Todd J. Schmitz
Data Architect, UIRR EVP, Executive Director, Data Leader, Visionary, Team Leader, Mentor, and Friend
What did you want to be as a child, and how has that journey led you to where you are today?

“I think like a lot of young boys, I wanted to be a baseball player first off. Athletics played a large part in my young life and allowed me to find a comfortable space and peers. Once I was in college I started working with the admissions office as a campus tour guide and host. I think that this was the first time where I realized that higher education could be a career option, but I was training to be a special education teacher as an undergraduate!”
What brought you to Indiana?

“My wife, daughter, and I came to IU in 1986 as I was offered a job as a career counselor (at $17K/year!). I always thought we would head back to Iowa, and I would be working at a smaller institution, coaching tennis, and helping young people find jobs!”
Who were some of your mentors and in what ways did they help you in your career/life?

“My first mentor was the director of career services, Wayne Wallace. He hired me to come to IU and he pushed me to explore my never-ending questions about why we did the things we did back in the career service office. He supported my desires in analytics and allowed me to do surveys and focus groups with our customers. That experience was seminal for me professionally and caused me to change my doctoral studies to higher education and statistics. From there I was blessed to have some amazing professors like Don Hossler and George Kuh.”
What’s the most valuable lesson you have learned from your coworkers? From a leader?

“My wife (a great nurse of more than 35 years) reminded me regularly that our work was not “life and death” and to not take myself too seriously. Of course, she was right and I have tried to share that same perspective with my team when we get a little stressed out about our work. Andrea Ingle has taught me (begrudgingly) to really attend to the importance of the work family – to celebrate each other and know our team members as more than just workers.”
INTERVIEWING 101 – WITH TODD SCHMITZ

What’s one of your favorite questions to ask of an interview candidate?

“Do you work to live or live to work?”

“I would always hope to have a balanced response!”
What are you most looking forward to in retirement?

“Starting each day with the knowledge that I can pursue my passions without interruption or distraction.”
What are a few of the more interesting requests for information you have received?

“Those are usually the ones where we don’t have any data available in our myriad views. Things like student employment, extracurricular activities, etc.”

Did you ever find a one-line response to “What do you do?” or “What’s an institutional researcher?”

That’s still a vexing question. I usually just say I work in data architecture or engineering. If the questioner is still puzzled, then I have about another 15 minutes of explanation in the queue.
What are some of your proudest moments during your career here?

“I guess I am most proud of the team that I have had the pleasure to lead and work with. They are the reason that I have enjoyed any success whatsoever. I can reflect back now and realize that we have done some incredible work to provide IU with an agile and responsive decision support environment that will be productive long after my time.”

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK
What will you miss most?

“The people – without a doubt. Not all of them mind you, but relationships have been key to my longevity.”
What sage advice do you have for your colleagues?

“Focus on building relationships with the people you work with at IU and in our professional networks. Give of yourself professionally and personally while at work and when you’re done for the day, put it all to bed until the next day. Don’t be remembered for your work at IU but strive to build a legacy that is more meaningful – whatever that is.”
How do you intend to spend Fall census day this year?

“Preparing for two weeks in Italy, harvesting vegetables and fruit, and spending time with my kids and grandkids!”
TODD’S DREAM TEAM - 2023 ALLSTARS EDITION
WHAT WOULD TODD DO?

Be authentic, always have integrity, be honest, be a mentor and advocate, be a great leader, support his team, do the right thing, be professional, protect and defend his team, value his relationships, pursue his life passions, and be wickedly awesome.
THE MAN, THE MYTH, THE LEGEND
TODD J. SCHMITZ
After receiving his degree from IU, Todd landed his first full-time position in Career Services. Leadership quickly noticed his potential and acumen with IU data and charged him with creating the IU Institutional Research Office. From two initial staffers, the office grew to become nationally recognized as a model for best reporting practices.

Between 2008 and 2009, Todd served as the Indiana Association for Institutional Research (INAIR) vice president and President. He presented numerous times at INAIR and received “best presentation” on occasion. He was always ready and willing to participate as part of a panel discussion or serve as a mentor to new and impressionable IR colleagues from across that state.

Throughout his career, Todd provided IR expertise to the state and the Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE), where he served as a council member. He also founded and chaired the IR Public Data Advisory Group (IPDAG) for many years. Through his selfless service, Todd cleared a path for institutional research initiatives and provided best-in-class service to his colleagues, the university, and the state.

Todd’s retirement plans include traveling, woodworking, beekeeping, and expanding Maple Creek Farm’s product offerings, including maple syrup, fresh fruits and vegetables, honey, and wine.