

AUGUST 2026



LEGACY LEDGER

BUILD A STRONGER TALENT PIPELINE

*A High-Quality Work-Based
Learning Workshop*

BRIDGING THE SKILLS GAP

*Why Demand for AI-Savvy Talent is
Rising Across Manufacturing,
Healthcare, and Beyond*

INVEST A DAY. STRENGTHEN YOUR BUSINESS.

*Learn. Connect. Grow. Join local
professionals for a day of practical
insights and meaningful networking*

HIT THE BRAKES OR BUILD THE RULES?

*As giant tech investments sweep across the
Midwest, LaGrange County is taking a step back to
ask a critical question: Are we ready? Get the facts
on the county's new one-year moratorium, what it
actually means for property owners and
developers, and how local leaders plan to balance
high-tech growth with rural tradition.*

Read more on page 7.



Fostering Community Connection. Driving Business Success.

LaGrange County Commissioner President, Terry Martin

CONTENTS

03 CELEBRATING OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

09 BEYOND THE FRONT DOOR

Your local business spotlight

04 BUILD A STRONGER TALENT PIPELINE

A High-Quality Work-Based Learning Workshop

10 INVEST A DAY. STRENGTHEN YOUR BUSINESS.

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05 BRIDGING THE SKILLS GAP

Why Demand for AI-Savvy Talent is Rising Across Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Beyond

11 BENEFIT OF THE MONTH

The inside scoop on one of the top Member Benefits

07 HIT THE BRAKES OR BUILD THE RULES?

As giant tech investments sweep across the Midwest, LaGrange County is taking a step back to ask a critical question: Are we ready? Get the facts on the county's new one-year moratorium, what it actually means for property owners and developers, and how local leaders plan to balance high-tech growth with rural tradition.

YOUR PARTNER IN BUSINESS & COMMUNITY



Sara Patrick

President & CEO

sara@lagrangechamber.org



Ian Mullen

VP of Marketing & Operations

ian@lagrangechamber.org



Taylor Rheinheimer

Membership Coordinator

taylor@lagrangechamber.org

The LaGrange County Chamber exists to champion local businesses, strengthen leadership, and build generational prosperity across our communities. Whether you're a business owner, community leader, entrepreneur, or resident, there's a place for you here.

Legacy Ledger is a member publication and is distributed free of charge to businesses and residents in LaGrange County and surrounding areas. A PDF version of this publication is available at www.lagrangechamber.org.

CELEBRATING OUR NEWEST MEMBER FROM JULY

Mark Your Calendars

AUGUST

- 06 Chamber Golf Classic
- 13 Member Luncheon
- 28 Coffee with the County

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Young Professionals Lunch
- 10 Member Luncheon
- 22 Small Business Workshop
- 29 Table for 10

OCTOBER

- 8 Member Luncheon
- 15 Legacy Launchpad
- 20 Connect with the Candidates
- 28 Woman2Woman Roundtable



SCAN HERE

for full calendar of events
and registration links



SPRINGFIELD ACRES

WHY GET INVOLVED?

Strong communities don't happen by accident. They are built by people willing to invest, collaborate, and lead.

The Chamber brings together businesses, nonprofits, educators, and residents to shape the future of LaGrange County.

513 W Central Ave., LaGrange, IN



260-463-2443



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BUILD A STRONGER TALENT PIPELINE

HIGH-QUALITY WORK-BASED LEARNING WORKSHOP

In today's competitive hiring environment, growing your own talent through structured work-based learning (WBL) is one of the most effective ways to secure skilled, reliable team members. Whether your business is looking to launch its first internship program or upgrade an existing apprenticeship, having a well-designed framework makes all the difference.

To help local employers turn learning opportunities into real business impact, the Indiana Chamber's Institute for Workforce Excellence is hosting an interactive 3-hour virtual training: Designing and Delivering High-Quality Work-Based Learning: From Foundations to Impact.

What You'll Learn

This workshop covers the full lifecycle of work-based learning—from foundational strategy to measuring long-term return on investment. The 3-hour agenda is structured around three core pillars:

- Hour 1: Foundations of High-Quality WBL – Understand the spectrum of work-based learning (job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships) and clarify your business's role in education-to-career pathways.
- Hour 2: Designing Meaningful Experiences – Learn how to structure onboarding, set clear learning goals, and effectively mentor students or early-career workers.
- Hour 3: Evaluation & Continuous Improvement – Discover how to measure program success, use feedback loops, and continuously strengthen your talent pipeline.

Who Should Attend?

This session is ideal for HR leaders, hiring managers, operations directors, and business owners—both those new to work-based learning and experienced partners looking to optimize their programs.



Event Details & Registration

- Date: Thursday, August 20, 2026
- Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM (ET)
- Location: Virtual (Zoom)
- Cost: \$200 per participant
- Perks: Attendees receive a post-training resource packet and are eligible for continuing education credits and a digital badge upon completing the end-of-training assessment.

Ready to participate? Space is limited. You can register directly through the [Indiana Chamber Event Portal](#) or visit [Work and Learn Indiana](#) for more details. For questions, contact the Institute team at institute@indianachamber.com.

BRIDGING THE SKILLS GAP: WHY DEMAND FOR AI-SAVVY TALENT IS RISING ACROSS MANUFACTURING, HEALTHCARE, AND BEYOND

Headlines over the past year have been filled with news of big-tech layoffs, but beneath those surface trends lies a crucial shift that directly impacts our local business community: tech talent and tech skills are rapidly dispersing into traditional industries like manufacturing, health services, and regional business operations.

According to a recent report published by HR Dive (citing data from talent acquisition platform ICIMS), demand for tech-literate and AI-savvy candidates is climbing steadily—even as overall applicant pools fluctuate.

For business owners and hiring managers here in LaGrange County, understanding these workforce shifts can help our local employers stay competitive and attract the right talent.

Key Takeaways for LaGrange County Employers

- **Tech Skills Aren't Just for Tech Companies:** The ICIMS report highlights that tech hiring in non-tech sectors is experiencing significant year-over-year growth, particularly in manufacturing (up 4%) and healthcare (up 8%)—two core pillars of our regional economy.

- **Specific Roles are in High Demand:** Nationwide, job openings for roles like computer programmers (+35%), software developers (+28%), and database/systems administrators (+27%) saw strong year-over-year increases.
- **The Emerging Workforce is AI-Focused:** Early-career workers are driving applicant volume. Candidates aged 18 to 34 now make up nearly 80% of the applicant pool for tech and tech-adjacent positions. Younger job seekers are actively seeking opportunities where they can apply modern digital tools and AI systems.
- **Tighter Candidate Pools Require Smarter Sourcing:** Overall frontline application volumes fell year-over-year across the nation. HR Dive notes that when candidate pools shrink, local employers must rethink talent pipelines—re-engaging "near-miss" candidates, investing in upskilling existing staff, and offering clear pathways for professional development.



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Questions for Your Leadership Team

To help your organization adapt to these national workforce trends locally, consider discussing these questions with your management or HR team:

- 1. **Where can digital tools elevate our daily operations?**
 - a. Are there repetitive administrative, customer service, or production tracking tasks in your business that software or AI tools could streamline—and do your current job descriptions reflect those tech-forward skills?
- 2. **How are we upskilling our existing talent?**
 - a. Since national applicant volume is tightening, how can you invest in training your current team members to use modern tools rather than competing solely for external candidates? (Tip: Check out our Chamber’s Next Level Workforce initiatives for local training resources).
- 3. **Are we engaging early-career talent effectively?**
 - a. With younger candidates seeking workplaces that embrace modern technology, how does your onboarding process showcase technology adoption, continuous learning, and clear career growth?

What This Means for Our Community

Whether you run a manufacturing facility in Shipshewana, a healthcare clinic in LaGrange, or a small business on Main Street, integrating digital tools and seeking out tech-adaptable team members is becoming essential to maintaining efficiency and growth.

Creating workplace environments that embrace continuous learning and modern skills not only improves productivity, but also helps attract the next generation of local workers looking to build meaningful careers right here at home.

Source: Adapted from [HR Dive](#), reporting on hiring metrics from ICIMS.

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HIT THE BRAKES OR BUILD THE RULES?

WHY LAGRANGE COUNTY ENACTED A ONE-YEAR MORATORIUM ON DATA CENTERS & BESS PROJECTS

When the LaGrange County Commissioners recently approved a one-year moratorium on new Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and data center projects, the decision generated plenty of conversation; and just as many questions.

Does a moratorium mean these projects are no longer welcome? Is the County trying to stop future development? What happens over the next year?

According to Commissioner President Terry Martin, the answer is much simpler: the moratorium is intended to give the County time to develop the rules and regulations necessary to responsibly evaluate these emerging types of development before any projects move forward.

What is a moratorium?

A moratorium is a temporary pause on permitting. In this case, it applies to new BESS and data center projects while the County updates its Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Currently, the County's development regulations were not written with these types of facilities in mind.

"We had nothing in place to regulate them," Martin explained. "If someone had come in and applied for a permit, we wouldn't have had the standards to guide



setbacks, screening, locations, or other requirements. This gives us time to put those things in place."

Rather than preventing future projects, the moratorium creates an opportunity for the County to establish clear expectations before development occurs.

Why now?

Interest in large-scale data centers has increased throughout the Midwest and across the country. At the same time, local officials have heard questions and concerns from residents about what these facilities could mean for LaGrange County.

Martin said the County recognized it needed to be proactive rather than reactive. "We're not saying no," he emphasized. "We're saying if these projects come here, we want them done the right way."

That distinction is an important one. The moratorium is not a vote for or against data centers or battery energy storage facilities. Instead, it allows local leaders to study how other communities have addressed these projects and determine what regulations make sense for LaGrange County.

What will happen during the next year?

Over the coming months, County officials expect to research best practices from other communities, work with the County Attorney and Planning Department, and develop recommendations for updating the UDO.

Among the topics likely to be evaluated are:

- Appropriate locations for these facilities
- Setback requirements
- Screening and landscaping standards
- Site design and permitting requirements
- Public safety considerations
- Compatibility with surrounding land uses



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Martin noted that County officials are also reaching out to communities that already have these facilities to better understand both the benefits and challenges they've experienced. As draft regulations are developed, the public can also expect opportunities for input through the County's normal public hearing process.

Responsible planning—not anti-growth

One of the biggest misconceptions surrounding the moratorium, Martin said, is that it signals the County is opposed to economic development. He sees it differently. "A moratorium isn't a yes or a no," he said. "It gives us time to make sure we have everything in place so if a project moves forward, it's built according to our rules and regulations."

That planning process is similar to how local governments approach many new forms of development. Before approving projects that may have long-term impacts, communities often establish standards that protect neighboring property owners while providing developers with a clear understanding of local expectations.

For Martin, responsible growth means balancing opportunities for investment with thoughtful stewardship of the community's resources. "LaGrange County has a strong agricultural heritage," he said. "As Commissioners, we have to be good stewards of the land and the people."

Looking ahead

The County anticipates that regulations for Battery Energy Storage Systems may be completed sooner than those for large-scale data centers, as the two types of projects differ significantly in both size and operational characteristics.

Ultimately, Martin said success will be measured by having a well-developed framework in place by the end of the moratorium—one that allows future proposals to be reviewed through a consistent, transparent permitting process.

His message to residents is straightforward: the moratorium is about preparation. "If we didn't do this," Martin said, "someone could have come in and applied before we had any regulations. We want to make sure we do it right and that everybody is protected."

“
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”

-- Terry Martin LaGrange County
Comissioner President

Stay Engaged

As the County studies these emerging technologies, community input will play an important role in shaping future regulations. Residents, landowners, and business leaders are encouraged to follow the process, attend public meetings as they are announced, and share thoughtful feedback with County officials. Staying informed today will help ensure the policies developed over the coming year reflect the values and long-term vision of LaGrange County.

To reach your county commissioners:

- Terry Martin, North District, tmartin@lagrangepublic.com, 260-499-1814
- Peter Cook, South District, pcook@lagrangepublic.com, 260-585-0007
- Kevin Myers, Middle District, kevinmyers@lagrangepublic.com, 260-336-4524

Beyond The Front Door

Did You Know?

- Bowen Health serves 22 counties across northeast and north-central Indiana.
 - From LaGrange County to communities throughout the area, Bowen Health brings healthcare services closer to where people live, work, and raise their families.
- They believe healthcare should be accessible to everyone.
 - Bowen Health accepts Medicaid and does not turn patients away because of an inability to pay — reinforcing their mission of providing compassionate, patient-centered care for all.
- They care for the whole person — not just one piece of the puzzle.
 - Services extend beyond traditional mental health care and include primary care, addiction recovery, dentistry, life skills coaching, employee assistance programs, school-based programs, group therapy, and more.
- Their LaGrange location continues expanding access to care locally.
 - Bowen Health's LaGrange clinic combines healthcare services with their existing community presence, helping residents access physical health, mental health, and recovery services in one place.
- The "front door" is only the beginning.
 - Behind every appointment is a team focused on helping people build healthier lives — whether that means managing everyday wellness, navigating a difficult season, recovering from addiction, or finding support for emotional well-being

Biz Spotlight



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INVEST A DAY. STRENGTHEN YOUR BUSINESS.

Running a business today means wearing more hats than ever before. Whether you're leading a growing company, launching a new venture, managing a nonprofit, or building your professional career, there's always something new to learn—and someone new worth meeting.

That's exactly why the LaGrange County Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Workshop was created. On Tuesday, September 22, we'll bring together local business owners, entrepreneurs, professionals, and community leaders for a morning packed with practical ideas, meaningful conversations, and connections that can help move your business forward.

This isn't a conference filled with generic presentations. It's a workshop designed to provide real-world strategies that you can put into practice immediately. You'll hear from experienced presenters who understand today's business landscape, gain fresh perspectives on common challenges, and leave with actionable ideas to help your organization grow.

More Than Just Education

One of the greatest benefits of Chamber events is the opportunity to connect with others who understand the challenges—and opportunities—of doing business in LaGrange County.

Some of the best ideas come from conversations over coffee, meeting a future client, finding a new referral partner, or hearing how another business solved a challenge similar to yours.

Those connections often become collaborations, partnerships, and friendships that continue long after the workshop ends.

An Investment in Your Success

Successful businesses don't stop learning. They invest in their people, seek new perspectives, and continually look for ways to improve.

Whether you're hoping to grow your business, develop your team, gain fresh ideas, or simply reconnect with the local business community, the Small Business Workshop is an investment that can pay dividends long after the event concludes.

We invite you to join us on September 22 for a morning of learning, networking, and inspiration. Bring your questions, your business cards, and an open mind—you'll leave with new ideas, valuable connections, and practical strategies to help you and your business thrive.

Registration is now open. Call 260-463-2443 to register today!

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DID YOU KNOW



Member Benefit of the Month

EBLAST ADVERTISING

Did you know one of your Chamber membership benefits is direct access to more than 1,500 email subscribers through our weekly Chamber eBlast?

Whether you're promoting an upcoming event, sharing a special offer or launching a new product or service, the Chamber eBlast is one of the easiest and most effective ways to reach business leaders and community members across LaGrange County.

Our subscribers look to the Chamber each week for local business news, community happenings, and opportunities to support fellow members. By including your announcement in the eBlast, you're placing your message in front of an audience that values shopping local, doing business locally, and staying connected.

What can you promote?

- Upcoming events
- Sales and special offers
- Business announcements
- Grand openings
- Ribbon cuttings
- Community initiatives

Your Chamber membership is more than a listing—it's a marketing tool. Let us help amplify your message.

To learn more, email eblast@lagrangechamber.org or call the Chamber office at (260) 463-2443.



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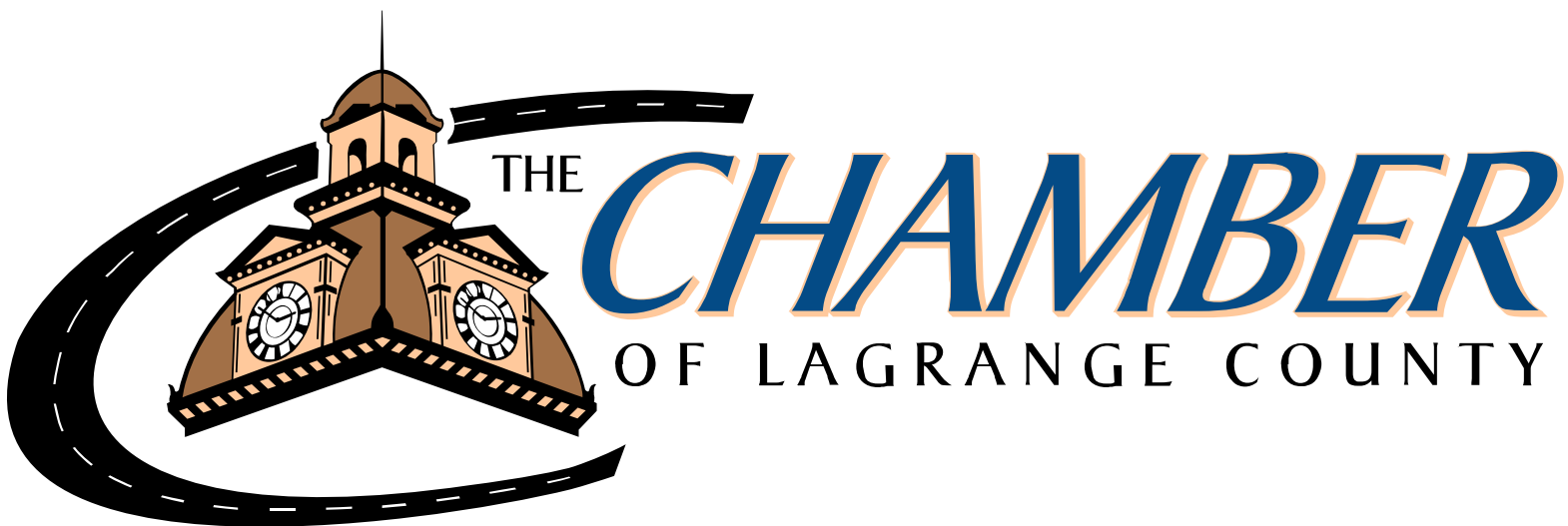
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