



State Excellence award

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Indiana DWD Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) program receives State Excellence Award

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For Immediate Release

WASHINGTON - Last week the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) recognized the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) program for their use of an innovative workforce development initiative to overcome a significant economic development barrier by matching ex-offenders with jobs. Indiana's DWD was presented with the prestigious NASWA State Excellence award at their 2018 Workforce Summit / 82nd Annual Meeting in Birmingham, Alabama.

In 2012, DWD, in collaboration with the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and other local and statewide partners, created HIRE to help ex-offenders reintegrate into society and become gainfully employed. HIRE works with employers to understand business needs to determine the knowledge, skills, and abilities an ex-offender needs to be successful in their organization. Participants are placed in different industries based on their skills and interests. Prior to release, participant training includes a curriculum that targets soft skills, workplace aptitude and motivation. HIRE coordinators meet with participants and employers regularly during the first year to identify any needs. HIRE is on pace to place over 3,000 Indiana ex-offenders into jobs this year alone.

"We are proud of the dedication and commitment of our HIRE team," said Indiana DWD Commissioner Fred Payne. "This award brings special attention to their efforts. HIRE is a support for many individuals gaining employment. This is a benefit to families, employers and our communities."

"Indiana's HIRE program embodies the absolute best of the best in workforce and economic development throughout the United States," said Scott B. Sanders, Executive Director of NASWA. "Innovative programs like HIRE are directly responsible for the remarkable recovery from The Great Recession underway in communities all across this great nation."

DWD estimates that Hoosiers save more than \$4 million each year for every 500 ex-offenders who remain employed and out of prison.