

## LaPorte County Forms Development Alliance

In the March-April *BizVoice*, Purdue University North Central Chancellor James Dworkin discussed the importance of regional cooperation in economic development. As that issue was being distributed, a number of organizations officially joined together to form the LaPorte County Economic Development Alliance.

The university, often a facilitator due to its central location in Westville and Dworkin's leadership, will offer university personnel, facilities and research to support the effort. The alliance helps bridge a longstanding divide between LaPorte and Michigan City, and brings together local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and local and county government officials.

Key issues are seen as transportation, air quality, infrastructure, land use, zoning, tax incentives, workforce development, business attraction and expansion, and marketing in all areas of the county.

"We have more resources and a more powerful voice if we work together to accomplish our common goals," Dworkin states.



James Dworkin

## Program Opens Doors to College Education

Purdue North Central (PNC) is also focused on its primary mission of enhancing area education with the recent announcement of a College Bound program. The partnership with Michigan City Area Schools (MCAS) will provide full college scholarships to qualifying students.

Twenty-five seventh-grade students will be identified this year. Potential in an area in which PNC offers a bachelor's degree, test scores, teacher recommendations and other criteria will be used to select the students. New students will be added each year.

In addition to the potential college funding, students will become involved in field trips, after-school programs and summer camps. A mentor-teacher relationship will help them prepare for education after high school.

MCAS Superintendent Fred LaBorn: "This will put a college education within reach of our students. Our students and their families can now look forward to fulfilling their dream of attending college, and ultimately earning a degree from Purdue North Central.

Grants, individual contributions and donations from area businesses and organizations will finance the program. The university hopes to expand to other area school districts.

**Resource: Purdue North Central at (219) 872-0527 or [www.pnc.edu](http://www.pnc.edu)**



## Flexibility Key to CMAP Success

Developing programs that match student expertise with business challenges is nothing new. Jim Gregar, associate director of the Indiana Small Business Development Center in South Bend, enhances those relationships, however, by working closely with college and university professors.

The SBDC's Collegiate Management Assistance Program (CMAP) was started by Gregar 16 years ago. He says MBA and senior undergraduate students complete between 50 and 60 projects a year. The high number of institutions – Indiana University South Bend, Saint Mary's, Bethel and Davenport are primary participants with the Notre Dame Mendoza College of Business – helps increase the volume.

"I serve as facilitator, lining up projects that are related to courses the students are taking," explains Gregar, a former college professor himself. Although an oral presentation with the client in attendance and a written report are required at the end of the project, Gregar adds, "The reason we're successful is we're not real rigid. I'm willing to do what the professor wants. Each one is a little different in how they want things structured."

Overall, 928 clients have received assistance in the 16 years. The student breakdown is 53% from MBA programs and 47% undergraduates. Nearly three-quarters of the projects – business plan preparation, marketing strategies, feasibility studies, surveys, strategic analysis and much more – have taken place within St. Joseph County.

In the end, students receive hands-on experience in applying principles and theories, while entrepreneurs gain free assistance. Gregar has trained SBDC advisors in other areas of the state, but frequent turnover often presents the programs from taking hold. He will be working with central Indiana officials as Marian College is leading the way in developing a CMAP program for that area of the state.

**Resource: Jim Gregar, South Bend SBDC, at (574) 282-4350**

## ThemeVision Advances Legal Preparation

Jury selection in court cases is often identified as a key element to success. Barnes & Thornburg law firm has advanced the concept much further with its scientific jury research and advocacy analysis service. It is now making ThemeVision available to other law firms throughout the country.

Dennis P. Stolle, Ph.D., is a social psychologist and an attorney. Few others doing this type of work combine both elements. Those most associated with the field are psychologists, sociologists, academicians or consultants.

Focus group studies, jury simulations and even mock trials are among the methods used to, in Stolle's words, "develop case themes and test out potential arguments. We want those themes and arguments to resonate with anyone who might be on a jury."

Stolle says that in a 2003 federal trial, in which Barnes & Thornburg was working for the plaintiffs, several claims were available. Jury simulation and mock juror processes resulted in rejection of the initial claims selected and strong positive reactions to some of the other potential claims. Changes were made and the mock jury process was repeated. Ultimately, the alternative claims were used and the result was a win for the client.

Stolle and others at Barnes & Thornburg have consulted on high-stakes cases throughout the country. The response since efforts to market the service began earlier this year has been very positive, he says.

**Resource:** Dennis P. Stolle at (317) 231-7742 or [www.btlaw.com](http://www.btlaw.com)

## Federal Money Goes to Indiana's General Fund

Indiana's \$1 billion-plus budget deficit would be several million dollars higher if not for the "fiscal relief" provided by the federal government in 2003. Washington provided \$20 billion nationally as part of the Job & Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003.

Mike Landwer of the State Budget Agency outlines Indiana's portion of the pie. An increase in the federal matching percentage for Medicaid provided an additional \$146.3 million to the state. The flexible portion of the relief – \$206.8 million for Indiana – was received in two installments in June 2003 and October 2003.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, the relief funds had to be spent for essential services, coverage of unfunded federal mandates or expenditures "of a type that existed in the most recently approved state budget." Indiana, Landwer says, appropriated the money to the Department of Corrections (meeting the third option listed above), which reverted it back to the state. The money went into the general fund to help pay for existing appropriations in the 2004 and 2005 fiscal year budgets.

NCSL reports that most states followed a similar path, with funds being used in the areas of education, corrections and health. Florida, however, planned to spend \$310 million to lure a biotechnology company to Palm Beach County.

**Resource:** State Budget Agency at (317) 232-5610



## Ball State Fills Construction Management Gap

Meeting the needs of students and businesses has led to the addition of a construction management option in Ball State University's industrial technology program.

Jack Wescott, chairman of the Department of Industry and Technology, cites widespread interest from both parties. Current and incoming students had inquired about such a program (15 have changed to the new major already even though the option does not officially begin until the fall of 2004), while a survey of area contractors was conducted.

"We found quite a need. There's an emphasis on communication skills, presentation skills, a lot of non-technical things people are looking for," he reveals. "Good trades people are often not interested in middle management. We can provide graduates for the construction workforce at that level."

Required internships will send students out of the classroom for field experience. Coordination with the architecture and business departments will provide a well-rounded curriculum that will carry over into the workplace.

Businesses will also benefit from a still developing lineup of certification programs for existing professionals. Wescott says a great deal of education and training for workers in construction goes beyond the traditional degree stage.

Ball State studied similar efforts at Purdue, Bowling Green (Ohio) and elsewhere in developing its program.

**Resource:** Jack Wescott, Ball State University, at (765) 285-5642 or [www.bsu.edu](http://www.bsu.edu)

## Legislative Staff Positions Become Permanent

Indiana has mirrored national trends – more permanent and less session-only personnel – over the past 25 years in the makeup of its legislative support staff.

The Indiana numbers: 138 permanent staff in 1979 to 304 in 2003. Session-only staff decreased from 170 to 79 over the same period. Indiana's total increase from 308 to 383 people was slightly less than the approximate 30% national average.

Not surprisingly, state population largely dictates staff size (see accompanying lists). Overall, 34,979 people were employed as legislative staff members in 2003.

**Resource: National Conference of State Legislatures at [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org)**



### Legislatures With Most Staff (2003)

New York – 3,428  
 Pennsylvania – 2,947  
 California – 2,334  
 Texas – 2,268  
 Florida – 1,803

### Legislatures With Fewest Staff (2003)

South Dakota – 49  
 Vermont – 82  
 Wyoming – 114  
 North Dakota – 124  
 Delaware – 131

## Business Community Invited to Leadership Summit

The Next Indiana: The Urgency for Change is the theme of the 2004 Indiana Leadership Summit.

Presented by the Indiana Humanities Council, the third annual event strives to strengthen communities through leadership, education and culture. Registration remains open for the 2004 summit, which takes place June 15-17 in downtown Indianapolis.

National experts will focus on topics including the importance of a civil society, entrepreneurship and management, e-government and faith-based economic development. Strategies that have proven effective in driving change in other states – including innovations in infrastructure, communications, service and social capital – will be explored.

Recognizing that Indiana's progress is contingent upon developing and retaining young leaders, the event will feature the Governor's Award for Tomorrow's Leaders. Twelve young leaders (age 19-29) from Indiana will be recognized for their leadership in business, entrepreneurship, community and cultural initiatives.

**Resource: Indiana Humanities Council at (317) 638-1500 or [www.ihc4u.org/summit.htm](http://www.ihc4u.org/summit.htm)**

## Is 'ER' Coming to the Workplace?

Health care costs may be a critical workplace issue, but the headline on this story has nothing to do with medical needs. ER, in this case, refers to early riser, as in a potential new job shift that may appeal to many workers, particularly older Americans.

The changing face of the workforce, the effort to balance employee work/life needs and a business climate that continues to become more global may give "rise" to a predicted 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. shift. Some companies, primarily manufacturers, utilize a similar shift to avoid extreme summer heat or allow for easier scheduling of second shifts. The practice, however, is expected to become more common in a number of industrial and office settings.

Federal statistics show the greatest job growth since 2001 coming in the 55-and-over age group. Human resource professionals, however, say the early riser shift may apply to employees in many age groups. Taking care of family responsibilities and/or increased leisure opportunities are appealing advantages.

Employers can also benefit. Early morning employee availability can enhance communications with international customers and suppliers. The flexible scheduling perk could help attract and retain top workers, as well as produce savings from shared workstations leading to smaller overall office space requirements.

Experts say the shift must be optional, however, as resentment would follow if mandatory implementation was to take place. The development of the early riser shift will be an interesting trend to watch, they contend.

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