

# Higher Ed Responds to Changing Realities



## Indiana Colleges and Universities are Responding to Urgent Call to Reimagine Higher Education



**Higher education may be facing its greatest challenges in more than a century.** Demographers, economists, business leaders and college presidents themselves are seeing and experiencing trends that promise to dramatically change postsecondary education, if not significantly disrupt it.

Across the nation higher education institutions are preparing for a steep decline in enrollment as projections portend demographic shifts and fewer young people of traditional college age. A higher proportion of that smaller group of young adults will be persons of color, individuals representing more diverse ethnic backgrounds, members of families with lower incomes and first-generation college students—students who are and have been historically underserved by higher education. To thrive, colleges and universities recognize that they must adapt and work to become more inclusive and more effective in serving all students.

And the exploding digital and knowledge economy has brought often disruptive innovation to higher education. New online options increasingly rival the in-person paradigm that has served higher education in the United States in the past.

Any one of these changes would spark soul-searching for colleges and universities. Several occurring simultaneously elevates the stakes for institutions and illuminates the urgent need for innovation.

Recognizing these opportunities and challenges, Lilly Endowment in 2019 launched Charting the Future for Indiana's Colleges and Universities. Through the three-phase initiative, the Endowment invested \$138 million to encourage Indiana colleges and universities to prioritize the challenges and opportunities they face to fulfill their educational missions in light of rapid economic, demographic and technological changes and the evolving needs and demands of students.

**Charting the Future** is the “most thoughtful, forward-looking and comprehensive” initiative in the nation, says Arthur Levine, who studies higher education at New York University and the Institute for Citizens and Scholars. In 2021, he authored with Scott J. Van Pelt “The Great Upheaval: Higher Education’s Past, Present, And Uncertain Future,” a bird’s-eye view of the higher education landscape. The Endowment’s vision is particularly apt for the times, Levine says. Because it encompasses all of Indiana’s colleges and universities, which could produce many ideas and best practices with potential to become the new normal through the digital age.

“Every college and university in the country will be required to change to meet the needs of the emerging era,” says Levine. “Most of the colleges and universities receiving Charting the Future funding were founded during the industrial revolution. Today, the institutions, which were once cutting edge, are grappling with serving ‘digital natives’ who never knew a world without internet and digital devices and who already are navigating the new digital infrastructure to advance developments in artificial intelligence and virtual reality. Charting the Future asked every college in Indiana to stop business as usual to consider challenges and possibilities ahead and it funded the first steps forward.”

- Wabash College (opposite) is working to improve campus climate through diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. Staff at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (above) is strengthening access to mental health services.





Indiana higher education leaders gathered in Indianapolis in November 2021; Vincennes University has developed a center for robotics (below); Steven Jones welcomes a high school student to Wabash College’s Malcolm X Institute.

Through Phase 1 of the Charting the Future initiative, the Endowment made planning grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 to each of Indiana’s colleges and universities based on enrollment. Phase 2 grants ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million, also based on enrollment, enabled the schools to implement their ideas.



The \$62 million distributed in Phase 2 will support broader in-demand degree offerings in health sciences, deeper connections and stronger alignment with local schools and other community-based organizations focused on education, better access to and utilization of technology for teaching and learning, more mental health services for students in response to growing cases of anxiety and depression on campuses, improved recruitment and student retention, and enhanced diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, among other programs and strategies to serve students and strengthen institutions.

The final, Phase 3, distribution of \$69.9 million was allocated through 12 grants—spanning \$2.7 million to \$10 million—to 16 schools and supporting nine large-scale projects. Some of these projects were highly collaborative, involving multiple schools, which was encouraged through Charting the Future.

Charting the Future Phase 3 grants are supporting efforts on the following campuses: Anderson University, Butler University, DePauw University, Goshen College, Indiana Institute of Technology, Indiana State University, Martin University, Purdue University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, University of Evansville, University of Indianapolis, University of Southern Indiana, Valparaiso University, Vincennes University and Wabash College.

**Indiana colleges and universities responded to Phase 3 of the Charting the Future initiative by proposing strategies that include:**

- **engaging adult learners with new educational offerings, including certificates and credentials that recognize skills and knowledge valued by employers**
- **partnering with K-12 schools to offer collaborative programs and improve college readiness**
- **improving mental health services for students through a three-school collaboration**
- **attracting and better serving and retaining more Black and Hispanic students through campus- and community-wide programming**
- **increasing overall student retention through better and intensive counseling and predictive analytics to develop and implement targeted interventions**
- **improving career readiness through employer partnerships, especially with Indiana companies in search of new talent.**

In November 2021, the Endowment in connection with the initiative convened leaders from all of Indiana’s 38 colleges and universities. During the one-day meeting in Indianapolis, institutional presidents, provosts, deans and others gathered to learn how Charting the Future efforts are taking shape on campuses across the state. And they came together to hear from national higher education experts, including Levine and Shaun Harper, a professor in the schools of education and business at the University of Southern California (USC).

Harper, who is founding director of the USC Race and Equity Center, urged Indiana’s higher education leaders to view improving equity on their campuses as mission critical. Since 2003, he and fellow researchers have helped 300 colleges and universities nationwide conduct “climate assessments” to learn the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) on campuses.

The process requires people to learn to talk about race, something that many people in higher education—students and faculty alike—never learn how to do, Harper says. Once prepared to talk about and learn about race, leaders can begin to examine all aspects of higher education—from admissions to financial aid, curricula to hiring,

student life to board governance—with a commitment to making campuses places where all people are welcome, included and able to learn and contribute. He challenged Indiana higher education leaders to treat DEI work with the kind of strategic attention they give to their institutions’ financial well-being.

Convening participants also learned from a panel of Indiana CEOs, moderated by Indiana higher education commissioner Teresa Lubbers, that included Connie Bond Stuart from PNC Bank, Jeff Harrison from Citizens Energy Group and Tom Linebarger from Cummins. They talked about the skills and other qualifications business leaders look for when filling roles in their organizations. And attendees spent time in moderated peer discussions exploring ideas on issues such as DEI, student retention, adult education and career readiness—all issues identified as priorities by college presidents.

Charting the Future is designed to foster a future in which higher education enables Hoosiers to thrive in a society facing rapid technological, social and economic change. The following are six examples of promising efforts underway at Indiana schools supported by Phase 3 grants.

**“We can chart a future where campuses are more equitable, more inclusive. But we have to teach people what to do, how to do it and how to sustain it.”**

—Shaun Harper, University of Southern California’s Race and Equity Center





PROJECT

### Restoring Hope, Restoring Trust

**School:**

Wabash College (Crawfordsville)

**Grant:**

\$4.5 million

The Endowment’s Phase 3 grant is bolstering efforts already underway on several fronts to improve diversity, equity and inclusion. Wabash concluded years ago that improving DEI efforts in curricula, training and leadership offerings, among other efforts, would attract quality faculty, staff and students, thus preparing the institution to thrive well into the future.

“The grant is a guiding light,” says **Jill Lambertson**, Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Wabash. “It enables us to simultaneously focus our diversity, equity and inclusion efforts on faculty and staff development, student recruitment and retention, campus climate, community engagement and multiple collaborations.”

Within five years Wabash intends to increase four-year graduation rates by 20 percent for traditionally marginalized students—those from low-income, new majority and first-generation college families. Enrollment of Black and Hispanic men is expected to rise 15 percent and 12 percent, respectively.

■ Steven Jones (right) leads a tour at Wabash College.

PROJECT

### Developing a Workforce Ecosystem for Industry 4.0 in Indiana

**School:**

Vincennes University (Vincennes)

**Grant:**

\$8 million

Vincennes University’s stock in trade is preparing students for advanced employment in the factories and warehouses dotting Indiana. Staying abreast of the latest equipment needed to help graduates become cutting-edge employees in these settings is an expensive proposition.

Vincennes anticipated needing a decade or more to build out new technology to teach students to use collaborative robots—“cobots,” which essentially act as human assistants. The Endowment’s Phase 3 grant enabled Vincennes, Indiana’s first university, to create the Center for Applied Robotics and Automation (CARA). Now, after edging into the budding field with two cobots in 2020, Vincennes is preparing to have 40 by 2022.

The anticipated upshot will be a statewide workforce better prepared to make the most of technology. In a project defined by industry collaborations, Vincennes is working with Purdue University’s IN-MaC, Eleven Fifty Academy, Conexus Indiana, Techman Robot Inc., and Telamon Corporation, whose founder Albert Chen has been a passionate proponent for teaching students how to use cobots and integrating this technology into Indiana’s manufacturing sector.

“The Lilly Endowment grant is an enormous boost to Vincennes University’s efforts to work with our partners in industry, K-12 and higher education,” says President **Chuck Johnson**.



PROJECT

### MINDful College Connections

**Schools:**

DePauw University (Greencastle), Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (Terre Haute) and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (Saint Mary-of-the-Woods)

**Grants:**

DePauw: \$2,695,912

Rose-Hulman: \$2,695,912

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods: \$2,695,912

DePauw University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College are collaborating to develop MINDful College Connections, a project designed to address more effectively student mental health needs by achieving various synergies and economies of scale.

“We hope to contribute to students’ overall well-being, academic success and long-term goal attainment,” says DePauw President **Lori S. White** (above). “It is important that our students are mentally, physically and emotionally at their very best so that they are fit to achieve academic success.”

Goals include reducing student wait lists for mental health services, health-related hospitalizations and medical withdrawals and increasing participation in educational, preventive and outreach programming.

The mental health and wellness services and delivery model developed by the schools will be shared with other Indiana institutions.



PROJECT

## Butler Ventures

**School:**

Butler University (Indianapolis)

**Grant:**

\$9,988,335

Butler was in the midst of launching a transformational new strategy, and associated operating entity, Butler Ventures, in 2019 when the Endowment initiated Charting the Future. In 2020, a Phase 2 grant of \$2.5 million supported the first phase of Butler Ventures, the Transformation Lab, a research and development hub to launch new education models, programs and mission-aligned organizations. In 2021, Butler received a nearly \$10 million Phase 3 grant to launch two additional Butler Ventures related efforts, the Division of Professional Studies and the Indiana Education Venture Network.

With the Phase 3 funds, the new Division of Professional Studies focuses on expanding Butler’s impact beyond the traditional undergraduate student to adult, online and professional learners. Meanwhile, the Venture Network is supporting and investing in education-aligned startup businesses to find the best new ideas while supporting Indiana’s economy.

**Melissa Beckwith** (below), Butler’s vice president of strategy and innovation, says the funding was critical to the launch of Butler Ventures and arrived at just the right time.

“The impact cannot be overstated,” Beckwith says. “The infrastructure, programs and partnerships we are able to quickly build because of the grant will benefit the university and the state of Indiana for years to come.”



PROJECT

## Improving Student Retention Through Data Analytics

**Schools:**

University of Indianapolis (Indianapolis) collaborating with Anderson University (Anderson), Indiana Institute of Technology (Fort Wayne), Martin University (Indianapolis), Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (Saint Mary of the Woods) and University of Southern Indiana (Evansville)

**Grant:**

\$9,806,456

Imagine the ability to anticipate with uncanny accuracy a student’s plan to drop out of college, then quickly stepping in with interventions that help the student rebound and graduate.

A consortium of six schools have banded together to develop just such a system of predictive analytics. The Endowment’s Phase 3 grant to Ulndy is enabling the schools to develop a user-friendly system with long-term potential.

The goal is to use data to be proactive and precise—acting within hours or days of receiving an alert that a student is struggling with attendance or missed assignments.

“The resources and planning grant time allowed us to formulate many ideas and conversations into actual plans and build on the work we were doing to support our students, staff and faculty in new ways,” says Ulndy President **Robert L. Manuel** (above).

Ulndy, for example, plans to increase the percentage of at-risk students completing its programs.

PROJECT

## Indiana Data Mine

**School:**

Purdue University (West Lafayette)

**Grant:**

\$10 million

Purdue is working to strengthen its relevance to traditionally underserved students and build partnerships that spark growth in local economies across Indiana.

The Endowment’s Phase 3 grant is helping the university expand The Data Mine, a learning community that provides experiential learning opportunities in data science for students across multiple disciplines. Through The Data Mine, Purdue is looking to attract undergraduate students—especially first-generation, rural and Black students—and revitalize regions that have specific workforce



needs, starting in the Anderson and Fort Wayne areas. Purdue will support both students and employers in adapting to the changing workforce by exposing students to local employers and in-demand skills.

The Data Mine complements Purdue’s Innovation College, which was made possible by a Phase 2 Charting the Future grant and accelerates innovation in pedagogy and the development of cross-discipline programs.

“Data-driven technological change is disrupting economies and transforming society at an unprecedented rate,” notes **Jenna Rickus** (above), Purdue’s vice provost for teaching and learning. “We have a unique and timely opportunity to reimagine the impact of the data sciences on Indiana’s economy and improve outcomes for communities across the state.”



# Center for Leadership Development Expands Reach

CLD Plans More  
Locations for its  
Mentoring  
Programs to Help  
Black Youth



## What does it mean to be a responsible man?

That was the weighty topic up for discussion on a Tuesday evening in November, as 23 teenage boys and three adult facilitators gathered in a meeting room at Community Alliance of the Far Eastside (CAFE), a community center serving a large swath of urban Indianapolis. With raised hands, the boys volunteered to take turns and read aloud from a long list of admirable qualities.

**“Be a gentleman.”**

**“Be honest and trustworthy.”**

**“Keep your shoes clean; people notice.”**

As one young man expressed strong support for clean shoes and his peers nodded in agreement, adult facilitator Joshua Posley offered his thoughts.

“Keeping your shoes clean is a good habit,” Posley said. “But I would challenge you to have that same integrity about all aspects of your life. Love yourself as much as you love those shoes.”

Integrity, responsibility, love and respect for oneself and others—these are among the core values reinforced during a six-week course called Project MR (Male Responsibility), brought to CAFE by the Indianapolis-based Center for Leadership Development (CLD). Project MR is designed especially for young men—a similar program is offered for young women—but it reflects CLD’s larger vision of success for African American youth.

Since 1977, CLD has delivered that vision to tens of thousands of Indianapolis students in fourth through 12th grades and their families. Today, CLD provides 19 enrichment programs focused on character formation, career exploration, mentoring, tutoring, literacy, and college readiness. CLD President Dennis E. Bland points to the organization’s mission, “to foster the advancement of minority youth in Central Indiana as future professional, business and community leaders by providing experiences that encourage personal development and educational attainment.”

While Lilly Endowment has supported CLD since its inception, an \$11.6 million grant in 2019 has enabled CLD to expand its capacity to empower hundreds more

Indianapolis youth to succeed. Among the grant’s key objectives: expand CLD’s reach through satellite locations and in-school programs across Marion County; build a 20,000-square-foot addition to expand operating capacity; establish support services and mentoring for CLD students attending colleges and universities; and support CLD’s endowment to help assure long-term sustainability.

“Our goal is to build a value system of achievement among African American youth,” Bland says. “If you develop and cultivate the right values in young people, they become assets to the community.”

### Principles for Success

CLD participants are more likely to graduate high school and enroll and persist in college than peers who do not participate in CLD’s programs. However, the need, Bland says, is greater than ever, as minority youth in Indianapolis face pervasive challenges.

On average, students in third through eighth grades in Indianapolis Public Schools did not perform well in 2020 on Indiana’s standardized assessments. These test scores diverged dramatically among student populations, revealing large gaps between Black students and their white peers, reinforcing the need to better serve students of color in Indianapolis’ largest school system. Significant achievement gaps also appeared in high school assessments in other school districts throughout Marion County.

■ Youth gather at Community Alliance of the Far Eastside (CAFE), a new location where CLD offers the mentoring program Project MR (opposite and right).







■ Dennis Bland leads CLD.

Such challenges are not entirely new. During the mid-1970s, a group of Indianapolis civic and business leaders identified several factors they believed were severely limiting Black youth from achieving—or even aspiring to achieve—academic, college and career success.

They saw a lack of exposure to career options and a lack of awareness about the demands, expectations and preparation needed to take advantage of career opportunities. And there weren't enough Black professionals providing guidance, mentoring, role modeling and simple encouragement to young people.

Endowment funding helped these leaders, including founding president S. Henry Bundles Jr., launch CLD. It based early programming on what has become known as the CLD Principles for Success: character, education, leadership, service and career.

Bland, who has led the organization since 2000, was an early beneficiary of CLD efforts to instill those principles. He is a 1982 alumnus of CLD and Indianapolis Public Schools. He graduated from DePauw University and earned a law degree from Indiana University's Robert H. McKinney School of Law.

"These principles are all directed at one outcome: achievement," says Bland.

Since CLD began, more than 12,000 students have completed its signature Self-Discovery/Career Exploration Project—a 13-week experience in which participants discover how to establish and achieve their personal, educational and career goals—and are considered CLD alumni. CLD estimates that at least another 40,000 students have had some connection to one of the organization's programs or events.

"At a very basic level, we provide an understanding and appreciation of education and how it impacts the trajectory of your life," says Bland. "We do not assume anything about what students may or may not understand about the way in which education serves as a currency in our society, or why character matters. At the most fundamental level, we help students understand what good character is and help them see the value of education."

## Breaking the Distance Barrier

For the past 12 years, CLD has primarily offered programming and services from its two-story, red brick headquarters, located on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street on Indianapolis' northwest side.

Not every student from challenging circumstances who could benefit from CLD is aware of the programs or has transportation to the main campus location, Bland notes. Forty-four percent of CLD students come from single-parent households; 47 percent receive free or reduced lunches and 35 percent come from one of seven "hot spot" high-crime ZIP codes.

The Endowment's 2019 grant is helping CLD to be more intentional in creating satellite locations, and, in the process, raise its profile in neighborhoods throughout Indianapolis. "We want to help students where they are, in neighborhoods where we are needed the most," Bland says.

When CAFE CEO Kendra Nowell stepped into her leadership role at the community center in 2020, one of the first calls she made was to CLD, which had recently announced plans to expand its offerings to satellite locations.

Nowell grew up on the east side, a good distance from CLD headquarters, but her parents provided transportation to CLD programs and encouraged her participation. CLD was such a crucial part of her educational and professional development that she made sure her own son Jathan, now a freshman at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga., also benefited from CLD programs during middle and high school.

Yet Nowell was mindful that not all far east side students have the same opportunities. "We don't want distance to be a barrier for our young people to have access to this phenomenal program," she says.

Community leaders like Nowell, who are familiar with CLD's reputation, pave the way for CLD to expand and reach a new generation. In November 2021 CLD wrapped up the fall Project MR program at CAFE with a celebration for the participants and their families. Damon Echols, 14, shared some of what he learned.

"They taught us how to be responsible males, do well in school, and also how we can take care of ourselves," Echols said. "You could have a lot of problems in life if you don't have good values."

In 2021, CLD offered programming at several other satellite sites, including Edna Martin Christian Center, Christamore House and The PATH School.



## The PATH School

**At The PATH School**, one of Indianapolis Public Schools' Innovation Network Schools, founder and Head of School Alicia Hervey welcomed CLD to provide the Project MR program in 2021. With direction from a CLD staff member leading Project MR sessions at the west side school, male teachers and staff met regularly with more than a dozen 6th and 8th grade boys.

"It was fantastic for our staff. They reported how powerful it was to see the light bulb come on during conversations with these young men," Hervey says. "One student said, 'This is the first time that someone outside of my family told me that they believed in me.' That comment got us all. Too often, we don't recognize the power of hearing that someone believes in us."

The Precious Miss program will be offered at the school in spring 2022, with direction from a CLD staff member and led by PATH School female staff.

## College Connections

**Leaira Carter first encountered CLD** as a middle school student at the urging of her mother, who signed her up for Precious Miss. The program, like Project MR, is aimed at helping teens understand the importance of developing good character and behavioral habits.

"I was bullied and, like most teens, I struggled with confidence and self-esteem when I started Precious Miss," Carter says. "Honestly, it really helped me gain confidence, as a young, Black woman. I took the advice I heard and applied it by sitting in the front of the class and speaking up more. As a result, my grades improved, and I learned how to stand up for myself against bullies."

Carter continued with CLD college- and career-prep programs while attending Providence Cristo Rey High School. Now a sophomore at the University of Evansville, Carter is majoring in public health and minoring in medical Spanish. Though she is thriving academically and has adjusted to college life, her CLD counselor still checks in regularly.

"She's my mentor," says Carter. "Going into college was a little scary and I definitely had times of self-doubt, but CLD is always there."

The Endowment's grant is helping CLD expand that kind of ongoing support for students navigating higher education. Mentors, according to Bland, are helping students overcome challenges that might hinder their ability to excel academically and obtain a college degree.

In addition to staff support, CLD plans to create a network of mentors to work with college students and increase rates of college persistence and completion, especially for students on campuses that have low graduation rates among Black and Latino/Hispanic students. A new internship program is also in the works, as CLD uses community connections and CLD alumni to create opportunities that tie meaningful work experiences to college coursework and future employment, Bland says.

■ In 2021, youth took part in CLD programs at CAFE (opposite), Edna Martin Christian Center and Christamore House.

## Building for the Future

**Key to these endeavors is a third objective:** strengthen CLD's long-term sustainability. A portion of the Endowment grant—\$5 million—was dedicated to building CLD's endowment, which was an important part of the organization's recent capital campaign. CLD raised an additional \$1 million in matching funds from other donors for its endowment.

CLD's campaign fundraising success continued to bear fruit in August 2021 when CLD broke ground on a 20,000-square-foot expansion to its headquarters. Plans include improved spaces for programming, including CLD's College Prep Institute.

The College Prep Institute offers students and families free access to licensed guidance counselors who provide reading, math and career assessments, support for college searches, social and emotional support, financial aid literacy, information about internships and referrals to internal and external community resources.

The increased space supports a larger strategy to bring more students—many of whom will encounter CLD at satellite locations—to CLD headquarters for in-depth and specialized one-on-one services. "CLD wants to connect with students for the long term," Bland says. "We want to enroll more students in more programs, get them to engage with our College Prep Institute, and help them enroll, persist and succeed in college."

The grant is not intended to point CLD in a new direction, but to expand its reach and impact, Bland says. As it begins its 45th year, CLD programs have helped thousands of Black and minority youth—and has the potential to reach thousands more, he says.

"The grant provides the resources to continue this work by building a master plan for the future," Bland says. "Our hope is to shift the narrative for African American youth to a future of unlimited potential and abounding achievement."

## Center for Leadership Development

**In 2019, Lilly Endowment approved a \$11.6 million grant to help the Center for Leadership Development (CLD) reach more Indianapolis youth through its programs that provide tutoring, mentoring, career exploration and support for college readiness. The grant is helping CLD:**

- establish satellite locations across Marion County
- create a mentoring program for CLD alumni attending colleges and universities
- expand its headquarters on the near westside of Indianapolis
- strengthen the organization's endowment to help assure long-term sustainability