

Jim McKinney

Jim McKinney, originally from Piqua, Ohio, has been a resident of Marion for 53 years. After finishing his college education, and meeting his future wife at Manchester College, he located to Marion in search of a well-paying teaching job. The moment he was accepted into the Marion Community School system, he made a commitment to serve the Marion community and not just pass through. Since 1965, he has served in multiple leadership positions within Marion Community Schools, and has even led a large consortium representing multiple high schools to improve academics. Jim also served on the collegiate level as an adjunct professor for Indiana Wesleyan University.

When Jim officially retired from the field of education, his community servant leadership lives on, stemming from his passion for aviation. Jim has been volunteering as president of the Marion Municipal Airport Board for the past 35 years. He has devoted his days in building the airport from what was a cornfield into the best airport in Indiana. Through grant-writing and building relationships, he has achieved over \$20 million for the airport's growth and sustainability. He has even been championing for vocational programming in aviation through Marion Community Schools, and as a result, the first class in aviation is already being taught.

When Jim was asked why it's important to be a champion for your community, he said, "You can't criticize unless you are actively involved. You need to, first, have the will to say that you want to make a difference. I spread the good news of Marion whenever I get a chance. I see beauty and potential in Marion, and I want to be a part of those who are doing great things."