

Fort Wayne Career Academy

A MODEL OF EMPLOYER-CONNECTED WORK-BASED
LEARNING ACROSS MULTIPLE INDUSTRIES

What It Is

Fort Wayne Career Academy (FWCA) serves students from 17 high schools across Northeast Indiana, offering hands-on, career-aligned education through high-quality CTE programs. Students participate in daily lab-based instruction and work-based learning (WBL) in fields such as construction, HVAC, welding, IT, automotive, and more. FWCA has launched nine certified State Earn and Learn (SEAL) programs, making it a statewide leader in developing talent pipelines through employer partnerships.

What Students Do

Students engage in real-world learning during daily morning or afternoon sessions and participate in both school-based and on-site employer experiences. Activities include:

- Building homes alongside industry professionals
- Working with real equipment in construction, HVAC, and electrical labs
- Completing team-based projects and reading technical diagrams
- Earning dual credits and certifications like OSHA 10, NCCER, and SACA

EXPERIENCE SNAPSHOT

School

17 Northeast
Indiana
High Schools



Location

Fort Wayne,
Indiana



Industry

10 Different
Industries



Participants

High School
Juniors/Seniors



VALUE FOR EMPLOYERS

Work-based learning isn't just about giving back—it's a strategic investment in your future workforce.

- Promote awareness of your industry
- Build a pipeline of career-ready talent
- Strengthen your company's community presence
- Lower hiring and onboarding costs
- Foster innovation by engaging young minds
- Improve long-term retention through early exposure

Industry Involvement

Employers play a vital role in shaping the success of FWCA's programs by:

- Hosting students for hands-on jobsite experiences
- Mentoring and training students in real workplace environments
- Participating in SEAL program planning and evaluation
- Helping align curriculum with evolving industry standards

Habitat for Humanity, IKORCC, and Ivy Tech Community College have helped FWCA students transition directly into postsecondary education or skilled employment—prepared and credentialed.

How Employers Can Get Involved

Whether you're interested in supporting an existing program like FWCA or launching your own work-based learning experience, Ascend Indiana can help. We provide:

- Program design and implementation support
- School and CTE center connections
- Access to funding and workforce partners

Discover how Ascend Indiana can support your business in launching or expanding work-based learning opportunities at www.ascendindiana.com.