



## **Indiana Governor Eric J. Holcomb, the Markle Foundation, and Microsoft Announce Skillful Indiana: Bringing New Investment, Partners and Innovation to Indiana's Next Level Workforce Agenda**

*With support provided by Walmart, and in partnership with Lumina Foundation, Purdue University and Purdue Extension, Skillful Indiana will bring practical tools to connect Hoosiers to good jobs in a changing economy.*

*Skillful Indiana will help people identify high-demand jobs and the skills they need to fill them, and help employers find and keep the talent they need to grow; strengthen the skills of career advisors across the state; and collaborate with local workforce development boards to support Hoosiers and Indiana businesses.*

**INDIANAPOLIS – Oct. 11, 2018** – Today, Eric J. Holcomb, Indiana Governor; Zoë Baird, CEO and President of the Markle Foundation; Beth Cobert, CEO of Skillful (a Markle initiative); and Mary Snapp, Head of Microsoft Philanthropies, announced that Skillful will begin operations in Indiana, bringing investment, training, tools and innovative methods to augment Governor Holcomb's Next Level workforce development plan. The launch of Skillful Indiana brings together the Markle Foundation, Microsoft Philanthropies, LinkedIn, Walmart, Lumina Foundation, Purdue University and Purdue Extension with the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and local workforce development boards to create better pathways to good jobs for Hoosiers. Skillful Indiana will work with Indiana businesses and the state's innovative educational community to equip Hoosiers with marketable skills that are the new currency of the digital economy.

First established in Colorado, Skillful is dedicated to enabling all Americans – particularly those without a four-year college degree – to secure good jobs in a changing economy. Skillful engages employers, educators, policymakers and workforce development organizations to create a labor market in which skills are valued, and people can more easily access the information and education they need to secure good jobs. Skillful, with its strategic partner Microsoft, selected Indiana for expansion after careful consideration as it possesses critical elements and needed infrastructure for success, including strong support from the Governor and Indiana's workforce ecosystem.

"Adding Skillful to the Hoosier state is a game-changer when it comes to skilling up our workforce," Gov. Holcomb said. "Here in Indiana, we've built a strong pro-growth business climate and have a fully-funded infrastructure plan, but we also need to ensure every Hoosier is prepared for this ever-changing economy while attracting more people to fill the jobs of tomorrow. Skillful Indiana will serve as a force multiplier—strengthening and building upon workforce efforts already underway to connect people with the skills they need for high-wage, high-demand jobs."

“Markle is bringing Skillful’s unique model to Indiana to help create a labor market that provides equal dignity for people who have developed skills in many different ways: on the job, from neighbors, in a related job in another sector or from more formal post-secondary education,” said Zoë Baird, CEO and President, the Markle Foundation. “By helping employers show the skills they need, and everyone to see more clearly the great ways to train at every stage of a career, we will open up opportunity to thousands more Hoosiers. Employers will see the talent in their own communities and workers will be inspired to become lifelong learners who can keep pace with the evolving needs of a digital economy.”

In the next decade, Indiana will need more than 1 million skilled workers to fill open jobs and support economic growth. Working with its national and local partners, Skillful is tailoring Skillful Indiana’s programs to the unique strengths and needs of the state: employer programs for Indiana’s distinctive mix of large and small, urban and rural employers; education initiatives tailored to Indiana’s innovative higher education system; and investment in career coaches as an important support for Hoosiers navigating educational and job opportunities.

Skillful will bring to Indiana innovations developed in its first state, Colorado, as well as those shared within the Skillful State Network, a coalition of 20 governors, including Governor Holcomb, who have made innovation in workforce development a state priority. The Skillful State Network was born out of the tremendous interest Skillful received from other states based on its work in Colorado. The Skillful State Network provides a forum to share Skillful’s approach, tools and assets quickly. States like Indiana have always been laboratories for innovation and today are leading the transformation to the digital economy.

“We are incredibly impressed with the extraordinary work going on in Indiana. With Skillful Indiana, we see a tremendous opportunity to bring additional resources, national partners and road-tested programming to contribute to the exciting things happening here,” said Beth Cobert, Skillful CEO.

## Skillful Indiana Founding Partners



“In a changing economy, we need a labor market with access to life-long learning and quality training, with a focus on developing people’s competencies. We are excited to partner with Skillful to accelerate Indiana’s efforts to take promising practices nationally and put them to work for the benefit of Hoosiers.”

**Jamie Merisotis**

*President and CEO, Lumina Foundation*



“Purdue and Skillful are partnering to advance our shared goal of connecting Hoosiers with the opportunity to flourish, when just starting out and throughout a lifetime of learning. It is a natural pairing with Purdue’s extensive network of campuses and innovative online educational options.”

**Mitch Daniels**

*President, Purdue University*



“Walmart and Skillful have a shared interest in building effective approaches to learning and career advancement. We are excited to support their work in equipping Hoosiers with the skills needed for the changing economy.”

**Kathleen McLaughlin**

*Senior Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer, Walmart Inc.;  
President, Walmart Foundation*

“Microsoft and LinkedIn partnered with Markle to develop the Skillful model in order to ensure more Americans can benefit from the digital economy. Working with our Indiana partners, Skillful Indiana will advance a new mindset of lifelong learning and increase opportunities for jobseekers to gain necessary skills and connections to employers,” said Mary Snapp, Head of Microsoft Philanthropies.

Skillful Indiana will focus on accelerating a skills-based labor market through the following:

- *Working with employers* to expand opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds and deepen their talent pool of qualified candidates by helping them to recruit and hire with a focus on skills, as well as encouraging employers to invest in skill building for their employees on the job, at colleges or online.
- *Working with Indiana’s innovative higher education community* so that all are better able to anticipate economic shifts and be responsive to them, as well as supporting the advancement of skills-based credential and data platforms.
- *Investing in the professional development of career coaches* at organizations like WorkOne, Purdue Extension and local nonprofits so that they are better equipped to connect Hoosiers to effective training opportunities and quality jobs.
- *Applying data-driven insights and technology tools* to all of its efforts so that the very same technologies that are disrupting the economy are put to good use in adapting to it. For example, online tools to create skills-based job postings and to assess the skills of job applicants.

“In collaborating with Hoosier employers, current workers, students, parents and teachers, we’re eliminating a one-size-fits-all mentality and embracing new ways of attacking the workforce challenge—like bringing Skillful’s expertise and resources to better prepare a robust, skilled workforce,” said Danny Lopez, Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Chairman.

Find [more information](#) on Skillful Indiana, Skillful, and the Skillful State Network.

For media inquiries, please contact Collin Roberts, Edelman for The Markle Foundation, 206.227.3439, [Collin.Roberts@edelman.com](mailto:Collin.Roberts@edelman.com) or Courtney Arango, Communications Director, Office of Governor Holcomb, 317.914.3787, [CArango1@gov.IN.gov](mailto:CArango1@gov.IN.gov)

### **About The Markle Foundation**

The Markle Foundation works to realize the potential of technology to achieve breakthroughs in addressing some of the nation’s most pressing issues. Markle challenges itself and diverse partners to deploy their varied expertise to identify solutions and achieve systemic change. Today as advanced technology and automation change the very nature of work, Markle’s priority is advancing solutions towards a skills-based labor market that will enable Americans to transition to the opportunities of the digital economy. Markle’s workforce initiatives include [Skillful](#) and the [Rework America Task Force](#). They follow Markle’s success in creating the policy and technology architecture that has enabled improvements in healthcare, national security, and access to the Internet. For more information,

visit [markle.org](http://markle.org), follow [@MarkleFdn](https://twitter.com/MarkleFdn) and [@ReworkAmerica](https://twitter.com/ReworkAmerica) on Twitter, and read our book, [\*America's Moment\*](#).

**About [Skillful](#), Skillful Colorado, Skillful Indiana and the [Skillful State Network](#)**

Skillful, a non-profit initiative of the Markle Foundation, is dedicated to enabling all Americans – particularly those without a four-year college degree – to secure good jobs in a changing economy. In partnership with Microsoft and others, Skillful is developing skills-based training and employment practices in collaboration with state governments, local employers, educators and workforce development organizations. Skillful and its partners are working to create a labor market in which skills are valued, and people can more easily access the information and education they need to keep pace with technology's impact on work. Skillful currently operates in two states, Skillful Colorado and Skillful Indiana, bringing investment, training, tools and innovative methods to augment local workforce development efforts. It formed and facilitates the Skillful State Network, a collaboration among 20 state governors to accelerate the development and deployment of effective skills-based practices to transform their labor markets. Skillful is grateful for support provided by Walmart, and its partnerships with the states of Colorado and Indiana, Microsoft, Lumina Foundation, Purdue University and Purdue Extensions and many great local organizations committed to strengthening their local workforce and creating better opportunities for all.

**About Microsoft**

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

**For more information, press only:**

Microsoft Media Relations, WE Communications for Microsoft, +1 (425) 638-7777,  
[rrt@we-worldwide.com](mailto:rrt@we-worldwide.com)