COMMENCEMENT 2015
Graduates celebrate, prepare for future success
PRESIDENT OBAMA VISITS INDIANAPOLIS CAMPUS
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NEW PATHWAY CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO ENTER PURDUE’S COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Ivy Tech Community College is teaming up with Purdue University to help students earn a bachelor’s degree in engineering—one of the state’s most sought-after fields, according to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development’s “Hoosier Hot 50 Jobs” list.

Ivy Tech pre-engineering graduates will have the opportunity to continue their studies toward a bachelor’s degree in one of two engineering disciplines—civil engineering or environmental and ecological engineering—at Purdue’s College of Engineering.

“Transfer agreements like this make it easier and more affordable for our students to transfer and complete their bachelor’s degree,” says Dr. Mary Ostrye, Senior Vice President and Provost at Ivy Tech. “This agreement represents a great move forward as we continue to partner with four-year institutions across the state to create seamless transfer opportunities for our students.”

In the most recent U.S. News and World Report rankings of undergraduate programs, Purdue’s College of Engineering ranked 19th in the nation. The civil engineering program ranked 4th, and the environmental and ecological engineering program ranked 13th. The new statewide engineering transfer program will begin this fall.

“This agreement is a milestone in providing transfer opportunities for our students,” says Dr. Todd Roswarski, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at Ivy Tech’s Lafayette campus. “Pre-engineering graduates who qualify for transfer will be able to continue their studies at one of the top engineering schools in the nation and worldwide. We are pleased that our partners at Purdue continue to recognize the excellence of Ivy Tech’s curriculum and instruction.”

Ivy Tech offers the associate of science in pre-engineering at seven of its 32 campuses statewide, including Indianapolis, Lafayette, South Bend, Warsaw, Fort Wayne, Valparaiso, and Evansville. Through the program, students can explore a variety of engineering fields and receive a strong foundation in science and mathematics. More information about the program is available at IvyTech.edu/1-engineering.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Snyder, President
Students enjoy “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunity

Ivy Tech Community College was honored to host President Barack Obama in a town hall-style event. In his remarks, the President focused on reasons to be optimistic about the future: the improving economy, robust private-sector job growth, rising wages, and lower college dropout rates.

The President also applauded Ivy Tech for setting the standard for community colleges nationally.

“Right here,” the President said, “at this school—one of the best in the country—you’re finding ways to raise graduation rates and partner with businesses to help provide apprenticeships and other pathways to careers that pay well.”

One of the highlights of the President’s visit was his interaction with students. Their comments reflect what a historic day this was for the College—and what an exciting future lies ahead for Ivy Tech and its students.

“I was in the audience for President Barack Obama’s Town Hall, and I got to shake the President’s hand. Most people I know, regardless of age, never get that opportunity. It never would have happened if it wasn’t for Ivy Tech.”
– Ragan Batchelor, Associate, Accelerated Program (ASAP) student

“It was an honor to be in the presence of President Obama! This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I am blessed to have been selected to participate. President Obama’s speech and answers to audience questions were inspiring and gave me hope.”
– Josette Robinson-Luster, Liberal Arts

“The presidential speech was so memorable. I got the chance to sit behind him, such an honor. His proposal on free community college for two years is a great idea for those who couldn’t finish their education and want a better opportunity. Thank you, Ivy Tech, for this great opportunity. Who said community college wasn’t a good thing?”
– Marlene Aguilar, Liberal Arts, ASAP

“I will carry this memory throughout my life. This experience has made me believe everything is possible if you just try harder than you are expected to. President Obama is my idol, and I couldn’t thank him enough for giving me a reason and chance to get a higher education!”
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“They have so many struggles, and they don’t...”

MacKenzie Copeland, Youth Program director at the Evansville YWCA. "They might think they have to be really smart..." she says, “...or have money,” says the YWCA’s Edwards. “They...”

Taylor Copeland appreciates the cost savings of the dual credit program. “We’re basically taking the same classes as we would in college.”

“High school students learn that they do have the skills to complete a college-level class, and this gives them the confidence to pursue more after high school,” Hankins explains. “The courses are rigorous and the expectations are high, but completing it within a comfortable setting can make all the difference when deciding whether or not to attend college after high school.”

"They might think they have to be really smart or have money,” she says, “...but they don’t.”

Those concerns aren’t uncommon, says Hankins. “People would be surprised to learn that it’s free and that the credits earned toward a student’s general studies transfer to any state university or college,” she explains. “Students can earn up to 40 credit hours, it depends on what’s offered at the school. We have a list of first-generation students in the program. Their parents know the hardships of raising them and they want something more for their kids. But parents often don’t have the knowledge of how to help them get to college, so that’s where a community college can do more one-on-one support.”

The three teens are now eligible to apply for scholarships, which provide funds for college expenses beyond tuition, such as transportation costs. YWCA staff will continue to offer support while they’re in college, and the girls will still meet with their mentors. “I’m excited that these three young ladies are already halfway through their college career,” says the YWCA’s Edwards. “I really think they’ll be successful because they’ve already overcome the hurdle of the first two years.”

"Many girls don’t make it through the first two years of college,” says Courtney Edwards, Youth Program director at the Evansville YWCA. “They have so many struggles, and they don’t know how to ask for assistance if they’re failing.”

High school graduation is one of the most exciting times in a young person’s life. Multiply that milestone by three for a trio of Evansville teens, who not only will collect a diploma this spring from Benjamin Bosse High School, but will also complete the dual credit program with Ivy Tech Southwest and graduate from a mentoring program offered by the Evansville YWCA.

The three young women—half-sisters Taylor and MacKenzie Copeland and Bridjunnie Garnett—participate in a YWCA program called “Live Y’ers” that serves girls in grades 3-12 at three Title 1 schools in Evansville. Many participants face obstacles in their home life and other circumstances that make it difficult for them to finish their education. Starting in sixth grade they are paired with mentors who maintain a long-term one-on-one relationship with the girls, helping them with social skills, self-esteem, goal-setting, and behavior management.

“Many girls don’t make it through the first two years of college,” says Courtney Edwards, Youth Program director at the Evansville YWCA. “They have so many struggles, and they don’t know how to ask for assistance if they’re failing.”

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While every Ivy Tech Community College graduate has a story to tell, two things make Bruce King unique. First, he is deaf. If it seems like that would make attending college a challenge, consider another way in which King stands out; this is the second time he earned a degree from Ivy Tech, after first graduating 10 years ago.

King credits his Grandpa Woody with inspiring him from an early age to want to pursue a career in construction technology. The two were working on a project that required removing an unwanted load-bearing wall between the dining and living rooms. His grandfather showed him how to install a header, and King’s interest in the field was born.

When it came time to think about college, King considered National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, N.Y., but it did not offer the electrical engineering or construction technology programs. He chose Ivy Tech instead, graduating in 2005 with an associate of applied science degree in general studies.

Between 2005 and 2015 King taught himself construction skills by working on houses for family and friends. But he didn’t forget his goal of improving his career prospects by earning a degree in construction technology. He took classes when he could fit them in at Ivy Tech campuses in Bloomington, Westville, and Muncie.

“I find it cool that I can get educated by Ivy Tech nearly anywhere in the state of Indiana.” —Bruce King

“Use all the opportunities available to them, such as interpreters, note takers, and maybe hearing aids. Also, make friends with students and talk to instructors when needed.”

In his free time King enjoys DIY home remodeling projects, landscaping, repairing vehicles, and tackling other handyman tasks. His post-graduation plans include restoring a circa 1890s house in Oakland, Calif., this summer, then continuing to renovate other houses in Ohio and elsewhere.

Ten years after receiving his first Ivy Tech degree, King has succeeded in earning the degree he first dreamed of while working alongside his grandfather. And in doing so, he serves as an example of how barriers are made to be overcome.

Bruce is Ivy Tech. Are you?

Share your story on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter with the hashtag #IAmIvyTech. We look forward to hearing from you.

“Know that I can show her how proud I am of her and how much I support her in the pursuit of her goals.” —Stacy Walker

“I knew Stacy would straighten out her life on her own timeline,” Brown says. “I had faith in her, even when she didn’t have it herself. She has an inspiration. In her drive to finish school, she hasn’t let anything get in the way of accomplishing her goal.”

Walker maintained a 3.66 GPA at Ivy Tech and graduated with an associate degree in liberal arts. She plans to transfer her credits and pursue a bachelor’s degree in communications. Her goal is to become a motivational speaker.

“I want to help others avoid the path that I took,” she says. “If I could help one person find their way back, it would make it all worthwhile.”

Brown will graduate alongside her sister with an associate degree in general studies. She aspires to become a secondary education history teacher. While this will be Brown’s second time going through a graduation ceremony, it will be Walker’s first and it is important to both of them to graduate together in a show of solidarity.

“I can show her how proud I am of her and how much I support her in the absence of our mother,” says Brown. “She might not know it, but I have always believed she could do anything.”

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#IAmIvyTech. We look forward to hearing from you!
Graduate Satya Sunkavalli’s career is cleared for takeoff

When you work in aviation, you know getting a flight from its point of origin to a destination isn’t always easy, and obstacles are the norm, not a rarity. What matters most is how well prepared you are to respond to those obstacles.

Maybe that’s why Satya Sunkavalli is such a great fit for the industry. Her journey toward a degree hasn’t always been easy, but now she’s ready to take flight.

Sunkavalli, a native of India, came to the United States on a student visa in late 2010 with the intent to earn a pilot certification. She enrolled in a flight program at another institution in Indiana, but personal obstacles prevented her from completing her studies. She transferred to a comparable flight program in Florida with the hope of finishing, but despite a solid performance on the verbal portion of her test, she did not pass the flight portion.

“I was so discouraged and disappointed with myself,” Sunkavalli says. “But there are always challenges in life. You just can’t give up. "I was so discouraged and disappointed with myself,” Sunkavalli says. “But there are always challenges in life. You just can’t give up.

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In addition to her artwork, Chew has a passion for fashion design, inspired in part through her silk-screening classes at Ivy Tech. She has interned at an Indianapolis boutique and at FUNKSHION Fashion Week Miami Beach, where she helped check in guests and handle backstage logistics in exchange for tickets to the shows. Her dream is to one day attend fashion school in New York City. She moved closer to that goal last year when she had the opportunity to work alongside professional designers and stylists and walk the runway in a show for Italian designer Antonio Uris for FTL Moda.

Chew admits there’s no way she could balance her competing responsibilities without the skills she has learned at Ivy Tech. “Ivy Tech has taught me so much about time management, organisation, discipline, and setting priorities,” she says. “I’ve also learned the importance of making sacrifices for my education.”

This summer Chew will participate in an artist’s residency program in East London, South Africa. She is on track to complete her degree in fine arts this coming fall. As to what comes afterward, she says, “My life is always throwing me for crazy loops every time I try to plan. If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.”

**A PASSION FOR ART AND FASHION**

From the studio to the runway, Ashley Chew enjoys life in the spotlight

Fine arts student Ashley Chew considers herself very much a “work in progress.” She admits, however, that she’s had a creative streak for as long as she can remember. Her mom encouraged her with art supplies for birthdays and Christmas. Her grandmother, also an artist, guided her efforts and shared mistakes so Chew could learn from them.

Chew moved with her parents and four younger siblings to Indianapolis when she was young. After graduating from high school, she studied costume design at Kent State University in Ohio before deciding to return home and enroll at Ivy Tech Community College.

At Ivy Tech, “I feel like a student, not a number,” says Chew. “I have accessibility to my professors rather than being in a lecture hall with 300 other students. My professors know me by name and have a clear idea of my career path and what I want to do.” She also finds it easier to make friends and connections with other nontraditional students who, like her, are juggling classes, work and other responsibilities.

One of Chew’s responsibilities is her commitment to art, which has resulted in several accolades. In 2013 RAW Indianapolis named Chew the Visual Artist of the Year. And in March her work was on display at the Madame Walker Theatre in a solo exhibition of 20 paintings in conjunction with Women’s History Month. She was stunned when more than 100 people showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night. In addition to selling six paintings, she received a commission for a large piece, and the Indianapolis Art Center showed up on opening night.

Chew credits her Ivy Tech fine arts instructor, Stephanie Robertson, for nurturing her talents. “I know she’s hard on me to get the best out of me. Her voice is in the back of my head when I’m thinking, labeling, or hanging paintings. Being in her class—even though she is tough as nails—is teaching me how to be more professional.”

“**I have accessibility to professors rather than being in a lecture hall with 300 other students. My professors know me by name and have a clear idea of my career path and what I want to do.**” —Ashley Chew

### CULTIVATING SUCCESS

**Graduate Desiree Steinkamp Earns Prestigious American FFA Degree**

When Desiree Steinkamp received the prestigious American FFA Degree at the organization’s national convention—an honor bestowed upon less than one percent of its members—she had a fitting metaphor in mind, given her career path. It was simply a case of seeds being planted long ago yielding a bumper crop.

“My grandpa always said you’re going to need three things in life: a doctor, a lawyer, and a preacher. But these three a day everyone needs a farmer,” she remembers with a smile. “Farming has always been highly valuable to me, especially due to the impact it has on so many lives.”

Steinkamp grew up on what she calls a “dectency-sized” home and cattle operation in southern Indiana. She focused on sports through junior high, but an injury in her freshman year left her sidelined. Looking for another way to stay active, she found a natural fit with her high school’s FFA (Formerly Future Farmers of America group. She credits this organization for helping her blossom and find her calling to be a leader in the agricultural industry—a dream she chose to pursue at Ivy Tech Community College.

“When I graduated high school, I had a lot of options,” says Steinkamp. “I’m very close with my family, and to know I could stay near them while going to college was one of the outstanding features of Ivy Tech. The faculty and advisors also reached out to me before I even even started there, and that welcoming feel really made me over.”

Steinkamp chose an associate in applied science for agribusiness, citing the hands-on applications with soil science, crop management, and livestock. She became heavily involved with the Columbus campus chapter of Agricultural Ambassadors. She says her role as president of the group combined with Ivy Tech’s programs have led to invaluable connections.

“I’ve actually made friendships with my professors. Friends of mine go to big-name colleges studying the same thing I am with a very similar curriculum, but they are sitting in lecture halls of upwards of 250 students. I’m sitting in a class of 25,” Steinkamp says. “The professors care about those personal relationships; they know what we are doing inside and outside of the classroom. They will be my mentors for the rest of my life.”

Steinkamp has her sights set on transitioning to Purdue University’s Columbus campus to obtain a bachelor’s degree in applied management. The end goal, she says, is a job in agricultural sales or marketing. But no matter what career she finds herself in, she won’t forget the encouragement from her friends, family and professors to pursue her passion.

“I plan on staying close to home and maintaining my relationship with Ivy Tech and my community,” she says. “Both have given me so much support over the years, I can’t imagine myself not being involved in some way; cultivating the same passion for agriculture I have in future students. It’s a critical time for young people to get involved in the various aspects of farming to create sustainable, safe agriculture systems to put food on our families’ tables.”

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Ashley is Ivy Tech. Are you? Share your story on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter with the hashtag #IAmIvyTech

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PILOT PROGRAM POSITIONS STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS

College Coaches connect high schools to their future.

While high school is the source of a lot of great memories, it isn’t all fun and games—especially as students approach graduation and try to decide what’s next. Teachers, counselors, and administrators offer excellent support, but sometimes assistance from an outside source is welcome. That’s where Ivy Tech’s College Connection Coach program comes in. Rene Hankins, Ivy Tech Community College Executive Director of Outreach, says the program is designed to help students succeed long-term.

“Ivy Tech’s goal is to increase the college attainment rate in the state of Indiana by partnering with schools for early college programming and helping students transition to the next step after high school,” says Hankins.

Ivy Tech’s Southwest and Wabash Valley regions are closing in on the successful completion of a pilot program. Hankins says the two regions have four coaches who split their time between 10 high schools. Coaches are available to help guidance counselors in the schools with a variety of tasks. Among other things, they can help:

- Configure pathways for students
- Meet with parents and students about post-secondary options
- Help students transfer their dual credits to the college program of their choice
- Carrie Feltis is among the inaugural group of College Connection Coaches. She’s spent this school year working with more than 100 students—most of them seniors—at Hamilton High School, School and Central High School in the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation. “As a first-generation college student, I deeply appreciate the value of education and training beyond high school,” says Feltis. “I am familiar with the struggles some students and their families encounter when trying to evaluate and navigate their post-secondary options. In my role, I hope to make the next steps feel achievable for them, ultimately increasing the college attainment rate for our students.”

Feltis says one of her favorite things about being a College Connection Coach is seeing students evolve from being moderately interested in what’s in store after high school to actively learning, asking questions, doing research, and displaying a sense of ownership over their future.

She works closely with the school district she serves to ensure that her goals align with theirs—supporting career exploration and career pathway development and helping students recognize and pursue options available to them after high school graduation.

“These professionals are so passionate about what they do,” she says. “It’s inspiring to work with them.”

One of those professionals is Dwight Ashley, the principal of Rockville Junior-Senior High School. Ashley says he appreciates the opportunity to partner with Ivy Tech.

“The College Connection Coach program allows us to go above and beyond in college support for our students,” says Ashley. “High school counselors do a great job, but they have many other tasks, especially in smaller schools. Having a College Connection Coach available to work with students to track and develop their progress toward dual credit and other goals is critical.”

Ultimately, Feltis says, those involved in the program all have the same objective: to help students reach their potential while also helping employers in the community thrive.

“The ultimate goal is to see more students progress from high school to higher education and training,” she says. “And ultimately, to help meet the state’s need for a skilled and educated workforce.”

CARTOON GUY DRAWS INSPIRATION FROM CHILDREN

Justin Barnes explores his passion at Ivy Tech

Growing up, Ivy Tech Community College student Justin Barnes had a wild imagination that led to a fascination with cartoons and movies. When he was in high school he was given the opportunity to work with cartoonist Gary Barker, long-time assistant to Garfield creator Jim Davis.

Barnes took what he learned from Barker and turned his dreams into reality. He started his own company, Cartoon Express, which teaches children how to create and design their own cartoons and comics. After much encouragement from his students, he decided to take his lessons to the airwaves with a television show he writes, animates, and produces.

The Cartoon Guy debuted on WPI in Indianapolis. Barnes, who is also a substitute teacher, says the goal of the show is to inspire and encourage children to grow their minds and imaginations.

Barnes isn’t just an accomplished cartoonist; he’s also a dual major student at Ivy Tech Central Indiana, working toward a degree in education. Ivy Tech faculty member Ken Marshall says he’s been impressed with Barnes from the start.

“Justin is a very talented student,” Marshall says. “He’s the creator, producer, artist, and star of this great children’s show, all while pursuing his education.”

Barnes admits that he isn’t a typical college student. As he explains, other priorities took precedence after he graduated from high school.

“I got a late start on my college career, which goes to show it is never too late to go back to school,” he says. “I went into the workforce right out of high school, got married, and had kids soon after.”

However, Barnes says he’s glad he’s been able to pursue his passion—thanks in large part to Ivy Tech. After graduating from Ivy Tech next year, Barnes plans to continue his education and obtain his bachelor’s degree in education and master’s in art therapy.

“Ivy Tech has opened so many doors for me,” he explains. “I have met so many wonderful people, both students and teachers, who have given me great advice. I am always encouraged to keep on doing what I am doing and to never give up.”

Justin is Ivy Tech. Are you? Share your story on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter with the hashtag #IAmIvyTech. We look forward to hearing from you!
The Ivy Tech Community College Foundation has received an estate gift valued at $3.5 million from the Bill and Sandy DeMichieli Trust. This gift gives Ivy Tech full ownership of the existing William and Sandy DeMichieli Learning Center that houses the Ivy Tech Franklin Campus, and provides additional funds designated for programming and scholarships in health sciences.

Ownership of the building gives Ivy Tech access to another 9,000 square feet for additional classrooms and labs. The estate funds will allow the College to add some of the space and equipment necessary to add health sciences courses, as well as other relevant offerings for local employers in the future.

“Bill and Sandy were both visionary people and wanted to find a way to give back to their community. They saw the value in providing higher education opportunities in a community,” says Dr. Kathy Lee, Chancellor for Ivy Tech Central Indiana. “They worked hard to provide for their families and wanted to provide those opportunities to other citizens in their own community. Their generosity will be felt by thousands of students over many years to come.”

Ivy Tech began leasing the building from Bill, a 30-year resident of Franklin, in 2008 when increased demand for more classes in the Franklin area allowed the College to pursue a larger space. The first lease and renovation provided 12,000 square feet of classroom, lab, and office space. The demand for more classes allowed Ivy Tech to quickly lease and build another 9,000 square feet. Ivy Tech has delivered classes to thousands of students at the Franklin Campus.