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Indiana Institute for Working Families Announces New Grant from Lumina Foundation for Education

Indianapolis, IN – The Indiana Institute for Working Families (Institute), a program of the Indiana Community Action Association (IN-CAA), has received an \$88,000 grant from Indianapolis-based Lumina Foundation for Education. This grant from Lumina will allow the Institute to examine the certificate programs in Indiana and the nation, while researching eligibility for financial aid and utility in obtaining additional academic credentials.

The goal of the Indiana Institute for Working Families is to promote data-driven policies that facilitate opportunities for Hoosiers and their families to achieve and maintain economic self-sufficiency. The Institute believes that a high school diploma is no longer a sufficient credential for workers striving towards financial stability and that working families need access to affordable postsecondary education. With each step of educational achievement, Indiana's workers improve their likelihood of workforce participation, employment, income, and self-sufficiency.

“Recent research conducted by the Institute in partnership with the National Skills Coalition revealed to us that Indiana's economic recovery and vitality will be dependent upon educating Hoosier workers for middle-skilled jobs – those requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree,” said Lisa Travis, Program Manager. “This funding commitment from the Foundation will allow us to take a closer look at certificate programs that provide a pathway to better paying middle-skilled jobs and to additional opportunities in higher education.”

The Institute intends to use the research findings from this project to help inform current policies that govern access to certificate programs in Indiana and the nation. Changes in public policies that increase access to postsecondary credentials not only lead to increased educational attainment and competitiveness levels, but provide economic benefits through increased levels of individual earnings, decreased number of working adults requiring public assistance, and increased opportunities for economic development.

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Indiana Institute for Working Families

The Indiana Institute for Working Families (Institute) is a program of the Indiana Community Action Association, Inc. (IN-CAA). The Institute was founded in 2004 and is the only statewide program in Indiana that combines research and policy analysis on federal and state legislation, public policies, and programs impacting low-income working families with organized education and outreach. The goal of the Institute is to promote data-driven research and public policy that result in opportunities for Hoosier families to achieve and maintain economic self-sufficiency. The Institute fulfills its mission by focusing its work activities in the following areas: Public

Policy; Research and Analysis; Education and Outreach; and National, Statewide, and Community Partnerships. To learn more, please visit <http://www.incap.org/iwfw.html>.

Indiana Community Action Association (IN-CAA)

The Indiana Community Action Association, Inc. (IN-CAA), a statewide not-for-profit membership corporation, was incorporated in the State of Indiana in 1970. IN-CAA's Network is comprised of Indiana's 24 Community Action Agencies (CAAs), which serve all of Indiana's 92 counties. IN-CAA envisions a state with limited or no poverty, where its residents have decent, safe, and sanitary living conditions, and where resources are available to help low-income individuals attain self-sufficiency.

IN-CAA serves as an advocate and facilitator of policy, planning and programs to create solutions and share responsibility as leaders in the War Against Poverty. Therefore, it is IN-CAA's mission is to help the state's CAAs address the conditions of poverty through training and technical assistance, developing models for service delivery, and providing resources to help increase network capacity. For more information about IN-CAA, please visit IN-CAA's web site at www.incap.org.

About Lumina Foundation

Lumina Foundation for Education, an Indianapolis-based private foundation, is committed to enrolling and graduating more students from college—especially 21st century students: low-income students, students of color, first-generation students and adult learners. Lumina's goal is to increase the percentage of Americans who hold high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina pursues this goal in three ways: by identifying and supporting effective practice, through public policy advocacy, and by using our communications and convening power to build public will for change. For more information, logon to www.luminafoundation.org.