

# Indianapolis

## INDIANA

### THE NEW SKILLS READY NETWORK

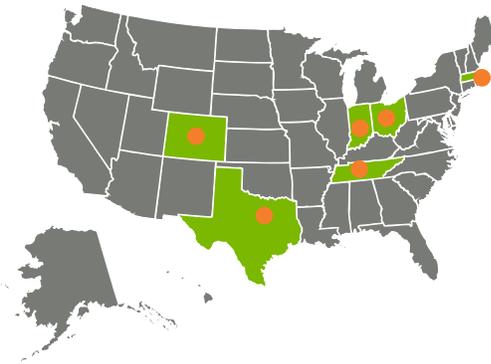
*New Skills ready network*, launched by JPMorgan Chase in 2020, bolsters the firm's efforts to support an inclusive economic recovery, as part of both their \$350 million, five-year New Skills at Work initiative to prepare people for the future of work and their \$30 billion commitment to advance racial equity. Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group are working with sites to improve student completion of high-quality career pathways in six US communities.

The six *New Skills ready network* sites are: Boston, Massachusetts; Columbus, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Denver, Colorado; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Nashville, Tennessee. These sites are formulating new partnerships between local school systems, higher education, employers, and government entities to develop pathways and policy recommendations that give underserved students access to higher education and real-world work experiences that lead to high-wage, in-demand jobs.

These snapshots provide an overview of sites' accomplishments in the fourth year of the *New Skills ready network* initiative, including the development of priority objectives and action steps toward those objectives. Through the *New Skills ready network* initiative JPMorgan Chase is looking to advance the following priority areas to prepare students for good careers and economic mobility:

- Strengthening the alignment and rigor of career pathways;
- Designing, implementing and scaling real-world work experiences;
- Building seamless transitions to support postsecondary success; and
- Closing equity gaps.

Indianapolis, Indiana, is one of the six sites participating in the *New Skills ready network*. This five-year initiative, launched by JPMorgan Chase in 2020, aims to improve learner completion of high-quality career pathways.



#### NEW SKILLS READY NETWORK SITES:

- Boston, Massachusetts
- Columbus, Ohio
- Dallas, Texas
- Denver, Colorado
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Nashville, Tennessee

In the first year of this initiative, the Indianapolis, Indiana, *New Skills ready network* team focused on conducting a review of existing career pathways across institutional partners against a quality rubric. This review informed work to improve five career pathways as a pilot for changes to the remaining career pathways. During year two, the project team finalized the alignment of all remaining secondary career pathways with the state's [Next Level Programs of Study](#) and piloted performance labs as a core component of the state's Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment. They also began aligning career advising opportunities across partners. In year three, the project team focused heavily on developing a new career pathway and creating advising tools, built largely upon lessons learned throughout the career pathways benchmarking process. In year four, implementation work continued in earnest and drove ongoing work at each partner institution.

In 2023-24, the Indianapolis, Indiana, *New Skills ready network* team focused on:

- 1 Aligning career advising practices across partners by building capacity and resources for learners;
- 2 Innovating to create seamless transitions to postsecondary success; and
- 3 Scaling apprenticeships, internships and other intensive work-based learning opportunities.



asset mapping what advising opportunities exist and developed multiple opportunities for the intermediary partners (EmployIndy, Ascend Indiana) or postsecondary partners (Indiana University-Indianapolis [IU-I] and Ivy Tech Community College) to provide the services required by law. The career coaches from Ivy Tech, who in year three became fully embedded in both Arsenal Tech High School and Crispus Attucks High School, provide coaching and general academic advising support. Coaches are now certified to administer [Gallup's CliftonStrengths](#) assessments and have administered CliftonStrengths to more than 150 high school learners.

Proactive advising has also been successful for IU-I. Proactive advising efforts seek to identify barriers to retention and completion before learners are at greater risk of stopping or dropping out. The university gave out incentives for proactive advising and randomly selected half of the first-year learners to participate. For learners participating in the pilot, IU-I administrators estimate a 240 percent return on investment in tuition dollars retained and will continue to expand proactive advising efforts throughout the entirety of a given cohort.

While state legislation and other initiatives did slow implementation to ensure compliance, career advising remains a significant focus for the final year of the grant. Partners continue to meet to map out how to bring the most value to learners in the limited time available. Messaging about the various career pathways and postsecondary options will be a focus, mainly as EmployIndy and others work to showcase how Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) learners can maximize other initiatives developed throughout the grant.

## HIGH-PRIORITY INDUSTRY SECTORS



Cybersecurity



Health Care



Information Technology

## PRIORITY 2

### Innovating to create seamless transitions to postsecondary success



Throughout the previous years of the *New Skills ready network* grant, postsecondary success has been a considerable focus for the Indianapolis, Indiana, project team. In previous years, the aforementioned career coaches focused heavily on conversations with learners to ensure that learners could access the postsecondary opportunities that are right for them, and postsecondary partners leaned in by [publishing program maps](#) for learners participating in 2+2 agreements between IUPUI and Ivy Tech.

Building on these collaborative projects was crucial to the success of initiatives that started in earnest in year four. Through a [state initiative](#) launched in fall 2024, Indiana seniors from specific high schools can be “pre-admitted” to 38 participating two- and four-year institutions, including IU-I and Ivy Tech, which allows learners to see the variety of postsecondary options available to them.

Two major initiatives grew out of these collaborations and conversations at network-wide *New Skills ready network* convenings:

- Starting in September 2023, IPS learners with a 3.0 grade point average or higher are automatically admitted to IU-I after completing a [short online form](#). Because of the partnership between IU-I and IPS, learners do not have to pay an application fee, fill out a lengthy application or send transcripts. While the seamless admissions process is currently only for learners in the five IPS-operated high schools, IU-I officials are working to expand the initiative to charters and other high schools to better serve learners across Marion County.
- In February 2024, Ivy Tech and IU-I launched a [dual admission program](#) to increase postsecondary access for learners while easing as many barriers as possible. Learners apply to Ivy Tech and complete an interest form, noting their interest in transferring to IU-I upon completing their associate degree. By participating in this process, learners receive access to advising, learner support services and financial aid counseling, as well as academic, cultural and social events at both institutions – a success that administrators hope will help reduce equity and access gaps for transfer learners. Learners will start this program in the 2024-25 academic year.

The embedded career coaches also coordinate dual enrollment, which has seen considerable growth in participation and engagement. Approximately 150 learners participated in dual enrollment opportunities, with more IPS educators eligible to teach dual enrollment courses than ever before due to increased credentialing and professional development.

Future work in this space will focus on ensuring that learners are aware of these opportunities and can take full advantage of the program that is most appropriate for their interests, aptitudes and goals.

### PRIORITY 3

## Scaling apprenticeships, internships and other intensive work-based learning opportunities

While improving work-based learning efforts has always been a priority for the *New Skills ready network* project team, the team continues their focus on scaling high-quality and equitable work-based learning opportunities. These work-based learning and employer engagement efforts build on previous initiatives such as [Talent Bound](#) and [Modern Apprenticeship](#), whose work continued to expand because of discussions in the *New Skills ready network* and statewide work-based learning cohorts developed in collaboration with this initiative.

In year four, multiple ongoing initiatives continued to grow as cohorts developed a regular cycle for implementation. H.B. 1002 fully defined “modern youth apprenticeship,” providing critical criteria for site partners to meet as they pursue quality modern youth apprenticeship opportunities for learners in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ascend Indiana’s Modern Apprenticeship program formed new cohorts of learners and continued to convene statewide communities of practice, including a meeting in late 2023 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ascend Indiana and other partners are building lessons learned into a 10-month [Implementation Lab](#), with the goal of further scaling youth apprenticeship across the finance, life sciences and advanced manufacturing sectors.

IU-I has also continued to expand its [Sophomore Internship program](#), focusing on scaling its work. In part using *New Skills ready network* funds, a full-time coordinator was hired to help diversify interns and employer relationships. Seventeen interns, who primarily are from under-represented backgrounds or are first-generation college learners, participated in the most recent cohort. Learners are paid \$15 per hour for up to 15 hours per week.



**LOOKING  
AHEAD**

The grant’s last year will primarily focus on sustaining ongoing initiatives and ensuring that progress made throughout the *New Skills ready network* is not lost. While turnover continues to be an ongoing challenge for site partners, structures and relationships built in earlier years will ensure that the systems will stay in place long term. Partners are also focused on demonstrating the long-term value of these initiatives to help secure future funding opportunities through state, institutional and philanthropic sources.



Learner  
Profile

## AKINWALE ADESAKIN

**EDUCATION:** Sophomore, Indiana University-Indianapolis

The extensive opportunities available through Modern Apprenticeship (MAP) were a significant factor in my decision to join. With a strong interest in information technology (IT), I knew that an IT apprenticeship would be a perfect addition to my portfolio, providing valuable hands-on experience.

My passion for the technology industry has been a lifelong pursuit, and the apprenticeship played a crucial role in solidifying my career choice in cybersecurity. This experience opened my eyes to the vast array of opportunities that exist, many of which are often

overlooked but can be life changing for those who pursue them. Exposure to these opportunities is crucial in making informed career decisions.

The connections I've made and the knowledge I've gained throughout the program, from my junior year until now, have made this journey both smooth and enjoyable. While the exposure and experience have been incredibly beneficial, it is the networking aspect that stands out as the most pivotal element in my professional development.

