



NEWS RELEASE

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CANI / BLUE JACKET PARTNERSHIP EXPANDS TO HELP MORE PEOPLE BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Two local organizations are working together to help people who are struggling to find or maintain employment. CANI (Community Action of Northeast Indiana) and Blue Jacket, Inc., joined forces a few years ago to begin offering the CANI Career Academy. While this partnership is not new, what *is* new is additional funding that is making more of a good thing possible.

The CANI Career Academy is a 60-hour program created by Blue Jacket to coach participants on how to be the best job seekers they can be. The training program includes skills and interest assessments, professional development, professional clothing assistance, and job placement. The clothing is provided for free through the Blue Jacket Clothing Company and job placement is offered through Opportunity Staffing - both operating under the umbrella of Blue Jacket.

CANI, recognizing the role that permanent employment plays in families achieving self-sufficiency, is covering the cost of enrollment in the CANI Career Academy. The only requirements are that participants have a barrier to employment and have the motivation to put in the required work.

Last year, 84% of CANI Career Academy participants in Allen County became employed within three months of graduation. An expansion outside of Allen County has been made possible by generous funding from the trust of the late Richard "Rick" Hoffman. This spring, CANI and Blue Jacket are launching a new offering of the CANI Career Academy at the IMPACT Institute in Kendallville. Registration is now open and classes begin soon.

The CANI Career Academy in Allen County is also getting a boost thanks to the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority (IHCDA.) Through an Innovation Grant, IHCDA is helping to fund more CANI Career Academies in Fort Wayne this year.

In order to start the program, participants must attend a 90-minute orientation. In Allen County, classes are hosted at Blue Jacket, 2826 S. Calhoun Street, Fort Wayne; Orientations are held every Tuesday at 12:00 pm. In Noble County, classes are hosted at the IMPACT Institute, 1607 E. Dowling Street, Kendallville; Orientations are held every Thursday at 10:00 am.

For more information about the CANI Career Academy, visit www.canihelp.org/careeracademy or call (260) 423-3546 ext. 262.

CANI helps communities, families, and individuals remove the causes and conditions of poverty. For more information about CANI and the services provided, visit www.canihelp.org.

Blue Jacket's mission is to provide disadvantaged adults the tools and opportunities to be productive members of society. For more information about Blue Jacket, Inc., visit www.bluejacketinc.org.