

# Bringing opportunity back

► 38TH AND SHERIDAN PROJECT  
ISSUE 12 | DECEMBER 2022



▲ A look inside a class at The Excel Center®, which was developed by Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. For more about the Excel Center as well as Martin University's connection to the 38th and Sheridan Project, turn to page 4.

## Giving it his whole heart

### Jimmy Johnson's journey and his passion for the neighborhood

**F**rom a very early age, Jimmy Johnson has been hard at work. Now, a foreman for **Harmon Construction**, he helps oversee the development of the **Indy Fresh Market** at **38th and Sheridan**. For Jimmy, the road here has been a long and winding one.

"Growing up, there were 15 of us, between my brothers and sisters and me," he said. "I can remember being four years old and picking up trash in the neighborhood to earn some money for the family, that's how I got started working."

"As I got older, I was mowing grass for neighbors, and by the time I was a teenager, I did a lot of work for the elderly in the neighborhood," Jimmy continued. "I would go to the store for them, take care of their yards, any little thing that they needed."

After helping take care of his grandfather growing up and then getting involved with the elderly in the community, Jimmy's passion grew.

"I just have it rooted in me deeply, to help people," Jimmy said. "And so, I just don't know anything else but that."



▲ Jimmy Johnson, a foreman for Harmon Construction at the Indy Fresh Market construction site.

#### The hard work is worth it

Over the years, along with working in construction and helping around the neighborhood, Jimmy tried to pick up odd jobs when he could, especially during the times he was laid off or unemployed. During this time, Jimmy struggled with drug addiction and worried about providing for his family.

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## Giving it his whole heart

"I knew that if I didn't straighten up, I wouldn't be here anymore," Jimmy said, with emotion in his every word. "It was the roughest time in my life, but I knew I needed to work harder."

Across the street from the very construction site that he works at now, Jimmy used to pray in the parking lot for the strength and patience to heal and grow into the man and father he wanted to be. He sought out faith and religion and started praying and fasting. After years of battling against addiction, Jimmy had broken the cycle and quit doing drugs for good. Now, 17 years clean, Jimmy strives to share his story in hopes that it could help someone like him.

"This is the same exact neighborhood I struggled with drug use in," Jimmy said, "But being 17 years clean and walking through this community now with my head held high, I thank God for giving me a second chance."

Jimmy worked with local youths, teaching them basic job skills and



▲ Above and to the right: **Jimmy** hard at work on the inside of what will become the **Indy Fresh Market**. Jimmy grew up in the neighborhood and knows first-hand the impact the market will have.

about the importance of doing work that they could be proud of doing. Now, with a job he loves, Jimmy is living the life he's talked about for so long.

"Man, I love my work," Jimmy said with a small smile. "To be able to have a chance to tell people they can make it, and to be able to have the resources to help them make it, to show them the hard work is worth it. It is more than giving them a job, it is giving them hope."

### Grateful for his journey

Growing up in the neighborhood, raising a family there, and working just down the road has helped Jimmy to develop an even bigger appreciation for the work going on all around him.

"Because I live around here, I know what it's like to shop at the nearby stores that don't have a lot of stuff, like food, especially food that's good for you," Jimmy said. "Having a fresh market like this that people

*"Man I love my work. To be able to have a chance to tell people they can make it, and to be able to have the resources to help them make it, to show them the hard work is worth it. It is more than giving them a job, it is giving them hope."*

– Jimmy Johnson, a foreman for Harmon Construction





can walk to, to spend their money on something valuable, it's going to help a lot, I think.

"When they told me what this building was and what it would be for, I knew I was going to give it my whole heart," he added.

From his darker days of addiction, Jimmy now walks around the construction site smiling, grateful for his journey, for his job, and for the opportunities he is helping to create in the neighborhood.

"I am so excited for **Cook Medical** and **Goodwill**, for **Darden** and **Harmon Construction**, and for them giving our neighborhood a chance,

a place that gave me my second chance" Jimmy said.

"I am so thankful for the people I work with, for this place that is about change, and for this neighborhood that reminds me we can make it, even if we mess up at times," he added.

### Never quit hoping

Since working for Harmon Construction, and getting involved with the Indy Fresh Market, Jimmy has become even more inspired about hard work and helping others.

"I just want to say thank you to Harmon Construction for allowing

me to live my dream and for helping me to grow stronger," Jimmy said. "I want to give them a special thank you for this and helping me in so many different ways during the darkest time in my life, when my daughter's life was taken last year. I thank Harmon Construction for helping me change and giving me my life back."

"It's crazy to me to think that people can come and see this beautiful building, on this beautiful corner, and I will always know that I was a small part of helping make it happen," Jimmy said.

Alongside his work at the site, Jimmy has been working hard to undergo and pass a construction course with The Darden Group, LLC.

"I come to work every day and try my best to teach and show my kids and my grandkids that there is hope, even when things feel hopeless. I come to work every day to make them proud," Jimmy said.

"I want to help spread hope back into the neighborhood, too," he added. "Hope for jobs. Hope for opportunities. Hope for kids who grow up knowing only drugs—to see that there is something new, something better, and to never quit hoping hard and working even harder, to make a better life for us, our families, and our neighborhood."

Now hiring!



COMMERCIAL  
SERVICES

## Goodwill Commercial Services

Currently hiring for jobs in manufacturing. For more information and to apply for an open position, visit [goodwillindy.org/careers](http://goodwillindy.org/careers).



# Creating a college-going culture

Goodwill and Martin University partner to create education opportunities in the Indianapolis community

**N**ew employees at the Goodwill Commercial Services manufacturing facility at 38th and Sheridan complete a questionnaire as part of Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana's onboarding process. The survey comes to them electronically from the Workday, Goodwill's cloud-based human resources management system. Thirteen questions are bucketed around the wrap-around services Goodwill provides to employees.

Questions like, "Do you have stable housing?" "Today, are you in need?" "Do you need a high school diploma?" serve as the first filters Goodwill uses to gauge how they can help support employees and connect them with resources.

One of the key opportunities Goodwill offers employees is the ability to complete and further their education through **The Excel Center®**, Goodwill's tuition-free high school for adults.

## Building pathways to learning

The Excel Center in Indianapolis and **Martin University**, also in Indianapolis, share pivotal roles in offering educational opportunities for the community through a dynamic revitalization effort.

**Cook Medical** has been a proud partner with the community in Indianapolis to build up the northwest corner of 38th Street and Sheridan Avenue. Cook purchased the property to construct

the manufacturing facility, and Goodwill Commercial Services manages the facility's operation as a medical device supplier for Cook. A new, full-service grocery store, **Indy Fresh Market**, is being built by Cook Medical with **100% minority contractors** and slated to be completed in 2023. Indy Fresh Market will provide a much-needed food source in the area, which has been considered a food desert. **IMPACT Central Indiana** and other local partners will provide capital and inventory.

This unique alliance has opened doors for residents of the neighborhood in terms of employment and education.





▲ Dr. Sean Huddleston, president of Martin University.

"I have to take my hat off to Cook," said **Dr. Sean Huddleston**, president of Martin University. "They determined a very comprehensive approach. Most companies will stop at the manufacturing company. They will say, 'We want to create a manufacturing company, and we need employees.' For them, that's enough, but with Cook, they took the next steps and said, 'We are looking at the entire livelihood of the community.'"

### The Excel Center

In the mid 2000s, Goodwill began a charter school called **Indianapolis Metropolitan High School (Indy Met)** sponsored by the **Indianapolis Mayor's Office**. It served individuals who were traditional aged high school students experiencing a variety of barriers. Out of that model, Goodwill saw a need from the parents of those students who were

coming to Indy Met high school.

"We discovered that the parents of our students [at Indy Met] were also without a highschool education and faced similar challenges as their children," explained **Shelley Ashley**, vice president of Mission Initiatives at Goodwill.

"We developed the concept of an adult high school and worked with the Indianapolis Mayor's Office to open our first campus in Indianapolis. We opened our first campus in 2010 and have since expanded nationally with over 30 locations across the United States."

The Excel Center's first year curriculum was primarily an online model. While students came to the building intermittently with teachers present, the course work was exclusively online and self-paced.

*Continued on the next page*

## For your information

Impact stats and facts from The Excel Center Research Report (pertaining to The Excel Center graduates)

- ▶ **3,589** industry-recognized certificates or credentials earned by graduates from September 2010 to January 2017.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **5,328** dual (college) credits earned by students.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **70%** of graduates are employed and have a **50%** wage increase six months after graduation.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **8%** of graduates are enrolled in post-secondary education, and **76%** have a two-year persistency rate, which means that they continue their post-secondary education for two years.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana, Goodwill Education Initiatives; The Excel Center Research Report. 2017.

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About half-way through the first year, the students were not thriving. The staff discovered the students were most successful when they were working with a teacher in a synchronous environment. The staff shifted to an accelerated model with in-person classes in five, eight-week terms during the school year.

Adult students can get through an entire semester or in some cases, an entire year of course content in eight weeks primarily through direct instruction from state licensed teachers. The Excel Center is available to any adult, not solely Goodwill employees. Since the opening of the The Excel Center, **7,074 graduates** have earned a high school diploma.

"We want students to be successful, both in their educational journeys and their lives. We meet students where they are, making our work very individualized based on each student's needs," Shelley said. "We have students enrolled who have never attended high school, are language learners or may not have attended middle or elementary school either. We start from where they are and get them to graduation."

The Excel Center supports students in a variety of ways to help them overcome obstacles and barriers. When students enroll, they are automatically assigned life coaches, who serve as academic counselors and as individual counselors, similar to social workers.

Many free, supportive services are embedded in The Excel Center programming for students, from transportation assistance and **Young Learners childcare** for the children of students to Goodwill's **Nurse-Family Partnership** programs, which include



▲ A teacher helps students with their work at The Excel Center.

nurse home visitations for first-time, Medicaid-eligible mothers.

### **Martin University**

"Students from The Excel Center have a higher education pathway right to Martin University," said Dr. Huddleston. "We complement The Excel Center with our approaches to higher education. We educate a high percentage of students who have not taken traditional classes."

As Indiana's only predominantly Black college, Martin University is a small yet significant presence in the educational sphere of Indianapolis. The University prides itself in providing support systems for its students. Similar to The Excel Center's life coaches, the University's student success coaches mentor

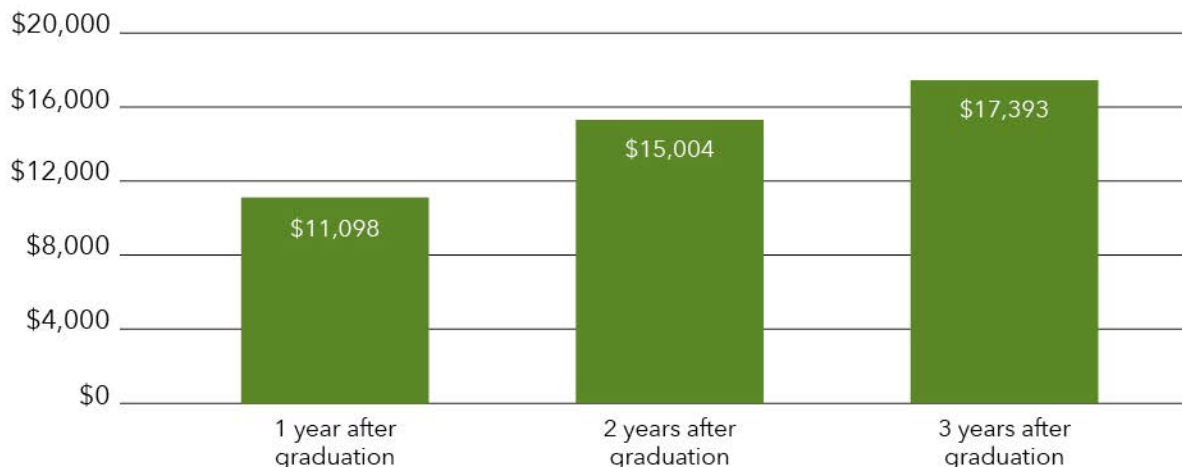
and work with students, making sure they maintain satisfactory progress toward their degree. Free childcare for students, transportation assistance, lower tuition rates, and flexible attendance policies with options for virtual courses, all serve to enable students to overcome barriers to academic success.

Martin University largely serves the population that makes up the 38th and Sheridan neighborhood.

"Cook reached out to us and said, 'We're gonna start this grocery store, Indy Fresh Market, and we want to make sure that we have a partner who is responsible for training and education of the people who will ultimately run and own the grocery store,'" explained Dr. Huddleston. "It was a great opportunity for us

# Impact on graduates of The Excel Center<sup>1</sup>

Average wage increase of Excel Center graduates participating in the workforce



<sup>1</sup>Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana, Goodwill Education Initiatives; The Excel Center Economic Impact on Students report. 2019.

to come together in partnership with Cook and Goodwill. We are a small institution. We really consider ourselves to be very nimble, innovative, and responsive to the needs of the community and of the workforce. So, when this opportunity came to us to offer a new curriculum in grocery store management at our university, we believed this was an important opportunity for us to support the community."

The grocery store management certification became embedded inside the **Business Administration Bachelor of Science degree** program at Martin University. The University's Academic Affairs division led by the provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs worked with grocery management consultant **Joe Welsh** (aka Joe the Grocer) to develop the learning outcomes and course design. The future owners and operators of Indy

Fresh Market, **Michael McFarland** and **Marckus Williams**, are currently enrolled in the program.

### Multigenerational impact

"We believe that the benefits of education that both Michael and Marckus are receiving are multigenerational," Dr. Huddleston said. "The attainment of their college degree will allow them to create a college going culture in their community. As leaders already, we think this will only help enrich their leadership capabilities and make them stronger and inspire others."

Shelley sees the generational impact on an almost everyday basis at The Excel Center. People, she said, can be generationally impacted when you start talking about education and breaking cycles. She witnesses parents and their adult children sitting in the same class working together toward their diplomas.

"There are multigenerational and economic impacts from obtaining a high school diploma. We know wages increase when someone earns their high school diploma. The economic impact becomes a factor on the family when someone has a diploma versus someone who does not. It's pretty profound.

"Many of the individuals we work with have a very limited view of jobs they could have," Shelley continued. "What we try to do is help them think about the scope of their careers—there are endless possibilities and pathways. Our job is really to help them see the opportunities and help connect them to the resources they need to follow their path, not the path we want to set for them. They are the experts of their own lives. We want them to chart out their own dreams and goals."



# Getting into the spirit

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana Commercial Services hosted the first annual community fall festival on October 28 at the site of the 38th & Sheridan Project.

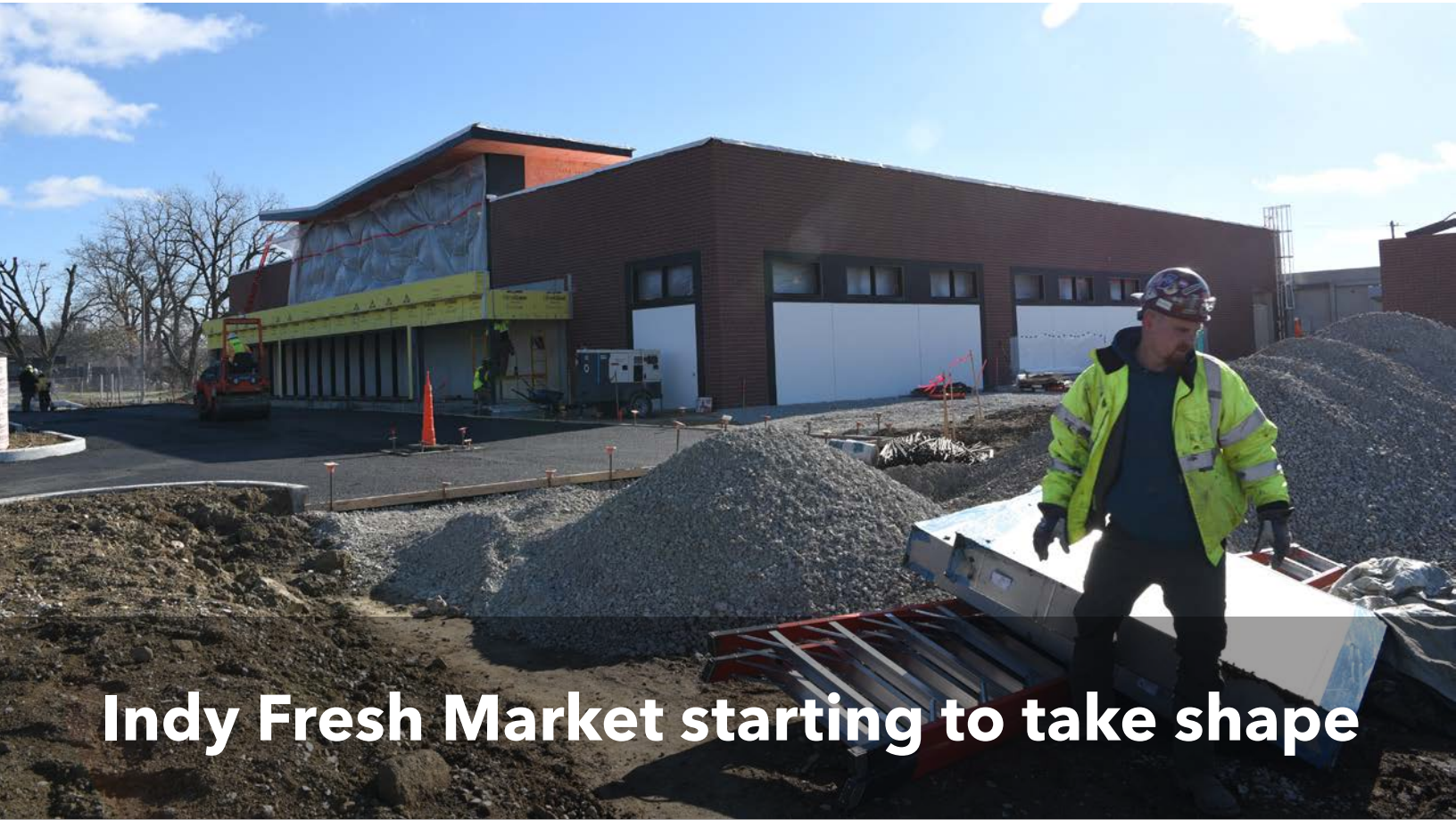






See page 13 for more photos





# Indy Fresh Market starting to take shape







# Fighting food insecurity

Local programs help to ensure Indianapolis residents have enough to eat



**T**he **Equitable Food Access in Indianapolis Neighborhoods** initiative, funded by the **Anthem Foundation**, is a community-based planning and implementation process that convenes residents, community leaders, subject matter experts, and civic organizations to develop a vision of equitable food access that will be translated into achievable strategies.

In June 2021, **LISC Indianapolis** and Anthem Foundation announced that the **Northeast Corridor** in Indianapolis was selected to be the focal point of the three-year, \$2.45 million initiative to improve nutritious food access and help build a more equitable food system.

A community-based planning and implementation process has now begun in this community that convenes residents, community leaders, subject matter experts and civic organizations to develop a vision of equitable food access, coupled with strategies for physical developments, programmatic partnerships, and investment to achieve that vision. The neighborhood is using a collaborative approach to determine which food projects will be supported, launched, or expanded. Emphasis is being placed on ensuring all projects improve food access and economic mobility for the area, are community-led, and help build racial equity.

Visit [www.equitablefoodaccess.org/](http://www.equitablefoodaccess.org/) for more information.



## Diabetes Impact Project-Indianapolis Neighborhoods (DIP-IN)

This project is working to help people improve their health. As a Community Health Worker (CHW) in your area, I would love to assist you in achieving better health.

### What can a Neighborhood DIP-IN Community Health Worker (CHW) help you with?

- Provide diabetes and general health information and education
- Connect you to health and social resources
- Provide social support
- Advocate for your health
- Serve as a link to the overall community
- ...And more!

I'd love to connect with you. As a CHW for the Northeast area, I am here to be a resource for residents. Feel free to reach out to me via phone or email:

#### Summer Burks

Phone #: 317-749-2782

Email: [summer.burks@anuimpact.org](mailto:summer.burks@anuimpact.org)



## Follow us on Instagram!

Get regular updates and see the progress of the **38th and Sheridan Project** at [www.instagram.com/38thandsheridan](http://www.instagram.com/38thandsheridan)

## We want to hear from you!

We want to hear your feedback about this project! Please send your questions, concerns, or thoughts to [community@cookmedical.com](mailto:community@cookmedical.com).



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## Getting into the spirit



### How are we doing?

Since the start of the Indy Fresh Market construction project, 42% of the project workforce has been diverse. This information was collected by Akilah Darden, president of The Darden Group LLC.

# Who's hiring?

A closer look at the companies hiring construction and manufacturing employees for the 38th and Sheridan Project.

The general contractor, **Harmon Construction**, and all of the subcontractors are currently hiring diverse talent for construction jobs for the **38th and Sheridan Project**. **Goodwill Commercial Services** is also hiring **manufacturing employees** to work in their newly-completed facility. Residents from 38th and Sheridan area are strongly encouraged to apply!

If you see a job you are interested in, you can reach out directly to that company, visit [www.38thandSheridan.com](http://www.38thandSheridan.com), or you can contact **Akilah Darden** from **The Darden Group LLC** at [jobs@38thandSheridan.com](mailto:jobs@38thandSheridan.com) or 317.385.8954.

## Construction jobs and training available

	 <p>Harmon Construction is a general contractor based in North Vernon, IN. Harmon Construction was established in 1955. Harmon Construction specializes in healthcare, restaurants, education, gaming, and more.</p>	 <p>Harmon Steel is a steel erection company based in Indianapolis, IN. Harmon Steel has been serving Indiana and beyond for over 30 years. Harmon Steel specializes in steel erection.</p>
	<p><b>Harmon Construction - Hiring</b> also hiring for Taylor Brothers and Harmon Steel</p> <p>Steel erectors, carpenters Apprenticeship Program Available <a href="mailto:Hailee.Harmon@harmongroup.com">Hailee.Harmon@harmongroup.com</a></p>	 <p>Taylor Bros. Construction is a general contractor based out of Columbus, IN. Established in 1933, We work in over half of the states in the USA. Taylor Bros. specializes in carpentry, fixture work, retail, and more.</p>

**Fox Contracting**  
Hiring Equipment Operators & Laborers  
[bkochersperger@foxcontractors.com](mailto:bkochersperger@foxcontractors.com)  
317.281.8963

**Multicraft Fire Protection**  
Hiring  
Union 669–Sprinkler Fitter  
Apprenticeship Program Available  
[bfunk@multicraftdec.com](mailto:bfunk@multicraftdec.com)  
812.336.5005

**ATEC Electrical**  
Jim Bird  
765.482.8926  
[j.bird@atec-electric.com](mailto:j.bird@atec-electric.com)

**Apogee Construction**  
Local 19 Roofers & Waterproofers  
Apprenticeship Program Available  
[www.indyroofers.com](http://www.indyroofers.com)  
317.484.8990



### Sexson Mechanical

Plumbers, Steamfitters, & HVACR Service Technician  
Apprenticeship Program—Local 440 (ualocal440.org)

Corey Stein  
cstein@sexsonmechanical.com  
317.989.5486

### Ironworkers Local 22

Hiring Ironworks Apprenticeship Program Union  
Membership & Pension Program

(Will work onsite with HG Metals and Harmon Steel  
fabricating/erecting on the project)

Ironworkers22.com  
5600 Dividend Road,  
Indianapolis

### Price Construction Group, LLC

**Now hiring!**

<https://priceconstructiongroup.com/>  
info@priceconstructiongroup.com  
317.723.3201

### Sheet Metal Workers

S.M.A.R.T. Local 20—Apprenticeship Program

(S.M.A.R.T.=Sheet Metal Air Rail Transportation)

**Metal & Copper Roofs,  
Metal Siding, Gutters**

2828 E. 45th Street, Indianapolis  
317.549.6013

### Indiana Laborers' Training Institute

Local 120—Laborers' Union  
Apprenticeship Program

IndyRoofers.com  
317.484.8990

### Robert Haines

Sealed concrete Floors, Joint Sealants

Jim Pridgen  
317.547.5271  
jim@roberthainesco.com

### Mr. Green Jeans

Landscaping

William Petty

317.289.6801

william223petty@msn.com

### AGM-Architecture, Glass & Metal

Jeff Hutson

317.472.7449

jhutson@agmcompany.com

### Taylor Brothers

Carpentry, doors/frames/hardware

Josh Imlay

(812) 379-9547

josh.imlay@tbcci.com

### Difiniti Group

Drywall installation, acoustical ceiling panels

Guadaloupe Baldazo

(317) 496-0635

gb@difinitigroup.com

## Community Development



**United Northeast Community  
Development Corporation**

Localized Support Programming

[www.anuimpact.org](http://www.anuimpact.org)

@anuimpactindy

ashley.gurvitz@anuimpact.org

317.546.6240



## Job Opportunities

# Apply to work in construction

We're proud to announce that **Cook Medical, Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana, The Indianapolis Foundation, IMPACT Central Indiana, and the United Northeast Community Development Corporation** have partnered on a unique project to bring opportunity back to an underserved Northeast Indy community. The 38th and Sheridan Project includes a medical device manufacturing facility and a full-service grocery store call the **Indy Fresh Market**.

The Indy Fresh Market is estimated to be complete in the summer of 2023, and we're looking for people to join our contractor teams!

### We have job opportunities and training available in the following areas:

- Earthwork, Site Utilites
- Storefronts
- Roof and Metal Siding
- Electrical
- Stud, Drywall, Insulation, Acoustical Ceiling
- Structural Steel
- Plumbing and HVAC
- Fire Protection - Sprinkler System
- Rough Carpentry, Door and Hardware
- Concrete Foundations and Slab on Grade
- Sealed Concrete Floors, Joint Sealants
- Landscaping

### How to Apply

1.) To apply for construction jobs, visit [38thandSheridan.com](http://38thandSheridan.com).

2.) Select the "**Construction Job Seekers**" button at the bottom of the page and complete the simple online form.

3.) You will be connected to a wide range of local sub-contractors, which are listed on the next page.

Unsure of which construction trade fits your interest? Please email Akilah Darden with The Darden Group, LLC at [akilah@dardengroupllc.com](mailto:akilah@dardengroupllc.com) or [PM@dardengroupllc.com](mailto:PM@dardengroupllc.com), and her team can provide assistance.

Employees have access to comprehensive benefits programs and options for pension with the union contractors.

