992 employees	3.92/5.0
Spring 2022	14,171 employees	3.95/5.0

*Disengaged (1-2), Engaged (3), Highly Engaged (4-5)

Popularity of Workplace Characteristics



Questions	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
I understand what is required to be successful in my role.	4.30	4.26	4.27	4.25	4.24
My work is meaningful and contributes to the goals of my agency.	4.30	4.22	4.27	4.24	4.25
I seek opportunities to improve my performance.	4.30	4.25	4.28	4.27	4.28
My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.	4.20	4.17	4.20	4.19	4.20
My supervisor, or another leader, encourages my professional development.	4.10	4.04	4.10	4.05	4.09
I have access to the equipment and information needed to do my job well.	3.90	3.89	3.96	3.93	3.97
I feel a sense of belonging and inclusion at work.	3.90	3.84	3.91	3.86	3.70
I receive timely feedback from my supervisor regarding my performance.	3.90	3.83	3.89	3.85	3.88
My peers are committed to continuous improvement.	3.80	3.73	3.81	3.77	3.80
I have access to opportunities at work that allow me to learn and grow.	3.80	3.76	3.86	3.81	3.85
Diverse identities and ways of thinking are valued in my workgroup.	3.80	3.77	3.81	3.78	3.78
I receive meaningful recognition when I do good work.	3.70	3.63	3.73	3.67	3.70
I work with someone I consider a close friend.	3.60	3.56	3.62	3.60	3.64
*Pulse Score	3.95	3.92	3.98	3.94	3.97

*Disengaged (1-2), Engaged (3), Highly Engaged (4-5)

IDOH looks back on pivotal year in public health, forward to monumental 2024

What do a scavenger hunt, a cardboard tree and a package of chips that expired in the '90s have in common?

They were all part and parcel to a week of fun events [Indiana Department of Health](#) (IDOH) employees engaged in throughout [National Public Health Week](#) (NPHW). The week highlighted the work of IDOH's public health professionals in meaningful ways while also injecting entertaining and educational activities into the mix. The week was as much about looking forward as it was looking back on recent accomplishments with [Health First Indiana](#) (HFI) remaining top of mind as the agency moves into 2024.

The IDOH awards program was the headline event as four individuals and one team of three were honored for outstanding work alongside numerous others who reached a years of service milestone (ranging from five to 45) within the last year.

- **Public Health Hero** – Naima Gardner (Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity)
- **Power of One** – Andrew Gonzalez (HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis)
- **Exemplary Leadership** – Jamie Black (Office of Data and Analytics, formerly of HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis)
- **Exceptional Customer Service** – Caleb Hoffman (Administrative Services)
- **Outstanding Teamwork** – Chloe Sirico, Jeremy Musko, Chase Westby (HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis Fiscal Services)



Top: Naima Gardner-Rice was named Public Health Hero during National Public Health Week's IDOH awards ceremony. She's pictured (fifth from left) with the executive staff.

Middle: Caleb Hoffman (fifth from left) was recognized with the Exceptional Customer Service award during the April 2 ceremony. The award is given to an IDOH employee or team who practices exemplary service to internal/external customers. Hoffman received three nominations for his work.

Bottom: The award for outstanding teamwork went to Jeremy Musko, Chloe Sirico, and Chase Westby of the Division of HIV/STI/Viral Hepatitis.

During the week there were also a number of presentations including those for Innovation Day, which introduced the leaders of IDOH's new [innovation teams](#). They're working to transform public health in the Hoosier State under the umbrella of eight different groups covering topics that range from artificial intelligence to infant mortality data.

Some other highlights for the week included The Office of Performance Excellence's presentation on Lean Six Sigma, a process improvement method that can help improve IDOH's efficiency, an "idea board" that gave IDOH staff a voice in how the agency can improve going forward, IDOH's resident yoga

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Putting Indiana in the spotlight

“There’s more than corn in Indiana.” The Indiana Beach jingle is hard to forget, and the Indiana Destination Development Corporation (IDDC) knows precisely how true it is. Their team works to promote all that Indiana has to offer to residents and visitors alike. They gave The Torch a look behind the scenes at what that goal entails.

Created in 2019, IDDC sought to expand the former Indiana Office of Tourism Development’s focus on tourism. “We want Indiana to be not just a destination, but to be all the other things that make up the quality of life and make it so fabulous to live here,” said Karen Momper, Director of Strategic Initiatives. That goal means reaching residents and potential visitors of all [92 counties](#) across Indiana and supporting agencies like the Department of Natural Resources. It’s a task that constantly pushes them to find new and interesting ways to put the state in the spotlight.

From the summer of 2022 through the summer of 2023 alone they launched programs like:

- The Home Again in Indiana video series that highlights Hoosiers who have returned to Indiana to raise families, start businesses and more.
- A partnership with Governor Eric J. Holcomb and INDOT to create new IN Indiana interstate signage to welcome in visitors and residents returning home.
- New [Indiana-related merchandise](#) on their e-commerce page.
- The Indiana State Nature Passport, Arts and Culture Passport and other passport programs that encourage



Hoosiers to visit exciting locations across the state.

- A new student campaign to focus on graduate retention in Indiana.

They also work to harness the buzz of exciting events. For the eclipse, the team created a webpage with an extensive resource and event guide and for Taylor Swift’s Indianapolis tour dates, Digital Marketing Strategist, Hailey Reynolds got creative with a themed destination guide based on Swift’s albums. Reynolds is always looking for interesting tie-ins for her marketing efforts and said, “finding some inspiration in the smallest ways is rewarding in itself and being able to do it from my home state is extremely special.”

The efforts and passion of the IDDC team have had a clear impact. In an analysis of their marketing for their [annual report](#), IDDC found that for every dollar they invested



Southeastern Indiana Musician’s Hall of Fame mural in Lawrenceburg, Indiana.

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JAG Indiana more than halfway to 2024-25 expansion goal

Originally adopted during the 2006-07 school year to help combat the state's escalating high school dropout crisis, Indiana's Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program is now widely recognized as one of the most successful initiatives in the country.

Administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), JAG Indiana has served in excess of 40,000 students and graduated more than 95% of program participants since its inception.

Indiana's 2023-24 academic year opened with 125 programs but also with the potential for significant growth momentum thanks to an announcement by Governor Eric J. Holcomb that detailed an expansion target goal of 250 programs in the state by the 2024-25 school year. The goal is driven by DWD's new partnership with the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), which will invest more than \$23.1 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants.

However, JAG program numbers haven't always been as strong as they are now. In fact, during its first year, JAG Indiana served 217 students through a total of 12 statewide in-school programs.

"When we first started, the program was small, and we worked primarily

with urban schools. Then, we started to see significant interest and investment from legislators," said Brianna Morse, DWD Director of Youth Initiatives. "We doubled the program size in 2013 and did another big push in 2017."

As of April 2024, JAG Indiana program administrators were already more than halfway to the 2025 expansion goal.

"This is a big undertaking, but JAG programming can fit all schools and as of today, we're at 78 of 125 new programs," Morse said. "Our goal is to hit the 250 mark by the second semester of this coming school year."

"JAG programming will reach approximately 10,000 students in the next couple of years. We have the opportunity make this the largest program in the nation."

While continuing to expand its program base, JAG Indiana consistently boasts admirable achievements in comparison to national program goals. In fact, for the 2022-23 school year, JAG Indiana highlights included:

- 95% graduation rate (national goal is 90%);
- 83% full-time employment rate (national goal is 80%);
- 82% positive outcome rate (national goal is 80%);
- 72% job placement rate, including military (national goal

is 60%); and

- 39% further education rate (national goal is 35%).

"When the Indiana program began, the goal was to help kids stay in school. That's still central to our focus today," Morse said. "JAG is a pipeline of highly qualified students who have a base line of skills employers are looking for. They're going to show up for their jobs, be enthusiastic and be able to work in teams."

Schools interested in JAG expansion are encouraged to visit in.gov/dwd/jag to learn more >

Article by Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Artwork by Tammy Porter (Indiana Department of Child Services)



May 11, 2024

Annual Friends Native Plant Sale | Indiana Dunes State Park

Mark your calendar to support our Friends of Indiana Dunes along with your backyard habitats by purchasing a native plant.

[More Information >](#)

Friends of Mounds Annual Native Plant Sale | Mounds State Park

There will be 120+ species of native flowers and plants available for the Friends of Mounds State Park's annual fundraiser. All proceeds go to the Friends of Mounds State Park whose mission is to support programs, events, and projects within Mounds State Park.

[More Information >](#)

May 12, 2024

DNR Free Fishing Day | Spring Mill State Park

Stop by the Lakeview Activity Center to borrow a pole and bait to fish in our lake. One hour time slots. Limited supplies.

[More Information >](#)

May 16-19, 2024

Indiana Dunes Birding Festival | Indiana Dunes State Park

These events and programs are a part of a large birding event in the Duneland Area.

[More Information >](#)

May 18, 2024

Summer Concert Series | Fort Harrison State Park

Join us on the sledding hill this summer for some summer concerts! Bring a lawn chair and relax while listening to local musicians from GMH.

[More Information >](#)

Kids to Parks Day | Mississinewa Lake

Learn safety and techniques for archery and firearms by certified instructors.

Designed for youth, but all ages and experience levels are welcome.

[More Information >](#)

Kids to Parks Day | Summit Lake State Park

Join us at the Park Office to meet the park ambassador turtles and for a take and make turtle craft. Also, grab a scavenger hunt sheet and find our hidden photos on Trail 4.

[More Information >](#)

Kids to Parks Day | Salamonie Lake

Spend a day filled with kid-themed activities at Salamonie Lake!

[More Information >](#)

Kids to Parks Day | Spring Mill State Park

Meet new friends and enjoy the outdoors at the Lakeview Nature Center! Activities include a scavenger hunt, critter talk, make and take crafts, and turtle time.

[More Information >](#)

May 19, 2024

Visit Indiana Day | Brown County State Park

Take advantage of Visit Indiana Day and enjoy free admission to Brown County or another Indiana State Park!

[More Information >](#)

May 25, 2024

Bike Parade in the Campground | Summit Lake State Park

Come decorate your bike from 11:30 a.m. until noon at the Naturalist Campsite. At noon, we bike around the campground for our bike parade!

[More Information >](#)

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 >](#)

[View all DNR special events >](#)

This Month WITH



May 11, 2024

Digging up Death

We've been dying to get this program started. Grab your pick and spade as we dig into Early American death practices in the Lanier Mansion formal parlors. Afterwards, we'll head over to Springdale Cemetery and enjoy a guided exploration of Madison's historic burial ground.

[More Information >](#)

May 18, 2024

Young Explorers: Farm Animals | Indiana State Museum

Chickens and cows and pigs, oh my! Join us for a day of barnyard fun and explore all the animals, equipment and jobs that work together to run a farm. Your little farmer will engineer a barn, explore ways to make art on the farm and more.

[More Information >](#)

May 19 & 23, 2024

Meet the Collector: John Simmermaker | Indiana State Museum

John Simmermaker of Pulaski County collected his first antique coverlet in 1972. Since then, he and his family have built one of the most respected coverlet collections in the country with over 700 examples. His collection includes at least 400 Indiana Jacquards, including the coverlets of Woven Together, which were selected for the John and Janet Simmermaker family collection.

[More Information >](#)

May 23, 2024

Curious Kids: Paint Like T.C. | T.C. Steele State Historic Site

Curious kids will explore the world around them with hands-on activities, art making and science exploration. We'll bring the paint supplies; you'll bring your imagination and creativity. And together we'll explore line, shape and color.

[More Information >](#)

May 24, 2024

May Movie Matinee | Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site

Bring your family to the Carriage House for an afternoon at the movies! We'll be screening the movie adaptation of Gene Stratton-Porter's book, Keeper of the Bees. Popcorn is free with admission, and you're welcome to bring your own beverages and candy. After the movie, feel free to take a walk down to the lake or a stroll through the gardens.

[More Information >](#)

May 25, 2025

Stay and Play | Indiana State Museum

Join us for a self-led play experience in Firefly Landing where young children and their caregivers participate in open-ended play and family learning. These two-hour sessions provide a space to explore a variety of tools and activities while also building connections with other families.

[More Information >](#)

Canal Field Day | Whitewater Canal State Historic Site

Come participate in a series of games to celebrate the start of Whitewater Canal State Historic Site's programming season! Families can compete in games of the past and present including Jump the Canal, Battledore, Ball in a Cup and others. It's a fun afternoon for the whole family!

[More Information >](#)

June 1, 2024

Lanier Day | Lanier Mansion State Historic Site

Hip, hip, hooray for Lanier Day! Join us in celebrating Lanier Mansion and the history of Madison with a variety of reenactors, performances, family-friendly activities, vendors and more both inside and outside the mansion, rain or shine.

[More Information >](#)

Spring Loblolly Wildflower Safari | Limberlost State Historic Site

Stroll along the Loblolly Marsh trails with a Limberlost naturalist and take in the variety of spring wildflowers Limberlost has to offer. Find out what they are and how people and animals use them.

[More Information >](#)

View all Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites events >

IDOH looks back on pivotal year in public health, forward to monumental 2024

instructor Erika Chapman (HIV/STI/ Viral Hepatitis) guiding a mindful movement exercises, a presentation on “Mind Body Medicine: A Public Health Approach to Transforming Trauma,” and the week’s customer appreciation activity that allowed staff to pen notes of appreciation to colleagues and customers.

IDOH’s spring cleaning activity also gave staff an opportunity to tidy up their workspaces while hunting for buried treasure. After receiving his Exceptional Customer Service award, Caleb Hoffman (Administrative Services) made an interesting discovery during the

all-office clean-up: a package of Cheetos that passed its sell-by date around the zenith of the Spice Girls craze. That’s August 1997 if you want (you really, really want) to know a precise date. Meanwhile, Lonnie Houser (Office of Technology and Compliance) unearthed an external floppy disc drive that would fit perfectly in the same time period. In addition to unearthing these relics, IDOH employees also had fun during a “scavenger hunt extravaganza” and an “inspiration tree” greeted staff and visitors to the 2 N. Meridian IDOH office Monday through Friday. The tree’s “leaves” bloomed from IDOH employees sharing their “why” behind what they do, including IDOH [Laboratories](#) and [CDHHE](#) staff.



Andrew Gonzalez (left) and Jamie Black won IDOH’s Power of One and Exemplary Leadership awards, respectively.

Article by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
INDIANA UNCLAIMED
What will you find?

INDIANA UNCLAIMED RETURNS
\$1 MILLION
IN UNCLAIMED PROPERTY TO HOOSIERS EVERY WEEK
SEARCH NOW FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES!

START MY SEARCH

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a faint image of the Indiana State Capitol building. At the top center is the logo for the Office of the Attorney General, Indiana Unclaimed Property, with the tagline "What will you find?". Below the logo, the text "INDIANA UNCLAIMED RETURNS" is written in white, followed by "\$1 MILLION" in large, bold, yellow letters. Underneath that, it says "IN UNCLAIMED PROPERTY TO HOOSIERS EVERY WEEK" in white. A yellow banner with black text reads "SEARCH NOW FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES!". At the bottom, a red button with white text says "START MY SEARCH".

Putting Indiana in the spotlight

in their 2022 summer campaign, they were able to generate \$6 in new taxes for Indiana and an impressive \$50 in direct visitor spending for the state. “We’re just trying to improve the quality of life for everyone,” said Amy Howell, Vice President of Tourism, Marketing, & Communications.

And IDDC’s work doesn’t stop with marketing—they also seek to improve quality of life through their grants. In March of this year, IDDC announced that they were awarding \$450,000 through nine grants with recipients like the Evansville Museum of Arts and the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society. The grants will help these sites continue improving, attract even more visitors and contribute to the communities around them. Alongside this support, they’re encouraging groups throughout Indiana to take an active part in their own marketing with their open-source branding campaign. Howell made clear that “anyone’s a partner” and can utilize their [full campaign kits](#) that make it easy to be a part of their promotional efforts.

When asked about the top things that set Indiana apart, the team had plenty to share. To name a few: Forbes named Indiana the second best state in the U.S. to start a business in 2024, the Indianapolis Airport was named one of the best in the country in 2023 by Airports Council International (an award they’ve received for 12 years in a row), Indiana’s universities draws



talent from around the world, Indiana Dunes National Park contains over 15,000 acres along miles of beautiful lake shoreline and the Indy 500 is an iconic racing event that fans look forward to every May. “We could go on and on,” said Marketing Coordinator, Lindsey Skeen.

Within this list, the biggest thing they agreed that sets Indiana apart is the people. “Hoosier hospitality is a real thing,” said Howell. “It’s the people you meet along the way.” As the team looks ahead and plans how to promote the state next, they’ll keep the people of Indiana at the core of what they do.

To keep up with IDDC and the great events that are happening around the state, look for the Visit Indiana banner in each edition of the Torch (located on page 4 of this edition).