



DWD Honored with Awards for Governor’s Public Service & APM Observability

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) was recently presented with awards that honored individual agency employees for their work in public service as well as a team award for the agency’s utilization of technology.

DWD’s Director of UI Benefits Suzanne Manning, the DWD’s UI Modernization team, and the agency’s Indiana Adult Education State Team were awarded 2024 Governor’s Public Service Achievement Awards Oct. 30 in a ceremony that took place at the Indiana Statehouse.

The Governor’s Public Service Achievement Awards celebrate those who have made a significant and positive impact on their agency’s finances, operations, or the communities they serve.

The Awards were first implemented by Governor Daniels and were reinstated by Governor Holcomb in 2023.

Each of Indiana’s nearly 100 agencies nominated staff for the award.

From a technology perspective, DWD earned a second-place finish in the Indiana Office of Technology’s (IOT) first ever APM (Application Performance Monitoring) Observability Champion awards competition, part of an initiative developed to recognize statewide agency utilization of technology-related tools and to encourage agencies to expand their own usage.

The Indiana Department of Revenue finished first among approximately 25 state agencies that were evaluated during the contest while third place went to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

The idea for a friendly competition among agencies began with Brad Welsh, IOT’s APM Program Manager.

“I was a swimmer in school, so I understand the importance of healthy competition,” he said. “It’s fun when teams get involved in something and become engaged.”

The IOT contest began in January 2024.

“That’s when we informed the agencies about the initiative,” Welsh said. “Throughout the year, we tracked progress using a scorecard that measured engagements, training enablement, and application instrumentation maturity, culminating in September.

“All three winning agencies participated and excelled in these categories.

“DWD has been a strong partner of ours for a long time. They’re highly engaged, utilize applications and are great about asking questions.”

According to DWD Technology Officer Rick Bedel, the COVID-19 pandemic helped strengthen DWD's connection with the IOT APM team and was the beginning of the application performance monitoring journey.

"With as much unemployment as there was at that time, our Uplink system couldn't handle the number of claimants," Bedel said. "They (IOT) connected us with a set of tools that would allow us to troubleshoot issues much quicker.

"At the very beginning, we were only using the app (AppDynamics) for troubleshooting, but we saw the potential it had. Now, it's being used to monitor almost all our public-facing applications, and we are working toward being more proactive to potential issues rather than reactive."

Welsh said IOT plans to continue the APM contest into 2025. He also emphasized that agencies receiving awards this year will again be eligible for the competition next year.

"If anything, they already have a path to success," he added.

"This is a great way to get more agencies to use the technologies available to them," Bedel said. "After all, they're free to use."