



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Who we are



2021 was a year of adapting for everyone, and Young Leaders of Northeast Indiana (YLNI) were, and are, here to serve. We believe in investing in our community's future by utilizing our resources to help young people personally and professionally. Doing so reinforces connections between the people and communities we support. When people feel connected to their communities, they stay and invest their time and talent. YLNI is building a foundation of young leaders who will continue to work for Northeast Indiana's success.

Led by a team of committed volunteers, YLNI works to build a community where people want to live, work, and play. Our members are entrepreneurs, artists, business people, musicians, accountants, doctors, lawyers, teachers, students, and so much more. Our dedicated volunteers love Northeast Indiana, and their eagerness to share that passion makes our organization successful.

"I recognize how my own career growth was a result of help, mentorship, and support. YLNI builds connections, and those relationships are further fostered by opportunities within our community. Giving back is important to me, and I am in a position now where I can impact, inspire, and influence growth and development for others.."

Ian Broad-White, MHA, MBA
Vice President, Leadership Development

OUR MISSION

To attract, develop and retain emerging leaders through community, professional and social engagement.

OUR VISION

Northeast Indiana is an attractive region influenced by diverse, emerging leaders who are engaged, inclusive and attached to their community.

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OUR BOARD

YLNI relies on generosity, passion, and commitment.

The Board of Directors consists of passionate leaders who volunteer their time to an organization with a mission and vision they believe in. These volunteers live and work in Northeast Indiana and believe in the power of investing in the community.

The Board of Directors is the governing body of YLNI and meets formally once a month. Their big-picture approach is to guide the organization to fulfill the mission. Some of their duties include approving activities, securing funding, and advocating for the organization's demographic.



Justin Hayes
President



Chris Polhamus
Vice President



Kyle Mills
Treasurer



Meg Saxman
Secretary



Brandon Noll
Director at Large,
Executive Committee



Chelsea Yoquelet
Vice President,
Community Impact



Ian Broad-White
Vice President,
Leadership Development



Rachel Batdorff
Vice President,
Membership



David Curry
Vice President,
Fund Development



Erica Hickey
Vice President,
Communications



Giang Petroviak
Vice President,
Social Programming



John Hudson
Director at Large,
Community Impact



Josette Grames
Director at Large,
Communications



Andrew Ginter
Director at Large,
Technology



Kristin Conley
Director at Large,
Leadership Development



Beth Johnson
Director at Large,
Fund Development

OUR CHAIRS

YLNI's committee chairs volunteer their time to help execute programming under the Board of Directors leadership. Each of them represents what it means to be an emerging young leader and help make a difference in the Northeast Indiana region.

"Leadership is joining together with others to work towards a common goal. YLNI has helped me to develop a network of close friends that work together to better NE Indiana. Getting further involved with YLNI – joining committees, attending Hot Spots, etc. – has helped multiply those impacts for the community and build lifelong friendships through the process.."

Travis Adkins
Chair, Communications

COMMUNICATIONS

Travis Adkins, Abeer Saeed

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- **Farmers Market**
Ashley Wagner (Market Manager)

FUND DEVELOPMENT

David Curry

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- **Power Lunch Series**
James Couchman, Charl Franks
- **Ignite Institute**
Aaron Robles
- **Leadership Institute**
Kristin Conley, Kelli Warner
- **NextGen Leadership Institute**
Morgan Ferguson, Jennifer Simmons
- **High School Leadership Institute**
Jessica Morales, Morgan Johnson

MEMBERSHIP

Lindsey Dutrieux

SOCIAL

- **Hot Spots**
Adriane Roberts, Brandon Roberts
- **Social Events**
Courtney Sullivan
- **Concert Series**
Kat Erickson
- **General Membership Event**
Lindsey Dutrieux



MEMBERSHIP



The Membership Committee is responsible for recruiting and retaining members. This function is accountable for listening to and learning what prospective and current members deem valuable in YLNI. The membership committee is dedicated to helping members feel satisfied with their YLNI membership investment—whether that’s at a professional development level, networking with other young professionals, investing in the Northeast Indiana region, or attracting and retaining talent to the area.

General Membership Event

The General Membership Event, or GME for short, connects current and future YLNI members to our Board of Directors and community leaders. The event acts as a celebration of our community’s growth and our organization’s accomplishments throughout the year. The 2021 event took place at Promenade Park Pavilion in June where we presented our 2021 Board of Directors.



170
Dues Paying Members

1,534
Prospective members
receiving YLNI info



“Whether you’re looking to meet new friends or business contacts outside your normal circle, share your voice and opinions on current topics, or are seeking professional development or volunteering opportunities, the Membership function of YLNI is here to understand your needs and to connect you to what matters.”

Rachel Batdorff
Vice President, Membership

Committee Members | Lindsey Dutrieux (chair), Anna Baer, Joe Hickey

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

The communications and marketing committee's goal is to keep our members, community leaders, and local media informed on all the happenings of YLNI. They operate as the organization's outward voice and internally support the programs and committees dedicated to fulfilling YLNI's mission. The committee oversees all social media channels, press releases, media relations, and much more.



2,588
newsletter
subscribers
+223 from 2020



3,936 followers
+284 from 2020



1,673 followers
+121 from 2020



1,147 followers
+172 from 2020

YLNI's top social posts for the year covered YLNI programs and events, including:

- ♥ YLNI Leadership Institute Apps: 13.4k reach
- ♥ YLNI Power Lunch Series: 3.1k reach
- ♥ YLNI Fall Festival: 10.9k reach
- ♥ YLNI Farmer's Market Volunteers: 10.5k reach
- ♥ YLNI Board Applications: 3.1k reach

LIVING FORT WAYNE™

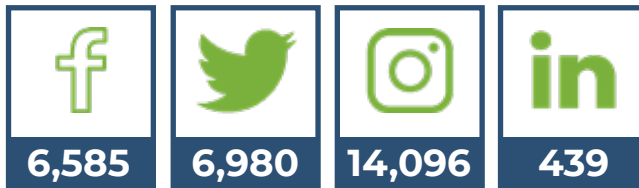
Living Fort Wayne (LFW) powered by YLNI is a leading social media platform for everything great about living, playing, and working in our community.

By providing a forum to showcase all of the positive things happening in our city, we engage the citizens of our community from all walks of life and encourage an optimistic outlook for Fort Wayne by creating a sense of pride and attachment to the city we call home.

LFW is your go-to social media source on all things that keep our vibrant city buzzing. We strive to offer so much more than what a place is called and where it's located. We want you to know about the atmosphere, the history, and the people that run our local businesses and events.

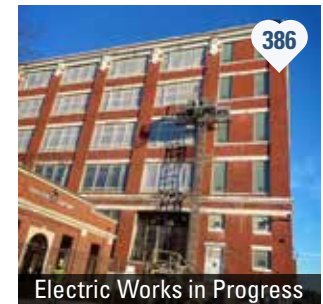
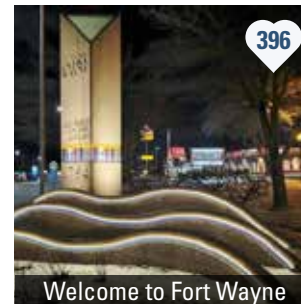
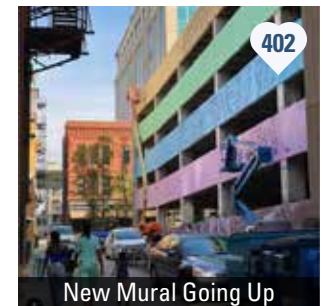
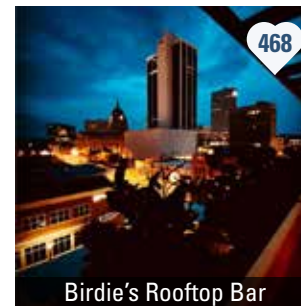
Whether you already live in the city, are planning to make the move soon, or just love to visit, bring LFW along for the ride as we share the experiences we've had around Northeast Indiana.

Social Media Engagement



Instagram Post Engagement

@LivingFortWayne highlighted various aspects of our vibrant city. Here are the top 10!

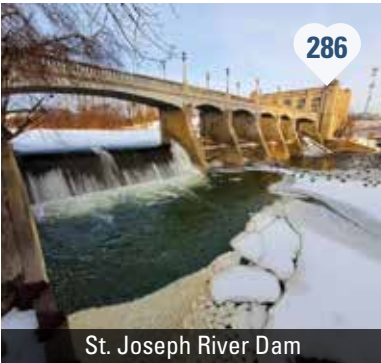




Downtown in Spring



Hello Mural



St. Joseph River Dam



New Mural at The Landing

TECHNOLOGY



Over the past year, the technology team has actively worked with the communications and membership committees to address the best ways to move YLNI's top initiatives forward. We have increased visibility, influence, and engagement within the Northeast Indiana community by utilizing Google Ads to promote events and programs that benefit our demographic to grow personally and professionally.

Website Stats:

~2,900 sessions per month

Top Pages Visited:

YLNI Farmers Market

Board of Directors

Homepage

Leadership Institute

Living Fort Wayne

FUND DEVELOPMENT

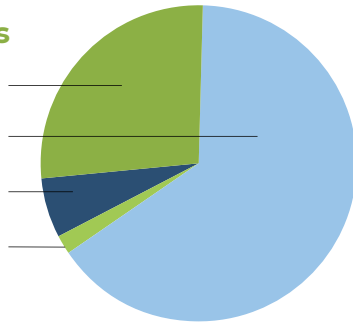


Each of YLNI's committees is self-sufficient and self-reliant. All funding received directly impacts YLNI's programming and initiatives.

When you support YLNI, your financial contribution supports Northeast Indiana's community, professional, and social development.

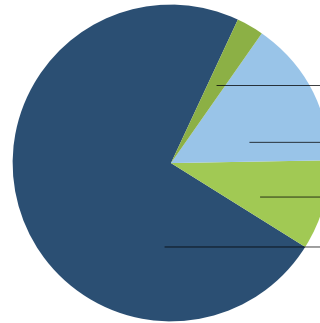
Funding Sources

Grants **27%**
Programming **65%**
Sponsorship **6%**
Membership **2%**



Funding By Program

Membership **3%**
Leadership Development **15%**
Operating Expenses **9%**
Community Impact **73%**



Without the support of our donors, our efforts to attract, develop, and retain top talent in our community wouldn't be possible. Their contributions have provided YLNI the ability to have a larger voice within our community and region.

- Ameriprise- Todd Larson
- Edward M. & Mary McCrea Wilson Foundation
- English-Bonter-Mitchell Foundation
- Foellinger Foundation
- Howard P. Arnold Foundation, Inc.
- JH Specialty
- The Journal Gazette Foundation
- Lake City Bank
- NIPSCO
- Strahm Building Solutions



The YLNI Farmers Market on Barr Street continued their partnership with The History Center for the 17th outdoor season. After emerging from the delayed start last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the market was voted the 2021 Readers' Choice Best Farmers Market for the third year running by Fort Wayne Newspapers. This was achieved through our vendor's commitment to provide quality service and goods to YLNI Market customers. Every Saturday from May through September, more than 120 local vendors, non-profits, partner organizations, and musicians could feature their products and skills. Brunch on Barr debuted during the summer market season. A variety of food trucks offering delicious food selections paired with alcoholic beverages provided a perfect Saturday morning brunch location.

The YLNI Board, market committee, and volunteers made a continued effort to ensure everyone's safety each weekend. Some of the items that were incorporated included:

- Hand sanitizer stations;
- Additional trash bin access; and
- Offered delivery and pick-up options through local delivery services.

These efforts continued as we entered the second season of the Winter Market at the historic Aunt Millie's Bread Factory on Pearl Street, thanks to a partnership with Sweetwater. The Winter Market runs every Saturday from October to April, extending the market season through the colder months.

SUMMER MARKET STATS



130,000 total visitors averaging **6,300** per week



185 total local vendors averaging **115** with a high of **130**



Hosted **15** food vendors for "Brunch on Barr"



Partnered with **10** local non-profits

NEW WINTER MARKET STATS



1,100 average weekly visitors



130 total local winter market vendors averaging **65** per week



Partnered with **2** local non-profits

COMMUNITY IMPACT



YLNI continues to work directly with our community leaders to provide a young leader's perspective and engage in active discussions on several issues. We have quarterly meetings with the Mayor and attend city council meetings to stay current on local happenings.



Inclusion, Diversity & Advocacy Committee

The continued commitment of the IDA committee is to educate YLNI members about issues that affect the community, especially the young leaders' demographic. In keeping with this mission, the committee reviews public policy issues, community initiatives, and other pertinent issues and makes recommendations to the YLNI Board of Directors. In addition to education, the committee's goals are to strengthen relationships between our members, the community, and public officials while creating awareness of legislation and advocating for YLNI members.

Tough Talks

IDA continued with Tough Talks, which were introduced in 2020, creating a safe space for community leaders of all ages and backgrounds to engage in authentic conversations on several difficult topics to foster more inclusivity and understanding in our region. The goal of these talks are to listen and understand because when we know better, we can do better.

YLNI facilitated three Tough Talks in 2021, centered around sexuality in Northeast Indiana, racism, and social justice. On average, more than 20 people attended and engaged with a diverse group of panel members at each event. Tough Talks tackle topics and sub-topics relating to:

- Race
- Religion
- LGBTQ+
- Dating and sex
- Immigration
- Gender issues
- Political polarization
- Socioeconomics
- Mental health



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Power Lunch Series

The Power Lunch Series aims to put young leaders in the room with influential community leaders for an intimate conversation. Small groups of four to five participants meet once a month over four months for a unique opportunity to meet with one community leader for lunch. The personal interaction provides leaders with a chance to share experiences, while participants can openly ask questions candidly. By meeting with the same group every month during the series, each group has an opportunity to build lasting relationships with one another.

2021 Community Leaders

Clifford Clarke

President, C2 IT Advisors

Amy Lehrman

Managing Director,
Katz, Sapper & Miller

Barry Schrock

Director of Leadership Programs,
Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.

Jim Wilcox

President and Owner,
Wilcox & Associates

Ignite Institute

YLN and Founders Spark introduced the Ignite Institute, a two-year program focused on leadership and entrepreneurship for young adults in Fort Wayne. This program filled a gap in education and resources for this demographic and enabled them to start a thriving business and maintain it sustainably. Throughout the program, the group concentrates on fundamental skills to help them build and scale a successful business and connect them to people and organizations in our region to support their continued success after program completion.

The Ignite Institute had 12 entrepreneurs graduate this year, an 80% success rate for this two-year program. The graduating class was 55% female 45% male, 50% Black, 25% White, 17% Hispanic, and 8% mixed.

The lessons incorporated for part two of the class were beneficial to the student's current life stage and entrepreneurs. We also wanted to ensure that the concepts taught were not readily taught in other places but were critical for success. The class concentrated on S.M.A.R.T. goals, time management, failure, mindfulness, and confidence.

Class of 2020-2021

Alexa Silva

Carter Bonecutter

Luis Aldave

Amelia Turnbull

Jaden Gonzalez

Rachelle McCoy

Amir Pierre-Louise

Jaelynn Hinton

Romeo Morris

Ani'a Walker

LaDarius Griggs

Tyler Hunter



Leadership Institute

YLNI's Leadership Institute connects young professionals with their peers and their community to advance their career skills. Through hands-on instruction, small group activities, personal reflection, and sharing, participants develop skills needed to help them grow in their careers and community. Topics range from personality recognition and communication effectiveness to board stewardship and diversity in the workplace. This program consists of a kick-off event, six all-day sessions, and a graduation celebration over the span of three-months. 2021 marked the 16th year of the Leadership Institute. The class consisted of 26 young leaders from 22 Northeast Indiana companies.

"I learned so much about my own leadership style through the YLNI Leadership Institute. I gained a keen understanding of how to utilize my personal strengths and effectively collaborate with others."

Brandon Curry
Leadership Institute Graduate

Class of 2021

Alexis Thomas	Kidane Amare Sarko
Andrew Ginter	Kiley Tate-Potts
Ashley Nicoletti	Kristen Ripley
Brandon Roberts	Lea Gamble
Danielle Parr	Madison Lyon
Demetria Pettie	Mandie Kolkman
Erica Billingsley	Mandy Bordeaux
Erica Means	Rachel Batdorff
Erin Johnson	Samara Thompson
Gigi Goshorn	Storm Wright
Jessica Rossow	Tayshia Williams
Jordan Backer	Travis Adkins
Josette Grames	Trey Kempton

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

NextGen Leadership Institute

In its second year, the Next Gen Leadership Institute targets emerging leaders ages 18-22, helping bridge the gap between our other programs. The Next Gen program is modeled after our other institutes, connecting entrepreneurs and students from Northeast Indiana universities, colleges, trade schools, and communities. Taking place in February, this two-day program is a crash course in leadership development, covering both personal and professional topics that are tailored to help participants build relationships, network, and connect with their community. For participants, it plays a role in their future goals and plans here in the community. The 2021 class was made up of 12 individuals from six local colleges and universities. The two-day program covered budgeting, resume critiquing, DiSC, GRIT, networking, and communication.

Class of 2021

Katie Dorsey	Maggie Becraft	Rachel Ringler
Brent Thurber	Maria Solis	Alexis Quick
Nadia Garcia	Kerrigan Yard	
Jack Koshko	Ella Machall	
Kristen Forti	Antonio Ybarra	

NextGen Committee Members

Morgan Ferguson (chair), Jennifer Simmons (chair), Carrie Reeb

High School Leadership Institute

YLNI's High School Leadership Institute connects emerging professionals with community leaders to learn about various topics, including temperaments and interaction styles, interpersonal communications, networking and community engagement, and financial strength. High School Leadership Institute sessions also include tours of major downtown landmarks to understand better all that our city has to offer.

Class of 2021

Autumn Bartley	Lydia Geise
Will Butler	Ryan Horning
Carolyn Chen	Evette Kolev
Ho Mai Da	Camron Murphy
Nada Dahouk	Kelsey Swymeler
Alexa De Somer	Ryan Lucas Valcarcel
Colton Ehle	

High School Committee Members

Jessica Morales (chair), Morgan Johnson (chair), Jasmine Fox, Sam Graves, Stephanie Taylor

SOCIAL

YLNI Hot Spots

YLNI Hot Spots are free monthly networking events that allow individuals to learn more about YLNI and connect with like-minded young professionals in the region while exploring and supporting a local business. We invite all young leaders to come to Hot Spots, including new, current, and prospective members, on the third Thursday of every month from 5:30-7:00 pm.

2021 Hot Spots

January – Virtual via Zoom

February – Three Rivers Distillery

March – JK O'Donnell's

April – Davey's Delicious Bagels & Deli

May – Hoppy Gnome

July – The Deck

August – Hotel Tango Fort Wayne (HT2)

September – Dot & Line Brewing Company

October – Club Soda

November – Hop River Brewing Company



“The monthly Hot Spots are such a great way to network with like-minded people in a casual environment. They are the reason I first joined YLNI a few years ago, because I kept making such great connections at every single one!”

Brandon Roberts
Chair, Hot Spots


A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The two words I believe everyone could agree to describe 2021 would be uncertainty and resilience. The only certainty was uncertainty when we started the year, and as the year went on, we began to see resiliency transpire throughout our communities. Resiliency is a vital characteristic of high-performing leaders when facing adversity and change like we have had over the last two years, and it has been amazing to see our community leaders come together to adapt for the better. I believe true leaders and changemakers rise to the top in times of challenge and uncertainty.

It's been a privilege to witness YLNI as an organization continue to succeed and be a valued voice within our community during these very uncertain times. It makes me proud to see our members continue to adapt and grow the organization, ensuring our mission to attract, develop, & retain emerging leaders through community, professional, and social engagement is fulfilled.

In 2021, we continued building on our existing foundation of flagship programming throughout our community, professional, and social engagement initiatives. Led by our Inclusion, Diversity, and

Advocacy (IDA) committee, YLNI continued our Tough Talks series, which began in 2020. This series will continue as the IDA strives to create a safe space for all to engage in an authentic conversation around complex yet important topics. We were able to stretch our community engagement efforts by hosting two more events that engaged the community and community leaders on racism, social injustice, and sexuality in Northeast Indiana.



“I believe true leaders and changemakers rise to the top in times of challenge and uncertainty.”

Within our leadership development programming, we graduated our first IGNITE institute class, which focused on leadership development within young entrepreneurs in the region. Our leadership development programming now consists of High School Leadership Institute, NextGen for college students, our traditional Leadership Institute for

emerging leaders, and IGNITE for those within the entrepreneur ecosystem. Over the last 16 years, we have graduated more than 500 emerging leaders within our community from 16 – 40 years old.

The YLNI Summer Farmers Market finished its 16th season in 2021, growing to an average of more than 100 vendors each week. The YLNI Winter Farmers Market has continued to be an overwhelming success as we wrap up our second season with an average of more than 60 vendors each week. The success of these two markets would not be possible without our dedicated market manager, community impact committee members, community partners, and YLNI volunteers.

I am very excited and honored to have the opportunity to lead such a fantastic organization and work alongside a group of determined emerging leaders that make an impact within the community daily.

I want to thank our donors and grantees for supporting us and our mission; the community leaders who believe in and support our organization; our Board of Directors, committees, volunteers, and members for helping to make our mission a reality within our great community.



Justin Hayes

President | Young Leaders of Northeast Indiana



YLNI.org



@YLNI.org



@youngleadersnei



@YLNI



Young Leaders of
Northeast Indiana