The end of 2022 presents an excellent opportunity to pause and reflect on some of the year's events. This year the Indiana Bar Foundation (Foundation) had much to celebrate, including reaching a milestone with the statewide deployment of 120 Indiana Legal Help kiosks around the state. This particular Foundation project had so many moving parts and partners that I wanted to highlight it and the hundreds of people around the state that helped make it happen. First, Foundation staff have devoted countless hours to planning and reviewing hundreds of details before the first kiosk was shipped in October. We are truly fortunate as an organization to have such highly motivated and dedicated people working to advance the mission of the Foundation. In addition to the board and staff of the Foundation, there are several new and some continuing partners that have been critical as well. The Foundation's new partnership with the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority has been an excellent new relationship that has enabled both organizations to move the needle on housing stability and legal assistance for all Hoosiers. In addition to this new partnership with the IHCDA, the Foundation has also been fortunate to develop many new relationships with the 120 host sites for the Indiana Legal Help kiosks. These grassroots partners come from county courthouses, libraries, and community centers across the state. They are now part of an expanding statewide network connecting Hoosiers with critical legal resources. All these new relationships have expanded on the Foundation's historic and robust partnership with the judges of Indiana through the Indiana Supreme Court and its Office of Judicial Administration, as well as the attorneys of Indiana and the Indiana State Bar Association. Projects like the Indiana Legal Help kiosk take incredible collaboration, leadership, vision, and partnership. These characteristics are some of the skills the Indiana Bar Foundation team will continue to bring to additional exciting projects in 2023 and beyond.

I look forward to building on these existing partnerships to accomplish even more in the future.

-Chuck

Civil Legal Assistance

Mike Commons, the Foundations new Indiana Legal Help Manager, has dedicated his distinguished career focused on helping families and the court system. Mike was the first court-based mediator for the Marion County, Superior Court, Juvenile Division, mediating more than one-thousand CHINS cases. The father of two teenage boys spent eight years working for the Indiana Supreme Court, Office of Court Services. In this role, he acted as a family law and Alternative Dispute Resolution subject matter expert and advised and staffed various judicial and multi-branch interdisciplinary governmental committees. Through this work, he provided direct support for trial court judges around Indiana. "I look forward to continuing the hard work of the Foundation and its partners in expanding functional access to courts and the legal system," Mike said.
He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts, minoring in Psychology and majoring in History, and was awarded a 2000 History Scholar Award. He earned his Juris Doctorate from the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University, Bloomington. He holds a Certificate in Information Sharing from the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

Mike is a member of the Indianapolis Bar Association, Family Law Section and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Section. He served as Chair of the Family Law Section in 2016, and currently serves as Chair of the ADR section in 2022. He graduated from the Indianapolis Bar Association’s Bar Leader Series, Class XII, in 2015. He maintains professional membership in the Indiana State Bar Association Juvenile and Family Law Section as well as the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section where he was a member of the ADR Council.

He and wife Christy just celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary.

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**Civic Education**

The historic Union Station and Crowne Plaza-Downtown hosted the Indiana Bar Foundation's 2022 We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution Middle and High School State Finals on December 5 and 6. More than 700 students representing 14 middle and 14 high schools participated in the most extensive civic education program teaching the principles and values of the Constitution. In Indiana, We the People is administered by the Foundation. Educators, parents, and school communities continue to support these outstanding students. Volunteer judges and facilitators ensure regional and state competitions run smoothly. Sponsors and Foundation donors play a vital role in providing the appropriate funding. Thank you to all who make Indiana’s We the People program among the nation’s best.

Seventy-eight individuals took the Oath of Citizenship December 5 during the Indiana Bar Foundation’s 2022 “We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution” State Middle School Finals. More than 300 students witnessed the proceedings held in downtown Indianapolis. The Honorable James R. Sweeney II, United States District Court, Southern District of Indiana and member of the Foundation Board of Directors, served as the Presiding Judge.

Fishers Junior High School and teachers Mike Fassold and Tony Sturgeon captured the 2022 Indiana Bar Foundation “We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution” Middle School State Championship. Fall Creek Junior High School and teachers Patrick Bradshaw and Jeanne Medeiros finished second, while Sidener Academy and teachers Casey McNealy and Julie Opal finished third. Thank you to the sponsors supporting We the People and the more than 100 volunteer judges and facilitators participating in the event. The Foundation is also grateful to all the school communities for their support.
Congratulations to Fishers High School and teachers Liz Paternoster and Matt Follman for winning the 2022 Indiana Bar Foundation "We the People: The Citizen and Constitution" State Championship. Hamilton Southeastern High School and teachers Janet Chandler and Alana Kane finished second. Plainfield High School, Team Hamilton, and teacher Adam Ferguson finished third. Learn more here.

Development

For the first time, the Foundation is among Central Indiana organizations featured in the Indianapolis Business Journal Giving Guide, a supplement to the Indianapolis Business Journal and the Indiana Lawyer. This prestigious annual publication elevates organizations like the Foundation, providing a high-profile community awareness platform and brand expansion opportunities. The Giving Guide was published 12 years ago to connect the business community with organizations like the Foundation. If you have access to the Giving Guide, please visit page 48 and page 49 to view our information. The Foundation's Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon are included in the 2023 Fundraisers Calendar. (Pictured: President & CEO Charles Dunlap viewing the Giving Guide)

As the Foundation closes out the calendar year, we are grateful for the generosity of our 2022 donors, sponsors, and partners. It's because of your support that we can achieve our vision of being the premier statewide charitable organization and trusted partner advancing civic literacy and the legal system. However, we still need additional funding to support our programs. Please consider making a year-end contribution to the Foundation by visiting this link. Please contact Kim Berry, Director of Development, to learn more on how your gift advances our mission.

Thank you to all who attended the Foundation's Holiday Reception at the Crowne Plaza. This annual event kicks off the "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" Middle and High School State Finals. The Holiday Reception brings board, staff, donors, supporters, and friends from across the state to gather and celebrate the last 12 months and hear about Foundation initiatives to come in the new year. (Pictured L-R: Lucy Dollens, Board Member; Joe Skeel, Executive Director, Indiana State Bar Association; and the Honorable Judi Calhoun, Delaware Circuit Court)