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Vanderburgh County Board of Commissioners Receives Statewide Award

The Indiana Association of County Commissioners (IACC) is pleased to announce that the Vanderburgh County Commissioners Cheryl Musgrave, Ben Shoulders, and Jeff Hatfield were selected as IACC's Achievement Award winners for the "2022 Outstanding Team Effort for a Board of Commissioners." The award is in recognition of their outstanding team efforts in collaborating with community and state partners to advance many projects with multiple funding sources to impact the future of Vanderburgh County.

Spearheaded by this Board of County Commissioners, their County launched a \$39 million project with AT&T to build out high-speed fiber broadband to more than 20,000 households and businesses in the county. Reliable and affordable broadband has become more important than ever, with many consumers continuing to work, learn and entertain from home.

Today, one-third of the population of their unincorporated County does not have access to fixed broadband solutions. Fortunately, that's all about to change. Thanks to unprecedented federal funding currently available to counties, through the American Rescue Plan, they are moving forward on a [\\$39 million public-private project with AT&T](#) that will bring fast, reliable fiber-optic internet to households and businesses in their county. Life is about to get a lot better in Vanderburgh County.

The nomination stated, "The potential for new economic opportunity will be immense when local businesses in every corner of our county have best-in-class fiber solutions to connect to customers and participate in e-commerce." With access to affordable, reliable internet, these modern-day necessities and conveniences many of us take for granted will soon be available to thousands of their residents who could only wish for them before.

Because of these amazing accomplishments the Vanderburgh County Board of County Commissioners, Cheryl Musgrave, and Ben Shoulders, and Jeff Hatfield deserves to be recognized for their achievement as the "2022 Outstanding Team Effort for a Board of Commissioners."

The achievement award was presented during the IACC's 2022 Annual Conference, the largest gathering of County Commissioners in the state. The three-day conference included several different workshops, and breakout sessions that were designed specifically for county commissioners and their support staff. The Commissioners and others attended several training workshops concerning county related topics focusing on, Collaborative, Forward-Thinking, and Intentional Partnerships, 2023 Legislative Priorities, Governor Holcomb's Public Health Commission, Indiana LTAP Partnerships, Open Door Laws, Responsibilities of County Commissioners Before, During and After Disasters, Best Practice Guidance Renewable Energy Development, Broadband Infrastructure Investment, Road Funding, and more in their training sessions.

Indiana's 52nd Lieutenant Governor, Suzanne Crouch welcomed commissioners to the conference. She spoke on current issues related to local government, expanding broadband through Next Level Connections Broadband Grants, Improving Housing needs, revitalizing travel and tourism, supporting Hoosier farmers, and improving mental health and addiction programs in Indiana counties. Crouch has been a long-time partner of the IACC and is committed to improving the lives of all Hoosiers.

Representative Jeff Thompson House Ways and Means Committee Chairman, State Senator Mike Crider Majority Whip, and Representative Greg Steuerwald, Majority House Caucus Chair addressed attendees as well during their Legislative Update.

The Indiana Association of County Commissioners is a nonprofit organization established to provide the best education, leadership support, and advocacy services for our County Commissioners to strengthen their influence throughout Indiana. The objectives of the Association are: to promote cooperation of the county unit with all other units of local government, (cities, towns, township, etc.) and with state and federal agencies; and to promote improvement and efficiency in the delivery of county government services. The various functions of the IACC include serving as liaison among counties, state and federal agencies, lobbying the Indiana General Assembly on behalf of County Commissioners, as well as providing technical assistance and training to county commissioners and support staff.

Pictured in attached photo: Indiana Association of County Commissioners 2022 President Diana Biddle, Brown County Commissioner and accepting the award is Vanderburgh Board of County Commissioners; Cheryl Musgrave and Ben Shoulders, (not pictured) Jeff Hatfield.

