

# BRIDGING GAPS

January 2024

## YOUR EXTENSION EDUCATOR

Happy New Year! Hello and Welcome to the Inaugural Bridging Gaps Newsletter for the Community Development Section of Purdue Extension LaPorte County.

For those who don't know, I'm Mary Komenas and I have been with LaPorte County for 11 years! This newsletter will be quarterly and have information about successes, webinars, trainings and data resources. But first, a little about me! I am originally from Iowa and went to Iowa State University where I got both my bachelors and Masters of Public Administration. For fun, my husband John and I like to go hiking and travel. We are currently trying to go to every county in Indiana and see most of the attractions while also visiting the County's courthouse.

Please feel free to reach out for more information or to set up a meeting to learn more about Purdue Extension!



Here we are at the LaPorte County Courthouse!

### MARY KOMENAS

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## REMOTE WORK AND EXPERIENCE INCUBATOR



Learn More About Remote Work

The Remote Work Professional Certificate course is designed to equip individuals with the skills they need to excel in a remote work environment. The course covers topics such as time management, communication, collaboration, and strategies for staying focused and productive while working from home. Participants will also learn about the latest tools and technologies that are essential for remote work success.

### **EXPERIENCE INCUBATOR:**

Purdue Extension will teach a series of interactive workshops to help individuals in the 50+ age range discover their inner entrepreneur and the initial steps needed to launch a business.

The workshops explore entrepreneurial thinking and application and include the following topics:

- 1.Introduction to Entrepreneurship
- 2.What is Entrepreneurial Thinking and Acting?
- 3.Decoding Your Entrepreneurial History
- 4.Anatomy of an Idea
- 5.Building Your Brain Trust
- 6.Branding that Brings Results
- 7.Finance: Common Sense and Cents
- 8.Entrepreneurship is a Verb, not a Business Plan - Just Start!

The Workshops are held on Zoom from 3-4 pm Central on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon in February: 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 27, 29. Register by January 30, 2024, at <https://cvent.me/3wba11> The cost of the workshop series is \$99 and is payable when you register.





90% of U.S. adults are online — will they find your business?\*

Let Purdue Extension help get your business noticed! We offer introductory webinars that cover how to expand your business's online presence.

## COST

Workshop Cost: \$25  
Workshop Package: \$250

**LEARN MORE** about Purdue Extension's Digital Ready Businesses program and how to participate at: [cdext.purdue.edu/DR](http://cdext.purdue.edu/DR)

## CONTACT US

[walke422@purdue.edu](mailto:walke422@purdue.edu)

[Click Here to Register](#)



1/9	Claim Your Online Turf
1/11	Website Basics
1/16	Grow Your Virtual Customers
1/18	Search Engine Optimization
1/23	Email Analytics and Marketing
1/25	Podcasting 101
1/30	How to Blog Successfully
2/1	Intro to Social Media Platforms
2/6	Social Media Plan and Content
2/8	Social Media Analytics and Marketing
2/13	Digital Storefront



## DIGITAL READY BUSINESSES

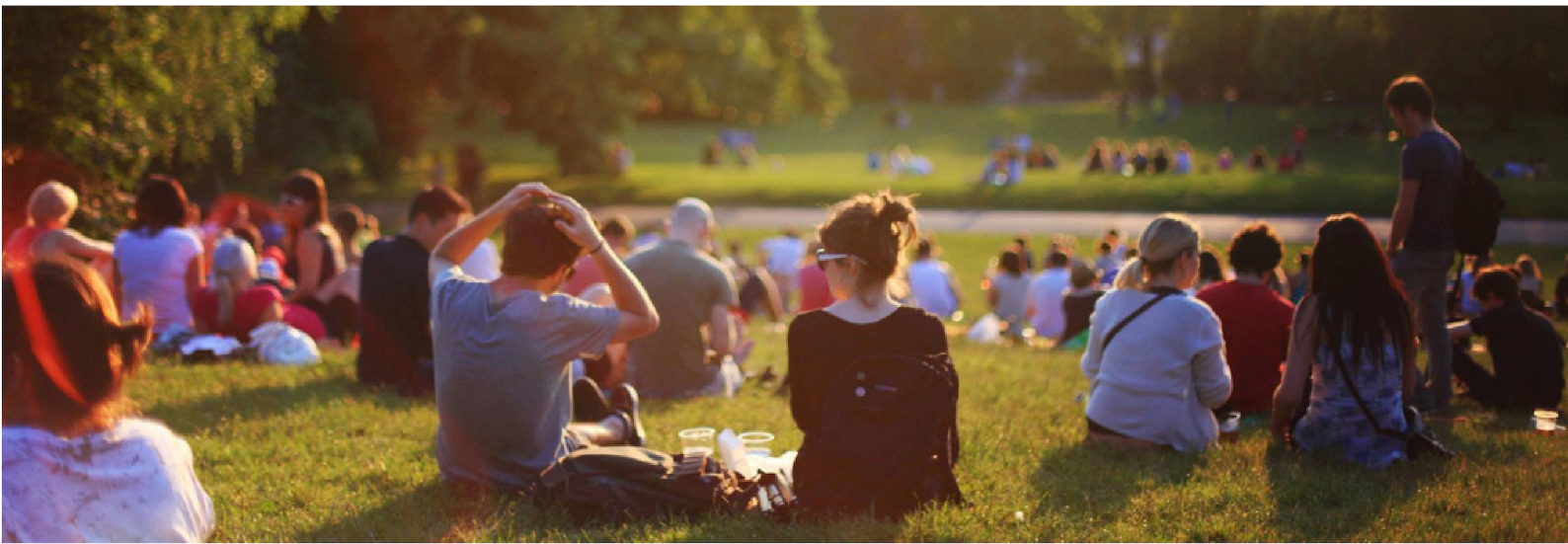
**[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAMS](#)**

**[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EACH SECTION](#)**

\*Statistics courtesy of Pew Research Center, December 2016



## COMMUNITY HEALTH



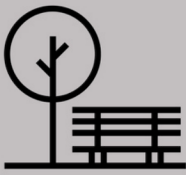
## 2023 COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

The new County Health Rankings and Roadmaps report is out! As discussed in this month's Spotlight article, people's feeling of connectedness to their community has effects on their well-being in some surprising ways. The 2023 report, "Cultivating Civic Infrastructure and Civic Participation for Healthier Communities," provides data analysis and actionable insights on civic engagement and offers a nice complement to the updated data snapshots for every county in the United States.

For Indiana, some counties made giant leaps, some kept up their momentum and others experienced some setbacks. Here are the rankings for all 92 Indiana Counties sorted by the difference between 2023 and 2011.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW INDIANA RANKINGS](#)

From Purdue University Cooperative Extension Community Development Newsletter



# COMMUNITY PLANNING

## WHAT IS BROADBAND?

### WHY IS BROADBAND ACCESS DATA IMPORTANT?

The federal government, in partnership with states, is deploying broadband funds through the Broadband Equity, Adoption, and Deployment program also known as BEAD. Indiana is receiving close to \$870 million. A map compiled by the FCC will dictate where these funds go. So, we need to make sure Indiana's map is as accurate as possible. Continue reading below for more information.

### CONFLICTING BROADBAND INFORMATION

Part of the reason this map is being updated is because broadband data is very muddy. In the past, the FCC compiled data from providers that report where they offer service, with what technology, and their maximum advertised download and upload speeds. However, because this data is provider self-reported and not validated by consumers it can overestimate broadband availability. This time around, they are asking for your help to make sure the data reported by providers is accurate at the address level.

### SPEED TESTS

Another wrinkle to consider is that beyond internet service being available, is the issue of reliability and quality of service. One way to measure this is through speed tests. A speed test calculates your download and upload speeds (again, measured in Mbps). If your internet connection consistently delivers speed tests below what the provider says it is providing, there may be some quality issues. This in turn may make your address eligible for funds to build more high-quality internet service. You can see what service you subscribed to by checking out your internet bill.

To conduct a speed test on your existing service or to report an address with no service, please visit: [pcrd.purdue.edu/speedtest](http://pcrd.purdue.edu/speedtest)

And remember, speed tests are free so please complete as many as possible, as frequently as possible! The more data there is on your internet service, the better!

### ADOPTION AND AFFORDABILITY

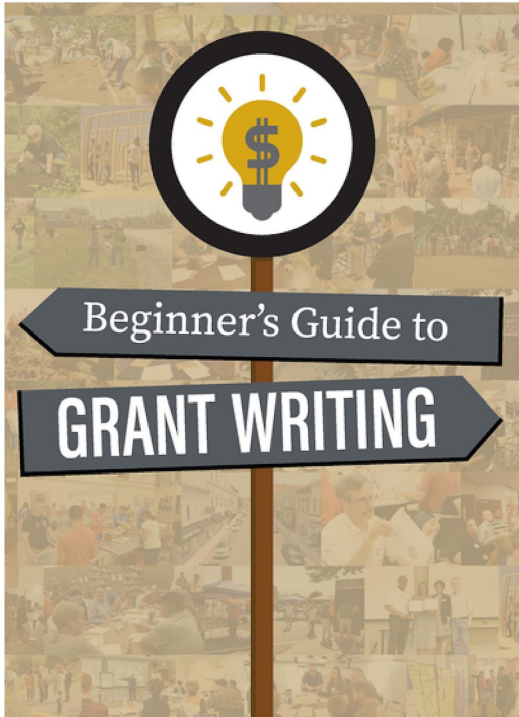
In addition to having access to adequate internet, another issue is adoption. Many times, internet is available, but folks do not subscribe because they may not be able to afford it. Fortunately, there is a program in place called the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) that provides \$30 per month to eligible homes (\$75 in qualifying tribal lands and high-cost areas). Please visit [www.fcc.gov/acp](http://www.fcc.gov/acp) for more information and for instructions on how to enroll.





# LEADERSHIP & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

## PROGRAM OFFERINGS



### BEGINNER GUIDE TO GRANT WRITING

For more than 20 years, the award-winning Beginner's Guide to Grant Writing program has been helping Hoosiers improve their communities by leveraging grants of all sizes. Participants of the Beginner's Guide to Grant Writing workshop draft and polish a grant proposal and learn how to navigate the grant process. Both beginners and experienced grant writers learn to develop ideas into winning proposals, identify and build relationships with potential funders, and speak and write confidently about how their proposal will make an impact.

### BOARD TRAINING

Purdue Extension can provide customized training and facilitation for nonprofit and local government boards and the staff who work with them.



### COMMUNITY COACHING

Do you find yourself guiding or coaching community groups? If so, consider registering for the Community Coaching Learning Circle. Purdue Extension Community Development is offering a professional development opportunity for individuals interested in honoring their community coaching skills.



## EVENTS AND CALL TO ACTION



### DATES

#### Digital Ready Business:

January 9-February 13: Tuesday and Thursday  
1PM - 2PM CST  
Register for zoom link.

#### Experience Incubator:

February: 6,8,13,15,20,22,27,29  
3PM - 4PM CST

#### Remote Work Certification Program Dates

January 8 - February 7, 2024  
February 5 - March 2, 2024  
March 4 - March 30, 2024

For questions & more information about the  
Remote Work Certification Program

[CLICK HERE](#)

### CALL TO ACTION

Want to be on the  
Community Development  
Advisory Committee?  
Let Mary know at  
mfoell@purdue.com

We meet two times a  
year. We look at the  
needs of the county and  
determine programs new  
and existing.

**Follow us on Facebook to find out more about other Purdue Extension events and happenings**

**Check out our Purdue Extension Page for more information on 4-H, Health & Human Sciences, ANR and Community Development**



**PurdueExtensionLaPorteCounty**



**La Porte County Extension Page**

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## **Office Hours & Contact**

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Extension - LaPorte County

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