

The first steps are the hardest. Indiana just made it easier

[Hollie Nicholson](#), Founder, the STRONG Method

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Almost every morning, I log onto Zoom for work at 5:45 a.m. It's my dream job, one that I started as a pandemic venture in a garage and have scaled into a full-time business. With

more than a decade of experience as a fitness coach, when COVID hit, I was looking for a way to stay active and connected with my clients. I never imagined those Zoom sessions that started as simple Facebook posts, would become the STRONG Method, my virtual strength training program for busy women. I also never expected that entrepreneurship would become such a fulfilling and defining path.

Like many small business owners, I didn't have a roadmap, just a drive to keep trying. As my business grew from 30 women to 350 paying subscribers worldwide and thousands of women who've joined for fitness challenges, I figured it out step by step. I bootstrapped the whole thing and took messy action to build something of my own.

In those early days, I wasn't thinking about growth projections or available state resources. I was trying to make things work with what I had and pouring myself into each fitness challenge and coaching the ladies who joined. As I continue to grow and scale this Indiana-based business into a worldwide fitness solution for women, I'm eager to explore what support and tools the state offers to entrepreneurs. I know I'm not the only one who could benefit from knowing where to start.

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That's why I'm excited about Indiana's new Office of Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Now, as entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses, they'll have a one-stop-shop for information and assistance provided by the state. This could save time and energy for countless Hoosiers who are chasing their ideas with limited resources.

It's encouraging to see this office led by someone who has firsthand experience building a business. As an entrepreneur himself, Brian Schutt brings real-world perspective that can make a meaningful difference. His background positions him to be a strong advocate for business owners and ensures the office stays attuned to the challenges entrepreneurs face, whether that's navigating permits, securing funding or making the right connections.

The leadership of the office also seems to be thinking long-term with plans to support educators and students in developing entrepreneurial skills and mindsets. As a former teacher, I know the impact of introducing career options to students early in life. If I had known that I could build a

business coaching women to build strength and long-term health, I might have found this path sooner. That kind of exposure opens doors and allows kids to dream about self-made careers they may never have considered otherwise.

Starting something new is always challenging. But like I encourage my clients at 5:45 a.m. on Zoom, they get to choose to show up for themselves, their goals and their future selves. Total body strength starts with a strong mindset. Sometimes people just need that coach to encourage them and offer straightforward strategies to accomplish their goals. That's what this new office can be for Indiana entrepreneurs. A starting point and support system for when they are ready to show up for their idea and start building something they believe in.