

NCSHA 2016 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

Deadline: Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Visit ncsha.org/awards to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

Instructions: Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact awards@ncsha.org or 202-624-7710.

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name: _____

HFA: _____

Submission Contact: (Must be HFA Staff Member) _____ **Email:** _____

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page:

HFA: _____

Entry Name: _____

Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
Annual Report	Empowering New Buyers	Federal Advocacy	Financial
Creative Media	Encouraging New Production	State Advocacy	Human Resources
Promotional Materials and Newsletters	Home Improvement and Rehabilitation		Operations
			Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
Encouraging New Production	Combating Homelessness	Special Achievement	Yes
Multifamily Management	Housing for Persons with Special Needs		No
Preservation and Rehabilitation			

Background

My Community, My Vision (MCMV) encourages high school students throughout the State of Indiana to shape their community's future while being civically involved through a yearlong community planning process. By creating a youth-led community vision plan, the program hopes to inspire youth to return to or stay in their hometowns. The program was created through a partnership with the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and Ball State University (BSU). These groups recognize that Indiana is facing a major dilemma; young people, particularly those who are college educated, are leaving the state. According to a [2012 study conducted by Indiana University](#)¹, 50% of students who attend IU will leave the state after graduation. The MCMV program was created as an attempt to inspire youth to stay in Indiana by involving them in community planning processes and connecting them to their local elected officials. Through these efforts, the program shows students that they can have a profound impact in shaping their communities.

To apply high school student groups are invited to submit essays outlining their ideas for enhancing the quality of life in their hometowns. Up to six student groups are chosen to participate in the program based on the essay applications and winning groups each receive a \$500 award. Once the communities are chosen, the high school groups are paired with a BSU Urban Planning graduate or an upper-level undergraduate student. The BSU students are mentors to the high school groups throughout the September to April program year. The BSU mentor leads meetings with the high school groups to teach about urban planning, economic development, and the functions of local government. The mentor facilitates planning exercises, like SWOT analyses and asset mapping, to help the high school students brainstorm ideas for their hometowns. The mentor then creates a planning document based on the high school students' ideas. During this process, at least four statewide meetings are hosted every year, giving students an opportunity to learn from their peers from different communities around the state. In the spring, the student groups present their final plans to IHCDA, BSU, the Indiana Lieutenant Governor and local elected officials.

Recruitment for the pilot year of the program began in August 2014. Five student groups were chosen to participate in the first year of the program, which culminated in April 2015. Initially, small rural communities were targeted for the program, but during second year recruitment, program leadership decided to open the program to all Indiana communities. This resulted in an even more enriching learning environment for youth participants as they now interact with students with different experiences and hometowns.

NCSHA Judging Criteria

Young people are rarely involved in community planning processes, and when planners do involve them, it is most often through a one day event. My Community, My Vision (MCMV) takes an innovative approach by involving youth in a yearlong planning process that is completely student led. Ball State University (BSU) urban planning students lead planning efforts based on the high school students' ideas. This approach creates a voice for the community's youth as well as professional experience for the BSU students. The program provides hands-on learning experiences for high school students showing how local and state government function, how community goals are created and accomplished, and how to be engaged citizens. Public officials are keenly interested in the students' ideas because they recognize that communities' futures depend on retaining young talent. Public officials are rarely approached by young people interested in improving their hometowns. The MCMV process prepares both the high school and the BSU students for these meetings, ensuring that they can professionally advocate for their ideas.

¹ Ben Skirvin, "Brain Drain in Indiana: The Facts and Opinions," *State Impact Indiana*, January 26, 2012, accessed April 22, 2016, <http://indianapublicmedia.org/stateimpact/2012/01/26/brain-drain-in-indiana-the-facts-and-opinions/>

During the first two years of the program, varied student organizations and communities have applied. Groups ranged from Future Farmers of America organizations located in towns of less than 2,000 people, to a non-profit group in inner-city Gary, Indiana that focuses on providing safe spaces for urban youth. Every plan created is unique to the community and the students involved. Groups explore and celebrate the positive assets in their communities while recognizing the major hurdles facing their hometowns. Students critically think about current community conditions, must formulate an action plan, and are tasked with identifying partners, resources, and funding. For many students, this is the first time they have assessed needs beyond their own.

Eleven community vision plans have been created through the MCMV program. During the first year of the program, the City of Rushville officially adopted the youth-driven plan. The student group from Anderson has raised approximately \$4,000 in grant funding and in-kind donations to implement a community garden and beautification project. Students from all of the involved communities have met with their local elected officials, including county council members, mayors, legislators, and the State of Indiana's Lieutenant Governor.

Based on pre- and post-survey results from the first year of the program, students are more interested in returning to their hometowns after participating in the program. For example, compared to the beginning of the school year, students from Rushville were 41% more interested in returning to their hometowns after completing the MCMV program.

MCMV is the first of its kind, and the diverse student groups show that it could be successfully transferred to many communities. Brain drain is a problem facing many rust belt cities and mid-western states. In order to retain young talent, communities must engage their youth. The program is adaptable to each community as it can be focused on youth from high schools, community groups or led by local governments. As long as local officials, planning professionals, and young people are all engaged, the program will be a success.

Appendix A

Students from Washington County, Indiana during a poster presentation geared towards community members and local elected officials, December 2015.



Appendix B

First year participants gathered for the final event, April 2015.



Appendix C

Future Farmer of America students from Hanover, Indiana presenting during the final event, April 2015.



Appendix D

IHCDA staff, a Ball State mentor, and former Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann interacting with the faculty supervisor and youth from Gary, Indiana, September 2015.



Appendix E

Participants from DeKalb County at the final event, April 2016.



Appendix F

Student discussing ideas with Dr. Bruce Frankel (center), IHCDA's Ball State University partner, and Lieutenant Governor Eric Holcomb (right), April 2016.



Appendix G

Students, faculty advisor, and Ball State mentor with the mayor of Muncie, Dennis Tyler, and State Representative Sue Errington.



Appendix H

Poster summarizing the youth initiatives for Muncie, Indiana.

ONE MUNCIE ONE VISION







A STRATEGIC YOUTH ACTION PLAN

PREPARED FOR:
Mayor Dennis Treaste City of Muncie, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, & Muncie Central High School

PREPARED BY:
• Brian Fierstein, MPA, Master Bachelor of Urban Planning - Ball State University, Mentor
• Braxton Anderson, Kayleigh Barber, Jimmy Gonzalez, Lily Torres, Eriq Ford, Rodrigo Garcia, Isaac Ryan, Lena Smith, and Hannah Williams - Muncie Central High School Students
• Mr. Todd Gibson - Muncie Central My Community, My Vision Sponsor

PURPOSE
Similar to many other Midwestern communities, Muncie was once known as a heavy industrial powerhouse with major corporations such as the Ball Company, Hemmigray Glass, and Warner Gear dominating the landscape and empowering economic growth. Once all of these manufacturers left, the community was left in a state of despair, struggling to redefine its identity.

Now the community is making many efforts to shift from the old way of thinking to a technology- and creativity-driven economy. One component of achieving this goal is capitalizing on the skills offered by the young people who grow up in the community. Many young people who grow up in Muncie move to other communities upon graduation and use their talents elsewhere. This plan, One Muncie One Vision, is an effort to alter this phenomenon. By focusing on the following six strategies and goals that the young people have outlined for the community, Muncie can begin to attract more of those young people back and capitalize on the unique talents that they possess.

<p>EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A MUNCIE BIKE SHARE SYSTEM</p> <p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes spontaneous trips • Complement Mass Transit Systems • Popular amongst many groups <p><i>Why It's Important</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coincides with efforts to improve multi-modal circulation • Improves connections between key destinations • Promotes tourism and builds identity 	<p>EXPAND SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps students realize local careers • Effective workforce development and business expansion strategy <p><i>Why It's Important</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficial to students and local businesses • Helps retain young adults by matching them with existing jobs in the community 
<p>IMPROVE COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</p> <p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of health services is important to all • Counseling and mental health tend to fill through the cracks <p><i>Why It's Important</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts are being made to cater to marginalized citizens • Students travel outside of Muncie for quality mental health services 	<p>PROMOTE TRAIL-BASED DEVELOPMENT ALONG LOCAL GREENWAYS</p> <p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on tourists around local trails and greenways • Promotes locally-owned and operated businesses <p><i>Why It's Important</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local greenways already attract visitors and create opportunities • Would enhance the user experience and promote small business development 
<p>PURSUE A REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTION BETWEEN MUNCIE AND ANDERSON</p> <p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails are essential to quality of life for millennials • They are not only recreational, but also key transportation routes <p><i>Why It's Important</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardinal Greenway is one of Muncie's strongest assets • Would improve quality of life, connectivity, recreational, and development opportunities 	<p>SUPPORT DOWNTOWN BUSINESS AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</p> <p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a vibrant downtown is vital to attracting millennials • Must offer urban amenities as well as commercial and residential options <p><i>Why It's Important</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of Muncie's strongest opportunities • High demand for downtown housing and residential opportunities 

MY COMMUNITY, MY VISION | FINAL EVENT | TUESDAY APRIL 12TH, 2016

Appendix I

Plans created during the first year of the program. Click [here](#) to visit the My Community, My Vision webpage which houses plans for each of the first two years of the program.

