



The Torch

The official newsletter for Indiana state employees

IOT employee Kathy Pyle achieves elite 'Ironman' status

By Bill McCleery

A decade ago, Kathy Pyle never dreamed of swimming 2.4 miles, biking 112 miles and running 26.2 miles – all in the same day!

But after making drastic lifestyle changes and losing 140 pounds, Pyle accomplished exactly that on Oct. 9, 2016. She achieved her feat in Louisville, finishing the three triathlon stages within a 16-hour period to join the elite ranks of those awarded the "Ironman" designation.

"It took a lot of hard work," said Pyle, 52, a senior LAN administrator based out of Tell City and part of IOT's Southern Indiana desktop support group. "But nothing is impossible."

Her quest began in 2007, she said, as a simple vow to lose weight and become healthier. She changed her eating habits and moderately increased her activity levels, she said, and lost 50 pounds over the course of several months.

Only after that initial weight loss, Pyle said, did she become comfortable working out in any aggressive or organized fashion.

"What got me into fitness is bike riding," she said. "I knew it would be something I would enjoy doing. I decided I wanted a road bike so I made the purchase in 2008 and started riding. I rode everywhere and found that this was my true love. I pushed myself to ride all the hills in Perry County, where we live. It was such an accomplishment to get to the top of a hill after at first trying to talk myself out of climbing it." The "added bonus," she said, came "when there was a super-fast downhill on the other side."

When winter came in late 2008, Pyle joined a spinning class to stay in biking shape until spring. (Today, she is a certified spinning instructor and "Biggest Loser" coach for her local gym.) Her motivation in taking those early steps started her on a journey that continues to this day.

As Pyle continued losing weight, increasing her stamina and improving her fitness level, she kept stepping up to new challenges. A friend encouraged her to try running a half-marathon, so she began training. Before long, she had run

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The Torch is published monthly by the State Personnel Department and is available online at www.in.gov/spd

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On My Way Pre-K applications for 2017/2018 school year are now available for families in five pilot counties

State to partner again with Indy Preschool Scholarship Program in Marion County

Indiana's Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL) is now accepting applications from families in the five pilot counties (Allen, Jackson, Lake, Marion and Vanderburgh) who may be eligible for grants for their children to receive high-quality, prekindergarten education through the On My Way Pre-K program for the 2017/2018 school year.

Families residing in **Allen, Jackson, Lake and Vanderburgh Counties** must meet the following eligibility criteria to apply:

- The family must have an income [below 127 percent of the federal poverty level](#).
- The child must be 4 years old by Aug. 1, 2017, and starting kindergarten in July/Aug. 2017.

In **Marion County**, the same criteria apply as those listed above. However, the city of Indianapolis is providing additional funding in Marion County through its Indy Preschool Scholarship Program ([Indy PSP](#)). And while families can apply to Indy PSP and On My Way Pre-K using a single application, the Indy PSP funding adds eligibility in Marion County for children who are three or four years old and are from families living at or below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

It is important to note that first priority is given to children in Marion County from families living at or below 127 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for both On My Way Pre-K and Indy PSP.

Once a child has received a grant,

families in all five counties choose from any of the eligible, enrolled On My Way Pre-K programs.

OECOSL has enrolled 262 On My Way Pre-K providers in the five pilot counties, and the application process for new providers is ongoing. In order to qualify, the program must be top-ranked at level three or level four on Paths to QUALITY or be accredited by an approved national or regional accrediting body ([Click here for details on provider eligibility](#)).

Applications for limited spots are accepted until March 31, 2017. If more families qualify than there are grants available, awards are made through a randomized lottery process.

Approved pre-K programs may be located in a public or private school, licensed child care center, licensed home or registered ministry as long as that program meets the quality requirements and is registered as an On My Way Pre-K Provider. Families may choose from a program that is full-day or part-day, as well as from programs that end with the school year or continue through the summer. A list of approved pre-K providers can be found [here](#). **Families who need help finding an approved pre-K program can also call 1-800-299-1627 for assistance from an early learning referral specialist.**

Click the appropriate county to apply: [Allen County](#), [Jackson County](#), [Lake County](#), [Marion County](#), [Vanderburgh County](#).

More than 2,400 children who begin kindergarten in July or Aug.

of 2017 are currently participating in the second full year of On My Way Pre-K, which began in Allen, Jackson, Lake, Marion and Vanderburgh counties in July/Aug. of 2016. More than 2,700 children have participated in previous cohorts of the pilot program, from Jan. 2015 through Aug. 2016.

[On My Way Pre-K](#) is the name of Indiana's first state-funded prekindergarten program, which was approved as a five-county pilot by the Indiana General Assembly in 2014.

The Indy Preschool Scholarship Program (Indy PSP) is the city of Indianapolis's first ever preschool program that provides free scholarships for children from low-income families to attend quality preschools. Indy PSP is partnering with On My Way Pre-K to expand access to preschool for families in Marion County. The United Way of Central Indiana provides program administration support by managing the application, outreach, and evaluation processes. Visit www.indypsp.org for more information.

The Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning is a division of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA).

Families seeking assistance may call 1-800-299-1627.



Kathy Pyle achieves elite 'Ironman' status (continued from page 1)

not only half-marathons but a full marathon. One thing led to another – such as adding swimming to her workouts so she could tackle a triathlon.

She credits the steadfast support of her husband, John Pyle, as one ingredient that has helped spur her achievements. He happens also to be a state employee – working as a sergeant at the Branchville Correctional Facility. The Pyles have two adult children.

Besides completing the Louisville Ironman event in October, Kathy Pyle also served as a Bicentennial Torchbearer earlier this year in the Bicentennial Torch Relay. For her leg of the route through Perry County, she carried the ceremonial torch while riding a bike.

Pyle offers this advice to others interested in losing weight or improving fitness levels: “Set a goal. And sometimes you have to break it into small chunks. Set small goals and work your way to bigger goals.” And don’t ever stop. “It’s a lifetime commitment,” she said. “I can’t just say I am done.”



Kathy Pyle carries the Torch during the Bicentennial Torch Relay

Follow Kathy's lead: Participate in the 500 Festival events

**STATE OF INDIANA EMPLOYEES GET
DISCOUNTED RATES!**

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**FINISH LINE
500 FESTIVAL 5K: \$30**

 

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Click on the picture to access the discounted rate. Remember, this rate is exclusive to State of Indiana employees.

A letter from the director: Wellness CDHP qualification

Fellow State Employees,

I am pleased to report that thousands of state employees and their families actively engaged in the Humana Vitality Wellness program during 2016. Participants enjoyed access to personal health assessments and biometric screenings, educational resources to enhance well-being, and incentives to reward healthy lifestyle practices. Around 29 percent of employees qualified for and enrolled in the Wellness Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP), which features lower premiums and higher HSA contributions. Many of you have anxiously been waiting for qualification requirements for the 2018 Upgrade Your Health, Upgrade Your Plan Wellness initiative. In fact, many employees have already logged into Go365, Humana's updated wellness portal, and are well on their way to achieving their goals.

If you are currently enrolled in state medical benefits, you can qualify for the 2018 Wellness CDHP by attaining an earned status of Silver in Go365 by **August 31, 2017**.

Go365 is an incentive-based wellness portal that empowers you to invest in your health. The quickest path to Silver Status within the program includes completing the:

- 1. Health Assessment**, a confidential assessment that helps you to identify health risks, as well as provides the opportunity to create a plan to address potential risks.
- 2. Biometric Screening** with your [primary care physician](#) or attending one of many free screening events happening around the state in coming months. These numbers are kept confidential from your employer. To guarantee points are received for a biometric screening, you must: 1. Receive your screening at a state-sponsored [onsite screening](#); or 2. Complete your screening at Go365 [partner clinic](#) before June 30, 2017.
- 3. Action Items** recommended within Go365 to take charge of your health. These items (customized for each participant) have different point totals and enough points must be earned to attain Silver Status (or higher).

Those who attain Silver Status by the deadline have the option of selecting the Wellness CDHP this fall during Open Enrollment.

Please take a few minutes to learn more about upgrading your health by visiting www.investinyourhealthindiana.com/Upgrade. There you can find additional qualification information, FAQ's and user guides for Go365. Be sure to take the time to understand the difference in point earning opportunities, especially regarding adult dependent children, within the updated Go365 portal.

The State of Indiana is committed to providing employees with the resources they need to take control of their health and well-being. I look forward to participating alongside you on the path to Silver Status.



In good health,

Brandye L. Hendrickson, Director
Indiana State Personnel Department



Complete a biometric screening and earn Go365 points!

6,316 Points



[Biometric screenings](#) are similar to yearly wellness exams – they collect measurements such as height, weight, waist circumference, cholesterol, fasting blood glucose, and more.

Completing your biometric screening can earn you up to 4,000 points in Go365 – a substantial number of points toward achieving Silver Status to qualify for the 2018 Wellness Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP).

PLEASE NOTE: the deadline for submitting biometric screening results is June 30, 2017 in order to guarantee points count toward qualification for the 2018 Wellness CDHP. We recommended [submitting your results](#) as early as possible to ensure points are processed in a timely fashion.

More importantly, biometric screenings, along with the Health Assessment, are used to calculate your Go365 age, which determines if you are living older or younger than

your actual age based on a variety of factors. This information offers insight into your current lifestyle habits and is helpful in reaching your health and wellness goals.

How to Sign Up for a Biometric Screening

Biometric screenings are free and can be completed at a state-sponsored clinic, a partner clinic around the state or at your primary care physician's office. Information about completing a biometric screening at a partner clinic can be found [here](#). Information about completing a biometric screening at your primary care physician's office can be found [here](#).

State-sponsored biometric screenings have already been scheduled over the next several months both at the Indiana Government Center in Indianapolis and around the state (with more dates and locations to come!). While these screenings are scheduled at state facilities, the

results cannot be accessed by the state; instead, the results are sent straight to Go365 to calculate your Go365 age and add points to your profile.

We encourage you to regularly check the schedule [here](#) to see when these free biometric screenings are coming to your area. Click on the link to the right of any date and location to sign up for a biometric screening.

Open vs. Closed Sites

There are two types of biometric screening locations – open and closed. Open sites are those with biometric screenings that accept all employees, spouses, and dependents* over the age of 18. Closed sites only accept employees who work at that specific location. If you have further questions, contact your Human Resources department for information on how to set up an appointment.

*Adult dependent children do not receive points in Go365 for completion of Health Assessment or Biometric Screening.



Elements Financial seminars are filling

This February, Elements Financial covers the most important items you need to know when it comes to your credit in their **“Understand Your Credit”** Lunch and Learn.

This is a crash course in controlling your own financial destiny. By understanding the components of a credit report and how a credit score is calculated, you can better understand the prices you pay for loans and use revolving credit more wisely.

This session is offered in-person three times during the month:

- [Feb. 8 from noon to 1 p.m.](#)
- [Feb. 22 from noon to 1 p.m.](#)
- [Feb. 22 from 1:15 p.m. to 2 p.m.](#)

Remember, if you cannot attend in-person, Elements Financial now offers Lunch and Learn sessions online. Visit the [Elements Financial Education Center](#) to learn more about online sessions. Earn 35 Go365 points per month by attending Elements Financial seminars in person or online.



Take a sneak peek into March’s topic: “There’s a first time for everything, Including a home.”

Home ownership is one of the biggest decisions and purchases most of us ever make. In this seminar, Elements Financial provides need-to-know information about the home buying process and helps you make an informed decision on finding the best way to make the purchase.

Though this seminar is specifically designed with the first-time home buyer in mind, it also offers great information for existing homeowners.

Before you upsize, downsize, refinance or purchase, be sure you attend this seminar to establish a knowledge base of the ins and outs of this exciting process.



Artwork by Jerry Williams

A promotional banner for Geofest, the 15th Annual Indiana State Museum Fossil, Gem and Mineral Show. The banner features a variety of colorful fossils and gemstones scattered across the top. The "geofest" logo is prominently displayed in the center, with "FOSSILS :: GEMS :: MINERALS" underneath. To the right, the event details are listed: "The 15th Annual Indiana State Museum Fossil, Gem and Mineral Show FEB. 17, 18 AND 19, 2017". The Indiana State Museum logo and website URL "indianamuseum.org" are in the bottom right corner.

geofest
FOSSILS :: GEMS :: MINERALS

The 15th Annual Indiana State Museum
Fossil, Gem and Mineral Show
FEB. 17, 18 AND 19, 2017

indianamuseum.org **INDIANA STATE MUSEUM AND HISTORIC SITES**

Understand your risk and know the signs of heart disease

Every 42 seconds someone in the United States has a heart attack, and every minute someone dies from heart disease-related events.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Indiana and across the nation. According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), 5.3 percent of Indiana adults reported having a heart attack in 2015.

Many risk factors can lead to heart disease and stroke, and understanding these can help you make small changes to reduce your risk. Healthy lifestyle changes and early detection may help prevent heart disease.

What are my risks?

A number of risk factors can lead to heart disease and stroke.

- Family history of heart disease or high blood pressure
- Being overweight
- High cholesterol
- Having a sedentary lifestyle
- Excessive alcohol use
- Poor diet
- Smoking
- Age (55 or older for women)
- Having diabetes or prediabetes

Simple steps to a heart healthy you!

In 2015, 39.1 percent of Indiana adults reported high cholesterol, and 33.5 percent reported high blood pressure in 2013, according to the BRFSS. Modifying your lifestyle through these simple steps can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke:

- See your doctor once per year for check-ups, or more often if you have a chronic disease, like diabetes.
- Maintain a healthy blood pressure and cholesterol level. If you have

high blood pressure or cholesterol, ask your doctor about ways to manage it, including the DASH diet.

- At mealtime, make half your plate fruits and veggies. Visit choosemyplate.gov to find recipe ideas, online tools and resources to help eat healthier and move more.
- Take a walk after lunch and dinner, just 15 minutes makes a difference. You can join or create a walking group of coworkers or friends.
- Don't smoke or chew tobacco. If you do, talk to your doctor about the benefits of quitting.
- Reduce your alcohol intake.
- Sleep at least eight hours per night.
- Reduce stress.
- If you have prediabetes, consider joining a Diabetes Prevention Program in your area.
- Check out the CDC's Million Hearts Campaign for tools to help you talk to your doctor about heart health.

Know the signs

Knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack could save your life. Experts advise never to wait more than five minutes to dial 9-1-1 if you or someone else is experiencing the signs of a heart attack.

The first responders or EMTs and the Emergency Department nurses need to know which symptom was experienced first and how long ago symptoms started. This information helps them decide the best treatment option available at the time.

According to the American Heart Association, Indiana residents should seek immediate medical help if they experience the following symptoms:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your

chest - especially if it lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.

- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort.
- Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or light-headedness.
- The most common symptom is chest pain or discomfort. Women are sometimes more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Signs of Stroke

Stroke is a leading cause of death in the US and Indiana. In addition, it's among the leading causes of long-term disability. Every second counts when someone is having a stroke. Seek immediate medical attention if you, or a loved one, has any signs of a stroke.

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg – especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing or blurred vision in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Remember that if someone is having a stroke you need to act FAST! Face, Arm, Speech, Time to call 911.

Thank you to the Indiana State Department of Health for this submission.



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State of Indiana

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