



REPORT ON
2024
SCHOLARSHIPS



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INTRODUCTION

In 2024, scholarships awarded through the CICF Collaborative — which includes Central Indiana Community Foundation, Hamilton County Community Foundation, the Indianapolis Foundation, and Women's Fund of Central Indiana — broke yet another funding record. Valued at \$2,137,250, your generosity in 2024 helped more than 160 students start or continue four-year, two-year, graduate, and career/technical post-secondary education.

This annual review is designed for fundholders who want a clear view of impact and an honest look at statewide trends around education after high school. Inside, you'll find:

- 2024 Recap: Scholarship funding highlights from the 2024 cohort
- Trends 2020–2024: Five years of movement in applications, eligibility, demand by program type, and student outcomes.
- Student Voices: Testimonials from the students across the state who put your generosity toward fulfilling their educational ambitions.
- A critical look at Indiana's decline in college enrollment and why it matters

Thank you for making this progress in Indiana's higher education possible. Together, we're lowering financial barriers, widening Hoosier prosperity, and helping more students earn the credentials that power stronger families and a **stronger Central Indiana.**



Jennifer Bartenbach
CEO, CICF



Danielle Stiles-Polk
President, Hamilton County Community Foundation



Ahmed Young
President, Indianapolis Foundation

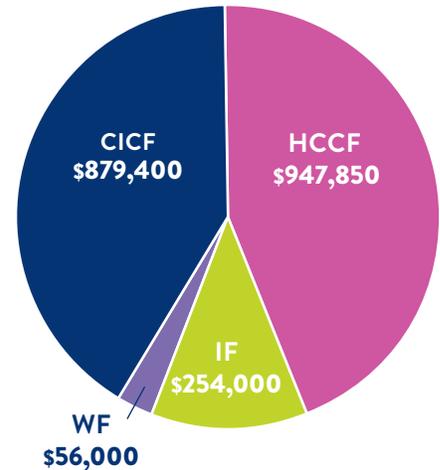
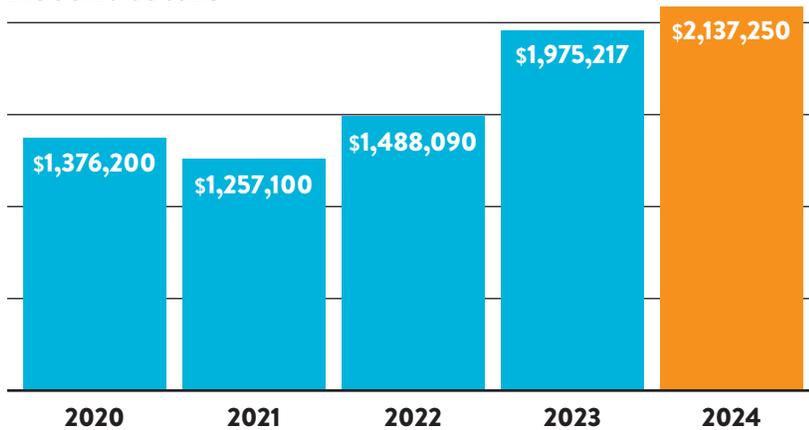


Tamara Winfrey-Harris
President, Women's Fund of Central Indiana

DATA FROM SCHOLARSHIP YEAR 2024

In 2024, fundholders at the CICF Collaborative awarded **\$2,137,250** in scholarship funding. Yet again, this is a new high.

Recent totals



OVERALL, FUNDHOLDERS CONSIDERED
A TOTAL **1,047 applications** FOR 2024

211
AWARDS
WENT TO
163
RECIPIENTS

TYPICAL AMOUNT
AWARDED WAS
\$7,500
THE LARGEST
SINGLE AWARD WAS
\$60,000

NEARLY
20%
OF SUBMITTED
APPLICATIONS
**RECEIVED
FUNDING**

ENROLLMENT DATA: 2024

Where did 2024 scholarship recipients enroll and what did they study?

88% went to an in-state institution, **14%** went out-of-state

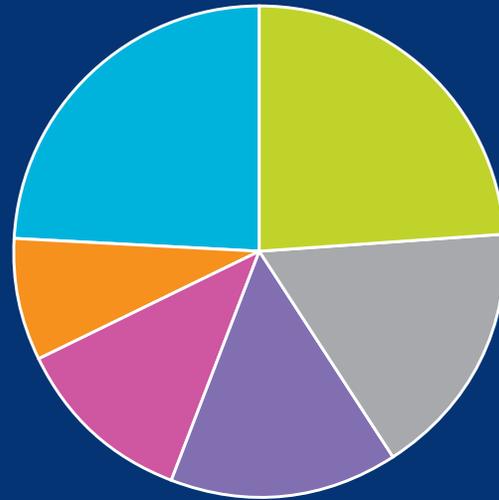
96% went to a 4-year institution, **15%** went to a 2-year institution

75% went to a public institution, **29%** went to a private institution

Institutions most attended

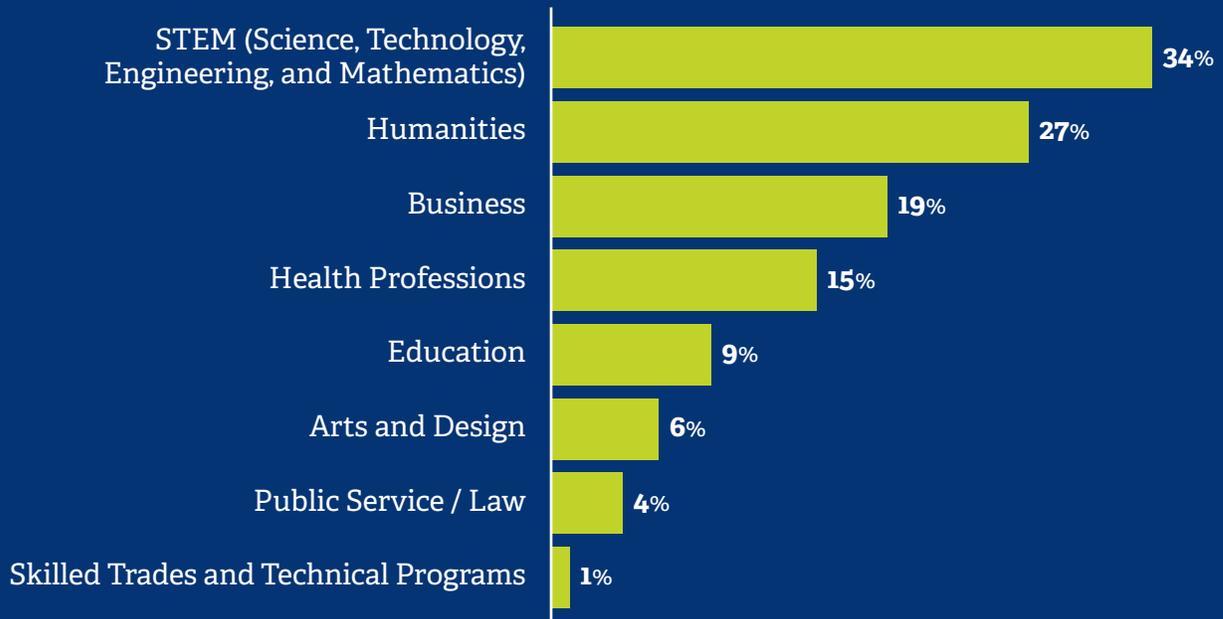
% of enrolled

- 24%** Indiana University Bloomington
- 17%** Purdue University West Lafayette
- 15%** Ivy Tech Community College
- 12%** IU Indianapolis
- 8%** Ball State University
- 24%** Other



Most popular areas of study

% of enrolled*



*Totals above 100% represent intersecting demographic categories and/or students with more than one destination or area of study.

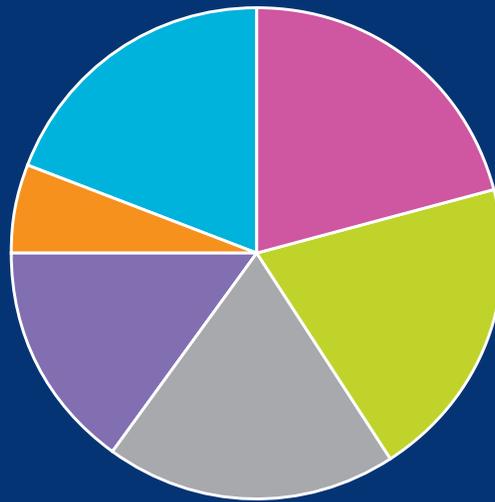
FIVE YEAR ENROLLMENT DATA: 2020-2024

Since 2020, the CICF Collaborative has awarded over **\$8 million** through **1,013** scholarship awards.

Institutions most attended

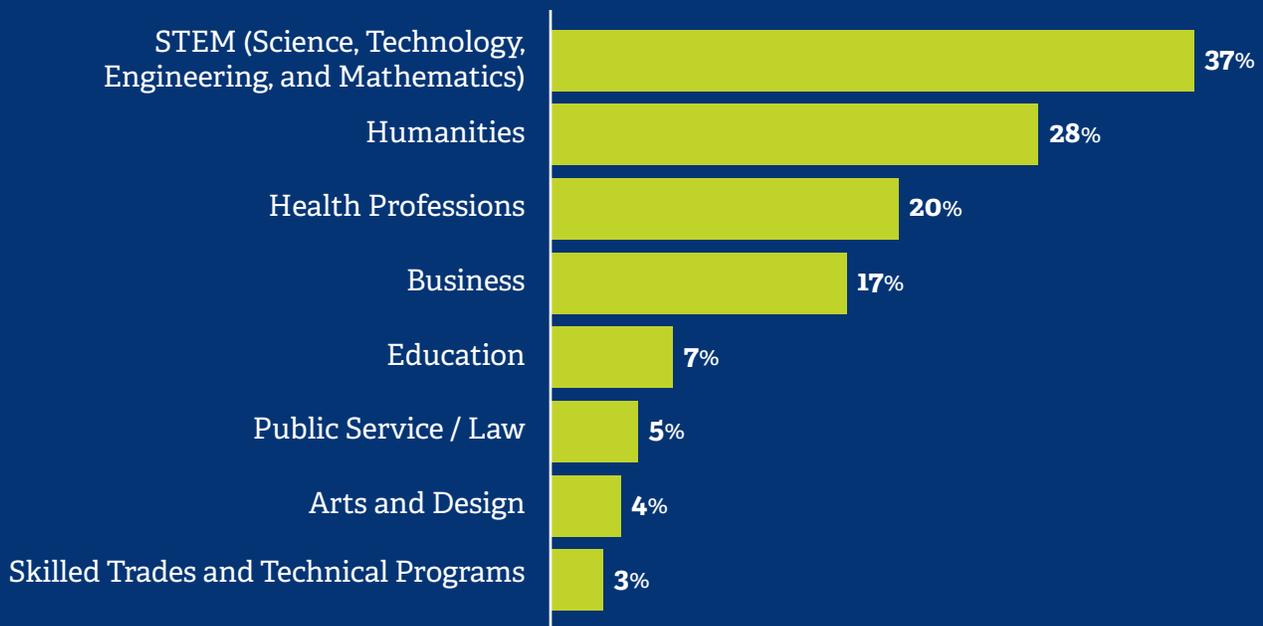
% of enrolled

- 21% IU Indianapolis
- 20% Indiana University Bloomington
- 19% Purdue University West Lafayette
- 15% Ivy Tech Community College
- 6% Ball State University
- 19% Other



Most popular areas of study

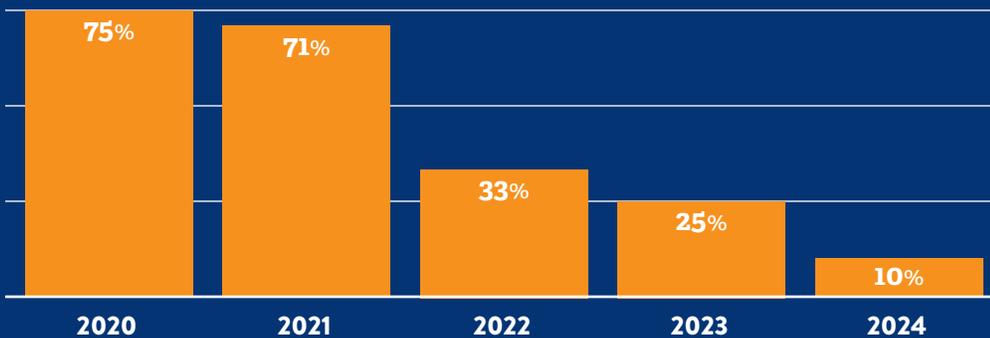
% of enrolled*



*Totals above 100% represent students enrolling in multiple institutions or areas of study. Data represents percentage of award recipients who have confirmed enrollment.

FIVE YEAR GRADUATION DATA: 2020-2024

Share of recipients who have graduated based on award year.

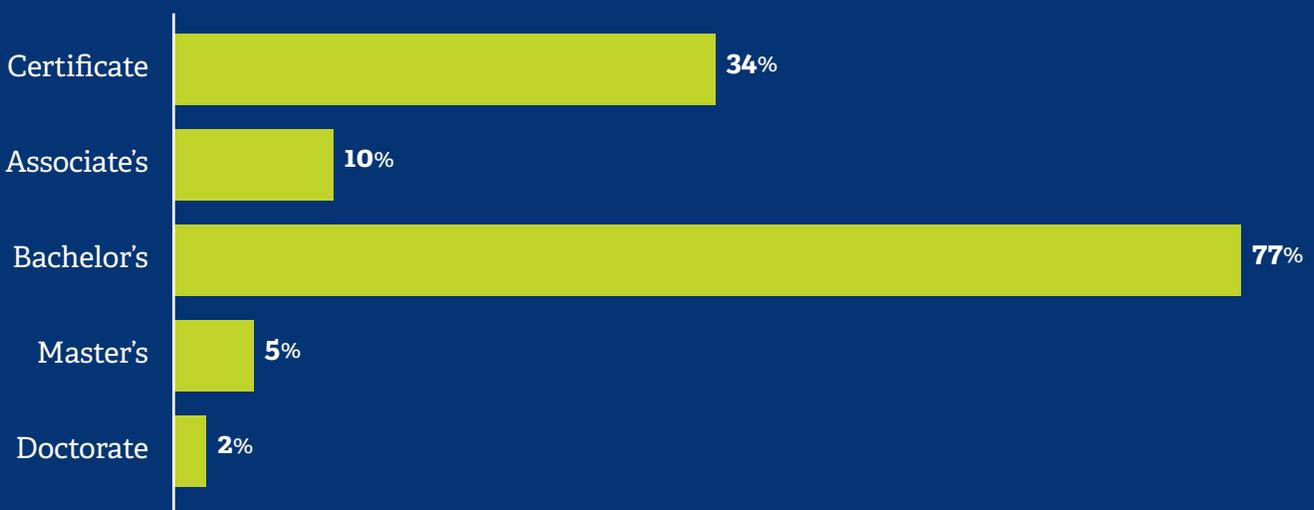


Note:
96% of award recipients enroll in a 4-year institution versus 16% who enroll in 2-year institutions, meaning graduation rates will necessarily be lower after 2021.

CONTEXT: Among all U.S. students at 4-year institutions, the graduation rate is about **53%** over six years. CICF Collaborative scholarship recipients appear likelier to graduate, and to graduate on time, than their peers nationally.

Degree types earned, 2020-2024

% of enrolled*



*Totals above 100% represent students enrolling in multiple institutions or areas of study. Data represents percentage of award recipients who have confirmed enrollment.

INDIANA'S ENROLLMENT CRISIS

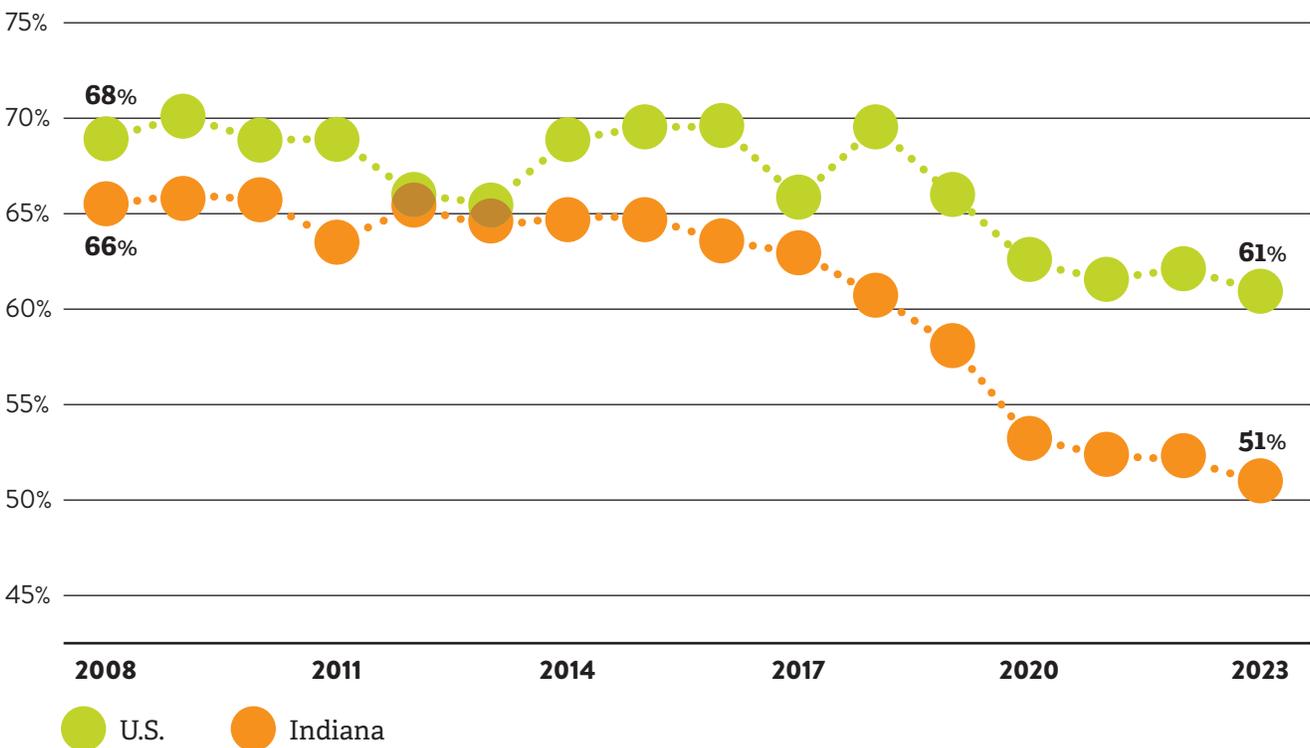
When compared with 2020, our scholarship fundholders awarded more funding (up 50%) through more scholarships (up 7.6%) in 2024. You are answering the call to increase access to post-secondary education for more Hoosiers.

And yet, those increases are going *against* a disturbing trend statewide: The college-going rate for Indiana dropped to a new low of **51.7%** in 2023, the most recent year with complete data. Compared to the national rate of **61.4%**, the rate for Hoosiers enrolling directly into college after high school is closer to the **national rate for high-poverty schools: 50.6%** (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Student Clearing House Research Center).

Scholarships we manage have an overall acceptance rate of 19%, meaning that nearly 1 in 5 applicants receive some kind of funding. But for those of you who review applications, you'll know we often have *more* qualified applicants than awardees.

That's why, in a time of declining college enrollment, we are committed to maximizing our community's generosity for qualified students.

College-going rate of high school graduates



RISING SCORES

A 2025 survey from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education found that the overwhelming reason Hoosier high school students avoid post-secondary education is the cost. In other words, they're far more concerned about the price tag than the classroom. Indeed, Indiana primary and secondary student test scores are rebounding to pre-pandemic levels. IREAD results for the 2024-25 school year had statewide reading proficiency over 87% – a five-point increase. At IPS, the year-over-year increase was a full 10 points!

That all gives affordability efforts an opportunity in coming years, not only to greatly increase Indiana's turnout for enrollment, but also to improve messaging about college affordability.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Now, with so much emphasis on enrollment, a very simple question can get overlooked: *Why is it so important in the first place?*

In an age of growing skepticism about the social and economic value of college education, providing a thoughtful response can motivate families and Indiana stakeholders like businesses, lawmakers, and potential scholarship funders.

Here's the short answer: Post-secondary education usually increases individual health and wealth which in turn benefits our local communities and economies.

But how?
And by how much?

According to research from Ball State economist Michael Hicks, **each year of education completed after age 16 increases**

adult wages by about 15%. Furthermore, while a post-secondary degree may not totally erase the adverse effects of childhood poverty, studies show that it substantially reduces them while greatly increasing chances that one's own children attend college. That provides a massive boost for upward mobility, a metric Indiana has long struggled to improve.

But it goes beyond individual households. According to a compendium of studies and reports assembled by Lumina Foundation, post-secondary degree recipients are often physically healthier, live longer lives, are likelier to vote, volunteer, and participate in civic or religious organizations, and less likely to commit crime. That plants the seeds for more cohesive and resilient communities and local economies.

CONTACT US

Given the far-reaching benefits, we are grateful that our fundholders award nearly 1 in 5 scholarship applicants with funding. Contact us to discuss opportunities to boost or target resources to maximize your impact: scholarships@cicf.org.

**INDIANA PRIMARY
AND SECONDARY
STUDENT TEST SCORES
ARE REBOUNDING
TO PRE-PANDEMIC
LEVELS.**

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Here are several testimonials from students who have won scholarships through our collaborative.



MARIANA ALVAREZ NUNEZ

Award amount: \$4,600

 **\$2,600 (1 year) through the St. Catherine of Alexandria Scholarship, 2021**

 **\$2,000 (1 year) through the INTESOL Wendy Wildman-Long Scholarship, 2021**

School: Ivy Tech / Accounting

"Because of these scholarships, I was able to attend college and get my Accounting degree **without paying a penny** from my pocket. That allowed me to save up while working during college. Then, I got accepted at an internship at a bank which led to a full-time position once I finished school. This helped me achieve my dream: **become a homeowner, providing for my son as a single mother.**

Thank you! You have no idea the impact you're making in students' lives."



MYKAH COLEMAN

Award amount: \$14,000

 **\$3,500 for 4 years through the Steve Wright Memorial Scholarship, 2020**

School: Marian University – Indianapolis / Education

"Receiving this scholarship made college a reality for me. **I've wanted to be a teacher for as long as I can remember**, and Marian University gave me the best knowledge and experience to be the best teacher for my future students. As a first-generation college student, the journey wasn't easy by any means, but not having to worry financially about completing college made the journey easier for both myself and my family.

I can't thank you enough! Being the sole caregiver of my dad who was diagnosed with kidney failure my freshman year of college was tough. I just want to thank you for providing me with one less burden.

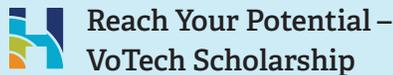
Since graduating, I have joined a master's program, also through Marian, which lets me earn my master's degree in one year while teaching during the day and taking evening classes, completely free!"

WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

Among CICF Collaborative Scholarship awardees, about 3% of graduates go through a vocational or technical program. But that number is growing. That growth coheres with national trends: **Enrollment at public 2-year vocational institutions in America went up by 13% in 2024**, the second year in a row of double-digit increases and nearly three times the rate of increase for all other postsecondary enrollment (4.5%).

RICHARD B. DUARTE

Award amount: **\$17,000**



Reach Your Potential –
VoTech Scholarship

School: **Lincoln Tech– Indianapolis**



Richard's story:

Working at a remodeling company in Carmel, Richard heard about an HVAC licensing program from a co-worker. He knew this could satisfy both his desire to further his education and marketability while also remaining in the job sector for which he already had experience. As a father in his mid-twenties, he had plenty of motivation.

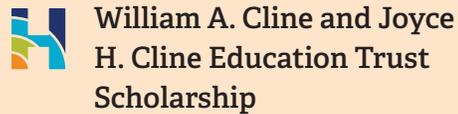
Because he was a returning adult student, Richard was eligible for the Reach Your Potential – VoTech award. This funding helped reduce his financial obligation, which can range up to \$10,000 for local HVAC licensing programs.

Managing his parental, work, and education responsibilities wasn't easy. But he did it, and **now Richard is licensed in a trade paying between \$58,000 and \$68,000 a year in Indiana.**



ELIJAH KINKEAD

Award amount: **\$9,000**



William A. Cline and Joyce
H. Cline Education Trust
Scholarship



Sheridan Community Schools
Scholarship Foundation



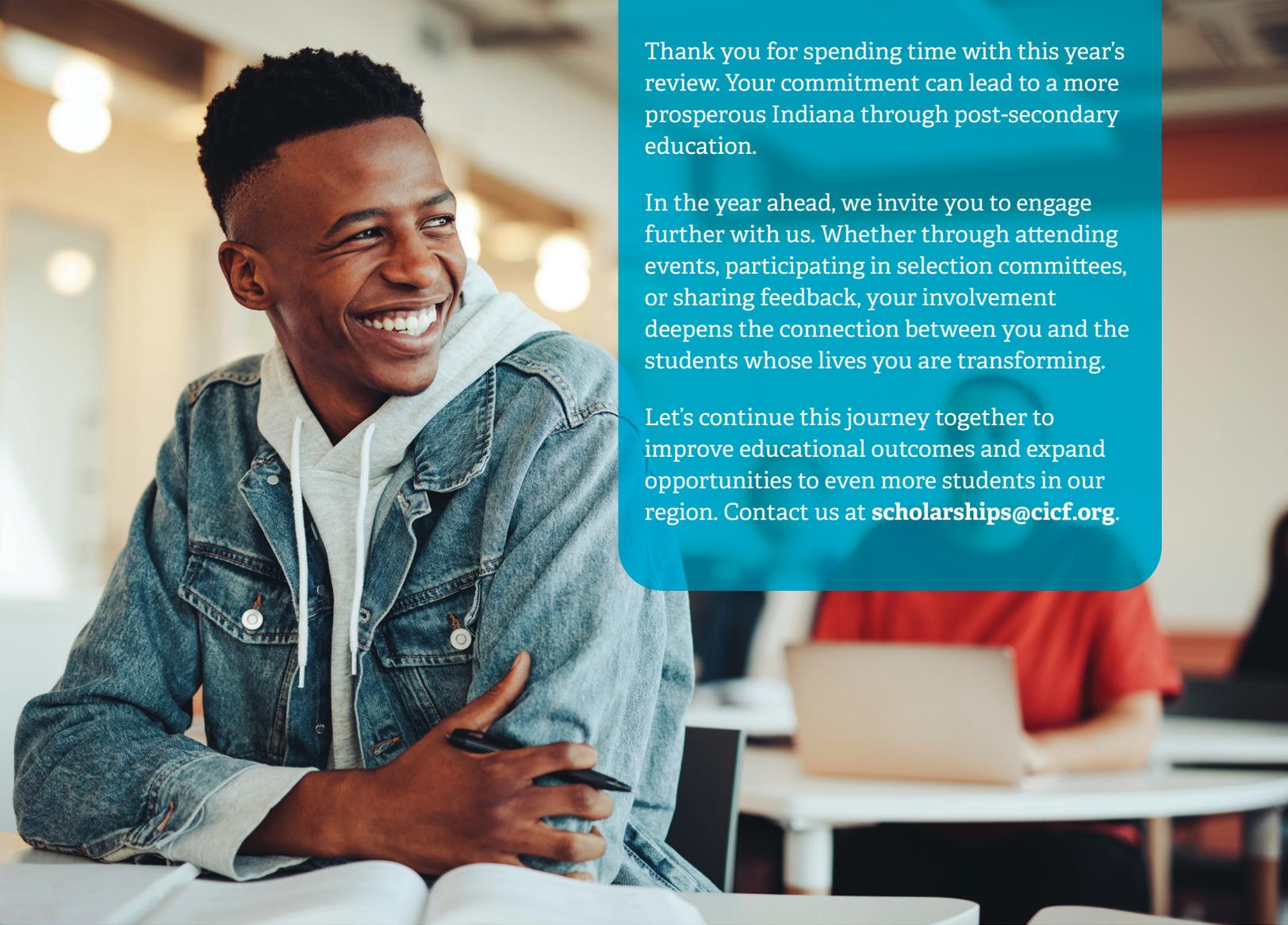
Reach Your Potential STEM
Scholarship

School: **Purdue University / Industrial
Engineering Technology**

"These scholarships and my education have allowed me to form great **lifelong friendships** at Purdue and find mentors. It has also helped with professional development opportunities in the **three summer internships** I have had.

My future aspirations are to work as an industrial or manufacturing engineer or in supply chain management.

Thank you for your kindness in donating to these scholarships and relieving the financial burden of students like me to help us gain confidence in ourselves and for our careers overall."



THANK YOU

Thank you for spending time with this year's review. Your commitment can lead to a more prosperous Indiana through post-secondary education.

In the year ahead, we invite you to engage further with us. Whether through attending events, participating in selection committees, or sharing feedback, your involvement deepens the connection between you and the students whose lives you are transforming.

Let's continue this journey together to improve educational outcomes and expand opportunities to even more students in our region. Contact us at scholarships@cicf.org.

