

Executive Staff Celebrates Innovation Winners; New Ideas Still Welcomed

The Innovation and Process Improvements Division is celebrating the INDOT employees behind the winning ideas of the inaugural 2019-2020 campaign while reminding workers that it's not too late to enter the 2020-2021 call for ideas for improving INDOT's processes or projects.

In late August, INDOT Commissioner Joe McGuinness and other executive staff, along with Innovation and Process Improvements Director Todd May and his team, traveled to Linton in Greene County to honor Vincennes District Area Engineer Patrick Craig. He was the district's lone 2019-2020 winner, devising a concrete equipment blast cleaning cabinet.



Todd May and Clark Packer (second and third from left) present the award to Chris Jilg (from left), Mark Anderson, Pat Szewczak, and Adam Tyra at the Indianapolis Subdistrict in the Greenfield District.

In late September, the Greenfield District was similarly honored by district executives and others for their inventions. Several Greenfield Subdistrict employees last year devised an asphalt push paver, and former Indianapolis Subdistrict Highway Technician Miranda Orick invented a tow-plow guidance laser.

Accepting the award from May and Greenfield District Deputy

Commissioner Clark Packer at the Indianapolis Subdistrict were Greenfield District Highway Maintenance Director Pat Szewczak, Indianapolis Subdistrict Manager Mark Anderson, Highway Maintenance Engineer Chris Jilg, and Highway Engineer Adam Tyra (Jilg and Tyra are the district's Innovation team leaders). Accepting the Greenfield Subdistrict's award from May and Packer at the District administrative building were

Szewczak, Jilg, Tyra, Greenfield District Equipment Manager Andrew Shannon, and Greenfield Shop Foreman Robert Oldham.

Trips to the remaining four districts to honor those responsible for the other 11 winning ideas will take place this fall and winter.

"The COVID-19 crisis delayed the timeframe in which we wanted to honor [the 14 winning ideas from 2019-2020](#)," said May. "These ideas are being prepared for statewide implementation. Despite the delay, it was a delight for executive staff and my team to personally recognize the Vincennes and Greenfield winners and to see their innovations. We can't wait to visit Crawfordsville, Fort Wayne, LaPorte, and Seymour."

Craig said he was honored to be celebrated by McGuinness, executive staff, May, Vincennes District Deputy Commissioner Rusty Fowler, and others at the Indiana Department of Natural Resource's Goose Pond facility in Linton.



Vincennes District innovation winner Patrick Craig.

“I think that INDOT has made a great decision to place innovation as a top priority,” said Craig. “This has been a challenging year for everyone, so I’m glad that INDOT has stuck with the Innovation program. Our employees have great ideas, and the program gives them an avenue to share them.”

Craig continued: “The idea has sparked other ideas and processes where we can use alternative blast cleaning for cleansing other equipment and graffiti by using alternative materials such as dry ice. I would urge other INDOT employees to think outside the box and not be afraid to submit the simplest ideas. The Innovation program is still just beginning, and I am hopeful that it will continue to grow.”

In Greenfield, Packer was excited to help honor the winners.

“These ideas coming forward and being brought to fruition is really what the program is about,” said Packer. “I’m proud of the team being able to drive these items forward to produce a tangible product that makes us better. The partnership between the district and Central Office teams was awesome, and I am a firm believer that we all win during these times of collaboration.”

It’s not too late for INDOT employees to enter their innovative ideas for the 2020-2021 competition. Staffers have until Oct. 31 to complete a submission form. For more information, click [here](#).

The Innovation and Process Improvements Division was the focus of the August edition of On the DOT, INDOT’s monthly podcast. To listen to the podcast, click [here](#).



At the Vincennes District award ceremony are (from left) Vincennes District Deputy Commissioner Rusty Fowler, Commissioner Joe McGuinness, winner Patrick Craig, and Innovation’s Todd May.



At the Greenfield District administrative building are (from left) Andrew Shannon, Adam Tyra, Pat Szewczak, Clark Packer, Robert Oldham, Chris Jilg, and Todd May.