

Make & Move Up brings training and careers to northeast side of Indianapolis, builds local workforce

INDIANAPOLIS (Sept. 9, 2021) – Conexus Indiana is partnering with Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana to bring jobs, career training and economic development to Indianapolis' northeast side.

The Make & Move Up program will provide residents with paid training in advanced manufacturing and logistics (AML), preparing up to 50 residents with the skills to succeed in their careers. The training program, called Catapult Indiana, is possible through a \$200,000 philanthropic investment from JPMorgan Chase, and it aligns with the community collaboration between Goodwill, Cook Medical and the United Northeast Community Development Corporation. The project at 6190 E. 38th St. includes a new manufacturing facility that is expected to bring 100 jobs at a starting wage of \$15 per hour.

“Make & Move Up will offer exciting new opportunities to residents for well-paying careers while also adding to the neighborhood’s long-term prospects by developing a workforce ready to succeed with advanced manufacturing and logistics employers,” said Conexus Indiana President and CEO Fred Cartwright.

Added Kent A. Kramer, president and CEO of Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana: “This partnership will show what can happen when we tap into a neighborhood’s human potential and put real opportunities on the table. I can’t wait to witness Make & Move Up’s long-term impact.”

Conexus Indiana is not only bringing its successful and proven Catapult training program to the northeast side but is also working with its industry network to increase contract manufacturing and logistics operations at Goodwill Commercial Services, creating more jobs at the new production facility as well as its facilities on the west side and in Bloomington, which offer services to local, regional and global companies.

“We encourage our more than 200 industry network partners to consider the possibilities presented by Goodwill Commercial Services,” Cartwright said. “By contracting with Goodwill, businesses not only get their needs met, but they help to meet the needs of our local neighborhoods.”

“We are excited to see that companies are open to engaging with programs like Make & Move Up. When business leaders are planning their next expansion, hopefully they will consider building in a community that has seen opportunity and jobs leave over the years,” said Cook Medical President Pete Yonkman. “It’s definitely possible to do good business and good in the community at the same time.”

The northeast side experiences high levels of poverty and unemployment. In fact, in the nearby Devington neighborhood, 25 percent of residents live below the poverty level, and the neighborhood ranks 85th out of 108 Indianapolis neighborhoods in terms of job opportunities.

“This community is eager to move forward, and Conexus and Goodwill are helping to make that possible,” said Ashley Gurvitz, chief operations officer and executive director of United Northeast CDC. “Make & Move Up will strengthen both individuals and the community, which puts the community on a pathway to a brighter future.”

Conexus, Goodwill and their partners hope that Make & Move Up can be expanded to a statewide program to provide opportunities and wraparound services to Hoosiers while also helping to supply the workers needed to fuel Indiana advanced manufacturing and logistics businesses (AML). The state’s largest industry sector, AML accounts for one-third of Indiana’s gross domestic product and a half-million jobs, but it is also facing a shortage of skilled workers. Thousands of positions are unfilled, and the state is on the verge of a mass exodus from this workforce, as an anticipated 100,000 people will reach retirement age in coming years, and another 25,000 already have worked past age 65 and are expected to retire soon.

It was Conexus’ vision of meeting both this marketplace need and the needs of northeast side residents that helped it earn the JPMorgan Chase investment.

“A skilled workforce and an inclusive recovery are key to Indianapolis’ growth,” said Al Smith, chairman for Indiana for JPMorgan Chase. “Partnerships between community partners and business are critical to helping provide more people with the resources, skills and training they need to succeed. This investment helps prepare more Indianapolis residents for a more prosperous future.”

Training for Make & Move Up is expected to begin later this year at the previous site of Goodwill’s Outlet East, 2900 N. Shadeland Ave.

About Conexus Indiana

For more than a decade, Conexus Indiana, one of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP) non-profit initiatives, has been positioning the Hoosier State as the best place for advanced manufacturing and logistics industries to invest, employ and succeed. By collaborating with industry, academic and public sector partners on a shared vision for an innovative, skilled workforce and stronger business climate, Conexus Indiana has helped to create opportunities for advanced manufacturing and logistics companies, prepare Hoosiers to succeed in the state’s largest industry sectors and maintain Indiana’s competitive advantage. For more information, visit conexusindiana.com.

About Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana changes lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health and employment. Goodwill serves 39 Indiana counties and operates more than 70 retail locations, as well as charter schools for adults and youth, a maternal-child health program, a child care center and more.