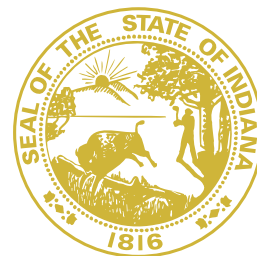


WEST CENTRAL INDIANA REGIONAL REPORT



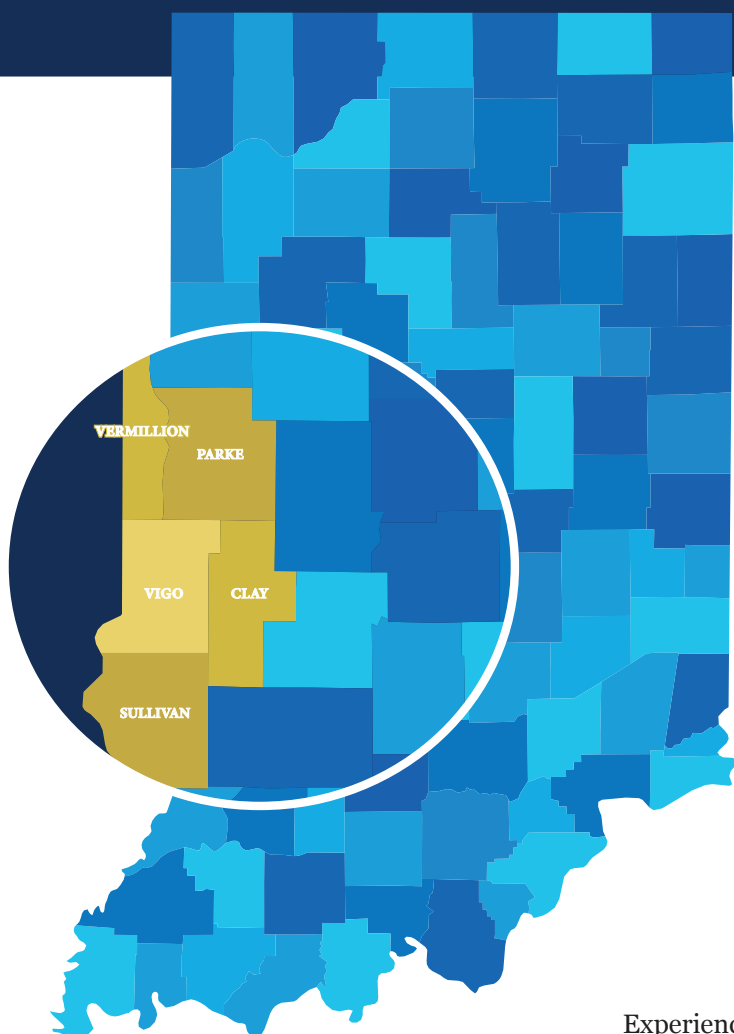
August 2026

“Indiana’s strength comes from its people – Hoosiers who work hard, solve problems and take pride in building something better for the next generation.

Across our state, we’re seeing what’s possible when business, higher education and community leaders come together to solve problems with a shared purpose. Those partnerships are driving growth, creating jobs and opening new doors for Hoosiers.

Here in West Central Indiana, that spirit of partnership is creating real momentum. Communities across the Wabash Valley are building on a strong foundation of advanced manufacturing, agriculture, energy and higher education to attract new investment and create quality jobs. With world-class institutions like Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and Indiana State University preparing tomorrow’s workforce, continued investment in industrial parks and regional infrastructure, and a growing economy, West Central Indiana is proving that collaboration and a skilled workforce remain two of Indiana’s greatest competitive advantages.”

— Governor Mike Braun



REGIONAL IMPACT

WEST CENTRAL INDIANA

IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS...

- ♦ **16 businesses** committed to locating or growing in West Central Indiana
- ♦ More than **\$2 billion in capital investment** committed
- ♦ **1,381 new jobs committed** with an average wage of \$28.93/hour
- ♦ More than **\$88 million in new payroll** committed

SCAN TO WATCH
WEST CENTRAL INDIANA
ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHT VIDEO

Experience the region momentum in this two-minute video.



STORIES FROM AROUND THE REGION

ENTEK BUILDING AMERICA'S FIRST GIGAFACTORY FOR LITHIUM-ION SEPARATORS IN TERRE HAUTE

- ◇ \$1.5 billion capital investment will support production of key component for batteries used in electric cars
- ◇ 1.4 million-square-foot plant to be completed by late 2027/early 2028
- ◇ Project is expected to create up to 642 jobs

“We chose Terre Haute for many reasons, including the excellent workforce opportunity ... a nearly shovel ready construction site with available utilities located in an industrial park, excellent vocational education, and business-friendly incentives from both the state and local governments,” said ENTEK CEO **Larry Keith**.

ZINKPOWER USA COMPLETES \$47 MILLION TERRE HAUTE PLANT

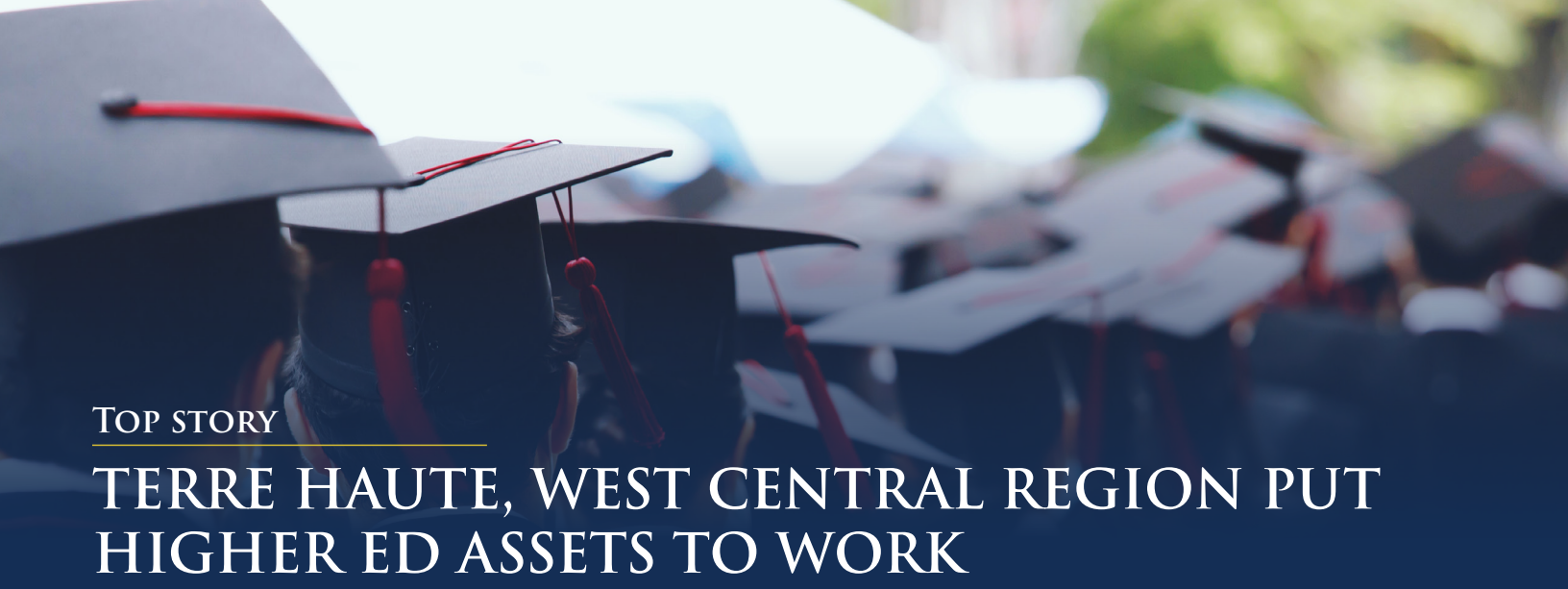
- ◇ Newly opened 125,000-square-foot facility to support 90 new jobs
- ◇ This is the fourth ZINKPOWER plant of its kind in the US and the company's first in Indiana
- ◇ Plant will provide galvanized materials to its neighbor, truck and trailer manufacturer Great Dane

“We are one of the leading groups [of our kind] worldwide,” said ZINKPOWER CEO **Martin Kopf**. “We’re doing hot dip galvanizing. We protect steel from corrosion where you can see all these parts: the trailer business, the infrastructure business, the poles, power grids, guardrails.”

TERRA HOSTING MOVES TO INDIANA, WILL REPURPOSE FORMER MILITARY BASE

- ◇ \$4-5 million investment
- ◇ Facility will house crypto mining and data center operations
- ◇ More than 1,200 specialized computers were moved from sites in Kansas and Wyoming

“Terra Hosting evaluated many options before selecting Indiana. What kept bringing the team back was a combination of factors that are hard to find together in one place: favorable energy costs, a central location, a business environment open to new industry, and a community that takes economic investment seriously.”
—**Terra Hosting press release**



TOP STORY

TERRE HAUTE, WEST CENTRAL REGION PUT HIGHER ED ASSETS TO WORK

THE TERRE HAUTE REGION BOASTS CONSIDERABLE HIGHER EDUCATION FIREPOWER.

Indiana State University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College all call the region home. Ivy Tech has a major campus in Terre Haute. Putting those regional assets to work for the city and broader region has been a priority.

All four of the higher education institutions are engaged in workforce development and retention efforts, and Rose-Hulman has been in discussions with Vigo County School Corp. about creating a STEM academy for high school students. Rose-Hulman is also creating a \$102.3 million innovation district, known as Innovation Grove, designed to facilitate entrepreneurship, hands-on learning and technological advancement for students, industry leaders and the broader Wabash Valley region.

GRANTS BOOST REGION

READI GRANTS LEVERAGE FUNDING FOR HOUSING, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND RESEARCH

WITH MORE THAN \$35 MILLION IN FUNDING FROM INDIANA'S READI 1.0 AND 2.0 PROGRAMS AND LILLY ENDOWMENT,

West Central Indiana is creating a region with robust housing options and leveraging the research firepower of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology to encourage groundbreaking medical research, entrepreneurship and collaboration with existing industry.

- ◇ **Innovation Grove.** Set to open in 2027, Innovation Grove is a research district on Rose-Hulman's campus dedicated to advancing entrepreneurship, education and health care. Developed in partnership with Union Health and the Indiana Orthopedic Institute, and with financial support from Lilly Endowment, the \$102.3 million district will feature state-of-the-art labs and spaces that support hands-on learning and collaborative opportunities across sectors. State READI grants have leveraged \$18 million being used for a mixed-use event space and other facilities that will provide space for start-ups.
- ◇ **Homes for the Future.** This region-wide program incentivizes home builders to provide age-appropriate housing for both seniors and young families as regional leaders work to address a housing shortage they believe is hindering economic progress. Initial efforts resulted in construction of 164 housing units. More than \$1.5 million in READI funding leveraged almost \$29 million in private investment.
- ◇ **Wilma & Liston Buell Community Center.** This project in rural Clay County provided a meeting place, a large food pantry, event space and other amenities aimed at improving population health through recreation, education and nutrition.
- ◇ **Indiana State University Early Learning Center.** The renovation of an existing building on Indiana State University's campus into an early learning center is meant to address a lack of childcare options in the region. It is also aimed at providing early learning experiences to children, giving them a head start on educational attainment that can lead to higher earnings potential and a stronger tax base.

ENTREPRENEUR SUCCESS STORIES

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

SMALL BUSINESSES MAKE UP THE HEART OF THE INDIANA ECONOMY and employ more than 1.2 million Hoosiers. The state, including the Indiana Small Business Development Center, supported more than 10,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses in 2025, an effort that helped launch more than 450 businesses statewide. The West Central Indiana Small Business Development Center served 406 entrepreneurs, small businesses and aspiring founders in the last 18 months, resulting in 38 business starts. Among the success stories are:

- ♦ **The Emporium (Clay County):** Established in 2023, The Emporium is a shared retail and small business hub that was named this May as the state's Community Impact Small Business of the Year. Started by Brazil native Chris Godfrey, The Emporium occupies a repurposed bank building on Main Street in Brazil and is home to numerous businesses, including a vintage clothing store, a massage spa, a nail studio, a dance studio and a café.
- ♦ **CDE Scent Detection Dogs (Vigo County):** Patti Farnsworth contacted the West Central Indiana Small Business Development Center in 2024 for help formalizing a business plan for CDE Detection, which helps locate missing pets. The SBDC connected her to Indiana State University. Farnsworth said ISU helped her create a website and navigate the challenges of filing articles of incorporation and understanding new technology. Her dogs Opie and Opal are trained to find missing animals, like the Miniature Schnauzer Opie found in the dark stranded in the middle of a creek. Farnsworth's goal is to conduct eight to 10 searches per month.
- ♦ **51 Bridges CrossFit (Parke County):** Founded in 2022 by Jennifer and Mike Pendleton, 51 Bridges CrossFit has defied data suggesting that a CrossFit studio wouldn't survive in a town as small as Rockville. The Pendletons, both of whom had recently lost weight through the group exercise program, thought otherwise and gave Rockville a CrossFit studio that now boasts 70 loyal members. 51 Bridges CrossFit was named Indiana's Rural Small Business of the Year in 2025.
- ♦ **Red Dog Dumpsters (Sullivan County):** Founded in 2024 by Coltin Kennedy, Red Dog Dumpsters rents 20-, 30- and 40-yard dumpsters primarily to customers in south, central and western Indiana. Kennedy was inspired to get into business by watching his father run a construction company, so he secured a loan and started Red Dog from scratch. Initially he found customers through his parents' construction company and personal contacts, but now he finds and books customers primarily through Red Dog's website.
- ♦ **1st Choice Lawncare (Clay County):** High school sweethearts Chris and Brittney Morris both had jobs in the pharmaceutical industry, but they felt the pull of entrepreneurship after disruptions to their work caused by the COVID pandemic. They started 1st Choice as a side gig with a mower, a weed eater and a small trailer. Now they have a full-time business with seven employees. They love the seasonal variety of their work. "You do your spring cleanup, landscaping, then you go into mowing all summer, then come fall clean-ups, pruning, tree trimmings and then the mums and pumpkins. There's always something different, and that's great," Chris said.

FOCUS ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

For more than 140 years, Freitag-Weinhart has helped power Indiana's economy as a trusted Terre Haute-based industrial and mechanical contractor. The company relies on a highly skilled workforce, and as those workers became more challenging to find, the company realized it needed to be strategic about workforce development. "Our primary focus is attracting younger talent into the trades and into apprenticeship programs," said Stephen Snyder, a member of the company's leadership team. The company invests heavily in continuous learning through internal mentorship, partnerships with Ivy Tech Community College, engagement with Purdue University and professional development opportunities for its employees. "Workforce development is an ongoing effort," Snyder said. "By continuing to invest in our people, we're positioning our company and Indiana's workforce for long-term success."

HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE REGION



[Rose-Hulman's Design Clinic aims to give students real-world experience, create talent pipeline](#) (July 6, 2026)

[Iconic downtown Terre Haute bar to get refresh](#) (June 29, 2026)

[West central Indiana hitting population growth goals](#) (June 4, 2026)

[LaVern Gibson CC course investing in improvements ahead of NCAA championships](#) (June 4, 2026)

[Hallador inks \\$450M equipment purchase agreement for Merom expansion](#) (June 2, 2026)

[Road, funding agreements detailed for \\$65 billion Sullivan County industrial campus](#) (April 1, 2026)