

Building Jay County's Future

Workforce Development

The Education and Workforce Development Task Force has created a plan to ensure that:

- Jay County has a home-grown learning system that cultivates the talent employers need and increases educational attainment.
- Jay County coordinates talent with equitable economic opportunities to raise household income and earnings.

Background

A strong and diverse workforce is the backbone of any local economy. The availability of skills enhancement enables workers to fill higher-wage jobs and, by doing so, boosts economic prosperity both for their families and for the community.

Many communities face shortages of trained workers. Finding skilled workers is perhaps the most important barrier to growth for many companies – growth that could boost the local economy.

Fortunately, Jay County already has a strong workforce development system in place through the John Jay Center for Learning.

The need to enhance the workforce pipeline is a critical part of the Jay County Economic Development Plan.¹ While the plan addressed several economic issues, two important goals of the plan were:

- Determine the workforce development related needs of priority employers in Jay County; and,
- Provide workforce development training for youth and adults of targeted employers.

The Community Prosperity Chart Book², completed in July 2019, reached a similar conclusion. Jay County “has numerous larger employers ... and we recommend a robust and aggressive larger employer retention and expansion strategy”. This strategy included enhancing the workforce development system, along with other important matters. “Workforce development includes recruitment and skills training,” the report said.

John Jay Center for Learning

John Jay Center for Learning (JJCL), located in downtown Portland, Indiana, is dedicated to helping people achieve satisfaction and lifelong employability through education. The mission of JJCL is “Inspiration and Prosperity Through Learning”.

Services provided by JJCL include traditional college courses, vocational training, certifications, and career planning. They partner with Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana, Purdue Polytechnic, Vincennes University, Indiana Tech, and Indiana Wesleyan University. Through a partnership with the Jay School Corporation, they are also able to offer Adult Basic Education and High School Equivalency programs.

The Importance of the Agricultural Sector in Jay County

A 2017 report listed Jay County as the Number 1 agricultural county in the state and among the top 166 counties in the U.S. Companies such as Poet Biorefining, Tyson, and Andersons Agricultural Group are major employers. Workforce development efforts in Jay County will include meeting the needs of this sector.

Career opportunities in agriculture could come in one of two forms: the production side, and the value-added side. While Jay County has examples of both, a great deal of activity occurs on the production side in Jay County. In addition, some economic development statistics may refer to the value-added side as manufacturing, rather than agriculture.

The local 4-H organization is working with the agricultural community in two important areas: succession planning, and farmers as employers. Additional work is being done by the Purdue Extension in Jay County.

¹ *Jay County Economic Development Plan*, Purdue University, 2019

² *Community Prosperity Chart Book, Jay County*, E2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, July 2019.

Information on the programs offered by 4-H in Jay County is included in an appendix to this report.

The Goals for Jay County

Our workforce development efforts in Jay County will focus on three primary areas: **Adult Workforce Training, Employment and Wages, and Future Talent Pipeline.**

In the area of Adult Workforce Training, we will **increase the number of residents who achieve high value certifications in targeted workforce areas.** This will be completed through the John Jay Center for Learning, which offers courses based on needs of local employers.

Success in this area will be measured through:

- Enrollment in targeted workforce development skills courses
- Number of certifications awarded in targeted areas

A related goal for our workforce efforts will be in Employment and Wages. We want to ensure that **residents who upgrade their skills increase their household income.**

In this area, JJCL will partner with Jay County Economic Development Corporation and work to increase participation in JJCL job skills and outplacement programs. The goal will be to measure the wages and benefits earned after completion of JJCL job skills programs compared to prior wages and benefits. This information can be used to entice other adults to participate in such programs.

Finally, our efforts will enhance the Future Talent Pipeline. In this area, schools and the community will collaborate to **provide mentoring programs and engaging learning opportunities that provide the skills and developmental assets children need to thrive.**

Some of the most important programs in this section will include:

- 4-H Youth Development Programs
- Other out-of-school-time (OST) programs TBD
- Career-embedded learning opportunities TBD by Jay County Jr.-Sr. High School

Success in this area will be measured by the following metrics:

- Number of youth engaged in 4-H programs
- Number of and % of students engaged in other OST programs and jobs
- Number of and % of students who progress toward “industry standard” credentials in high school

How Will This Improve the Quality of Life in Jay County?

If we are successful in our efforts, we hope to accomplish the following goals:

- Labor force levels improve
- Workforce participation improves
- Average wages rise
- Median family income increases
- Population grows
- Net migration Improves
- High school graduation levels rise
- The number of residents with post-secondary degrees and certifications increase
- The stories residents and others tell to describe economic opportunities in Jay County are positive.

Appendix: 4-H Youth Development Programs

4-H youth development programs delivered through Purdue Extension in all Jay County communities contribute to Education and Workforce Development outcomes by preparing young people to be leaders through hands-on experiences alongside their peers and caring adults. Community clubs, afterschool programs, school enrichment, camps/workshops, and special interest programs are among the ways the Extension provides such experiences. 4-H programs are grounded in the belief that kids learn best by doing. Children and teens complete hands-on projects in areas like science, health, agriculture, and civic engagement, in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles.

Regardless of the project area, all 4-H programs include mentoring and career readiness as core elements. Jay County 4-H uses the National 4-H Youth Thriving Model and Search Institute's Developmental Relationships Framework as its guide to ensure participating youth have the kinds of experiences that research shows matters most for their development. The five critical elements adult leaders are trained to provide include the following:

EXPRESS CARE - Show me that I matter to you.

- Be dependable—Be someone I can trust.
- Listen—Really pay attention when we are together.
- Believe in me—Make me feel known and valued.
- Be warm—Show me you enjoy being with me.
- Encourage—Praise me for my efforts and achievements.

CHALLENGE GROWTH - Push me to keep getting better.

- Expect my best—Expect me to live up to my potential.
- Stretch—Push me to go further.
- Hold me accountable—Insist I take responsibility for my actions.
- Reflect on failures—Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.

PROVIDE SUPPORT - Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.

- Navigate—Guide me through hard situations and systems.
- Empower—Build my confidence to take charge of my life.
- Advocate—Stand up for me when I need it.
- Set boundaries—Put in place limits that keep me on track.

SHARE POWER - Treat me with respect and give me a say.

- Respect me—Take me seriously and treat me fairly.
- Include me—Involve me in decisions that affect me.
- Collaborate—Work with me to solve problems and reach goals.
- Let me lead—Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.

EXPAND POSSIBILITIES - Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

- Inspire—Inspire me to see possibilities for my future.
- Broaden horizons—Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places.
- Connect—Introduce me to people who can help me grow.

Jay County 4-H programs include the following:

- **4-H Clubs** provide youth with educational, fun learning experiences with their peers. Youth enroll in subject matter areas of interest (projects), participate in 6-12 meetings during the year, select youth officers, carry out club responsibilities, participate in service to the community, and receive recognition for their work. Club meetings typically are held once a month in a location such as a school, community center, church, or other public meeting space. Project evaluation is often carried out during the county fair or at the end of the 4-H Youth Development Program year. Clubs use their meetings to develop group process skills, leadership ability, and communication skills.
- **After-school Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) programs** give youths experience in the use of computer aided design and 3D printing, writing code, and programming robots and drones.

Location	2021-2022
Bloomfield STEAM After School	12
West Jay STEAM After School	12
Homeschool STEAM Group	8

- **Youth mentoring** for youth in grades 9 through 12 is funded by a special grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Youth are paired with caring adult mentors for at least 12 months. Mentors create the developmental relationships and adult-youth partnerships that will launch youth on the path to success.
- **UAV precision agriculture programs** allow youth to explore how to operate unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) or drones that farmers use to become better managers of their production practices.
- **Soccer for Success** trains teens to coach younger children to play the game, make healthy choices, and build peer mentoring relationships that positively impact both the mentor and mentee. The program is especially popular among Hispanic and Latino youth that come from countries where soccer is their national sport.

- ***Back a 4-Her** engages community leaders to network with and invest in Jay County 4-H youth, their 4-H experiences, and their futures. The program allows youth the opportunity to showcase the skills they are building through participation in 4-H, and the money raised by the 4-Her can be used to attend college, pay for necessary materials for 4-H projects, expand future 4-H participation in camps and trips at local, state, and national levels, and more.
- ***Livestock Auction** provides youth in 4-H livestock projects the opportunity to sell one of their 4-H animals. This opportunity helps youth learn to track expenses to determine profit/loss margins. 4-H youth use the money raised to attend college, pay for the next year's 4-H animal projects, and more.

*4-H youth choose whether to participate in Back a 4-Her or the Livestock Auction. Youth cannot participate in both fund-raising events.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN 4-H PROGRAMS OVERALL												
Year	School Enrollment	Hispanic/Latino Enrolment	Total Youth Engaged	Hispanic/Latino	Not Hispanic/Latino	Male	Female	Farm	Town/Non-Farm	Town 10-50K	Suburb	City
2008	3764		685	1	684	330	355	284	374	25	0	2
2009	3671		741	5	736	342	399	305	385	50		1
2010	3635		701	1	700	394	471	326	351	23	0	1
2011	3643		675	6	669	310	365	328	317	25	1	4
2012	3626		643	6	637	294	349	316	298	24	0	5
2013	3503		585	7	578	272	313	285	261	36	1	2
2014	3465		571	6	565	265	306	287	241	39	3	1
2015	3463		530	21	510	262	268	321	180	23	6	0
2016	3443		479	16	464	235	244	300	157	19	2	1
2017	3376		467	12	456	223	244	299	158	7	2	1
2018	3250		415	9	406	199	216	268	135	9	2	1
2019	3167		397	7	390	190	207	247	134	9	5	2
2020	3147		415	12	403	201	214	254	151	5	4	2
2021	3020		413	13	400	209	203	214	175	19	5	0

A Note of Appreciation

We wish to thank the following community leaders who served as members of our Steering Committee or on one of our task forces. Your contributions were greatly appreciated, and will help us to improve the quality of life for everyone in Jay County

- Chad Aker – President, Jay County Commissioners
- John Boggs – Mayor, City of Portland
- Carol Bradshaw - Forward STEPS Manager, Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana
- Michael Brewster – Jay County Coroner, Portland Police Department
- Amanda Bullion – Purdue Extension
- Ray Cooney – Editor, The Commercial Review
- PJ Corwin – Executive Director, Youth Service Bureau
- Jason Craig - Substance Misuse Prevention and Mental Health Promotion, Region 5 Regional Prevention Coordinator
- Gerry Cyranowski – Regional VP of Clinical Services, Meridian Health Services
- Randy Davis - Founder, A Better Life-Brianna’s Hope
- Chad Dodd - Principal, Jay County High School
- Dwane Ford – Sheriff, Jay County
- Julie Gregg – Principal, East Elementary School
- Jeremy Gulley – Superintendent, Jay County School Corporation
- Tammy Hanlin – Chair, The Portland Foundation
- Rusty Inman – Executive Director, John Jay Center for Learning
- Virgil Jones - Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition
- Rex Journey – Jay County Commissioner
- Allison Keen – Youth Educator, Purdue Extension
- Justin Littman – Family Case Manager Supervisor, Department of Child Services
- John Moore – Board Member, The Portland Foundation
- Krista Muhlenkamp – Board Member, The Portland Foundation
- Michele Owen – Executive Director, Family Alliance
- Chynna Ratliffe - Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition
- Kimbra Reynolds - Executive Director, Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition
- Travis Richards - Executive Director, Jay County Development Corporation
- Jane Ann Runyon – Executive Director, United Way of Jay County
- Christy Shauver – Director of Community Development, Jay County Development Corporation
- Mitch Sutton – Police Chief, City of Portland
- Annie Van Horn – Director of Special Education, Jay School Corporation
- Jenni VanSkyock – Program Manager, IU Health Jay Hospital Outpatient Behavioral Health
- Jon Vanator - President, IU Health Jay Hospital
- Tashia Weaver – Family Resource Center Coordinator, Strengthening Indiana Families