

## Annual Outing Teams Colleges, Businesses ... and a Bus

**T**eachers often tout hands-on experience as model career training for students. A Day on the Bus event helps college faculty follow their own advice.

Four southwestern Indiana colleges – the universities of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Vincennes and Ivy Tech Community College – introduced the program in January. Faculty and administrators travel via an Old National Bank bus to several local businesses, where they learn about the companies and tour the facilities.

“In a college setting, you’re building case studies, using examples in the classroom,” reports Sue Ellspermann, director of the Center for Applied Research and Economic Development at the University of Southern Indiana. “We want them (faculty) to have individuals they know within these business organizations in particular content areas.”

On August 10, nearly 50 individuals from diverse study areas were scheduled to visit Mead Johnson Nutritionals, Berry Plastics Corporation, Deaconess Gateway Hospital and Old National Bank. An evening reception followed.

“All of these different businesses will be talking about trends, innovation, market research,” notes Kathy Schoettlin, vice president of public relations for Old National Bank. “And when they (faculty) come to Old National, we’ll have our human resources representative talk about what they’re looking for in a college graduate.”



**Students are not the only bus passengers on their way to learning experiences.**

“It’s not going to stop that day,” emphasizes Ellspermann in discussing the higher education/business community partnership. “It’s going to continue as we go on.”

**Resources:** Sue Ellspermann, University of Southern Indiana, at [sellsperma@usi.edu](mailto:sellsperma@usi.edu)

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### Organization Fosters University/Community Partnership

**T**he National Campus Compact personifies the concept of real-world learning. Civic and service learning are cornerstones of the organization’s mission.

Indiana Campus Compact (ICC), the local chapter, serves 45 accredited higher institutions of learning and more than 200,000 full-time equivalent students. Established in 1993, it focuses on curricular and co-curricular activities.

Students can benefit from professional development opportunities and technical assistance provided by the ICC. They also can seek funding for various projects, including after-school tutoring programs. Similarly, the ICC awards faculty members grants to assist with creating civic learning courses.

Jackie McCracken, executive director, comments on the significance of the Campus Compact:

“It’s valuable to our (chapter) presidents because we can make this impact not only on student learning, but also helping local communities to solve problems,” she reflects. “They feel very strongly that what we can do together as a body, as an organization, is far more than what a campus can do by itself.”

**Resource:** Jackie McCracken, Indiana College Compact, at [jacmccra@iupui.edu](mailto:jacmccra@iupui.edu)

### High School Seniors Diversify College Options

**T**here’s a new trend among high school students that’s more academic than social. Rather than focusing on a few select colleges, many are applying to a dozen or more institutions.

In fact, the number of students applying to a minimum of 12 colleges has doubled over the last five years, according to a UCLA Cooperative Institutional Research Program annual survey.

Increased admission options can boost teens’ confidence and allay fears of rejection as each submission improves the likelihood of an acceptance letter. On the other hand, many educational leaders argue against widespread submissions, emphasizing the danger of replacing quality with quantity. Another drawback is the potential stress seniors may experience while deciding between numerous colleges.

The process can be expensive. Application fees often range from \$50 to \$75. Availability of free online applications, however, continues to grow.

A Washington private school restricts college applications. Further, a Pittsburgh high school discourages excessive submissions by charging a \$35 fee for providing more than 10 transcripts per student.

Compiled by Symone Salisbury

## Company Adds Unique Twist to Home Inspections

“Don’t fix it if it isn’t broken,” advises a familiar expression. In the context of home maintenance, however, the first challenge often is determining needed repairs.

Enter Landmark Inspection Services LLC, a Fishers company established earlier this year.

Landmark Inspection Services offers traditional inspections (such as those relating to real estate transactions), as well as a Total Preventative Inspection (TPI) annual program. Standard TPI inspection criteria includes plumbing and electrical systems, roof and attic evaluations.

“TPI is unique because no one else is doing it,” contends Matt Kiser, owner and inspector. “It’s a check-up, if you will, for your house.”

Kiser says one reason for creating the program was to help individuals address problems that, if overlooked, could magnify future expenses. TPI also facilitates advance planning, increases home resale value and identifies safety concerns.

“Our business is to provide information, and we want to provide the best information possible,” Kiser contends. “We want to be in business a long time, and those are the kinds of things that will allow us to do that.”

**Resource: Matt Kiser, Landmark Inspection Services, at [www.landmarkinspect.net](http://www.landmarkinspect.net)**

## Teen Restrictions Help Retailers Rebound

Teen-agers spent an estimated \$158 billion in 2005. Various shopping centers and malls, however, have seen an increase in traffic and sales by enforcing strict rules against unchaperoned teens.

Malls throughout the country have implemented restrictions against teens who loitered, bothered customers, blocked entrances and exits, argued or created disturbances. Families and older consumers have returned in many of those venues, shoplifting has decreased and sales have increased slightly. Sales at youth-oriented stores even increased by up to 5%, with one general manager saying, “The teens that come are now here to shop.”

At Fairlane Town Center in Dearborn, Michigan, as many as 750 teens were expelled on Friday and Saturday nights before the restrictions – those age 17 and below need a chaperone after 5 p.m. – were put in place. School officials, religious leaders and other groups were invited to the mall to observe the problems prior to the rule changes.

Since the new policy, Fairlane has increased its Kids Club (for ages 12 and under) activities, doubled its walking club participants, reduced police incidents by 70% and realized increased spending from all age groups.

In a survey by the International Council of Shopping Centers, about one-third of respondents indicated they had some form of teen rules. Most had been instituted in the past two years.

## Innovative Railroad Ties Advance Industry

Indiana is playing a pivotal role in rail travel’s evolution by producing composite railroad ties made of recycled materials.

Unlike other recycled ties, the composite engineered tie contains steel and concrete in addition to plastic and rubber.

Primix Corporation (Atwood) licensed the tie to Dynamic Composites LLC, which will manufacture the ties at a new 45,000-square-foot facility in Columbia City. Steel Dynamics, headquartered in Fort Wayne, is funding the project.

The plant is scheduled to open later this year, with tie production planned for early 2007. Annual production rates will reach 250,000, with the capacity for double that amount.

Chuck Cadwell, Dynamic Composites general manager, maintains that although production costs are initially higher than those associated with traditional ties, users ultimately will save money since the lifespan is five to six times greater than that of a wood tie.

He also points out that composite ties can eliminate the use of cancerous agents such as creosote, which often is used to preserve wood on train tracks.

“The composite ties that are out there right now crack and wear to the outdoor temperatures,” Cadwell explains. “Incorporating



**Railroads remain vital components of economic development in Indiana and beyond.**

the steel and concrete allows us to use the plastic more in its natural state and get the life out of it that’s needed.”

**Resource: Chuck Cadwell, Dynamic Composites, at (260) 625-8100 x 8806.**