

Sue Ellspermann Bio

Sue Ellspermann became Ivy Tech Community College's ninth president on July 1. She now leads the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system serving over 170,000 students a year. Dr. Ellspermann has more than 30 years of experience in higher education, economic and workforce development, and public service.

She most recently served as Indiana's 50th Lieutenant Governor from 2013 until March of this year. As part of that role she served as President of the Senate and Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, as well as overseeing six agencies. As the vice chair of the Indiana Career Council she led efforts to align Indiana's education and workforce development system to meet the needs of employers. Her public service began in 2010 when she was elected as the State Representative for District 74.

Ellspermann formerly served as the founding Director of the Center of Applied Research and Economic Development at the University of Southern Indiana and also owned and operated Ellspermann and Associates, Inc, an independent consulting firm licensed in the training and facilitation of Simplex Creative Problem Solving.

Early in her career she spent time with Frito-Lay and Michelin Tire Corporation. Ellspermann holds a Ph.D. and M.S. from the University of Louisville in Industrial Engineering and a B.S. from Purdue University also in Industrial Engineering.

She is married to James Mehling, a recently retired high school principal. She has a blended family of four daughters, three sons-in-law, two grandsons and two granddaughters.

In 2010 Ellspermann was elected as the State Representative for District 74 (portion of Dubois, Spencer, Perry and Warrick counties). While in office she served as the Vice-Chair of the Employment, Labor and Pensions Committee, as well as served on the Small Business, Commerce and Economic Development Committee and the Elections and Reapportionment Committee. She was nominated for and participated in the 2011 Emerging Leaders Program at the University of Virginia focused on developing the next generation of leaders in state legislators. She served one term during the 2011-12 legislative session before running for Lieutenant Governor in 2012.

The 20 years prior to joining the University of Southern Indiana, she owned and operated Ellspermann and Associates, Inc., d/b/a Basadur Applied Creativity, an independent consulting firm licensed in the training and facilitation of Simplex Creative Problem Solving. Her clients included Kimball International, Microsoft, Mead Johnson and numerous small businesses and non-profit organizations. She was the first associate of Dr. Min Basadur, founder of Simplex Creative Problem Solving, and achieved the highest level as Master Simplex Consultant.

Early in her career she spent time with Frito-Lay in Dallas, Texas. During her tenure at Frito-Lay, Ellspermann served as a production and shipping supervisor and plant industrial engineer followed by a promotion as a corporate industrial engineer where she was responsible for corporate productivity initiatives. She also spent time at Michelin Tire Corporation in Greenville, S.C., where she completed an extensive industrial engineering program including pace rating, plant layout, work design and material handling.

Ellspermann holds a Ph.D. and M.S. from the University of Louisville in Industrial Engineering. She conducted quantitative research on problem formulation within unstructured problem solving with dissertation titled, "The Impact of Creative Thinking Training and Problem Structuring Heuristics on the Formulation of Ill-Structured Problems." Her dissertation was recognized by Emerald Management Reviews as one of the top 50 articles published in 2007.

Her thesis was titled, "Implementation of Creative Problem Solving Technology in the Business Organization" utilizing case studies toward the development of a prescriptive model for implementation. She holds a B.S. from Purdue University also in Industrial Engineering. While at Purdue she completed the cooperative engineering program with AC Spark Plug, a division of General Motors in Flint, Mich., and served as a residence hall counselor and teaching assistant.

Ellspermann has published research and reports on various topics including workforce development, innovation, and problem solving.

She is highly engaged in the community and was recently named to the OneAmerica board of directors. She also serves as Indiana Honorary Chair of the Million Women Mentors, Advisory Board of the Indiana Conference for Women, and has served on numerous committees and nonprofit boards, including the Evansville Chamber of Commerce Board and Executive Committee, Diocese of Evansville Strategic Planning Committee, Indiana HomeTown Competitiveness Steering Committee, Tri-County YMCA Capital Campaign Advisory Board, Little Sisters of the Poor Advisory Board, and Good Shepherd Catholic Church Pastoral Council. She is married to James Mehling, a principal at Forest Park Junior-Senior High School