**Distinguished Alumni and Benefactor Bios**

*(Alphabetically by Ivy Tech campus location)*

Anderson

*Distinguished Alumni*

Shanese Pointer (2018)

Shanese Pointer builds bridges. She did it with her career, and she’s doing it today as a leader at Ivy Tech Anderson. Shanese graduated in 2018 from Ivy Tech with her associate degree in criminal justice. She took her degree to Ball State where she completed her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Corrections. Later, she earned her Master of Science in Human Resource Management/Personnel Administration at Indiana Wesleyan University. And she earned each degree while working full-time at the Youth Opportunity Center in Muncie. Today, Shanese has built relationships with the academic advisors she leads at Ivy Tech Anderson, creating trust that produces a strong environment and a cross-functional approach to student success. Shanese ensures academics, career services, marketing, and student life are working together to revolutionize community college success. Shanese consistently makes herself available for mentoring and problem-solving to deliver the best results for the campus.

*Benefactor*

Bonnie Willy

Bonnie Willy has committed much of her adult life to shepherding opportunities for people interested in an Ivy Tech education. In fact, she has been directly responsible for helping thousands of high school students with the acquisition of college credits from Ivy Tech. She has served the college in several ways including through classroom instruction and, most recently, as the Executive Director of K-14. Bonnie has a wealth of knowledge and career-long relationships that allow her to help students in numerous ways, and her commitment to student success is incomparable. If that weren’t enough, Bonnie has contributed to the Ivy Tech Foundation since 2004. She established an endowed scholarship at our Muncie campus in 2021, and she plans to create another for the Anderson campus. Her generosity is an example to us all.

Bloomington

*Distinguished Alumni*

Erik Bare (2009)Erik Bare helps people living with cancer throughout Central Indiana. Erik, who studied radiation therapy at Ivy Tech Bloomington before graduating in 2009, is executive director of oncology services at Community Health Network MD Anderson Cancer Center in Indianapolis. He’s become a leader in the radiation therapy profession – having worked at the Northwestern Medicine Chicago Proton Center and the radiation therapy department manager at Good Samaritan Hospital in Vincennes before accepting a leadership role at Community Health. Erik is a big supporter of Ivy Tech’s radiation therapy program: he’s a member of the program’s advisory board and actively advocates hiring graduates of the program. Erik also belongs to many organizations that improve our communities: he is a member and past President of the Rotary Club of Greenwood, a member of the selections committee for Leadership Johnson County, and a grant evaluator for the Greenwood Schools of Education Foundation.

*Benefactor*

Joyce Poling

Joyce Poling has made a big difference in Bloomington as a leader in county government, community health, economic development, nonprofit board service, and higher education, and her commitment to Ivy Tech is helping students thrive in the real world. In addition to her longstanding work with the Gayle and Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship, Joyce supports the college through 3 endowed scholarships, her Circle of Ivy membership, and participation in Ivy Tech capital campaigns. And as a Monroe County commissioner, her deep understanding of workforce development needs of our community led to the construction of the county-funded Indiana Center for Life Sciences, supporting life science training and the study of biotechnology by Ivy Tech students. Her legacy of leadership and service in the community is unparalleled.

Columbus

*Distinguished Alumni*

Tyshaun Allen (2012)Tyshaun Allen, a vice president of Taylor Brothers Construction Company, provides scholarships and actively donates to programs at Ivy Tech. He graduated with an associate degree in applied science in computer information technology before receiving his bachelor’s degree from Western Governors University. He is continuing his education today at IUPU Columbus. Tyshaun was named Volunteer of the Year by the Columbus Young Professionals and the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce – part of the NextGen Awards, which raises the visibility of emerging talent and highlights individual achievement in the area. He is a board member of the Columbus Area Multi-Ethnic Organization (CAMEO) where he volunteers his skills as their president and their web expert. He is a technology consultant to the African American Fund of Bartholomew County and the Columbus Enrichment Program and has been the keynote speaker for the Columbus Council for Youth Development.

*Benefactor*

The Heritage Fund Community Foundation   
The Heritage Fund Community Foundation has been changing lives in the Columbus area for decades. And, for more than 33 years now, the team now led by Tracy Souza has been a longtime partner of Ivy Tech Columbus. Its strategic and community-minded focus has brought our organizations together for numerous community projects. In addition to partnering on scholarships they have supported the iGrad program, academic programs like Visual Communication and Early Childhood, Hope Squad (a suicide prevention program), and more recently a naming opportunity with our building campaign. With their collective giving – more than $1.2 million – the Heritage Fund Community Foundation has left an amazing legacy on Ivy Tech Columbus. Tracy and her team are amazing advocates for the entire Ivy Tech community.

Evansville

*Distinguished Alumni*

Gelina Mascoe (2014)Gelina Mascoe’s story, including the health care specialist degree she earned from Ivy Tech, is part of the American Dream. Gelina is from La Gonave, Haiti, and moved to Florida unable to speak a word of English when in the 7th grade. She quickly adapted and made friends and connections. After graduating from high school, Gelina relocated to Northern Kentucky to pursue a career in medical technology. Gelina, who now has two degrees, eventually founded Lumiere D ‘education Foundation, a charitable organization that provides free education to 170 children in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Gelina also founded the Haitian Center of Evansville, connecting Haitian immigrants to support that will help them to achieve independence, increase their well-being, and enhance their community impact. Today, Gelina works as a top-producing, full-time real estate agent for F.C. Tucker Emge.

*Benefactor*

Lu Porter  
Lu Porter has been a Foundation board member for more than 27 years, connecting countless donors and Ivy Tech students. Porter supports her community in many ways – from serving 25 local and state boards over the last several decades to delivering community needs and helping non-profits with fundraising. Porter retired from the Evansville African American Museum in 2017 and previously worked in community outreach for Integra Bank. Throughout her life in Evansville, Porter has kept a pulse on supporting youth and the disenfranchised: from helping young people set up their first bank accounts to encouraging the pursuit of higher education. Porter is the daughter of a preacher, to whom she credits for teaching her the values of servant leadership. In addition to the Ivy Tech Foundation Board of Directors, Porter is also currently on the ECHO Community Healthcare board.

Fort Wayne

*Distinguished Alumni*

Josefina Cervantes (2008)Josefina Cervantes made her way to Indiana in 2005 as part of the new TRIO Student Support Services program at Ivy Tech Fort Wayne. Today, she is a substance use manager at Amani Family Services. Josefina was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, before moving to Los Angeles. After graduating from Ivy Tech as the Melvin L. Curtis Award Recipient in 2008, she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in human services from IPFW (now Purdue Fort Wayne). Josefina worked for the TRIO SSS program as a Coordinator and program alumna and won the 2014 Bertha M. Jones Memorial Award from Indiana TRIO. Josefina is also a certified community health worker, certified in Prime for Life and Wellness to Recovery, and a certified Spanish Interpreter. She has more than 16 years of experience in social services.

*Benefactor*

Northeast Indiana Chapter of the Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education  
The Northeast Indiana Chapter of the Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education, also known as NEI INFAME, entered a partnership with Ivy Tech Fort Wayne in 2020. The agreement facilitated the campus serving as NEI INFAME’s education partner implementing a dual-track, work-based learning program for Advanced Manufacturing Technician. The partnership creates a pipeline of highly skilled workers that meet the needs of manufacturing employers in Northeast Indiana. Through an alliance of six partner companies there was an investment of $738,537 – enabling the campus to create an INFAME Flex Lab where leaders develop the whole person including technical skills, work experience, personal behaviors, and core manufacturing skills. Students earn a two-year Advanced Manufacturing associate degree while working for one of the program partners, which has grown to nine companies. In May 2023, the first cohort of 11 students graduated – and each is placed with a partner company.

Hamilton County

*Distinguished Alumni*

Wendy Lane (1995 Indianapolis Campus)

A graduate of Ball State University and Ivy Tech School of Nursing, Wendy has been a Registered Nurse in the emergency department for over 25 years. Wendy's career started at IU Methodist and she is currently a Department Coordinator and Clinical Leader in the ER at Riverview Health in Noblesville, Indiana. Wendy has twice received The Daisy Award for recognition of extraordinary nursing care in her career. Wendy is involved in and advocates for Janus Developmental Services and the Epilepsy Foundation of Indiana and is a member of the Ivy Tech School of Nursing Advisory Committee. Wendy has two adult sons and enjoys reading, health and wellness, gardening, and watching her husband cook for family and friends while she enjoys a glass of wine.

*Benefactor*

Lauren and Chris Salerno

Lauren and Christopher Salerno, MD have made an unmeasurable difference in the opportunities to support Ivy Tech students throughout Indiana as volunteers and through their giving.  While the support centers around the Hamilton County campus, Lauren has led Ivy Tech’s Circle of Ivy initiative for the entire state and now serves as the Ivy Tech Foundation Board chair. Lauren and Chris established the Salerno Family Endowed Scholarship to help students who want to become a nurse.  In addition to this gift, as a lifetime member of the Circle of Ivy, Lauren established an endowment for the Circle of Ivy. The Salerno’s legacy of service and leadership in support of Indiana is supreme.

Indianapolis

*Distinguished Alumni*

Amber Coryell (2010)Amber Coryell is changing lives from inside and outside her work. Amber was a first-generation Ivy Tech graduate in 2010 who obtained her associate degree in business administration and later her bachelor’s degree in tourism, conventions, and event management at IUPUI. In addition to working full-time throughout college, Amber took opportunities for internships and community experience to explore and enhance her skills. Her commitment landed her a career in finance (in business development) which enables her to sit on several boards, committees, and councils such as Friends of Riley, Ivy Tech Alumni, Indy CREW (Commercial Real Estate Women), and others. These experiences allow Amber to help pave the way for others and to grow the futures of families, students, employees, and communities around her.

*Benefactor*

Catrina Tate (2012)  
Catrina (Lane) Tate has made a career of leading others. Catrina graduated from Ivy Tech Indianapolis in 2012, earning her Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration. Catrina, originally from Gary, began her career at Teacher’s Credit Union 19 years ago, and today is Vice President of Retail. Catrina has taken on various supervisor roles – including the management of three locations during her time as a branch manager. Today, Catrina leads a team while working to make a positive impact at TCU and the industry. She is co-chair of the credit union’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce and serves as First Vice Chair for Girl Scouts of Central Indiana Board of Directors. She is a past mentor for Habitat for Humanity and has established a scholarship in her name at Ivy Tech. Catrina was a 2021 winner of the David R Sage Award, and a CLD Minority Achievers nominee.

Kokomo

*Distinguished Alumni*

Catherine Hightower Valcke (1981)

Catherine Hightower Valcke’s higher education journey began at Ivy Tech, where she earned a technical certificate as a medical assistant. And for the last 25 years, she’s been part of the Indiana University Kokomo family where she has made many contributions to the college and her Howard County community. Today, Cathy is director of external relations and public affairs at IUK, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in communications arts. She has been integral in advancing her community through Indiana’s READI grant process, has worked on economic development boards, and the board of the United Way of Howard County. Cathy earned a master’s degree in higher education administration and student affairs from IU Bloomington. She has been honored with IUK’s Distinguished Service Award, IU’s Bicentennial Medal, and the IU Alumni Association President’s Award for her many contributions to the university.

*Benefactor*

The City of Kokomo and Howard County  
The City of Kokomo and Howard County make our community better by emphasizing quality of place, economic development, and educational attainment – and they recognize the important contributions Ivy Tech Kokomo. They have supported our scholarship fundraising efforts along with our Doing the Dream Diversity event, job fairs, and leadership programs. Both also have supported two important initiatives: the $43 million Kokomo Campus Transformation and the development of Ivy Tech Kokomo’s Industry 4.0 Lab supporting Smart Manufacturing and Digital Integration skills training, which are vital to the area’s industrial sector. As the campus prepares for potentially hundreds of students associated with the $2.5 billion EV battery plant under construction, we are grateful for the support from the city and the county. The 3.3 million-square-foot StarPlus Energy plant, a joint venture of Stellantis and Samsung SDI, is expected to employ 1,400 when completed in 2025.

Lafayette

*Distinguished Alumni*

Janet York (2002, 2009, 2011)Janet York faced a big professional challenge in 2009. She had earned her bachelor’s degree in business administration from Indiana State University – following her start at Ivy Tech – and was working as a business analyst during the heart of a recession. She anticipated her job being eliminated and felt it was time to make a big move. Janet decided to pursue a career in IT so she re-enrolled at Ivy Tech to learn more about computer programming. Twice Janet chose Ivy Tech because it offered what she needed at the right price and the right schedule. Today, Janet works at a software company and credits Ivy Tech with the education she needed to find her career path.

*Benefactor*

Wabash Heartland Innovation Network  
Wabash Heartland Innovation Network (WHIN) has partnered with Ivy Tech Lafayette since 2019, giving nearly $1.1 million in grants to various programs, primarily in agriculture. WHIN serves 10 counties in North Central Indiana and is working to develop the region into a global epicenter for digital agriculture and next-generation manufacturing – one that is empowered by data science and Internet-enabled sensors of all types. The organization’s regional cultivation initiative is designed to increase the vitality, education, and connectivity of the Wabash Heartland region.

Lake County

*Distinguished Alumni*

Jessica Howard (2004)  
Jessica Howard has turned her interest in physical therapy into a passion – and long, successful career. Jessica graduated from Ivy Tech in 2006 with an associate degree in physical therapy assistant. She finished her Doctor of Physical Therapist degree in 2013 at The University of Findlay and became certified as an oncology physical therapist in 2021. Jessica recently has advanced to being the managing director of two outpatient clinics for Rush Physical Therapy. She also is the local coordinator for clinical education with the Ivy Tech Lake County physical therapy assistant program, offering clinical placements to PTA students. She also has been a clinical instructor – providing guidance, clinical education, and supervision of Ivy Tech PTA students.

*Benefactor*

Cleveland-Cliffs  
Cleveland-Cliffs has been a financial friend of Ivy Tech for more than 26 years. The company is the largest flat-rolled steel producer in North America and the main source of steel production serving Northwest Indiana. For years Cleveland-Cliffs has supported the Chancellors’ scholarship event – the Meet the Need initiative – for students. It also partners on the electrical technology certificate program to help improve the lives of students at the Lake County and Valparaiso campuses. Cleveland-Cliffs is committed to public service in the region, and they’ve made it their business to stay involved in what’s happening locally. They understand there is a need in every community and remain committed to partnering with non-profit organizations, including the company’s footprint through in-kind contributions and financial support.

Lawrenceburg

*Distinguished Alumni*

Richard Richardson, Jr. (2005)

Richard Richardson loves his Lawrenceburg community – and he’s using his skills to show it off to anyone who will listen. Richard is a 2005 graduate of Lawrenceburg High School, holds an associate degree in criminal justice from Ivy Tech, and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Indiana University. He was Clerk-Treasurer for the City of Lawrenceburg from 2018-2019 and enjoyed partnering with the various stakeholders across the city. Richard has seen Lawrenceburg change over the years, but he says it has never lost its small-town sensibility.  It’s a place where everyone is welcome – and his goal is to make sure the same welcoming spirit comes from the Lawrenceburg Community Center, where he is the director, Richard is working to cultivate a facility that is welcoming and externally focused on all people regardless of where they are in life’s journey.

*Benefactor*

Jim & Charlotte Helms

Since 1963, Jim Helms has dedicated his life to education by serving in a wide variety of roles including high school teacher, guidance counselor, basketball coach, and high school principal. Helms’ initial involvement with Ivy Tech was in 1976 when he served on the Southeast Regional Board of Trustees. He continued to serve as a Trustee until he was hired as the Executive Dean in 1998 for the Lawrenceburg and Batesville campuses. In 2001, Helms was named Chancellor of the Southeast Region, which included Lawrenceburg, Batesville, and Madison. Under Jim’s leadership as Chancellor, the college’s vision to expand Ivy Tech in Southeastern Indiana with new state of the art facilities in all three communities was brought to fruition. During his 16-year tenure as Chancellor, the College experienced a massive and unprecedented growth period of enrollment, curriculum, and programs. Jim was also instrumental in launching the now statewide Dual Enrollment initiative creating partnerships with the area high schools to offer college credits to high school students. After retiring in 2014, Jim continued his involvement with Ivy Tech, along with his dedication to meet the educational needs of Indiana residents, by serving on the statewide Foundation Board of Directors until 2018. In 2021, Jim was selected as the Lawrenceburg Citizen of the Year in honor of his outstanding community activism & dedicated regional support for the citizens of the City of Lawrenceburg & Southeast Indiana. Jim & Charlotte Helms have been married for 58 years, and together have funded two separate scholarships through Ivy Tech Foundation. The Jim & Charlotte Helms Scholarship fund was established to assist students in reaching their educational goals. They also did not hesitate to establish the Jim & Charlotte Helms Emergency Scholarship fund when they were made aware of a tragic situation an Ivy Tech student was facing and wanted to ensure students would be able to continue their education despite unforeseen situations they may encounter.

Madison

*Distinguished Alumni*

Tammy Allen (2005)Tammy Allen focuses her work on improving the lives of people who face medical challenges. Tammy graduated from Ivy Tech Madison in 2005 with her LPN technical certificate before completing her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Western Governors University. Her early career focused on emergency care, medical/surgical, labor/delivery, and education. Since 2013, Tammy has worked for DNV, a leading certification organization where her focus is on healthcare. DNV provides hospital accreditation and certification and is the second-largest entity in the U.S. – behind the Joint Commission – to provide these services. Tammy started as a healthcare surveyor for DNV before advancing to director of program development and certifications (PDC) where she managed development and operations of several hospital certification programs. Under Tammy’s leadership, PDC partnered with their maritime colleagues to provide the first and most extensive global certification of maritime infection control operations during the COVID pandemic.

*Benefactor*

The Community Foundation of Madison and Jefferson County  
The Community Foundation of Madison and Jefferson County (CFMJC) has been a true partner and supporter of our Ivy Tech community for more than three decades. The Foundation has supported initiatives as far ranging from endowing a scholarship, outfitting our Paramedic classroom, expanding campus broadband service, supporting our emergency aid fund, and beautifying our campus with more than 20 new trees. The Foundation is making our campus, along with Madison and Jefferson counties, better.

Marion

*Distinguished Alumni*

Ashlyn Pollard (2022)

Ashlyn Pollard grew up in Grant County and was ready to become a registered nurse – so ready, in fact, she enrolled in the dual credit CNA program through Ivy Tech Marion. But the COVID pandemic got in the way – making it impossible for Ashlyn to complete her clinicals and take her board exam. But the setback didn’t end Ashlyn’s dream – it only changed it. She searched for a new program and landed in business administration, which offered numerous career opportunities. In December 2022 – less than two years after graduating from Mississinewa High School – Ashlyn graduated with an associate of science in business administration. In September 2022, she was hired as the College Connection Coach, a new role at Ivy Tech Marion where she serves five high schools and homeschooled students – helping them to learn about dual credit and dual enrollment, giving them more options after graduation.

*Benefactor*

Randy Ballinger  
Randy Ballinger is professionally and personally committed to making Indiana a better place to live – including for students at Ivy Tech. Randy – a graduate of Purdue University with a degree in agronomy and turfgrass science and a graduate of the National Institute of Golf Management – served on the Ivy Tech Marion board of directors from 2018-2022. He’s been recognized numerous times for his leadership in the state’s golf industry – including recipient of the National Golf Course Owners Association Champion’s Award and the Indiana Golf Course Owners Course of the Year Award. Away from the course, he’s been recognized for his support of Indiana’s communities: Randy was honored with the Hoosier Homestead Award and the Indiana Governor’s Hoosier Hospitality Award. He’s a past vice president of the state’s tourism board and he’s a three-term past president of the Grant County Convention Recreation and Visitors Commission.

Muncie

*Distinguished Alumni*

Rheaunna Jones (2015)Rheaunna Jones – known by some people as Rhea, or Rhea of Sunshine – is an early childhood education graduate of Ivy Tech, earning her degree in 2015. After teaching at a nationally accredited early learning center, she enrolled at Ball State to pursue a degree in elementary education – all while working with community partners to open a new childcare center in Muncie. But Rhea’s plans changed with the COVID pandemic. In 2021, she instead pursued her calling to work with youth in Muncie's highest-need area: a 5th-grade teacher at Southview Elementary School where she engaged in numerous projects to ensure the needs of her students – both in and out of the classroom – were met. Today, through her work at the Department of Education, Rheaunna supports youth-serving and after-school organizations around Indiana. Rheaunna is a beacon of hope and an advocate for change in our community.

*Benefactor*

Sheila Johnson

Sheila Johnson has been a servant leader for Ivy Tech Muncie for 50 years. Her career began in 1973, making her the longest-serving state employee in the history of the college. Throughout her tenure, she has held various executive positions in the Office of Administration, working diligently under 9 previous chancellors. It is often said that she has trained nine chancellors and played a vital role in assisting thousands of students in achieving their education goals. Early in her career, she was the Executive Assistant to President Gerald Lamkin father of Indiana's community college system. She has had many opportunities offered to her in Indianapolis but has chosen to serve in Muncie her entire career.

Currently as Chief of Staff, Sheila's responsibilities extend far beyond the smooth operation of the campus. She has consistently demonstrated her exceptional leadership abilities and unwavering commitment to excellence. Her expertise and diligence have been instrumental in ensuring that our institution functions seamlessly, and her exemplary management skills have earned her the trust and respect of our entire community.As the liaison for the Campus Board of Trustees, she helps maintain a cohesive and well-informed administrative structure. Her strategic thinking, combined with her strong work ethic, has resulted in significant advancements for the students. Sheila K. Johnson has had as strong impact on our Ivy Tech Foundation through her consistent giving over the course of her 50-year tenure. Her dedication, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to Ivy Tech's mission have been a driving force in Muncie. She embodies the qualities and values that the benefactor of the year seeks to honor. She is a well-deserving recipient of this prestigious recognition.

Richmond

*Distinguished Alumni*

Rebecca Conley (2009)Rebecca Conley has used Ivy Tech to make life better for people and communities around her. Rebecca is a 2009 graduate from the medical assisting program before earning her bachelor’s degree in psychology with a focus on counseling. She became a full-time medical assisting faculty for Ivy Tech in December of 2011 and the program chair in 2014. Rebecca earned the

Glenn and Catherine Sample Award for Excellence in Instruction for the Richmond Campus in 2015 before completing a master’s degree in human services and executive leadership in 2015, and a Doctorate in leadership with a focus on higher education. Rebecca also serves her community as a marketing and management consultant for City Connect in Greenwood, Indiana.

*Benefactor*

Glen and Carolyn Thornburg  
Glen and Carolyn Thornburg are a faith-driven couple. They have committed time, talent, and financial support to many local and international organizations with a shared mission to love and support people from all walks of life. Their most recent gift is both personal and a meaningful way to help Ivy Tech students for years to come. Glen and Carolyn became members of the Cornerstone Society and established the endowed Grant Huldane Thornburg Legacy Scholarship in memory of their son, a United States Marine Corps veteran. This endowment ensures a legacy that will change the lives of Ivy Tech students forever. Additionally, their early involvement in the Young Life program impacted countless young people in the Richmond area. Glen and Carolyn are admired by all who have the pleasure to meet them.

Sellersburg

*Distinguished Alumni*

Angie Wilson (2012)Angie Wilson – a friend and mentor to many students while attending Ivy Tech as a non-traditional student – has used her experiences to excel and help build the community around her. Since finishing her education at Ivy Tech, Angie has earned her BS, MPA, and JD from Indiana University. Angie also runs a successful tax preparation firm and has volunteered her time and served on several nonprofit boards – including as Vice President of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, as President of Helping Hands, as recruitment ambassador for Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law, and at the YMCA.

*Benefactor*

The Caesars Foundation of Floyd County  
The Caesars Foundation of Floyd County, a private foundation created to benefit the Floyd County community, has been an important partner to our campus and community. The Foundation's philanthropic focus traditionally falls into the categories of grant making to charitable non-profit organizations, educational scholarships, and program-related investments that encourage economic development. Since its inception, the Caesars Foundation has awarded more than $57 million to Floyd County organizations and schools. The Sellersburg Ivy Tech foundation’s benefactor, Caesars Southern Indiana, has contributed more than $69 million to the Sellersburg Ivy Tech Foundation since 1999. Excluding annual scholarships, Caesars Foundation of Floyd County has contributed more than $500,000, which includes its most recent gift of $100,000 to support the renovation of a new Student Life and Development Center.

South Bend

*Distinguished Alumni*

Harry Smyers (1984, 1989)

Harry Smyers has touched the lives of hundreds of students who have come through Ivy Tech over four decades. Harry has been affiliated with the college for roughly 38 years and he remains a strong advocate. He has helped to launch the automotive careers of more than 400 Ivy Tech students, and he’s more than a field instructor: he’s a role model, a Marine veteran, and a person who cares about and encourages the success of his students. Every student who shows their mettle is richly rewarded with Harry’s mentorship. He helps students work through fatigue, find resources, and do the extra work needed to succeed. And he always advocates for Ivy Tech as a college that leads students to the right opportunities. Rather than seeking accolades or riches, Harry lives the essence of what Ivy Tech provides students.

*Benefactor*

Donna and Dick Pfeil

For more than 10 years, Donna and Dick Pfeil have been one of the strongest supporters of Ivy Tech South Bend-Elkhart campus, specifically the Culinary Program. They created the Donna & Dick Pfeil Hospitality Administration Scholarship in 2016 and have supported Ivy Tech’s annual fundraising event, which started as the Culinary Dinner nearly 20 years ago and has evolved into the Ivy Impact Gala.  Both Dick and Donna are known for their philanthropic commitment to the Michiana area.  Together, they have funded the Pfeil Innovation Center for Beacon Health System employees and the Pfeil Innovation Center at Bethel University for students and staff. Dick and Donna continue to be visionaries for Ivy Tech South Bend-Elkhart. Dick currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the college, while Donna is a member of the Circle of Ivy. Their commitment to Ivy Tech students persists as they continue to partner with the College through new opportunities.

Terre Haute

*Distinguished Alumni*

Abby Noblitt (2021)Abby Noblitt, who graduated magna cum laude from Ivy Tech in 2021 with a degree in early childhood education, is making a big impact on her community. Abby is the owner and director of VIP Kinder College, a family childcare facility in Terre Haute. Abby earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and plans to earn her Master of Education in teaching, learning, and curriculum through Indiana University. While pursuing her education, Abby was the director of VIP Kinder College and managed the facility’s staff while juggling her own family and being active in her church. VIP Kinder College helps children to learn through play, concrete experiences, and interactions with their environment, peers, and adults. VIP Kinder College is rated as a high-quality childcare program and recently received a grant from United Way of the Wabash Valley to help establish a new center, VIP Kinder College South.

*Benefactor*

Union Health  
Union Health and Ivy Tech Terre Haute have been linked for many years. Union Health is an integrated health system and the Wabash Valley’s largest employer. It has served the health care needs of West Central Indiana and East Central Illinois residents for more than 130 years. Union Health’s mission is to provide compassionate health care of the highest quality while leading communities to their best health and wellness. Union Health has served as a clinical site for Ivy Tech Terre Haute students for more than 50 years and employs more than 600 Ivy Tech graduates, which is equal to nearly 20 percent of its total staff. In the spring, Union Hospital Foundation awarded Ivy Tech a $1 million gift to expand the School of Nursing and support the School of Health Sciences.

Valparaiso

*Distinguished Alumni*

Sandy Strilich Daly (2011)

It was 11 years ago at the age of 47 that Sandy found herself in a position where she knew she needed to find a great paying full-time job with benefits and also realized learning a trade could help that. Sandy enrolled in Ivy Tech's Energy Program and was the first female to ever pass climbing class for her Electric Line Construction degree. The classes were challenging and exciting and she loved learning. After graduating, Sandy was immediately offered a job with other local utility company Northern Indiana Public Service Company, and is currently a working Foreman in gas Construction as a Heavy Equipment Operator.

*Benefactor*

Cleveland-Cliffs  
Cleveland-Cliffs has been a financial friend of Ivy Tech for more than 26 years. The company is the largest flat-rolled steel producer in North America and the main source of steel production serving Northwest Indiana. For years Cleveland-Cliffs has supported the Chancellors’ scholarship event – the Meet the Need initiative – for students. It also partners on the electrical technology certificate program to help improve the lives of students at the Lake County and Valparaiso campuses. Cleveland-Cliffs is committed to public service in the region, and they’ve made it their business to stay involved in what’s happening locally. They understand there is a need in every community and remain committed to partnering with non-profit organizations, including the company’s footprint through in-kind contributions and financial support.