



# Character Council of Indiana

*Building Cities of Character One Individual at a Time*

May 2000 Newsletter

## Elkhart Mayor Champions City Effort

On January 1, 2000, David Miller began his first term as the Mayor of Elkhart. During his campaign, Mayor Miller emphasized the value of character and promised to provide ways that Elkhart could emphasize character citywide. Following his election, the Mayor received an e-mail from a voter reminding him of this commitment and asking what steps he was taking to fulfill it.

Early in 1999 Mayor Miller became familiar with the Character First training material through a contact with Larry Rhoads, chairman of CCI's Statewide committee. Mr. Rhoads met with Mayor Miller in February and helped him map out a strategy for building character in Elkhart. This included an initial community meeting to present the concept of a Character City, passing a resolution through



*On April 3, 2000, Elkhart became the second city in Indiana to pass a resolution officially declaring their city a City of Character.*

the Elkhart City Council officially declaring Elkhart a City of Character, the formation of a local steering committee, and a Character Implementation Training for city employees and local business leaders. All of these have taken place in the last month and a half.

A successful City of Character needs a champion, a community leader who will lead the local steering committee and motivate each city sector to find ways that character can be emphasized, required, and recognized. Following the April Cities of Character conference, Mayor Miller expressed his desire to be that champion for the City of Character initiative in Elkhart.

We applaud Mayor Miller for his commitment and dedication, and we are looking forward to observing the results of his enthusiasm.

## Indy Mayor, Council Attend Reception

Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson along with members of his staff recently attended a reception hosted by the Character Council. Members of the Marion County City/County Council also attended. The Indianapolis Training Center, a local community volunteer organization, provided the meal.

CCI President Steve Becker expressed gratefulness to the Council for their unanimous vote declaring Indianapolis a City of Character. He also outlined key concepts that must be applied in building a City of Character.

Mayor Peterson expressed his interest in working with CCI to strengthen the city.



*City/County Council members, Mayor Bart Peterson and staff and CCI representatives discuss Character City efforts*

## Upcoming events

*May 16*

6:30 AM ~ 8:00 AM  
Monthly Business Leaders  
Breakfast  
*Indianapolis Training Center*

8:00 AM ~ 9:30 AM  
CCI State Council Meeting  
*Indianapolis Training Center*

*May 24*

8:00 AM ~ 10:00 AM  
Local Steering Committee  
*Elkhart, IN*

*May 30*

8:30 AM ~ 4:30 PM  
Character First Training  
*Indianapolis, IN*

## In this edition

Elkhart Champion

Indy Mayor, Council

CCI Running Start

Int'l Conference

# MAY character focus

## DISCRETION

vs. Simplemindedness

*"Recognizing and avoiding words, attitudes and actions that could bring undesirable consequences."*

### From the President



*Steve Becker is a retired Indianapolis businessman, formerly a partner in Airtron, Inc. Aside from serving as CCI president, Steve is a consultant with Applied Principles, a firm dedicated to management training focused on character development.*

Indianapolis took the initiative last November to lead the state by becoming the first character city. Since then CCI has received significant financial sup-

port from the community. Most significant is Comcast Cable's monthly contribution of close to 5,000 30-second public service announcements across their 38 stations, a value of over \$220,000. We have also received tentative commitment for free billboards in the Indianapolis area. Focusing on the monthly character quality is an excellent way to encourage positive decisions in individuals, ultimately making Indiana a better place to live.

Questions? Comments? Please feel free to contact us.

### Character Council

of Indiana

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### Character Council Progress

On February 25, 2000, the Character Council of Indiana (CCI) was officially incorporated. CCI began in June of 1999 with a round table discussion and a half dozen community leaders brought together at the invitation of Dr. Roy Blackwood. Working in conjunction with the Chicago based International Association of Character Cities (IACC), the goal of CCI is to organize character efforts throughout Indiana. The following are highlights from the last 10 months.

On September 28, 1999, CCI hosted a City of Character informational meeting at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. Local and national speakers emphasized the need for a concentrated character effort in our communities. Over 120 people attended this meeting, many of whom offered their support. On November 17th, members of CCI testified before the Marion County City/County Council in reference to



an official resolution declaring Indianapolis a City of Character, a resolution which was passed unanimously on November 29, 1999. With this resolution, the Council pledged their "commitment to character and to doing all in our power to become known as a City of Character..."

On April 3, 2000, the City Council of Elkhart also passed a Character City resolution. This followed a March 15th meeting of community leaders who gathered at the invitation of Elkhart Mayor David Miller. On April 25th, CCI hosted a Character Implementation Training in Elkhart which was attended by city employees and local business leaders.

Most recently, a meeting was held on April 27th for members of the faith community. It was attended by over 130 pastors from around Indiana, many of whom expressed enthusiasm about future involvement with CCI.

### International Character Conference

Government leaders representing every continent except Antarctica recently gathered in Indianapolis for the 5th Annual Building Cities of Character Conference. Hosted by IACC, the conference provided a forum for the discussion of best demonstrated practices for building Cities of Character. Local and national leaders gave practical training on promoting character in each sector of the community.

Over its five year history, the conference has been host to over 40 states and 15 nations.



*Attendees of the Building Cities of Character Conference heard from law enforcement officers, educators, city and state officials, members of the faith community, and many others.*