

Take Five

August 30, 2021

The News in Academic Affairs



Are you ready for a challenge? Here goes: how many students can you greet this week? OK, it sounds a little corny, but research shows that a [sense of belonging](#) is an important factor in determining whether a student will persist in a college education, even more important than scores on standardized tests and other factors. In fact, Stanford neurologist Robert Sapolsky has observed that [feeling ostracized is particularly painful for adolescents](#), whose frontal cortices generally are not as fully developed as those of adults, leaving their limbic regions free to go wild. Put these young people in an unfamiliar environment where they may not yet know anyone, and it's no wonder that some decide college isn't for them. Of course, student success entails more than greetings; indeed, IU Kokomo deploys multiple strategies, from onboarding strategies to personalized outreach. Still, I think sending the message that our campus is a friendly, supportive environment can help build a sense of belonging. Besides, it's easy and uplifting to the person doing the welcoming. Try it and notice the reactions you get. ● "Now Doing," a feature I introduced last year, is back. It will appear in *Take Five* from time to time and provide updates on our Strategic Doing work.

Student Success Corner

It's been an exciting first week! Engaging students with picnics and carnivals is fun—and helps students to see IUK as place to stick around for the long haul. This semester, I'm appreciating the power of using my professional networks to motivate students. For example, I'm recording short Zoom conversations with local leaders I know and sharing those inspiring conversations with our A101 students via links. If you know folks with a powerful message, I encourage you to bring those voices to your students.
Christina Downey (downeyca@iuk.edu)



Students in the KEY Summer Institute (KSI) got the opportunity to experience Kokomo before classes officially started. Those who participated visited various locations around the city of Kokomo and met other students and staff from IU Kokomo. The trips took place on August 11, 12, and 13.

Upcoming Events

- 8/31: [Kaltura: Quizzes](#) (9 a.m., Zoom)
 - 9/2: [Activities Fair](#) (2—4 p.m., Alumni Hall)
 - 9/15: [Benjamin Franklin: A Force for the Constitution \(and More\)](#) (6:30 p.m., Zoom)
 - 9/20: [Cougar Career Readiness Workshop: Communication](#) (12:30—1:30 p.m., online)
- Some events may require registration. Click on links for details.

NOW DOING

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What if IU Kokomo became an enduring part of alumni's lives long after graduation, a place where they could both grow and contribute? What would make this vision a reality?

The IUAA Kokomo Region Board of Directors is working with Ben Liechty and Cathy Valcke to develop a proposal for a lifelong-learning program for alumni in our region.

Starring Ben Liechty as the Table Guide, Martha Warner as the Knowledge Keeper, and Cathy Valcke, Sharmaine Ellison, Melinda Stanley, Genie LaLonde, Linda Lotzgeselle, Bob Hayes, Cameron Huffman, and Brianne Boles as the fellow doers.