

E-REP

DECEMBER 2023

BUSINESS |

POLICY |

COMMUNITY |

TALENT |

STRATEGY |

# IMPACT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

*#riverofopportunities*

## INSIDE:

INDOT AWARDS CONTRACT FOR I-69 ORX SECTION 3

METROPOLITAN EVANSVILLE TRANSIT SYSTEM LAUNCHES METS MICRO

INDIANA APEX ACCELERATOR

IEDC: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIANA

UNIVERSITY OF EVANSVILLE UNVEILS STATE-OF-THE-ART MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS CLINIC

**NEW MEMBER PROFILE:** CATANESE REAL ESTATE SAFEVAC, INC.

Photo: E-REP Member Whitney Muncy, owner of Emerald Design. Photo provided by the Downtown Evansville Economic Improvement District.



*Happy Holidays...*

**SHOP LOCAL**

& SUPPORT REGIONAL BUSINESSES & COMMUNITIES

CEO LETTER | READI INITIATIVE | NEW MEMBERS  
TALENT EVV | NEWSMAKERS | MILESTONES | & MORE  
[www.evansvilleregion.com](http://www.evansvilleregion.com)



**EVANSVILLE  
REGIONAL  
ECONOMIC  
PARTNERSHIP**

# Support local businesses, especially during this festive time of year

As we approach the holiday season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible power that our community holds, and how we can make a significant impact by choosing to shop small. Supporting local businesses, especially during this festive time of year, not only enriches our local economy but also strengthens the bonds within our community. The Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (E-REP) has been steadfast in its commitment to promoting the growth of our local businesses, and we have witnessed tremendous success in this endeavor, thanks in part to the remarkable work of the Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

For the third year in a row, our region's SBDC has been recognized as the Highest Performing Center in the state. As of late October, the Southwest Indiana SBDC has served 514 clients across its eight-county footprint, mostly via one-on-one counseling. Documented impact includes assistance with \$7.2 Million in capital infusion (loans, equity, grants, etc.), 96 jobs created, and 30 new business starts.

The Southwest Indiana SBDC has been an invaluable resource for our local entrepreneurs. Through their guidance, training and one-on-one counseling, they have equipped small businesses with the tools and knowledge needed to navigate the complexities of the business world. Whether it's crafting a solid business plan, securing financing, or expanding into new markets, the SBDC has been a trusted partner for our small business community. Their dedication to helping businesses grow is a testament to the spirit of collaboration that defines our region.

Embracing the spirit of shopping small this holiday season to boost our local communities, I'm excited to share some fantastic news with you. Our region's "e is for everyone" brand, which has become a symbol of unity and pride in our community, is taking

a new and exciting step. You can now express your support for the e region and the values we hold dear by wearing "e is for everyone" apparel. We are thrilled to offer a wide range of clothing and accessories that showcase our community's spirit. This apparel is now available for purchase online at [shop.eisforeveryone.com](http://shop.eisforeveryone.com). By wearing this attire, you not only embrace the inclusive ethos of the Evansville Region but also contribute to initiatives that promote the betterment of our community. I encourage you to explore the collection and wear your "e" with pride, embodying the values that make our region a remarkable place to call home.



**TARA BARNEY**  
CEO, E-REP

In closing, let us celebrate and support our local businesses, showing them the love and appreciation they truly deserve this holiday season. Through our collective efforts, we can ensure the continued growth and vitality of the Evansville Region and create a lasting impact for years to come.

Thank you for your unwavering support, and I wish you a joyful and fulfilling holiday season.

#riverofopportunities

**TARA BARNEY**  
CEO, E-REP

f t i n @ @evvregion



## E-REP 2022 - 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report provides comprehensive updates on the achievements of the preceding year's initiatives, including highlights of Talent EVV Impacts, READI Projects, and the Ohio River Vision and Strategic Plan. It also enumerates Regional Wins, Catalytic Projects and Strategic Initiatives. Furthermore, the report showcases the continuous progress of programs like Economic and Community Development, Membership, Marketing and Events, accompanied by a detailed roster of Board Members, Top Supporters and Team Members.

VIEW ONLINE: [www.evansvilleregion.com/e-rep-annual-reports/e-rep-2022-2023-annual-report/](http://www.evansvilleregion.com/e-rep-annual-reports/e-rep-2022-2023-annual-report/)



The Signature Investors are the voice of business in the Evansville Region. This select group of Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (E-REP) Stakeholders guides E-REP's mission and priorities, its affiliates and its lines of work. It drives the Region's greatest opportunities for progress and addresses significant community challenges.

Above all, this leadership investment affords E-REP the capacity to employ and retain a high-quality staff to execute the work of the organization and to ensure that it has sufficient resources to provide leadership for the Region's greatest opportunities.

THANK YOU!



EVANSVILLE REGIONAL BUSINESS COMMITTEE





# INDOT Awards Contract for I-69 ORX Section 3

Work is expected to begin by next summer

Another key milestone has been met for the I-69 Ohio River Crossing (I-69 ORX). The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) awarded the contract for I-69 ORX Section Three to ORX Constructors, a joint venture that includes Walsh Construction and Traylor Bros, Inc.

“Awarding this contract is yet another important step toward generational progress as we work to improve Indiana’s infrastructure for all Hoosiers and visitors,” said Gov. Eric Holcomb. “We’ll be starting construction next year in Evansville, and that work will be a visible reminder of what’s to come. An I-69 Ohio River Crossing will further connect Indiana and Kentucky and create regional economic opportunities for decades to come.”

The nearly \$202 million contract includes approach roadways and bridges in Indiana that will provide all-weather construction access to the Ohio River for the future I-69 Section Two project, the river crossing.

“It’s an exciting time for transportation in Indiana,” said INDOT Commissioner Mike Smith. “We’re eager for construction to get underway as we work toward the completion of this crucial connection to Kentucky and points beyond, officially finishing I-69 throughout the state.”

I-69 ORX is divided into three sections for construction.

**Section One** focuses on improvements in Henderson, KY, and extends from KY 425 to US 60 and is led by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC). Construction began in 2022 and is expected to be complete in 2025.

**Section Two** is a bistate project between Kentucky and Indiana that will complete the I-69 connection from US 60 in Henderson to existing I-69 in Evansville. It includes the new four-lane river crossing. Design work is expected to begin in 2025 with construction anticipated to start in 2027 and continue through 2031. Both states are looking for opportunities to accelerate the timeline.

**Section Three** is led by INDOT. Construction of the Indiana approach is expected to begin by summer 2024 and wrap up in 2026. I-69 ORX Section 3 is funded through a \$200 million investment announced by Gov. Holcomb in 2021.

“Awarding this contract is yet another important step toward generational progress as we work to improve Indiana’s infrastructure for all Hoosiers and visitors.”

- GOV. ERIC HOLCOMB



# METS and Via launch innovative on-demand transit program, with support from Toyota Mobility Foundation

The launch of “METS Micro” signifies a step forward in METS’ and Via’s shared vision to use technology to create inclusive, flexible public transit

The Metropolitan Evansville Transit System (METS) is proud to announce the launch of METS Micro, an on-demand, app-based public transit pilot service in partnership with Via, a global leader in TransitTech; the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (Evansville MPO); the Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF); and Energy Systems Network (ESN).

METS Micro officially launched on November 28 with the goal of using innovative software to expand access to transportation in Evansville. METS Micro will allow anyone within a designated service zone in southeast Evansville to book an on-demand ride through the METS Micro app (available in Google Play and App Store or by calling 812-562-5011).

Upon booking a ride, Via’s intelligent algorithms match riders headed in the same direction into one shared vehicle to create quick, efficient shared trips. This model provides a flexible transit option designed to extend the reach of METS’ existing offerings by providing coverage in areas where fixed-route buses cannot efficiently reach.

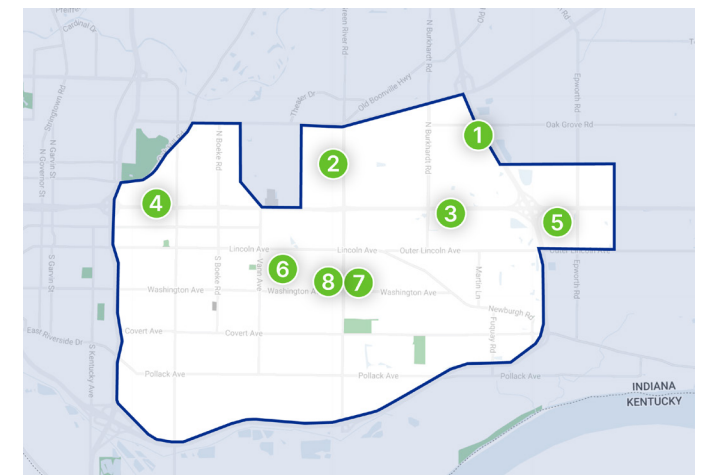
METS Micro will be available Monday to Saturday from 6:15 a.m. to 12 a.m. and on Sundays from 6:15 a.m. to 6 p.m. Rides will cost \$2. The fleet will include two wheelchair-accessible Toyota Sienna minivans.

Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke said, “The launch of METS Micro stands as a testament to the hard work, innovation and dedication of our entire team. Collaborating with Via and benefiting from the generous support of Toyota Mobility Foundation and Energy Systems Network, we’re not just enhancing our transit system — we’re envisioning a brighter, more connected future for Evansville.”

Todd Robertson, Executive Director for the City of Evansville Transportation Services added, “With help and two years of innovative thinking, even though it’s a pilot program, I am glad to see another affordable transit opportunity in Evansville and look forward to its expansion in the future.”

METS Micro is part of Toyota Mobility Foundation’s Together in Motion initiative, a program established in collaboration with Energy Systems Network (ESN) and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC). TMF played important roles in the planning behind METS Micro – from hosting community workshops to define local mobility needs, to providing matching funds with the City, to coordinating stakeholder engagement.

“The METS Micro pilot in Evansville exemplifies the power of collaboration between local and state public and private entities,



Popular Destinations:

- 1 Costco Wholesale
- 2 Eastland Mall
- 3 Walmart Supercenter
- 4 University of Evansville
- 5 Gateway Hospital
- 6 St. Vincent Hospital
- 7 Schnucks Lawndale
- 8 WorkOne Southwest Evansville

setting the stage for achieving greater equity in transportation access,” said Ryan Klem, Director of Programs at the Toyota Mobility Foundation. “Our hope is that the learnings from this pilot can help enhance the quality of life and work for the people of Evansville and might serve as an example for other cities to emulate in the future.”

Additional key contributions came from partner ESN, who purchased two Toyota Sienna minivans for the pilot using IEDC grant funds. ESN partnered with BraunAbility and Model1 to customize them to be wheelchair accessible. ESN acquired the vehicles through another local business, Evansville-based Toyota dealer Kenny Kent.

Via’s TransitTech is used by more than 650 communities globally; this includes a similar and successful on-demand transit program in Lafayette, IN in partnership with CityBus. For more information on how to ride with METS Micro, please visit: [city.ridewithvia.com/metsmicro](http://city.ridewithvia.com/metsmicro)



## Indiana APEX Accelerator: A New Name, Same Mission, Enhanced Focus

In a strategic move to reinforce its commitment to the growth and prosperity of Indiana’s small businesses, the Indiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) proudly unveils its new identity as the Indiana APEX Accelerator. Under the umbrella of the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP), this transformation signals a pivotal shift in the organization’s focus and its dedication to fostering economic development within the state.

The transition from Indiana PTAC to Indiana APEX Accelerator represents more than just a change in name — it symbolizes an evolution in mission and an enhanced commitment to supporting businesses seeking opportunities in defense and government supply chains. The APEX Accelerator aligns with the broader DoD mission to engage a diverse range of businesses entering these critical sectors.

One of the most significant updates in the rebranding is the heightened emphasis on aiding underserved businesses. Indiana APEX Accelerator aims to bridge the gap for businesses that may face barriers to entry into the defense and government supply chains. By providing invaluable, no-cost counseling, the program seeks to prepare these businesses for successful bidding and contract execution.

The APEX Accelerator’s renewed commitment to bolstering the defense industrial base (DIB) is a key aspect of its expanded focus. With an eye toward reducing the nation’s dependence on foreign supply chains, the accelerator aims to strengthen local businesses, enhance their capabilities and contribute to the overall resilience of the defense sector.

At the heart of the APEX Accelerator’s mission is the goal to generate employment and improve the economic condition of the state. By assisting Indiana companies, including those eligible for preferential consideration, in obtaining and performing under local, state and federal government contracts, the program seeks to create a positive ripple effect throughout the region. The accelerator understands the pivotal role these businesses play in contributing to economic growth, and its initiatives are designed to empower them for success.

Recognizing the strategic importance of a robust defense industrial base, the Indiana APEX Accelerator actively works toward

diminishing the nation’s reliance on foreign supply chains. This objective is not only critical for national security but also aligns with the broader economic strategy of fostering domestic manufacturing and innovation. By empowering local businesses to thrive in defense and government contracts, the accelerator contributes to building a more self-reliant and resilient economic landscape.

### Connect with Regional Counselors:

To facilitate seamless engagement and support, the Indiana APEX Accelerator encourages businesses to explore its brand-new website at <https://inapex.org>. The website serves as a central hub for information, resources and updates on the program’s initiatives. Businesses are also encouraged to connect with their regional counselor, who can provide personalized assistance and address any questions they may have about the program or the procurement process.



**JIM HADDAN**  
Southwest APEX  
Counselor (Evansville)

### In the Evansville Region, Jim Haddan is your go-to resource!

As the Southwest Indiana APEX Accelerator counselor, Jim covers 14 counties to guide small businesses through the process of bidding on solicitations for government contracts. Prior to joining PTAC, Jim was the Procurement and Compliance Manager at the Evansville Housing Authority for 10 years. His experience includes directing complex purchasing projects following federal, state and local statutes and recommending awards to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. He has worked in purchasing in the telecom industry and in marketing and sales for a not-for-profit, and has also served in municipal government as an executive director. Jim has a bachelor's degree in Public Affairs from Indiana University and an MBA from the University of Southern Indiana.

As businesses navigate the complexities of government contracting, the Indiana APEX Accelerator stands ready to provide unwavering support, empowering them to succeed and contribute to the economic vitality of the state. Through its no-cost counseling, strategic initiatives and collaborative partnerships, the APEX Accelerator is not just a name change but a bold step toward a more prosperous and self-reliant future for Indiana’s small businesses.



**Catie Catanese**  
COO, licensed REALTOR

Let’s welcome Catanesse Real Estate as a new member of the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership. Catanesse Real Estate is located at 405 Carpenter St. in Evansville and can be reached by calling 812-305-6420 or online at [CatanesseRealestate.kw.com](http://CatanesseRealestate.kw.com). Read on as Catie Catanese, COO and licensed REALTOR, tells us about Catanesse Real Estate.

### Tell us about Catanesse Real Estate and the services you offer.

We help buyers, sellers and investors achieve their real estate dreams.

### What inspired you to invest your time and resources in this business?

Theresa Catanese (my mother) started in the real estate business over 11 years ago. Her love for helping first-time home buyers sparked my interest. I bought my first home at 20 and I love helping other people realize you CAN build generational wealth and equity from purchasing a home, and it’s really not as hard as it seems!

### What career advice would you give the younger generation interested in this type of work?

87% of real estate agents drop out before 5 years. The common misconception is that real estate is “so flexible.” Realtors do a lot of socializing (guilty), but the fast-paced transactions and expectations are usually behind the scenes. It’s not uncommon for me to go from a day of 0 appointments, to 5 showings starting in an hour, writing an offer and countering till 8 p.m.. Being on a team has been CRUCIAL to my success. So thankful to have my mother as my mentor with so many years of experience as well as two other great Realtors on our team to hold each other accountable and help each other succeed.

### In your opinion, what are three ingredients for success?

Confidence, determination and admitting when you are wrong.

### What has been one of your toughest challenges?

Adapting to this crazy market shift! When rates were low we couldn’t even answer all the phone calls, now that rates are back to normal we are having to adjust daily activities, advertising, etc.



### Why is the Evansville Region a great place to operate a business?

Homes in Evansville are HALF the US average home price. The cost of living here is great! The small business community here is thriving, welcoming and supportive! Evansville is surrounded by great cities like Newburgh and Mt. Vernon that help sustain small businesses and keep the city diverse.

### What do you like most about the community in which you live?

Affordability! I also believe Evansville is a thriving city with so much to do! It’s a big city with a small-town feel.

# Year-end greetings and a special note of thanks from your Tri-State Better Business Bureau

By **BBB Serving Evansville and the Tri-State**

**A**s we close out 2023, we'd like to thank our gracious community for the support you've provided to your Tri-State BBB. Whether you've visited our website to review a business profile, followed us on social media for consumer and business tips, or supported our efforts through applying for BBB Accreditation, we appreciate you!

Our local Tri-State office serves an 18-county service area including portions of Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky, so we have many partners, friends and advocates in our midst. Your support continually inspires us and the work we do each day to help keep our community safe and informed!

If you've never utilized our services before, many of our offerings are free of charge. We welcome you to consider all the ways we can help with your marketplace needs:

- **BBB Business Profiles, Charity Reviews and Customer Reviews** – providing BBB's background knowledge of organizations and customer experiences to assist with your marketplace choices.
- **Complaint and Dispute Resolution Services** – helping to further communications when concerns or disagreements arise.
- **News and BBB Scam Alerts** – keeping you up to date on the most common tactics targeting businesses and consumers, as well as providing marketplace information.
- **BBB ScamTracker<sup>SM</sup>** – offering a platform for reporting potential fraud and scams.
- **BBB Business and Consumer Tips** – helping businesses grow and consumers be knowledgeable of current trends.
- **BBB Accreditation** – helping to set businesses and charities apart by showcasing their willingness to be screened for reputability and helping increase consumer confidence.

Accredited Businesses and Charity Seal Holders also support our public services, commit to upholding high ethical standards and receive BBB benefits, expanding visibility.

**As a nonprofit organization, we appreciate each and every business and charity that supports our efforts in this way!** While we are expressing thanks to those who support our efforts, we would be remiss not to thank our **BBB Consumer Protection Task Force**, comprised of law enforcement officers, consumer protection agencies and others.

These fraud-fighting partners meet with us regularly to help guide our education efforts and provide important connections in the community.

We also thank our **BBB Board of Directors** who have shared their time and talents to help us grow and improve.

Our **BBB Community Partners**, such as the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership and other area chambers, also bring our efforts to life, helping us connect with business leaders and the communities we serve.

Finally, with no less importance, **we thank our local communities.**

It has been our pleasure to talk with you by phone, share with you in presentations, visit at your home shows, and help you with our resources. **Our appreciation runs very deep!**

We thank all in our community who have contributed to our successes, and we look forward to building even more connections in the coming year.

If you have questions, suggestions or simply want to connect with a member of our staff, we hope you'll reach out.

Thanks again for supporting your Tri-State BBB in 2023, and we wish you a safe and prosperous new year! We look forward to continuing to serve you in 2024.

## “Service is Our #1 Priority”

Here to serve you are:



**Kenneth R. Johnson**  
812-838-4479



**M. Michelle Hudson,**  
ABR CRS MGRI  
812-457-4928



**Linda Dickens**  
812-455-1490



**Monica Kittinger**  
812-457-9993



**Delene Schmitz**  
812-483-0785



**Julia Vantlin**  
812-455-0461



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ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
IN INDIANA:

# Inspiring Stories of Innovation & Impact



In the heart of the Evansville Region, a diverse group of entrepreneurs is reshaping industries and fostering innovation. These visionary individuals are not only pursuing their dreams but are also contributing to their communities and to the state's economic growth. Let's dive into the inspiring stories of five Indiana-based entrepreneurs who are making a mark in various fields.

**1. Scott Massey – Anu™ Smart Garden Appliances:** Scott Massey, an Evansville native, identified the environmental challenges posed by industrial agriculture and envisioned a solution. In 2016, he launched Anu™, a subscription-based system that combines Indiana's manufacturing legacy with a consumable seed pod model for indoor gardening. Anu™, described as "nespresso for plants," empowers users to grow Pure Produce™ in the convenience of their homes. The innovative approach gained traction during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to National Science Foundation grants for A.I. enhancement. With a focus on sustainability and local production, Anu™ aims to surpass the output of the world's largest farms.

**2. Darrick and Jennifer Hayden – Parlor Doughnuts:** The Hayden family's irresistible doughnut, infused with the secret ingredient "Parlor Spirit," has propelled Parlor Doughnuts to success with 98 franchises nationwide in just four years. Rooted in community values, Parlor Doughnuts evolved from Noah Hayden's original concept, Proper Coffee. The family's commitment to community, collaboration and mentorship has not only expanded their business nationally but has also inspired others to become entrepreneurs. With a goal to open 230 shops nationwide, the Haydens aim to make Parlor Doughnuts a staple in every community while giving back to society.

**3. Kerry Ao – Intertwined Financial Literacy Platform:** Understanding the learning preferences of Gen Z, recent high school graduate Kerry Ao embarked on creating an immersive software platform to teach financial literacy. Intertwined, developed in collaboration with his business club, employs A.I. technology to personalize content based on individual student reactions. The platform gained momentum through competitions and grants, securing its first sale within a year. With a vision to expand into various educational sectors, Kerry Ao envisions Intertwined becoming a valuable resource for

financial literacy education, aligning with the growing movement to incorporate this essential knowledge into school curricula.

**4. University of Southern Indiana's Center for Applied Research:** Founded by Dr. Sue Ellspermann in 2005, the University of Southern Indiana's Center for Applied Research (CAR) serves as a catalyst for aspiring entrepreneurs. CAR acts as a bridge, connecting entrepreneurs with essential services, tools and expertise to bring their ideas to market. With a focus on viability and cost-effectiveness, CAR collaborates with a network of regional partners, offering access to faculty, laboratories and equipment. Through its commitment to community engagement, CAR is nurturing startups in various fields, contributing to the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

**5. DeAndre Wilson and Merrick Korach – Bedford Collab Shared Kitchen:** Serial entrepreneur DeAndre Wilson, along with co-founder Jeff Gott, identified the need for a shared kitchen for food entrepreneurs. After launching Turn Table catering in 2017, they established Bedford Collab, set to launch in 2023. The shared kitchen not only meets the needs of food entrepreneurs for prep and storage but also aims to improve the food culture in Evansville. By locating in the economically distressed southside, Bedford Collab becomes a catalyst for sustainable change, breathing life into a classic 1919 commercial building. With support from various financial backers and the creation of Impact Evansville, Inc., Wilson and Korach are providing opportunities for underrepresented entrepreneurs to thrive.

As we celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit in Indiana, these five stories exemplify the resilience, creativity and community-driven approach that defines the state's business landscape. However, these narratives are just the tip of the iceberg. Across Indiana, countless innovators are making waves in diverse industries, and their stories are waiting to be discovered. For a deeper dive into the wealth of entrepreneurial endeavors shaping the Hoosier State, explore more stories on the [Indiana Economic Development Corporation \(IEDC\) website](#). From tech startups and manufacturing ventures to educational initiatives and community-driven projects, these stories collectively paint a vivid picture of Indiana's dynamic and thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## SafeEVAC™ Leading The Way To Safety™

Let's welcome SafeEVAC, Inc. as a new member of the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership. SafeEVAC, Inc. is located at 318 Main St., Suite 101 in Evansville and can be reached by calling 812-449-5695 or online at [www.safeevac.com](http://www.safeevac.com). Read on as Michael Sandefur, Co-Founder, Executive VP, Chief Technology Officer, tells us about SafeEVAC, Inc.

**Tell us about SafeEVAC, Inc. and the services you offer.**

SafeEVAC, Inc. is a new company with a revolutionary technology related to threat identification and intelligent evacuation. This technology (initially focused on school safety) can identify the nature of a threat, the precise location of the threat, advise those in the threat area to shelter in place and direct those who can evacuate safely to the appropriate exit. The technology also instantly informs law enforcement of the threat, nature of the threat and leads First Responders to the threat. Providing responding law enforcement with the equivalent of a high-level military ops advisory team.

**What inspired you to invest your time and resources in this business?**

Inventors Michael Sandefur and Michael Day after the Parkland and Marshall County shootings set about to identify technical solutions to save our children. It has been a 5-year journey, but we are on the cusp of revolutionizing building security.

**What career advice would you give the younger generation interested in this type of work?**

My type of work is inventing and then building teams to transform that which can be into that which is. If you are going to be an inventor, see items 1.5 and 2.5 below.

**In your opinion, what are three ingredients for success?**

0.5. Personal integrity. Without it you will fail, and you cannot build lasting relationships.

1. Commitment. Create a plan, identify the needs and stick with it.

1.5. Growth. Never quit expanding your knowledge of the universe.



2. Balance. Balance your life... God, family, work, play. If things are out of balance, it is hard to move forward.  
2.5. Systems. Everything is connected. Critical thinking. If you understand how things are connected to can better predict outcomes.  
3. Listen. God is talking to you constantly. When you listen you will hear, see and receive the constant flow of miracles. No better teammate.

**What has been one of your toughest challenges?**

Working toward long-term outcomes with short-term resources.

**Why is the Evansville Region a great place to operate a business?**

The Evansville Region is large enough to provide the service you need and small enough to not have the big-city problems and attitudes.

**What do you like most about the community in which you live?**

The people, particularly my supportive wife.

**Is there anything else you would like to share?**

E-REP has been a great resource in our infancy, and we are anxious to fully utilize the services.



Rendering: Hafer Design

# University of Evansville Unveils State-of-the-Art Mental Health and Wellness Clinic

Partnership with Easterseals Culminates in the Opening of the UE Mental Health and Wellness Clinic and the Emily M. Young Assessment Center

In a landmark dedication ceremony recently, the University of Evansville (UE) proudly introduced its cutting-edge Mental Health and Wellness Clinic, solidifying its commitment to addressing critical mental health challenges in the Evansville community. This groundbreaking initiative, developed in collaboration with Easterseals, includes the Emily M. Young Assessment Center, a comprehensive facility equipped to provide advanced therapy and assessment services.

“UE’s Mental Health and Wellness Clinic, is a testament to our unwavering commitment to our Evansville community,” said Christopher M. Pietruszkiewicz, President of the University of Evansville. “This state-of-the-art facility, along with the Emily M. Young Assessment Center, marks a significant stride towards a brighter and promising future for individuals and families grappling with mental health concerns.”

At the heart of the clinic is the Emily M. Young Assessment Center, a specialized facility furnished with cutting-edge equipment and materials essential for sophisticated testing. This includes computers, software, recording devices, white noise machines and testing kits. The Assessment Center will play a central role in diagnosing and treating mental health conditions by offering a range of assessment measures, including outcome questionnaires,

personality testing, psychopathology measures and cognitive functioning assessments. The center is named in honor of the late Emily Young, the daughter of U.S. district judge for the Southern District of Indiana Richard L. Young.

Operated by 10-15 students annually from the University of Evansville’s Doctor of Psychology clinical degree program, under the supervision of a licensed clinical psychologist, the clinic will provide crucial therapy and assessment services to the Evansville community. The services, offered on a monthly basis, will focus on conditions such as ADHD, depression, bipolar disorder, intellectual functioning and personality functioning.

“The Emily M. Young Assessment Center serves as an invaluable resource for the Evansville community, addressing the pressing need for comprehensive mental health assessments for both children and adults,” noted Pietruszkiewicz. “This educational training clinic will play a pivotal role in not only diagnosing psychological disorders but also in guiding effective treatment, ultimately contributing to the overall mental health and well-being of our community.”

Community members interested in giving to the Mental Health and Wellness Clinic can visit [www.uealumonline.com/mentalhealth](http://www.uealumonline.com/mentalhealth).

# Wine & Fries

6 p.m. | February 23, 2024  
Old National Events Plaza



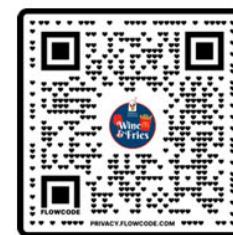
featuring THE MUSIC CITY Sound

**Master of Ceremonies**  
Ronald McDonald

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The Music City Sound  
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McDonald’s World Famous Fries®

**Tickets**  
\$100 a person | \$175 a couple  
\$750 a reserved table of 8  
*Dress is Party Casual*

Scan for Tickets



Presented by



[rmhcohovalley.org/wine-fries](http://rmhcohovalley.org/wine-fries)

All proceeds benefit Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Ohio Valley

## NEW MEMBERS

**CALIBER COLLISION**

318 N. Green River Rd., Evansville, IN 47715

**Melanie Moss** 812-461-1799[melanie.moss@calibercollision.com](mailto:melanie.moss@calibercollision.com)[www.caliber.com](http://www.caliber.com)**CAREY SPRINGS FARM, LLC**

3599 Fehd Rd., Elberfeld, IN 47613

**Cathy Carey** 812-459-8910[carey@careyspringsfarm.com](mailto:carey@careyspringsfarm.com)[careyspringsfarm.com](http://careyspringsfarm.com)**EDWARD JONES, TYLER VIEKE**

3307 N. Green River Rd., Evansville, IN 47715

812-491-2953

**EDWARD JONES, BEN WAITS**

7300 E. Columbia St., Ste. 101, Evansville, IN 47715

812-422-4709

**EDWARD JONES - JACK YOUNG**

4432 W. Lloyd Expressway, Evansville, IN 47712

812-422-4142

**EDWARD JONES - MELISSA KHAN**

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812-477-6978

**EDWARD JONES - DON PATTON**

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**EDWARD JONES - CHRIS FLECK**

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812-473-0225

**EDWARD JONES - JASON RAINEY**

121 S. Vine St., Haubstadt, IN 47639

812-615-5075

**ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING SOLUTIONS**

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**Scott Beard** 812-480-5201[sbeard@ecsevv.com](mailto:sbeard@ecsevv.com)[www.ecsevv.com](http://www.ecsevv.com)**HAYDEN VISION**

3801 Bellmeade Ave., Suite 320, Evansville, IN 47714

**Gregory Hayden** 812-422-3937[ghayden@att.net](mailto:ghayden@att.net)[www.haydenvision.com](http://www.haydenvision.com)**HOPE OF EVANSVILLE**

612 SE 4th St., Suite 206, Evansville, IN 47713

**Nikki Waller** 812-423-3169[office@hopein.com](mailto:office@hopein.com)[www.hopein.com](http://www.hopein.com)**LIVIN IMAGERY, LLC**

6509 Newburgh Rd., Evansville, IN 47715

**Amanda Day** 812-568-1483[amanda.livinimagery@gmail.com](mailto:amanda.livinimagery@gmail.com)[www.livinimagery.com](http://www.livinimagery.com)**NEXTECH**

4702 Sunset Ave., Suite 400, Indianapolis, IN 46208

**Jill Van Oostenburg** 317-207-7708[info@nextech.org](mailto:info@nextech.org)[nextech.org](http://nextech.org)**PEARLE VISION**

6614 Logan Dr., Evansville, IN 47715

**Brandi Stover** 812-477-6700[brandis@westpointoptical.com](mailto:brandis@westpointoptical.com)[www.pearlevision.com](http://www.pearlevision.com)**REPUBLIC FINANCE**

3423 N. Green River Rd., Evansville, IN 47715

**Rikki Stewart** 812-916-4796[303Evansvillein@republicfinance.com](mailto:303Evansvillein@republicfinance.com)[www.republicfinance.com](http://www.republicfinance.com)**SELF INSURANCE SERVICES, LLC**

7925 Bell Oaks Dr., Suite A, Newburgh, IN 47630

**Charles Self** 812-842-2813[charles@selfinsuranceservices.com](mailto:charles@selfinsuranceservices.com)[www.savewithself.com](http://www.savewithself.com)

## MEMBER RENEWALS

- 3 Chicks Fudgery
- Acclaim Graphics, Inc.
- Alliance Coal
- Ambassador Travel
- American Cancer Society
- America's Car-Mart of Evansville
- AmeriQual Group, LLC
- AON Risk Services Indianapolis
- Ascension St. Vincent Evansville
- AT&T
- Atlas World Group, Inc.
- Automated Office Solutions, Inc.
- Barnett & Associates, Inc.
- Berkshire Hathaway Indiana Realty
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwestern Indiana
- Bill Egli Concrete Construction, Inc.
- Bosler's Furniture Showroom
- Brizius, Embry, & Smith Optometry
- Brunson Insurance Inc.
- Budget Blinds
- Catholic Diocese of Evansville
- Clark Security/Ira E. Clark Detective Agency, Inc.
- Cresline and Wabash Plastics
- David Matthews Associates
- Deaconess Hospital
- Dean Dorton Allen Ford, PLLC
- Dyna-Mech's Truck Service, Inc.
- Encompass Health Deaconess Rehabilitation Hospital
- ERA First Advantage Realty
- Evansville Courier & Press
- Evansville Cryo
- Evansville Sheet Metal Works
- Evansville Tool & Die, Inc.
- Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library
- Evansville Winsupply Co.
- Farm Boy Foodservice
- Fine & Hatfield, A Professional Corp.
- First Federal Savings Bank
- FORVIS
- Gray Loon Marketing Group, Inc.
- Gribbins Specialty Group - Gribbins Insulation

- Hafer PSC
- Harding, Shymanski & Company, P.S.C.
- Hoosier Accounts Service
- Hutson Inc.
- Ilovekickboxing
- Imperial Fastener & Industrial Supply Co.
- Interim HealthCare
- J. Trockman & Sons, Inc.
- J.E. Shekell, Inc.
- Jani-Clean
- Junior League of Evansville
- K & W Premier HVAC
- Kahn, Dees, Donovan & Kahn, LLP
- Kasey Fuquay - State Farm Insurance Agent
- Keller Schroeder & Associates, Inc.
- Kemper 1st Choice Payroll
- Kemper CPA Group, LLP
- Key Associates Signature Realty
- Lieberman Technologies
- Lincoln Financial Advisors
- Lochmueller Group
- Mesker Park Zoo/Evansville Zoological Society
- Midwest Telecom Communications, Inc.
- Mills Body Shop
- Morley Corp
- ms consultants, inc.
- Mulzer Family of Companies
- N. M. Bunge, Inc.
- New Horizons Financial Consultants
- Nussmeier Engraving Company, Inc.
- Oasis Senior Advisors
- Orangetheory Fitness
- Orthopaedic Associates, Inc.

- PAR IT Consulting
- Paul's Pharmacy
- Red Wing Shoes
- Right to Life of Southwest Indiana
- Riney Hancock CPA's PSC
- Riverbend Nursing & Rehabilitation
- Robert W. Baird Co. Incorporated/Hilliard
- Sebree Consulting, LLC
- Serendipity Designs & Decor
- Shoe Carnival, Inc. Headquarters
- Sign Crafters, Inc.
- Signarama Evansville
- Southwestern Healthcare Inc.
- Stephen Libs Finer Chocolates
- SVN/The Martin Group
- T.J. Maxx
- Ten Adams Corporation
- The Arc of Evansville
- Torian Insurance
- TownePlace Suites by Marriott
- Townsquare Media, Inc.
- Traylor Construction Group
- Tri-State Bearing Company, Inc.
- Tri-State Trophies
- Trivalence Technologies LLC
- Turoni's Pizzeria & Brewery
- United Way of SW Indiana, Inc.
- University of Southern Indiana
- WB Koester Construction LLC
- WNIN-Channel 9 & FM88.3 Radio
- Woodward Commercial Realty, Inc.
- Ziemer Funeral Homes
- Ziemer, Stayman, Weitzel & Shoulders

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# MILESTONES

Milestone celebrations are a benefit of Evansville Regional Economic Partnership membership. To request a milestone ribbon-cutting, click or scan the QR code.



### THE SALVATION ARMY OF EVANSVILLE

The Salvation Army of Evansville celebrated the Annual Kickoff of the Red Kettle Campaign with a ribbon-cutting at 1040 N. Fulton Ave. in Evansville. The Salvation Army meets human needs through its food insecurity, youth center and social service programming. Families in the Pathway of Hope program receive support to break through life barriers and help them achieve self-sufficiency. Over 300 meals are served every day and over 400 families receive grocery assistance every month. Sign up to ring the bell this year at [www.registertoring.com](http://www.registertoring.com). Contact them at 812-664-4705 or visit them at [saevansville.org](http://saevansville.org).



### HONEY MOON COFFEE CO./ EVANSVILLE COFFEE CO.

Honey Moon Coffee Co./Evansville Coffee Co. celebrated the grand opening of a new location with a ribbon-cutting at 2903 Mount Vernon Ave. in Evansville. Honey Moon Coffee Co./Evansville Coffee Co. is a coffee shop, coffee roaster and serves ice cream. Contact them at 812-550-0253 or online at [www.honeymooncoffeeco.com](http://www.honeymooncoffeeco.com).



### HAIR REJUVENATION CENTER

Hair Rejuvenation Center celebrated the grand opening of a new location with a ribbon-cutting at 959 S. Kenmore Dr. in Evansville. The team at Hair Rejuvenation Center knows hair loss is very personal and emotional. Keeping clients comfortable in a private setting is important to them while providing the information clients need to make the best decision. Contact them at 812-499-1958 or online at [www.hair-rejuvenation-center.com](http://www.hair-rejuvenation-center.com).



# newsmakers

PRESENTED BY:



### AUDRIE BURKETT

Audrie Burkett joined Woodward Commercial Realty Inc. as Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President. As Woodward's COO, she will lead marketing efforts, internal operations, and the expansion of real estate development and investment activities across Indiana and Kentucky. Burkett recently served as the COO and

Executive Vice President of the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (E-REP), where she played a key role in driving the \$50 million Regional Economic Development + Acceleration Initiative for the Evansville Region.



### DR. RONALD S. ROCHON

Dr. Ronald S. Rochon, University of Southern Indiana President, was appointed Chair of the American Association of State College and Universities' (AASCU) Board of Directors. He will serve a one-year term as Chair. Before assuming this position, Rochon served on the Executive Committee and chaired the Millennium Leadership

Initiative Steering Committee. As President of USI since July 2018, Rochon has led the university in improving its rates of overall degree completion, at-risk degree completion, STEM degree completion, student persistence and on-time graduation. He has secured more than \$250 million in state funding for capital projects and operations and led the University's reclassification process from NCAA Division II to Division I athletics. In October 2020, Rochon was appointed to Indiana Gov. Eric J. Holcomb's Workforce Cabinet for a two-year term and to the Midwest Higher Education Compact in 2021. He also serves on the NCAA Division I Ohio Valley Conference Board of Presidents and the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America Board of Directors, as well as the boards of WNIN Public Broadcasting, Deaconess Health Systems, and the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership.

### KEVIN CORBIN

The University of Evansville appointed Kevin Corbin as its Public Safety Director. According to a news release, Corbin's extensive background in law enforcement, security management, and his commitment to innovation and safety will play a pivotal role in ensuring the safety and well-being of the University's campus community. Corbin has a master's degree in security management and is actively pursuing a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice. He has nearly 22 years of service at the Evansville Police Department, including with the Crime Prevention Unit, Motor Patrol, Crises Intervention Team (CIT), Mobile Field Force, Humane Officer Unit, and Honor Guard, in addition to conducting a wide range of criminal investigations. Corbin holds certifications in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) at both basic and advanced levels, as well as a Professional Designation in CPTED. His expertise extends to school safety and various certifications in OSHA and FEMA disciplines.

### ASTRA ZENECA

AstraZeneca made a pair of key hires:



### SETH WOLF

Seth Wolf joined AstraZeneca as a Process Engineer. Wolf attended Mount Vernon High School and obtained his undergraduate degree in Biology in 2017 at the University of Southern Indiana. He joined the food manufacturing industry in a quality specialist role, focusing on quality investigations, food safety event investigations, and positive

release of product. In 2020, Wolf took a role with the same company as a R&D Scientist, managing raw material portfolios, recommending materials to R&D colleagues, and performing food safety reviews. He completed his Master of Science degree in biology at the University of Nebraska Kearney in 2021.



### MARK WADE

Mark Wade accepted the role of Validation Manager. Wade started his career with Mead Johnson Nutrition as a quality control lab analyst in 2005. He advanced in role and responsibility to become Quality Control Manager in 2019, responsible for all quality control testing related activity in the chemistry and microbiology labs

for the Evansville site. Wade was a member of the analytical steering committee responsible for governance of the global method harmonization and validation process. Throughout his time with Mead Johnson, he worked closely with the production and formulation teams to improve formulation performance and innovation. Wade holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, from the University of Southern Indiana.



### DOUG HAZEL

Doug Hazel is now a Senior Maintenance Facilitator in Packaging. Hazel joined AstraZeneca in 2019 as a Formulation Maintenance Facilitator. He has worked in maintenance for more than 30 years at Alcoa, TMMI, and Mead Johnson. He was a Maintenance and Engineering Manager at Fisher Dynamics before joining AstraZeneca.

Hazel holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Pott School of Engineering at the University of Southern Indiana.

### EVSC FOUNDATION

The Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp. hired Melanie Atwood as its Chief Development Officer. As part of her responsibilities, Atwood will serve as president of the EVSC Foundation. There, she will be supported by Amy Walker, who served as executive director of the Public Education Foundation for 25 years. Walker will be a consultant during the transition.

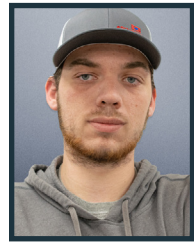
**LENSING BUILDING SPECIALTIES AND ARCHITECTURAL SALES**

Lensing Building Specialties and Architectural Sales added five new team members:



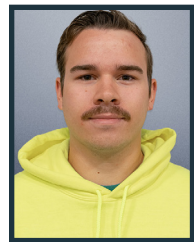
**MICHAEL CLOUTIER**

Michael Cloutier joins the Architectural Sales Integration team where he will install and service commercial low-voltage systems, including access control hardware and software, commercial security systems, audio/visual equipment and emergency communication systems.



**JACOB DEFUR**

Jacob DeFur joins the overhead door department as an installation technician. In this role, he'll install and service residential garage doors, commercial overhead doors and commercial docking equipment.



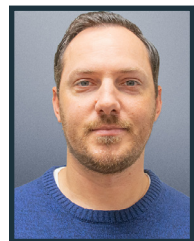
**ETHAN GEORGES**

Ethan Georges joins the overhead door department as an installation technician. In this role, he'll install and service residential garage doors, commercial overhead doors and commercial docking equipment.



**RYAN HILLS**

Ryan Hills is an inside sales representative for our door, frame and hardware department. In this role, he will work with Architectural Sales customers to quote and order doors, frames, and hardware for commercial and industrial settings.



**CLINT UNDERHILL**

Clint Underhill joins the commercial glass department as a project manager. He will manage commercial and industrial construction projects where Architectural Sales supplies and installs glass windows, curtainwalls, and storefront.



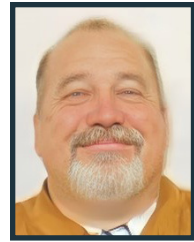
**KIM STARKS**

Kim Starks was promoted to Senior Vice President of Diamond Valley Federal Credit Union by the organization's Board of Directors. Starks has served Diamond Valley in various capacities since October 1984, holding the position of Vice President of Operations/Compliance for the last 10 years. She holds IRA and Compliance Certifications

and the Certified Credit Union Executive Designation. In her new role, Starks is responsible for directing and coordinating a broad range of activities including supervision, key position training, compliance, planning and budgeting.

**ALCOA WARRICK OPERATIONS**

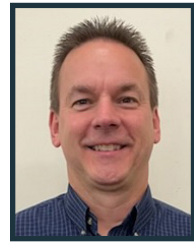
Alcoa Warrick Operations made hires in November:



**JIM GOODRIDGE**

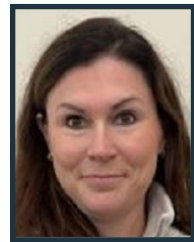
Jim Goodridge, Enterprise Account Management (eAM) Specialist, joined Alcoa Warrick Operations. He holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, and he will be instrumental in implementing Reliability Excellence (REX) model at Warrick. He reports to David Lee, Alcoa Warrick

Operations Land Manager/Lead Smelter Planner.



**ERIC LEBARRON**

Eric LeBarron, Logistics Planner, has extensive transportation and logistics experience, joining Alcoa from US TransLoCo. He holds a bachelor's degree in Management from the University of Southern Indiana. He reports to Jason Cunningham, Alcoa Warrick Operations Aluminum Plant Manager.



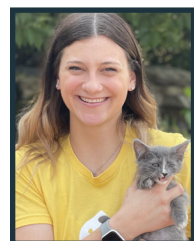
**MELISSA COMPTON**

Melissa Compton, Logistics Planner, is rejoining the Alcoa team. She became a Transportation Coordinator in October 2016, then went to Kaiser Aluminum when Alcoa sold the Rolling Mill portion of the business in April 2021. Compton holds a Bachelor of Science in Global Leadership from the University of Evansville. She reports to Jason Cunningham, Alcoa Warrick Operations Aluminum Plant Manager.



**LES MCCALLISTER**

Les McCallister, Electrical Engineer, is a graduate of Western Kentucky University with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering Technology. He will be instrumental in improving the electrical performance of equipment at Warrick. He reports to Eric Smith, Alcoa Warrick Operations Lead Engineer.



**MACKENZEE MCKITTRICK**

The Vanderburgh Humane Society received a 2024 Humane Society of the United States Community Cat Mentorship. Only six organizations in the entire country received Mentorships for 2024: two organizations in each of the three Mentorship categories. The Mentorship includes \$15,000 in grant funding, organization-specific training for VHS staff, and resources for building a definitive community cat program for the region. This will include discussions around high-volume community cat TNR (trap-neuter-release) and colony management in partnership with Evansville Animal Care & Control. Shortly before receiving word of this grant, the VHS had adjusted its staffing structure to support community cat programming. **Mackenzie McKittrick** has been with the organization for two years, with an additional 10-plus years of experience in veterinary technology, cat and kitten fostering, and community cat work. Her new title is Events & Outreach Coordinator.

**REXING COMPANIES**

Rexing Companies made new hires:



**ALEX FISHER**



**MICHAEL NEWSOME**

Alex Fisher, OTR Class A CDL Driver

Kein Neff, OTR Class A CDL Driver (not pictured)

Shawnee Sutherland, OTR Class A CDL Driver

Christopher Holub, LTL Business Development

Michael Newsome, Owensboro Spotter Driver

Dax Clary, Bulk OTR Class A CDL Driver (not pictured)

Damien Washington, Owensboro Spotter Driver

Destiny Ross, Owensboro Spotter Driver



**SHAWNEE SUTHERLAND**



**DAMIEN WASHINGTON**



**CHRISTOPHER HOLUB**



**DESTINY ROSS**



**BRIAN BURGESS**



**ERICA JACKSON**

**PORTS OF INDIANA**

Ports of Indiana filled two key executive finance roles with the hiring of Chief Financial Officer **Brian Burgess** and Vice President of Finance **Erica Jackson**. Burgess brings 35 years of strategic planning, financial analysis and budgeting leadership to Ports of Indiana, having most recently served as CFO of Fiserv Education, a division of financial technology company Fiserv, Inc. Before his tenure at Fiserv, Burgess assumed roles of increasing responsibility over 18 years with SLM Corporation and Navient, Inc. He earned Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration (MBA) degrees from Indiana University. Jackson played key financial leadership roles at Ports of Indiana from 2019 to 2021, first as controller and then CFO before joining the Indiana Department of Financial Institutions. Before Jackson initially joined Ports of Indiana, she was promoted into multiple accounting and human resources management roles for Blue Ribbon Transport, Kemba Credit Union and Automotive Finance Corporation. Jackson holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Toledo and will receive an MBA in Data Analytics from Indiana Institute of Technology in early 2024.

**DEALING WITH DEI PUSHBACK?**

Diversity, equity and inclusion work is a long game. Decades of inequality will not be solved in the short term. Those organizations that see DEI as their competitive advantage and double down on their commitments now will see long-term rewards for their efforts.

To handle DEI pushback consider rethinking your approach by:

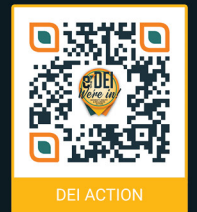
- **REFRAMING** DEI as building a culture of respect and inclusion rather than political or religious affiliations
- **REINFORCE** that DEI is not about telling you how to think, it's about respecting other perspectives
- **REENGAGING** early advocates and not letting the loudest, angriest voices represent your organization

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-handle-dei-pushback-julie-kratz/>



**ARE YOU IN?**

**TAKE THE E-REP DEI ACTION:**



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# LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

**The 2024 Indiana General Assembly kicks off in January.  
What are the issues facing the legislature as we begin  
the legislative session?**

Join us on Friday, January 5, 2024 for our annual legislative preview. E-REP's 2024 Public Policy priorities will be announced and legislators will be invited to share the top concerns they plan to address during the 2024 Legislative Session.

All Evansville Region Legislators have been invited to attend.

**JANUARY 5 | 7:30 - 9 AM**  
**BALLY'S EVANSVILLE**

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