

# INDIANA

MAY 2016

# CAREER MONTHLY

## Brain drain.

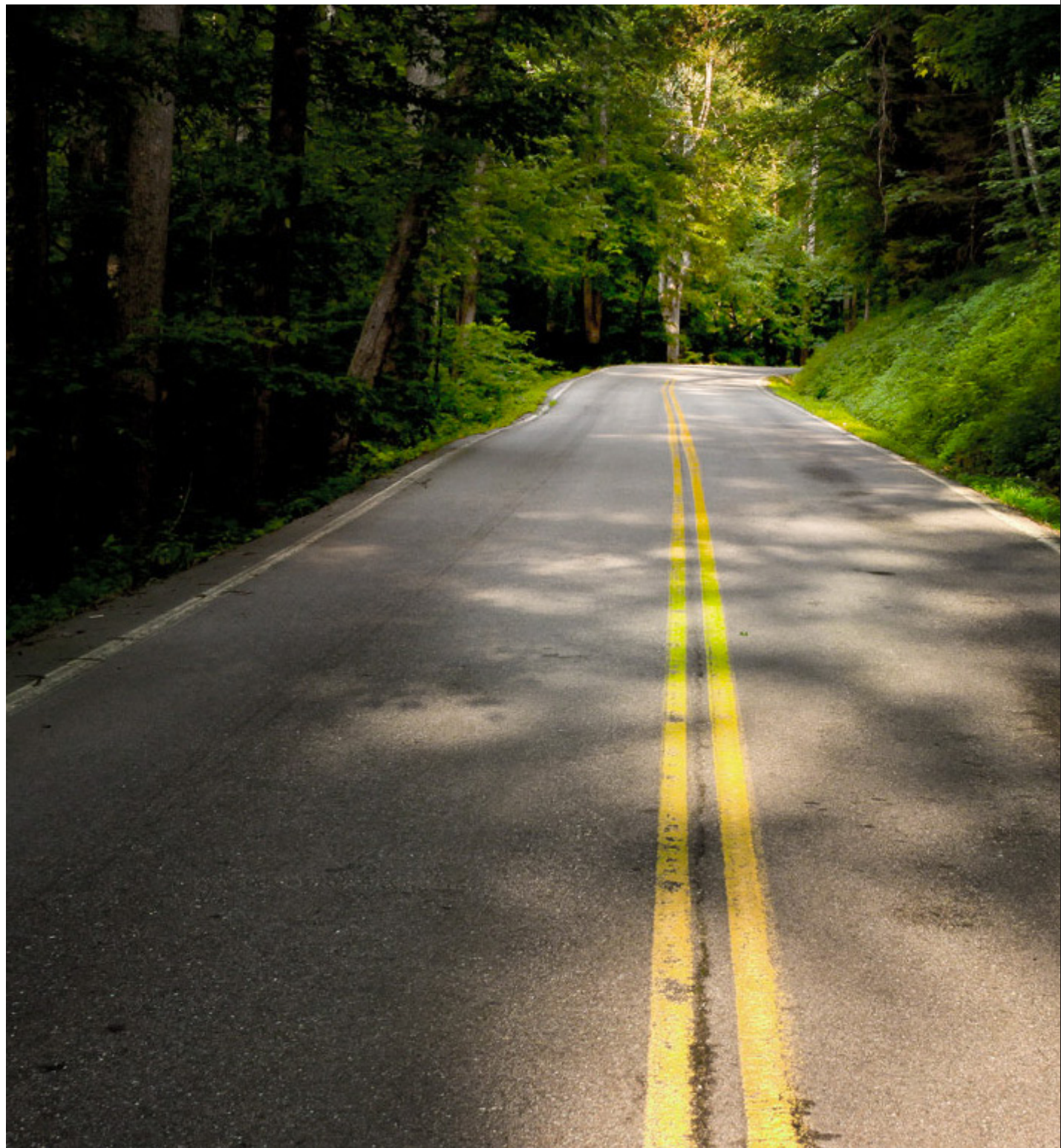
*Myth or Reality?*

Featuring  
Commissioner  
Teresa Lubbers and  
Rep. David Ober

## Recycling.

*Making the Shift*

Featuring  
Mayor Hogsett





# INDIANA

takes action to combat

## BRAIN DRAIN

Story & Photos By: Dyala Akermawi



Indianapolis, Ind.—Indiana is in jeopardy of losing population and aging as an effect of brain drain, but state leaders are determined to keep Indiana's young and brightest from leaving the state.

"Brain drain is when we have younger generations that because of better opportunities or other issues in their lives they stay here and get their college degree and then they move on to other states and other regions," said Rep. David Ober, R –Albion.

Some Indiana graduates dream of leaving the cornfields behind and moving to a different state for warmer weather or better amenities.

"When I was looking into chiropractic graduate schools I was definitely looking for somewhere with warm weather and a beach," said 2014 Franklin College graduate Theresa Stoakes.

Stoakes is a student at Palmer College of Chiropractic in Port Orange, Florida.

But, higher education leaders in Indiana are focused on keeping Hoosier graduates right here at home. Indiana leaders are working to create plans and initiatives to remind recent graduates the perks of living in Indiana.

Without the talented workers, businesses can't thrive. Which can make it less attractive for other businesses to move to a certain area.

One of Ober's main concerns is Indiana's losing population and aging. And with millennials leaving, Indiana businesses could suffer.

And, without millennials, Ober said he worries it could be hard for Indiana's economy to grow and move forward.

"It makes it harder to attract businesses here if you don't have the talent to fulfill their workforce needs and so we've really focused on training," Ober said. "We focus on higher learning in the state to make it better and to tie them with businesses so that they have all the resources that they need."

Ober said he wants to see Indiana's economy thrive and bring more high-wage jobs to the state.

"If we don't start doing more and more to keep our young, talented Hoosiers here it just gets that much more difficult to bring these high-wage, technical jobs to kind of remake the Indiana economy moving forward and bringing it into the 21st century," Ober said.

Indiana has seven public systems and 31 private colleges and universities.

"We are actually an importer of students because we have a wide range of options," said Indiana Higher Education Commissioner Teresa Lubbers. "We have more people who are accessing higher education now than ever before."

The Indiana Department of Higher Education is working to help combat the brain drain, but progress on the issue takes time.

"We need to follow these trends over a period of time," said Lubbers. "We need to follow what happens the first year after they graduate and then what happens five years after they graduate and follow what is happening in the employment market at the same time."

There are many factors that could attribute to the large migration of younger Hoosiers.

"You can't paint this story with one brush because it has a lot of different dimensions to it," said Lubbers. "You see a difference between students who study a particular subject matter. So if you look at those numbers there are a large number of people who come to study engineering who would leave."

It's not an issue that is going away and we are **concerned** and **focused** on it.

We have a lot of philosophy majors who leave, a lot of people in transportation will leave as well," said Lubbers.

According to the Indiana Workforce Intelligence System, from 2011 to 2013 roughly 122,000 Indiana residents graduated from a public university in Indiana. Out of those graduates roughly 70,000 were employed in Indiana one year after they graduated. That means roughly 60 percent of those graduates stayed in the state.

"You see a pretty strong consistency throughout the years in terms of the number of people who leave," Lubbers said. "You do see a difference between one year after graduation and three years and five years. So the highest percentage that we would see people staying in Indiana would be one year after graduation and then you see a slight diminishment of that at three and five years out as people have other opportunities in other places."

According to the Indiana Workforce Intelligence System, numbers stay consistent throughout the years until 2008 and 2009. From 2007 to 2010 approximately 110,000 Indiana residents graduated and out of those only around 60,000 were employed in Indiana one year after graduation.



“A lot of our statistics were skewed in 2008 and 2009 because of the recession so people tended to go where ever they could get a job and we are starting to see the sort of settling down from that again,” Lubbers said.

Lubbers believes it is important to build relationships with employers while students are in school – to have a better understanding of what college students know when they graduate from college and what employers need.

The Indiana Department of Higher Education is working with the Indiana Career Counsel and the governor's office to call for 10,000 more internships to help keep college students engaged in the workforce.

“It's more important that we actually have a relationship with what happens within higher education and what happens with our employers and I think that will go a long way to having a more effective way of dealing with the brain drain,” Lubbers said.

The Indiana Department of Higher Education recently crafted a strategic plan called “Reaching Higher, Delivering Value.”

One of the five sections is about career preparation and alignment with education. In 2015, “Career Ready” was launched with the goal of giving Hoosier students more knowledge about career opportunities and in-demand jobs, the educational pathways that lead to employment and, understanding the importance of having workplace experiences.

Indiana isn't the only state dealing with the issue of brain drain. According to The Washington Post, Illinois, Michigan and Ohio are other states that have experienced brain drain. Indiana is taking multiple steps to help combat the issue as much as possible. State leaders are aware of the brain drain and understand how it can affect Indiana's economy.

“It's not an issue that is going away and we are concerned and focused on it,” Lubbers said.

*Dyala Akermawi is a reporter for TheS-tatehouseFile.com, a news website powered by Franklin College journalism students.*



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