

A.1 Historical Background

Date

1/25

The University was established in 1965 in response to a need for public higher education in southwestern Indiana. From its earliest stage of planning in the early 1960s, community leaders have supported the University by providing a solid base for its present success and future growth. Local leaders worked with members of the Indiana General Assembly and Governor Roger D. Branigin to establish a public higher education campus.

The University of Southern Indiana (USI) began as a regional campus of Indiana State University, opening on September 15, 1965, in the old Centennial School Building, and offering classes to 412 students. In 1967 Southern Indiana Higher Education, Inc. (SIHE) raised nearly \$1 million to acquire the land where the campus now sits. Groundbreaking for the campus was held June 22, 1968, and the University moved to its present site four miles west of the city limits of Evansville in September 1969, graduated its first class of baccalaureate degree students in 1971, and achieved initial North Central Association accreditation in 1974.

In 1984 the Indiana Commission for Higher Education recommended, and the Indiana General Assembly created, a Board of Incorporators appointed by Governor Robert D. Orr. On April 16, 1985, legislation was signed which made USI a separate state university. To give recognition to its role and mission, Orr appointed a group of leaders to serve as members of the University's new Board of Trustees. In 1987, transfer of accreditation, including at the master's degree level, was approved through the North Central Association. On June 30, 2008, SIHE transferred ownership of land and remaining assets to the USI Foundation.

USI Today

USI enrolls nearly 9,500 undergraduate, dual credit and graduate students in more than 130 areas of study. A public higher education institution located on a beautiful 1,400-acre campus in Evansville, Indiana, USI offers programs through the College of Liberal Arts, Romain College of Business, Kinney College of Nursing and Health Professions, Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education and School of Graduate Studies.

USI is a Carnegie Foundation Community Engaged University and offers continuing education and special programs to more than 15,000 participants annually through Outreach and Engagement. The University offers study-abroad opportunities in many countries and is host to international students from around the globe.

Outreach projects include the administration of Historic New Harmony, Historic Southern Indiana, New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art, Center for Communal Studies, Epi-Hab Center for Disability Studies, and the Southern Indiana Japanese School among others.

A competitive member of NCAA Division I and the Ohio Valley Conference, USI offers 19 varsity intercollegiate men's and women's sports.

On July 20, 2024, Stephen Bridges became Interim President coinciding with the departure of Ronald S. Rochon, President, for another position. A national search for the University's fifth president is underway and expected to be concluded summer 2025. The University continues a tradition of affordable excellence through innovation and engagement and positions USI as a top choice for high-caliber college students across the state, nationally and internationally.

Mission and Vision

The USI vision is a simple but powerful one: USI will be a recognized leader in higher education boldly shaping the future and transforming the lives of our students through exceptional learning and intentional innovation. Its mission statement is: USI is an engaged learning community committed to exceptional education. We exist to provide an

educated citizenry that can engage in a civil manner within a community with divergent ideas and cultural differences. We prepare our students to lead and make positive contributions to our state, their communities, and to be lifetime learners in a diverse and global society.