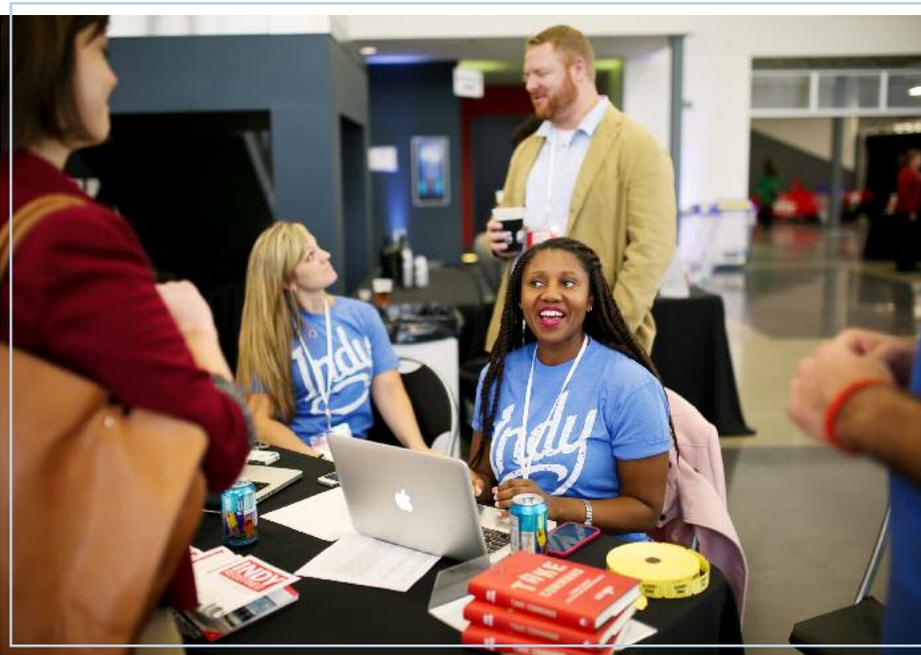


IndyHub Works to Engage a Generation

Young marketing entrepreneur and Indianapolis native Brent Lyle has lived and worked in New York, Mexico and Spain since he graduated from Ball State University in 2009. Tough competition for his hometown.

Lured back to Indianapolis by its affordability, Lyle has discovered more than reasonable apartment rents. He has found IndyHub, an organization nurturing the next generation of creative, dynamic leaders.



IndyHub's monthly events at local venues and volunteer opportunities weren't "stuffy or boring," according to Lyle. After getting more involved, he was tapped for 1828, IndyHub's professional development group for 18- to 28-year-olds and has continued to strengthen his ties to Indianapolis.

"IndyHub helped me put myself out there and get involved in the city," he says.

Lyle represents a success story for Indianapolis which, like many mid-size American metro areas, is eager to attract the young talent that cities need to thrive.

In fact, young workers with four-year college degrees are the most mobile part of the American workforce. A 2014 national study by City Observatory describes the current generation of 25- to 34-year-olds as the "young and the restless," both "up for grabs" and economically important. Young workers are critical to meet labor needs of fast-growing and technology-based companies, as well as an indicator of the overall health and attractiveness of a metropolitan area.

BioCrossroads, the life sciences initiative of the Central Indiana Corporate

Partnership, recognized the challenge for Indianapolis in 2005 and launched IndyHub as a strategy to attract and retain millennials (a term for the 86 million or so Americans born between 1980 and 2000). "We clearly heard from our members that it was critical for them to attract and retain talented younger workers," said David Johnson, president and CEO of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership and BioCrossroads. "We knew that engaging these young people in the life of our community was a key way to address this need. We wanted them to know they belong here."

Organizers originally conceived of it as an online resource, but they realized early on that there was much more to do, according to Molly Wilkinson Chavers, executive director of IndyHub.

“An online presence is great, but you also need face-to-face interactions. People were – and are – hungry to see what Indianapolis offers,” Chavers says.

During a decade of growth, IndyHub’s presence has expanded to monthly meetings, professional development op-

portunities and networking events. Through its outreach, IndyHub is introducing a new generation to local arts organizations, nonprofits, businesses and neighborhoods. In the process, it is tapping young men and women for deeper community engagement and future leadership.

IndyHub tailors messages and programming in a way that other organizations just aren’t able to do. Its focus on that core demographic is so important.”

As IndyHub’s efforts have expanded, its reputation has brought increasing attention from leaders in business, the arts, local government and civic affairs, along with frequent requests to collaborate. Recently, city government leaders asked IndyHub to spearhead a comprehensive, multi-year effort to

“We’re looking at what we need for the next 10 years to build our capacity and do even more.”

The goal is to build loyalty and commitment to Indianapolis among people like Lyle.

“We really need IndyHub,” Lyle says. “It has partnered with so many industry, government and arts groups in ways that allow people to become integrated quickly into the city and get excited about living here and staying here.”



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“IndyHub truly complements what we do,” says Melissa Cotterill, chief operating officer of the Indy Chamber. “Indianapolis has a healthy pipeline of young people, but the number one thing we hear from our Chamber members is ‘How can we attract and keep young talent?’

communicate the opportunities and benefits of living in Indianapolis.

Recognizing the important role IndyHub plays in helping young professionals connect to Indianapolis in meaningful ways, Lilly Endowment provided a \$50,000 grant in 2014 to support a strategic planning process through the charitable and educational foundation serving IndyHub.

“The strategic planning process is helping us look at important issues for our organization so that we can take our mission to a whole new level,” Chavers says.



IndyHub is engaging young Indianapolis leaders through professional networking events, including 2014 Indy Redefined at the Dallara IndyCar Factory in Indianapolis (opposite left), and through critical conversations, including a Spirit & Place Festival event about race relations held at the Phoenix Theatre (opposite right and above).