

A CASE STUDY

Economic Opportunities through Education

Building a Regional Talent and Learning Development System

THE MISSION OF EcO is to create a regional system of life-long learning connecting the residents of ten counties within rural Southeast Indiana to better economic opportunities through education by the year 2015 and beyond. EcO has three strategic goals: 1) Move residents up at least one level in their education, training, and/or job placement, 2) Coordinate and align a regional learning system, and 3) Be a catalyst for regional leadership & collaboration. The stakeholders involved in EcO to-date include education, community foundation, industry (including more than one hundred manufacturers and all seven hospitals), workforce, government, and community leaders from the region.

Economic Opportunities through Education by 2015 (EcO15) now called the EcO Network was created in 2007 by the community foundations of Southeast Indiana, coordinated by the Heritage Fund, the Community Foundation of Bartholomew County, in partnership with the Community Education Coalition (CEC) of Columbus, Indiana (which has served as the region's backbone organization since inception). The EcO Network was launched with an unprecedented \$38 million grant provided by Lilly Endowment Inc. to support educational infrastructure and common support services focused on economic opportunity. In 2012 a second grant of \$5 million was provided by Lilly Endowment to further broaden and deepen the work of the region. It is estimated that the EcO Network stakeholders have leveraged an additional \$19.7 million (cash and in-kind) over the nearly nine years of working together.

The EcO Network focuses on increasing educational attainment, especially linked to the economic sectors that are the most well-paying in Southeast Indiana, and currently focused on advanced manufacturing (representing 30% of people employed in the region) and health care (representing 10 % of people employed in the region).

Four regional organizations within Southeast Indiana have agreed to work together collectively with the shared purpose of creating a coordinated and aligned learning system. Specifically, the EcO Network seeks to create economic opportunities aligned to the region's economic strengths through educational attainment served and supported by a regional guiding team. The partnership believes that all parties are coming together willingly to be a part of something larger than themselves. It is anticipated that more stakeholders will become involved as the partnership work continues to unfold.

The Regional Partners

The partnership, at present, is composed of four regional organizations including the EcO stakeholder group, the Southeast Indiana Works Council, Southeast Indiana Workforce Investment Board, and a healthcare consortium including the region's hospitals, East Indiana Area Health Education Center, Ivy Tech Community College, and IUPUC's nursing program.

The Networks

Initially, the partnership has formed three regional networks: an Advanced Manufacturing Network, a Health Care Network, and an Attainment Network. The networks are supported by a regional guiding team, consisting of a diverse group of stakeholders from the public, private, and social sectors whose membership consists of representatives from the region's three networks and the partnership organizations.



Ten Counties, One Region, One Vision: Since 2008, the EcO Network has been creating economic opportunities through education for a region of 333,000 people

Advanced Manufacturing Network

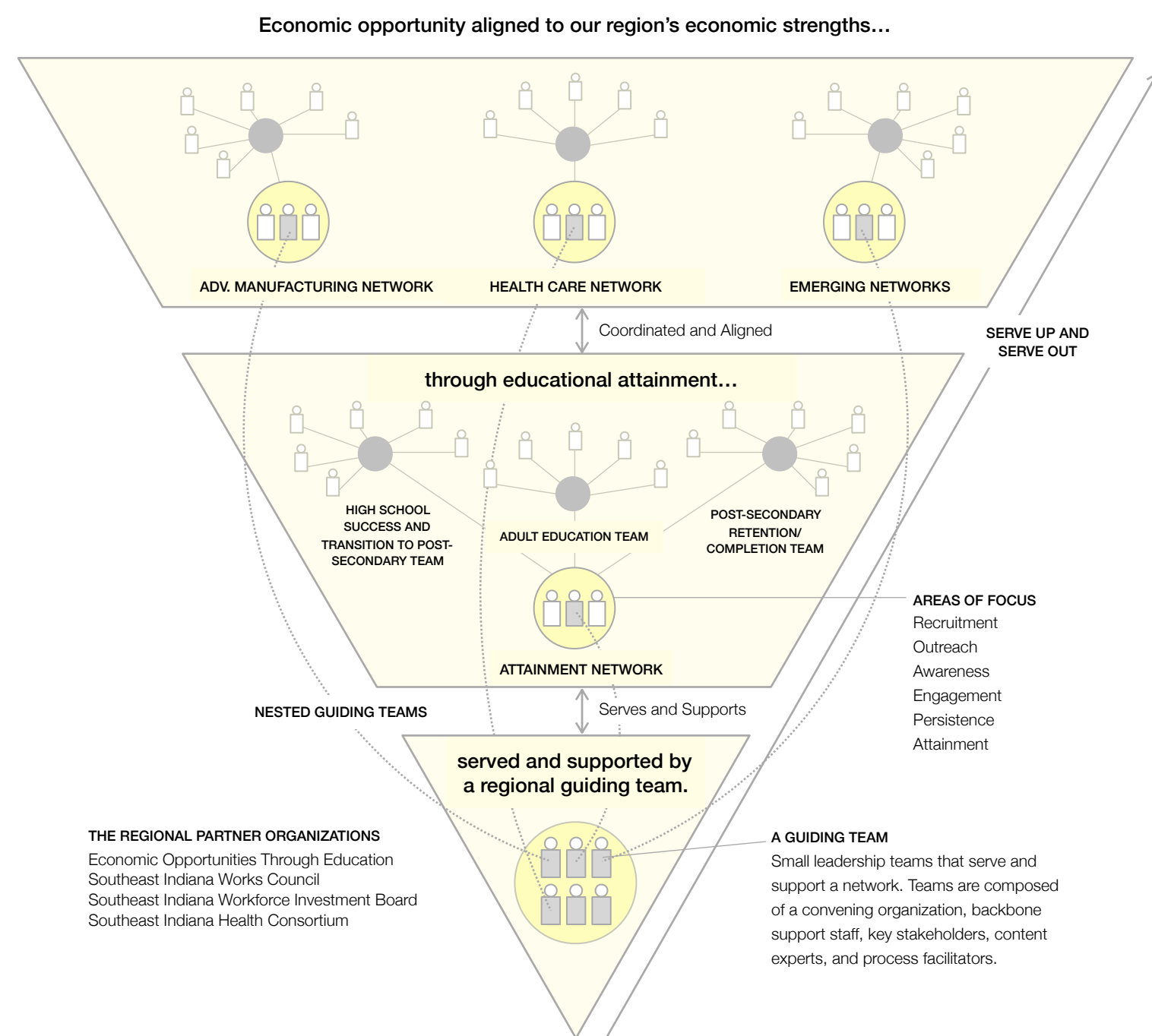
The purpose of this network is to bring together educators, advanced manufacturing leaders, workforce, and community-based organizations that can work together to coordinate educational program offerings for students that connect with well-paying occupations. The network builds relationships to ensure student-centered, "seamless educational pathways" are being implemented to attract, recruit, educate, and place students into well-paying advanced manufacturing careers.

Health Care Network

The purpose of this network is to better align education and career opportunities as part of a "next level up" strategy for the healthcare industry and associated education offerings in the region.

Attainment Network

The purpose of this network is to significantly increase the region's high school graduation rate, post-secondary attainment rate, and the percentage of adults possessing a high school diploma. The network is composed of teams working within adult education, post-secondary retention/ completion, and high school success and transition to post secondary education. The focus of the network includes co-created strategies for academic and career awareness, recruitment, outreach, engagement, persistence, and attainment.



The Federation Governance Model

The partnership agrees to work together using a federation model as its collaborative process of governance. A federation governance model incorporates the belief that all parties are coming together willingly to be a part of something larger than themselves. The model relies on an ethic of stewardship—the willingness to be held accountable for the well-being of the larger system by operating in the spirit of service, rather than control. Essentially, the group doing the governing sees itself as a bottom-up, “servant leadership” group, willing to take responsibility for the success of the whole regional learning and workforce system.

The Stakeholder Engagement Process

The partnership uses a common language and approach for engaging regional stakeholders. A disciplined engagement process creates a kind of “community operating system” that guides and shapes a conversation among a diverse group of stakeholders and provides a framework for their shared work together. The process co-creates strategies that move the needle on key metrics and shared outcomes while simultaneously building the underlying collective capacity of the region.

The EcO Guiding Team

A guiding team is a small leadership group that acts as the glue for collaboration. The team serves and supports larger groups of community stakeholders, facilitating their work and co-designing a process of engagement to achieve shared outcomes. Guiding team members learn how to work together through clearly defined roles and a collaborative structure that creates the mutually reinforcing actions necessary to solve complex community challenges.

The EcO Network guiding team is a diverse group of stakeholders from the public, private and social sectors whose membership principally consists of representatives from the region's three networks and representatives from the partnership organizations. The team is responsible for supporting the overarching goals of the entire network and the three networks that are tasked with improving their respective portion of the learning system. The guiding team is also responsible for ensuring that the education attainment network is coordinated and aligned with the work of the economic cluster networks to create greater economic opportunity for the region.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The EcO Network
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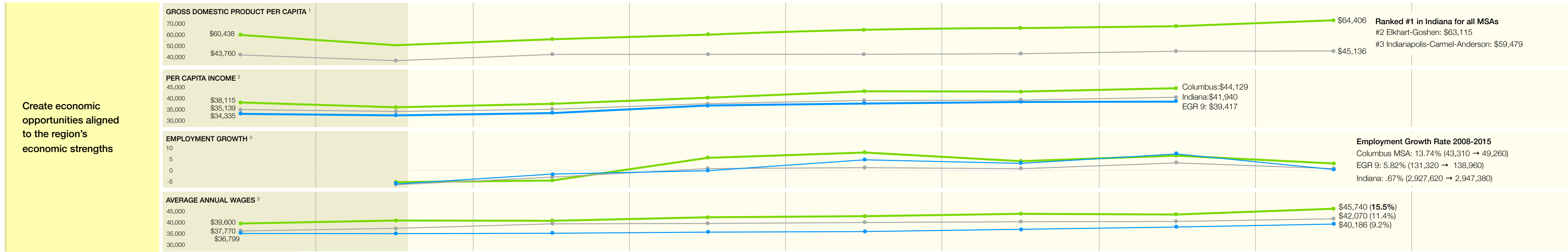
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The EcO Network: Creating a Regional Learning System

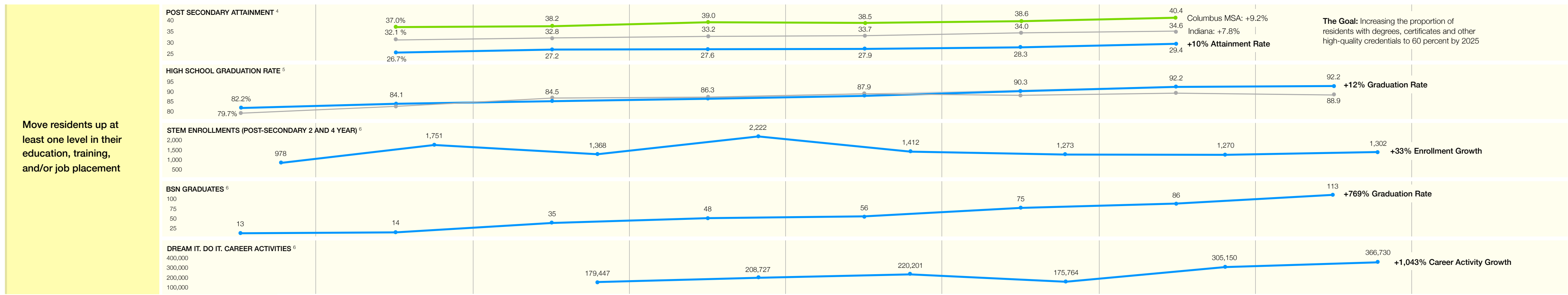
COLUMBUS MSA EGR 9 INDIANA

NETWORK GOALS



GREAT RECESSION
(December 2007 to June 2009)

SOURCES 1) Bureau of Economic Analysis 2) Stats Indiana 3) Indiana Department of Workforce Development



SOURCES 4) 25-64 year olds, Associate's, Bachelor's, Graduate or professional degrees, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-yr. Estimates 5) Indiana Department of Education 6) EcO15/Network Programmatic Data

