

# INDIANA PARTNERSHIP PENTAGON

Meeting 1 | Today's Students



## THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

### RESOURCE EXPERTS

- ✉ [Dr. Anthony P. Carnevale](#), Director and Research Professor, Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University

### KEY TAKEAWAYS & CONSIDERATIONS

- During this session, Dr. Anthony Carnevale provided data from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University. [Dr. Carnevale's remarks are linked.](#)
- *Postsecondary education and training are still the best avenue to economic prosperity both for individuals, as well as the state and nation's future.*
  - It is estimated that of the [3.3 million jobs](#) that Indiana will have available by 2031, over 2 million (62 percent) will require some form of postsecondary education or training.
  - In Indiana, [77 percent](#) of good jobs, defined as paying at least \$45,000 (in 2020 dollars), are currently held by workers with at least some college education or training.
  - Postsecondary attainment also has non-monetary benefits including reported rises in happiness, stronger civic engagement, better health, and boosts in agency and empowerment.
- *Indiana must contend with changing demographics and worker migration to ensure economic competitiveness in the coming decades.*
  - While [2.3 million workers](#) live and work in Indiana, 194,000 workers live in Indiana but work outside the state, and 157,000 workers work in Indiana live in another state.
  - By 2025, the number of college-age residents in the U.S. will decrease by nearly [17 percent](#), which may contribute to lower enrollment rates.
  - In Indiana over the next 5 years, a larger part of the college-going population will come from working class and low-income households. These students are typically more loan averse, work while enrolled and least likely to attend full time.
- *Indiana must continue to work to strengthen the alignment between workforce development opportunities, employer needs and higher education offerings to ensure the state is equipped with a well-trained and educated workforce.*
  - Demand for transparency and transparency in degree outcomes, including employment and earning, should result in policy changes that help students determine the value-add of specific programs and degrees.
  - Further changes to Federal Pell grants may also make funding available for short-term training programs that align with high-skill, high-wage jobs.
  - Support services, career counseling, and nonprofit intermediaries are needed to connect students with education, career pathways, and employers.

## TODAY'S POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS

### MODERATOR

- ✉ [Dr. Madeline Smith](#), Director of Higher Education, The Hunt Institute

### RESOURCE EXPERTS

- ✉ [Marlene Dotson](#), President & CEO, Indiana Latino Institute
- ✉ [Maceo Rainey](#), President, Indiana TRiO

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Indiana must continue to work to close equity gaps in postsecondary access and attainment.*
  - As of 2021, [54 percent](#) of adults ages 25-64 had some form of postsecondary degree or credential, which is below the state's goal of 60 percent by 2025.

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- Racial equity gaps still exist though, as [63.3 percent](#) of Asian/Pacific Islanders Hoosiers and 41.2 percent of white Hoosiers have attained a postsecondary degree, compared to 31.6 percent, 26.7 percent, and 25.9 percent of Black, Hispanic and American Indian Hoosiers, respectively.
    - Additionally, [6.2 percent](#) of the workforce population has some credits, but no degree or credential.
  - Barriers, and perception of barriers often keep students from underrepresented populations from applying for postsecondary education, and there are specific barriers unique to difference ethnicities and identities.
    - Students continue to question the cost of higher education and the return on investment, and lack of knowledge around financial aid often keeps individuals from even exploring training options.
- ***Student support services and community organizations are essential to helping students enroll, persist, and attain a postsecondary degree or credential, especially those from underrepresented populations.***
  - Programs such as TRIO and the Indiana Latino Institute serve to provide advocacy culturally responsive programming for specific student populations.
  - These programs also provide networking and mentorship, also known as social capital, which are critical components of overcoming the numerous barriers in the college going experience.
  - Coordination between nonprofits, government agencies, and social advocacy groups has the power to create more seamless transitions and work encompassing support services for students.
- ***The work to close the equity gap must begin prior to students arriving on higher education campuses.***
  - The K-12 school districts have a role in exposing students to all the various postsecondary pathways from 2- and 4-year degrees to workforce and career training.
    - K-12 systems should work with local business leaders to provide opportunities for students to intern and gain hands-on experience to promote postsecondary advancement.
  - Longitudinal educational data systems can help continue to parse out the roadblocks that keep students from enrolling in postsecondary education.

## RESOURCES

01. [Indiana TRIO](#) | TRIO is a set of federally funded college opportunity programs that motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of a college degree.
02. [Indiana Latino Institute](#) | The Indiana Latino Institute (ILI) works to improve health and advance education for the Indiana Latino community through statewide advocacy, research, and culturally responsive programming.

## CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS: PROVIDING BUILDING BLOCKS TO A MORE EDUCATED INDIANA

### MODERATOR

✉ [Paola Santana](#), Strategy Officer | Lumina Foundation

### RESOURCE EXPERTS

- ✉ [Dr. Stacy Townsley](#), Associate Commissioner for Adult Strategy, Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- ✉ [Melanie Zaber](#), Economist, Middle-Class Pathways Center, RAND Corporation
- ✉ [Aaron Baute](#), Chancellor, Ivy Tech Community College Lafayette

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ***Credential pathways are essential to engaging more students in workforce training that lead to high-quality careers and the opportunity for career advancement.***
  - Credentials should be universal and recognized by the broader business community to ensure that students are prepared to meet the needs of the current and future economy.
  - Credentials should also be stackable, meaning that the various credits and programs can accumulate towards the attainment of an associate degree and/or bachelor's degree for the student.

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- Stackability provides students the flexibility to enter and exit postsecondary education as needed, allowing them to upskill or reskill when needed, and be rewarded for previous experiences.
    - Credit for prior learning considers learning from life experiences, such as serving in the military, to shorten the time to degree by awarded credits for competency.
  - A state database of credential programs and pathways, as well as uniformity in their transferability across postsecondary institutions, would further promote the use and understanding of credential pathways.
- ***Students do not understand the multitude of postsecondary pathways available to them.***
  - Increasing the number of college/career counselors, as well as providing more professional development to current counselors, will equip counselors with the knowledge and tools to introduce students to a variety of postsecondary pathways.
  - Programs such as career and technical education in high school expose students to workforce opportunities earlier, but often rural schools and under-resourced schools lack the personnel and funding to offer a variety of these courses.
- ***Business and industry leaders also have a role to play in this work, and the state should incentivize their engagement in the process.***
  - Business leaders should be engaged in conversations with postsecondary leaders to ensure that course and program offerings align with the needs of the business community. One example of this includes the [BlueSky Tennessee Institute](#), in which Blue Cross Blue Shield and East Tennessee State University developed an accelerated curriculum to offer bachelor degrees in two years.
  - Incentives such as tax credits and matching funding for apprenticeships programs, for example, make it more feasible for small and local businesses to also engage in workforce development.
    - These incentives, coupled with an educated workforce, help bring businesses and industry investment to Indiana.
  - Calculating Return on Investment for these programs can be difficult, as data are sparse and there are tradeoffs between short- and long-term data. In fact, [a recent study](#) found that no states have comprehensive data about all types of non-degree credentials and that further work is needed to ensure all credentials are included in their state longitudinal data systems.

## RESOURCES

01. [RAND Lowy Family Middle-Class Pathways Center](#) | This center works to create new and better pathways towards equitable and sustainable work opportunities in today's economy.
02. [Your Next Step](#) | A one-stop shop of resources to present pathways to career, education, and life opportunities.
03. [Career Pathways @ Ivy Tech](#) | This interactive webpage lets students consider possible pathways to short term credentials, training, or earning an associate degree.
04. [Talent Resource Navigator](#) | Developed by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Navigator connects employers and individuals to the workforce resources needed.