Strengthening communities through applied research, community-engaged teaching, and student service.

About the Indiana University Center for Rural Engagement

The center collaborates with Hoosier communities—and the many organizations that serve them—to address the community’s and state’s goals by creating scalable, flexible, and replicable solutions to complex challenges common to rural communities everywhere.

The center calls on the research, teaching, and service of IU Bloomington faculty, staff, and students to address the challenges these communities face and to enhance opportunities identified by the communities themselves.

The mission of the center is to partner with rural communities to improve Hoosier lives. It does so by providing rural communities and small regional cities with access to IU’s cultural assets, research, data, community-engaged teaching, and student service. The center builds, coordinates, and deepens sustained relationships between communities and the university to address rural challenges and opportunities.

The center leverages the resources of IU Bloomington to improve Indiana Communities.

- **9K** faculty and staff
- **200+** research centers
- **550+** academic programs
- **40K** students
- **175+** community ideas were gathered from the initial listening tour.
- **1,400+** community members have been engaged to build collaborations and refine our understanding of community opportunities.
- **890+** students have participated in community-engaged learning projects since 2017.
- **590+** student organizations, community engagement programs, and service learning classes are connected to opportunities through IU Corps.
- **99** community-identified projects have been launched since 2017.
- **249,000+** student service hours for fall 2018 through IU Corps, which provided volunteer-hour value of more than $6 million to our region.
Top priorities

**Maternal health**
The IU Center for Rural Engagement seeks to improve the health and well-being of children, women, and families with increased maternal and infant care by lowering smoking and other behaviors that are dangerous to mothers and infants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>28% (SWCI*), 32% (IN)</th>
<th>85 (SWCI*) neonatal deaths§</th>
<th>9 (SWCI*) maternal deaths§</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of moms without 1st trimester prenatal care</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.1% (SWCI*), 15% (IN)</td>
<td>30.5 (SWCI*), 28.2 (IN) teen births per 1,000 live births§</td>
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**Substance abuse**
The IU Center for Rural Engagement is working to reduce the cumulative impact of substance abuse in rural communities with the development of an opioid response program and community education modules, and implementing best practices in rural addictions treatment and prevention.

**Chronic disease**
The IU Center for Rural Engagement is addressing major chronic conditions—the leading causes of death in Indiana—including type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. The center does this through Community Health Improvement Plans and assessments, a rural nursing home-health program, and health professional training and continuing education.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Impact of the Opioid Epidemic (2017)</th>
<th>41 (SWCI*) lives lost to opioids§</th>
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<td></td>
<td>285 (SWCI*) emergency room visits for non-fatal opioid overdoses§</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58% (IN) children in need of services (CHINS) due to drug use§</td>
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**Food systems**
The IU Center for Rural Engagement seeks to increase the consumption and production of local food in Indiana’s strong agricultural economy with a local food value chain advancement plan, harnessing the buying power of institutions and organizations and connecting them to Indiana’s food producers.

**Parks, recreation, and public lands**
The IU Center for Rural Engagement is working to heighten awareness of Indiana’s excellent parks and recreation resources to promote tourism and health for both Hoosiers and visitors with an inventory and opportunity mapping project.

**Water resilience**
A 2014 study by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce notes that Indiana ranked first in the nation in the percentage of its economy that depends on water. The IU Center for Rural Engagement is dedicated to examining water resources, including karst aquifers that require greater understanding of their role on Indiana’s water supply resilience.

**Quality of place**
The IU Center for Rural Engagement is increasing the quality of place of rural communities with arts and cultural resources for residents from school-age children to senior citizens, including comprehensive community planning, arts and humanities events and activities, creative aging toolkits, an IU Rural Arts Certificate program, and a model for cultural festivals.

**Sources:**
*SWCI region includes data from the following counties in Indiana: Brown, Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange, Owen, and Washington
1Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention; Vital Records (2017)
2American Association of Pediatrics, Opioid Fact Sheet Indiana (2018)
3CDC. Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke (2013)
4CDC. Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke (2014-2016)
5Indiana State Department of Health, Epidemiology Resource Center, Data Analysis Team; Vital Records (2016)
6Indiana State Department of Health, Epidemiology Resource Center, Data Analysis Team (2012-2016)
7National Center for Health Statistics, CDC Wonder 2016 birth data (2016)