



SOUTH BEND | ELKHART
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

MONTHLY update

Letter from the CEO

While the holiday season may look very different this year, one thing that remains unchanged is the resiliency and kindness of the South Bend - Elkhart region. From intentionally gift shopping at small businesses to brainstorming creative ways to unite with loved ones, our community has transformed the challenges of this year into opportunities for thoughtful connection. The people behind these stories are wonderful reminders of the reasons why we delve into regional economic development and strive to improve the quality of life for every individual in our community.

As the year winds to a close, so has our [WE+YOU Regional Impact Series](#). Since November's newsletter, we have released highlights on Education and Workforce as well as Industry Growth. Our most recent video features the Regional Partnership in its entirety, tying each initiative into our overarching goal to increase per capita personal income within our region. While this may sound like a mammoth task, these videos have showcased how our innovative, driven community of stakeholders and partners make this vision possible in collaboration with our dedicated team. To view each episode and learn more about WE+YOU, visit [WEplusYOU.com](#).

In case you missed the kickoff event, we officially unveiled the South Bend - Elkhart Digital Innovation Hub in partnership with the LIFT Network! Over 100 stakeholders tuned in to the webinar that formally introduced the concept of "the Hub," and its development over the course of the year. This large, collaborative effort has culminated into a one-stop regional resource for those seeking to cultivate talent, advance their career knowledge, start a business, or innovate their respective industry. If you want to take a look or submit your own resources for consideration, please feel free to visit the [website](#).

We are proud of the immense progress the region has made over the past year and are grateful to each of you for being part of this collaboration that makes it all possible. We are moving into 2021 with a renewed sense of hope and gratitude and look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

On behalf of the Regional Partnership team, we wish you a very bright, restful, and joyful holiday season!

WE+YOU,

Regina Emberton CEcD, CCIM, SIOR
President and CEO
South Bend - Elkhart Regional Partnership





INDUSTRY GROWTH

Industry Growth Committee Update

It has been an interesting year for our work supporting the growth of industries in the South Bend- Elkhart region. Our committee's focus on growing jobs in high- pay traded industries by providing business support services and improved infrastructure for a growing economy is important now more than ever.

Trends in consumer demand continue to drive the need for more products and services our region makes and moves every day and we are proud of the companies throughout our community that have been able to pivot and find innovative ways to produce and provide the most essential needs during the pandemic. We've seen millions of dollars invested into the [expansion of existing companies](#), [spec building development](#), as well as infrastructure and land use improvements over this past year. We are fortunate to have many passionate people in the South Bend - Elkhart region working diligently to support businesses across northern Indiana and southwest Michigan as we all adjust in an uncertain time.

To learn more about some of our work this year visit our [Industry Growth impact video](#) featuring co-chairs of the Regional Partnership's Industry Growth Committee [James Turnwald](#) and [Shelley Klug, CFcD](#).

Related News

- [Community Development Block Grant Program - COVID-19 Response Program: Phase 3](#)
- [Back On Track Indiana - Small Business Restart Fund](#)
- [Project Announcement - EV Maker to Bring Jobs to the South Bend - Elkhart Region](#)



EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

Education and Workforce Committee Update

In the recently released Indiana Commission for Higher Education report, [Indiana Certificates Report 2020](#), data shows that the number of Indiana residents earning postsecondary certificates has increased by 500 percent over the last decade. This growth coincides with state-level leadership policies to promote short-term credentials, which in turn enable upskilling within high-demand, good-paying jobs at accelerated rates. This continued direction, by state leadership, to prioritize postsecondary credentialing is well received by regional education and workforce ecosystem leaders as initiatives to align workforce demand and talent supply advance further into the new year.

LIFT Network Internship Program Accepting Employer Applications: The LIFT Network Internship Program has opened applications to regional employers to subsidize up to two upper-level undergraduate interns (at a rate of up to \$2,500 per intern). The application deadline is December 31, 2020 and any interested employers may [submit an application](#) or contact the LIFT Network directly via email at LIFTnetwork@southbendelkhart.org for more information. Recent information sessions, facilitated in collaboration with local chambers of commerce attracted 25 local employers across Elkhart, Marshall, and St. Joseph County to learn about the program.

Related News

- [Lessons Earned Podcast Featuring National Education and Workforce Expert, Michael Collins](#)
- [South Bend – Elkhart Digital Innovation Hub Launches in Northern Indiana](#)



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship Committee Update

The [South Bend - Elkhart Digital Innovation Hub](#) is now live and ready for innovators and entrepreneurs to connect with the vast number of resources and support available to support startups in the region! You will find resources from lifecycle stage analysis and facilities access to incubators and funding resources. If you have a resource that should be listed and promoted to entrepreneurs, you can [submit it here](#).

Locally based startup studio [INVANTI](#) recently launched the [Initiators Guild](#) as a home base for people who want to start impactful companies regardless of stage. Join other initiators as you develop new concepts and find ways to make progress on your entrepreneurial journey.

Apply by January 31, 2021 for the [Elevate Origins Virtual Pre-Accelerator Program](#)! You can choose from the Pre-Seed or Seed stage track to develop investor-ready pitch decks, executive summaries, and end up prepared to compete for investment funding.

When you are ready to move your idea through prototyping or market validation, remember to apply for one of our \$2,000 [Proof of Concept grants](#) and check out this article by Nicholas Kuhn, Entrepreneur-In Residence for the South Bend – Elkhart region: [Concept to Prototype: How Do You Get Started?](#) compared to compete for investment funding.

Related News

- [Startup South Bend – Elkhart Celebrates Second Cohort of Pre-Accelerator Graduates](#)



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Update

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee ends the year encouraged by the multitude of newly created diversity and inclusion leadership positions within private, public, and higher educational institutes. Prioritizing these roles within entities signifies commitment to include and prioritize the people that make organizations run. There is [recent news out of Elkhart County](#), regarding their agreement to move forward on becoming more CDFI Friendly, while the City of South Bend [recently launched their support services for small businesses](#).

As we look ahead to 2021, we are opening applications for HustleSBE Cohort Three in early January. The program will be offered virtually and open to businesses headquartered in the South Bend – Elkhart region that have been operational for at least one year.

Finally, we conclude 2020 with a conversation between Dr. Redgina Hill from Saint Mary's, Jess Koscher from Write Connections, Amish Shah from Kem Krest, and Bethany Hartley from the Partnership. [Read Let's Talk DEI with Friends](#).

Related News

- [\[Article\] How a new Minority Business Accelerator grant program can close the racial entrepreneurship gap](#)
- [\[Article\] For the first time in over 20 years, all S&P 500 boards have at least one woman](#)



TALENT ATTRACTION & RETENTION

Talent Attraction and Retention Committee Update

To date, over \$38.1 million of the [Regional Cities Initiative](#) grant has been disbursed, supporting the completion of 19 quality-of-place projects.

Last week, we completed our [WE+YOU Regional Impact Series](#). This six-part video series was developed in place of the South Bend – Elkhart Regional Partnership's bi-annual Regional Opportunities Forum. Through this video series, we have been able to reach a much larger audience outside of our traditional regional stakeholders. We were able to tell our story from a different perspective, and ultimately create marketing materials that can be utilized to encourage talent to relocate or stay in the South Bend – Elkhart region!

Talent Attraction and Retention | [Watch the video](#)

Featuring: Diana Lawson, Elkhart County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Carolina Pagán, Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce

Entrepreneurship | [Watch the video](#)

Featuring: Susan Ford, Graham Allen Partners and Camille Zyniewicz, Viewtique

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | [Watch the video](#)

Featuring: Amish Shah, Kem Krest and Kathy Burnette, Brain Lair Books

Industry Growth | [Watch the video](#)

Featuring: James Turnwald, MACOG and Shelley Klug, American Electric Power

Education and Workforce | [Watch the video](#)

Featuring: Matt Davis, ITAMCO and Greg Vollmer, Northern Indiana Workforce Board

South Bend – Elkhart Regional Partnership | [Watch the video](#)

Featuring: Regina Emberton, South Bend – Elkhart Regional Partnership

We look forward to sharing the good news with you every month! If you want more than just a monthly update, visit the [News](#) and [Events](#) pages of our website or follow us on social media.

To subscribe to our monthly newsletter, [click here!](#)

Have feedback? Please contact us at info@southbendelkhart.org.