

# Indiana County

## Office of Planning & Development

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Byron G. Stauffer, Jr.**

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

**LuAnn Zak**

Indiana County Courthouse Annex  
801 Water Street  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701-1705

(724) 465-3870 (Voice)  
(724) 465-3150 (Fax)  
(724) 465-3805 (TDD)

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**R. Michael Keith, Chairman**

**Bonni S. Dunlap, PhD**

**Sherene Hess**

4/25/2025

Media Contact: Josh Krug, Deputy Director, Planning (above phone number)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Indiana County Office of Planning & Development's Indiana County WalkWorks and Decathlon Program Awarded Governor's Award**

INDIANA, PA –

The Indiana County Office of Planning & Development, in partnership with Indiana County WalkWorks, the Indiana County Decathlon and other program partners, was awarded the **Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence in the category of Health and Wellness Initiatives**, on April 16, in Harrisburg.

The Indiana County Decathlon Planning Team would like to thank their program partners, event hosts, walk leaders, program supporters, and event participants for making the Program such a success year after year. They would also like to thank Representative Jim Struzzi for sponsoring a Citation in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, congratulating the team on the meritorious honor of receiving the prestigious award.

The Indiana County Decathlon is an annual program that promotes physical activity and healthy living during the winter and spring months. The Decathlon offers a series of free walking events from February through May, with something for everyone - from easy walks or rolls on paved paths to moderate walks on trails. It is a great way to stay active, get some fresh air, and enjoy the outdoors while exploring the beauty, culture, and history of Indiana County. If you prefer to explore the County at your own pace, they also have several self-led walking tours available online for viewing and download.

The Decathlon, in its 9<sup>th</sup> year, is managed by dedicated volunteer Barbara Hauge, facilitated by the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development and coordinated by a dedicated team of volunteers, in partnership with the PA WalkWorks program, the YMCA of Indiana County, Indiana County Parks & Trails, Friends of the Parks, the Indiana County Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ICATAC), Aging Services Inc., Indiana Regional Medical Center (IRMC), the Indiana County Tourist Bureau, and Indiana University of PA (IUP).

The Decathlon was developed to support and sustain the Indiana County WalkWorks Program. WalkWorks strengthens our community by establishing and improving accessible walking paths, created with locals in mind. These routes make embracing the health benefits of walking easier than ever.

Currently, there are eight WalkWorks walking routes in Indiana County, located in Blairsville, Ernest, Glen Campbell, Homer City, White Township, Indiana Borough, Clymer Borough, and Saltsburg Borough.

You can find a complete list of Decathlon events and download self-guided walking flyers by visiting [icopd.org](http://icopd.org): <http://icopd.org> and clicking on the Decathlon logo. They also post flyers and event updates on their Facebook page, “Indiana County Walking Decathlon,” so be sure to follow there for the latest information. For information on sponsoring the Indiana County Decathlon or providing prizes for the drawing in June, please call (724) 465-3877 or email Josh Krug, Deputy Director, Planning at [jkrug@ceo.co.indiana.pa.us](mailto:jkrug@ceo.co.indiana.pa.us).

The group that traveled to the ceremony and joined together on stage as Award Winners is below.

1. Barbara Hauge- Indiana County WalkWorks and Indiana County Decathlon Programs Manager
2. Josh Krug- Deputy Director, Planning Section, Indiana County Office of Planning & Development (ICOPD) - Program coordinator
3. Sherene Hess- Indiana County Commissioner
4. Leslie Stenger- IUP Department of Allied and Public Health- Longtime partner
5. Tina Kocan-Milby- Health and Wellness Coordinator, Aging Services- Longtime partner
6. Raven Sanchez- Permitting and Administration Coordinator- ICOPD- Website and admin support
7. Edward Cochran- Longtime Planning Team and WalkWorks partner\* Couldn't attend
8. Laura Herrington- Executive Director, Indiana County Tourist Bureau- Longtime partner
9. Sara Weaver- Director of Wellness and Sports- YMCA- Longtime partner
10. Dr. Kevin Patrick- Longtime Walk leader and partner, IUP Geography Professor

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