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FALL-WINTER 2013

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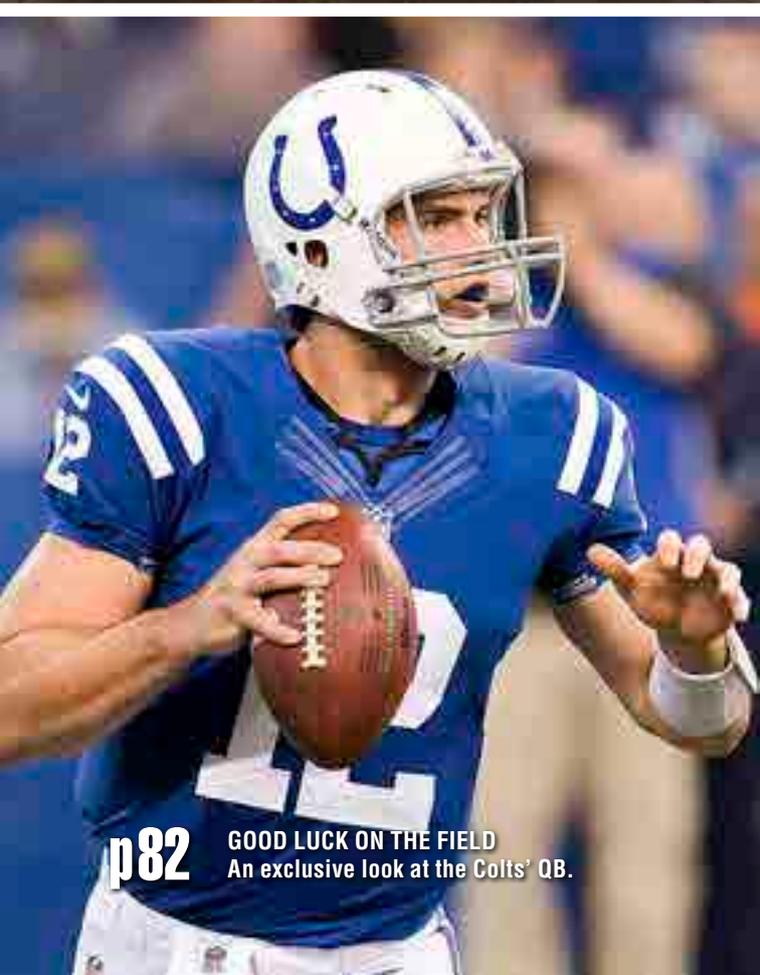
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Innovation and Growth

Award winners ensure a bright future for the region.

Our congratulations to the 2013 Northwest Indiana Society of Innovators honorees, who are making huge contributions to make our region and our world a better place. Among other things, this year's innovators introduced a "new steel" that is lighter and stronger, found new ways to share data to improve the quality of patient care, and embraced a team-based approach to problem-solving in manufacturing.

Innovation can be taught, says Stewart McMillan, president and CEO of Task Force Tips, named a Gerald J. Lamkin Fellow for Outstanding Achievement in Innovation and Service. "You must nurture a climate that is supportive of creativity," he says.

We also recognize the Northern Indiana 2013 Companies To Watch winners, a recognition sponsored in part by the Indiana Small Business Development Centers and the Indiana Economic Development Corp. These companies are exceptional, with projected growth that will be a welcome stimulus to our lagging Indiana economy.

Praise to healthcare professionals and the technology we have today to detect life-threatening illnesses. It is saving lives, and it has saved mine. I was diagnosed just recently with pancreatic cancer. Physicians at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis located my tumor using the same endoscopic ultrasound procedure now available at Porter Regional Hospital. Read more inside about the latest technologies and the hope they bring to those who are proactive with their

health. The key to surviving cancer and other life-threatening illnesses is early diagnosis.

The banking industry is growing, too, with new technologies such as mobile banking. Many younger customers embrace the technology, and though others resist, bankers are trying to ease their security and privacy concerns while continuing to offer face-to-face service.

We also offer, for auto enthusiasts, our first annual 2014 auto preview, as well as our annual Executive Gift Guide with lots of ideas for this year's gift giving.

We continue to mourn the loss of our great colleague and editor, Rick Richards, this past summer. He will be remembered as a vital part of our magazine's history.

In this issue we welcome a few new editorial contributors. Heidi Prescott Wieneke provides business news features, while sportswriter Ben Smith shares an *exclusive* interview with Indianapolis Colts quarterback Andrew Luck, who replaced Peyton Manning last season. We also welcome Mark Taylor, an accomplished journalist who wrote our excellent cover story. See page 6 for more about our contributing writers.

We look forward to more special reports, exclusive interviews and expanded distribution in 2014. Thanks for being a part of our success story—whether you're a reader or advertiser, editorial committee member or contributor, you have my commitment and I'm grateful to you. Enjoy our current issue!

—Glee Renick-May, Publisher

Meet Our Contributors

Jerry Davich has written about the last days of a woman with terminal cancer, flying in a U.S. Thunderbirds fighter jet at 9.2 G's, witnessing a forensic autopsy, and skydiving out of a plane with a tape recorder in hand. But his passion is for good old-fashioned storytelling through his *Post-Tribune/Chicago Sun-Times* newspaper column, which has garnered him more than 40 state and national awards. He also writes freelance stories, hosts the "Casual Fridays" radio show on Lakeshore Public Media.



For the past 10-plus years, **Shari Held** has crafted articles for magazines, newspapers, corporate newsletters and trade publications; written targeted web copy for businesses; fashioned blog posts; and created numerous other communications. She's covered events featuring mayors, governors and President Bill Clinton.

Small businesses always have an interesting story to tell, and **Kathy McKimmie** loves to tell a story. Every small business story starts with a vision that stokes the creative juices and ultimately the state's economy by meeting that all-important payroll. Kathy's also keen on antiques, collecting and all-things handmade, and writes regularly for an antiques publication. There, too, she's sharing someone's story, be it an auctioneer selling '50s furniture or a crafty person selling wares on Etsy.



She also has worked in government affairs and launched the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's *BizVoice* magazine.



Heidi Prescott Wieneke has worked at *The South Bend Tribune* for 19 years, spending most of that time as a business reporter. Her retail and restaurant column "Market Basket" has been around for more than a decade. The Erie, Pa., native graduated from Drake University in Des Moines and teaches journalism and magazine writing at Indiana University-South Bend.

Michael Puente has been an award-winning print, magazine and radio journalist for more than 20 years covering Chicago and Northwest Indiana. In 2004, he was named among the Top 50 "Most Influential People in Indiana Politics" by the *Howey Political Report*.



In 36 years as a sports journalist in Indiana, **Ben Smith** has been yelled at by Larry Bowa, lectured by Bob Knight and never let anything sway his unwavering conviction that sometime, perhaps within the current millennium, his beloved Pittsburgh Pirates would win again. Along the way he's interviewed people as diverse as John Wooden and Chuck Yeager, chronicled both the glory and final days of the iconic single-class Indiana high school basketball tournament, and covered the Indianapolis 500 since 1977.



Mark Taylor is a native Region Rat born in Gary and raised in Whiting and Hammond. He majored in journalism at Indiana University and was a staff reporter covering health and medicine for the *Post-Tribune* before joining Crain's *Modern Healthcare* magazine. Since 2007 he has edited a book on health-care fraud, served as restaurant critic for the *Post-Tribune* and freelanced stories for the *Chicago Sun-Times* and *Philadelphia Inquirer* and numerous health care business magazines.



Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly Magazine Testimonial

"On the Cutting Edge," an article written by Rick Richards, was published in the winter edition of *Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly*. That article put Don Keller, CEO of Tri-State Automation in Hammond, in contact with Doug Rassi, cofounder and president of Poly-Wood Inc. of Syracuse, Ind. Executives of the two companies met in early March at Poly-Wood's facility.

Doug Rassi was looking for a robotic welding integrator capable of providing a complete turnkey solution for his fast-growing outdoor furniture business. After reading Rick's article, Doug contacted Tri-State Automation and set an initial meeting between the two companies.

Tri-State Automation conducted a parts review, a feasibility study and a process review before presenting Poly-Wood with a CAD 3D simulation of a robotic welding solution that included three robots, tooling, programming and training.

This automated solution will allow Poly-Wood to expand its daily production capabilities by multiple times and lower its cost of production by improving accuracy in its welding process. Tri-State founder Don Keller says, "This project is a great way for two Indiana companies to come together and creatively solve a production roadblock." This partnership will result in a competitive advantage for Poly-Wood and has resulted in new hires for Indiana as Tri-State increases its staff. Founder Doug Rassi of Poly-Wood attributes the relationship to the article in *Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly*.

For more information on either of these companies please contact:

Tri-State Automation Inc.
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www.tristaterobotics.com

Poly-Wood Inc.
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Doug Rassi



Don Keller



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Around the Region

ACCOUNTING

Accounting firm of **Kruggel, Lawton & Co. LLC** has named **Barry Hall**,

CPA, CGMA, as its new managing partner and appointed **Daniel Smogor**, CPA, CGMA, as partner-

in-charge of the firm's South Bend office. Hall's role as managing partner will be to lead the firm's long-term strategy, plans for growth and overall management of the firm. He has been a partner with **Kruggel Lawton CPAs** since 2000. With more than 25 years of public accounting experience, he specializes in assurance, tax and consulting engagements for companies in the manufacturing, construction, transportation, wholesale, and not-for-profit industries. As partner-in-charge of the South Bend office, **Smogor** will oversee about 30 professionals who provide audit, tax, and business consulting services to clients. In addition, he will work closely with **Hall** to ensure overall goals and objectives are being met. **Smogor** has been a partner in the firm since 1992 and has over 30 years of experience providing tax advice and business strategy consulting for clients in a variety of industries.

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BANKING

Northwest Indiana Bancorp, the holding company for **Peoples Bank**, announced that the board has elected **Danette Garza** to the board of directors for a term that ends in April 2014. **Garza** fills a vacancy on the board of the **Bancorp** as well as **Peoples Bank** and is a certified public accountant as well as a licensed attorney specializing in corporate, estate planning and elder law. She is currently providing legal and consulting services as an independent contractor to the firm of **Austgen, Kuiper & Associates P.C.** and is the owner **Continental Languages LLC**. **Garza** earned a bachelor's degree with a concentration in accounting and an MBA from **Indiana University**, and her law degree from **Valparaiso University School of Law**. **Garza** is the chairman of the Investment Committee of the **Legacy**

Foundation serving on its executive board of directors and serves on the board for **South Shore Arts** as vice president of administration, and is a former board member for the **Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra** and **Forest Ridge Academy**. ... **NorthWest Indiana Bancorp** named **Benjamin Bochnowski** executive vice president and chief operating officer of the **Bancorp** as well as its operating subsidiary, **Peoples Bank**. Since joining **Peoples** in 2010, **Bochnowski** has had bank-wide responsibility for project management, strategic planning and enterprise risk management. ... **LaPorte Savings Bank** announced **Rob Zborowski**, CTP, of Valparaiso, is a recent graduate of the **Indiana Bankers Association (IBA) Commercial Lending School**. **Zborowski** is a Certified Treasury Professional and a Member of the **Association of Financial Professionals**. A graduate of **Purdue University**, he holds a bachelor of science degree from the School of Management.

COMMUNITY

Janis Regnier, chief volunteer officer of the **YMCA of Portage Township**, recently announced the appointment of **Christopher Aungst** as the next CEO of the **YMCA of Portage Township**.

CONSTRUCTION

MC Industrial, a national construction company specializing in industrial construction, recently announced the addition of industrial construction industry veteran, **Gary Jaslovsky**, who joined the firm as project director. **Jaslovsky** brings nearly 40 years of industry experience to **MC Industrial's** Portage location, and past clients include Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), Reliant Energy, Constellation Energy, U.S. Steel, Toyota and Wisconsin Electric. **Jaslovsky** holds a B.S. in chemical engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology and an MBA from Keller Graduate School.

DISTRIBUTION

Graybar, a leading distributor of electrical, communications and data networking products and provider of related supply chain management and logistics services, opened a new branch in Kalamazoo, Mich. **Graybar**, a Fortune 500 corporation and one of the largest employee-owned companies in North America, distrib-

utes electrical, communications and data networking products, and specializes in related supply chain management and logistics services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

St. Joseph County Airport Authority board of directors welcomed new board member **Dr. Jay Asdell** in September. **Dr. Asdell** is a board

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EDUCATION

Purdue University professor **R. Graham Cooks** received the 2013 Dreyfus Prize in Chemical Sciences. Cooks won the prize in recognition of his innovations in the field

of mass spectrometry and analytical chemistry. The international prize, given biennially by the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation, consists of \$250,000, a citation and a medal. **Cooks** is associated with several Purdue research centers, including **Bindley Bioscience Center**, the **Purdue Center for Cancer Research** and the **Center for Ana-**

lytical Instrumentation Development. ... Regina Biddings-Muro has been promoted to vice chancellor for advancement at **Purdue University Calumet**. In her role, she serves as the primary development, marketing and communications strategist for the campus. Biddings-Muro earned Purdue baccalaureate and master's degrees in communications at Purdue Calumet and is pursuing a doctoral degree in higher education and organizational change at Benedictine University in Lisle, Ill.

HEALTH CARE

Primary care physician **Shaily Macker, M.D.**, recently joined **Indiana University Health La Porte Physicians** and accepts patients at her Westville practice. **Dr. Macker**, board certified in family medicine, specializes in women's health along with providing expert care to patients of all ages. ... **Sherry L. Mosier, BSN, RN, CNRN, SCRNP**, stroke coordinator at **Methodist Hospitals**, Gary/Merrillville, has earned SCRNP certification through the **American Board of Neuroscience Nursing. ... Porter Health Care System** welcomes four new physicians to the hospital's network, **Porter Physician Group**. New physicians include: family medicine physician **Alex Alvarez, M.D.** who will be seeing patients at **DeMotte Physicians**; family medicine physician **Shane Bush, M.D.**, who will see patients at **Portage Medical Group**; **ENT Matthew Provenzano, M.D.**, who will be seeing patients at **Associated ENT Specialists** in Valparaiso; and family medicine physician **Annabel Yuen, D.O.**, who will see patients **Westchester Medical Group** in Chesterton. ... **Beacon Health System** welcomes **Ahmed Z. Elmaadawi, M.D.**, child and adolescent psychiatry, to the team of experts providing care at **Memorial Epworth Center**, in South Bend. **Beacon Health System** welcomes **Daniel Abel, M.D.**, family medicine, to the team of experts providing care at **Schwartz-Wiekamp Medical Group**. Dr. Abel received his

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Barry Hall



Lori Turner



Amjad Ali, M.D.



Saadia Alvi, M.D.

medical degree from **Indiana University School of Medicine** and completed his family medicine residency at **Community Health Network** in Indianapolis. **Lori Turner** has been named chief marketing, innovation & customer experience officer of Beacon. The health system welcomes orthopedic trauma surgeon **Christiaan Mamczak, D.O.**, who will join **Bryan Boyer, M.D.**, at **Beacon Medical Group Orthopaedic Trauma Surgery**. Also, Beacon welcomes **Vicente Gonzaga, M.D.**,

child and adolescent psychiatry, and **Narendra Singh, M.D.**, adult psychiatry, to Memorial Epworth Center in South Bend. **Beacon Health System**, the organization combining **Elkhart General Hospital** and **Memorial Health System**. ... **Methodist Hospitals** has hired renowned neurologist **Dr. Arif Dalvi**, who specializes in Parkinson's and movement disorders. ... **X-Ray Consultants (XRC) of South Bend** announced the addition of **Jonathan M. McCrea, M.D.**, to its radi-

ology practice. **Dr. McCrea**, board certified by the American Board of Radiology in diagnostic radiology, is a graduate of the **University of Notre Dame**, receiving his medical degree from the **Indiana University School of Medicine** in Indianapolis. ... **Saadia Alvi, M.D.**, has joined **Franciscan Medical Specialists'** department of endocrinology and is board certified in internal medicine and board-eligible in endocrinology. **Dr. Alvi** practices at the **Munster Medical Center** and at the **Francis-**

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can Medical Specialists Valparaiso office. ... **Arash Koochek, M.D.**, has joined Franciscan Medical Specialists' department of dermatology, is board certified in dermatology and practices at **Franciscan Medical Specialists** in Dyer. **Amjad Ali, M.D.**, has joined the Franciscan Medical Specialists' department of infectious diseases in Hammond. **Tapan Desai, M.D.**, has joined **Franciscan Medical Specialists'** department of pulmonary medicine and is located at the Munster Medical Center. **Amita Thakkar, M.D.**, has joined **Franciscan Medical Specialists'** department of rheumatology and is located at the Munster Medical Center and at **Franciscan Medical Specialists** in Schererville. ... **Methodist Hospitals** has been ranked as one of the best hospitals for 2013-14 in Indiana, Northern Indiana and the Chicago Metro Area by **U.S. News & World Report**. The annual *U.S. News Best Hospitals*

rankings, now in its 24th year, recognizes hospitals that excel in treating the most challenging patients. ... **Good Hospitality Services** recently donated exercise equipment to support the newly created client wellness program at **Porter-Starke Services**. The donation by the hotel management organization will provide clients of **Porter-Starke** the opportunity to improve both physical and mental wellness at the non-profit community mental health center's Valparaiso office. The **Porter-Starke** program was also supported by funding from the **United Way of Porter County** and additional donations and aims to help clients personalize their fitness routine in a familiar environment. ... **Michelle Rivera**, who had served as a registered nurse in the infusion department since 2009 before recently accepting the position of wound skin ostomy specialist in the education department, was

selected August Ambassador of the Month for **Franciscan St. Anthony Health-Michigan City**.

MANUFACTURING

Urschel Laboratories Inc. announced the appointment of **Rick Urschel** by the board of directors from vice president of operations to president/CEO. **Urschel**, fourth generation of the Urschel family, started working at **Urschel Laboratories** in 1991, and holds a management degree from **Purdue University**. ... **Bipin Doshi**, president of **Schafer Industries** in South Bend, has announced the appointment of **Thomas L. Troyan** as manager of the company's gear unit, where he is responsible for three plant locations including managing customer and supplier relations. **Schafer Industries'** gear division has plants in South Bend and Fort Wayne as well as in Rockford, Ill. **Troyan** has a B.S. in industrial management and

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engineering from **Purdue University**, and an MBA in operations from **Butler University**.

MARKETING

VIA Marketing was recently honored with a 2013 APEX Award of Excellence for creative work executed for the design and layout of its *VIA Idea* email template. Based in Merrillville, VIA Marketing provides online and offline marketing solutions that include all media, websites, graphic design, and public relations.

PHILANTHROPY

Esther Diaz has joined **Legacy Foundation**, a community foundation and philanthropic partner in Lake County, as its director of The Think Tank. **Diaz** joins **Legacy Foundation** with nearly 20 years of experience in both programs and nonprofit management. **Erika Fizer** has been welcomed as the foundation's program officer, and will be responsible

for the management of Legacy Foundation's scholarship program and grant administration. Fizer earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from **Indiana University** in Bloomington and a master's degree from **Indiana University Northwest**, where she studied nonprofit management and human services.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Longtime Northwest Indiana leader and educator **Bill Thon** and Dyer-based training and development company **NorthStar360** announced a strategic partnership. Thon, no stranger to training, spent more than eight years as executive director of the Corporate College for Ivy Tech Community College/ Northwest. Additionally, he served 17 years in various manufacturing, human resources and training roles at Rieter Automotive. **NorthStar360** helps businesses maximize their success

through comprehensive hiring practices and in-depth employee training and development programs.

REAL ESTATE

Bradley Company of South Bend welcomes **Angela Brister** as marketing director. **Brister** will manage and support marketing, communication and research initiatives across eight regional offices in Northern Indiana and Southwest Michigan and will coordinate marketing efforts and personnel in each of these offices to ensure continuity of brand and messaging in all departments, as well as elevate the marketing efforts and services to both **Bradley Company's** external and internal clients.

SMALL BUSINESS

FirstLight HomeCare of Valparaiso, a provider of non-medical, in-home care, recently opened its doors. Owners **Jim and Michelle Alex** offer services through **FirstLight**



GOLDEN RULE

No. 18

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TOURISM

Mark Newman, Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD) executive director, and **Speros A. Batistatos**, president and CEO for the **South Shore Convention and Visitors authority**, announced the 2013 Recognition of Service Excellence Awards (ROSE) at **The**

Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster. The ROSE Awards honor front-line employees who go above and beyond the call of duty on a regular basis. Presented by the **South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority**, winners include **Kimberly Uzelac, 54 Main Bistro; Gina Desadier, Ameristar Casino; Rebecca Jones, Cabela's; Lillian Soto, Comfort Inn & Suites; Linda Fiorenzo, Hampton Inn; Ray Matheny, Hilton Garden Inn; Dawn Gomez, Horseshoe Casino;**

Latoya Stubbs, Horseshoe Casino; Trent Pendley, Martin Binder Jewelry; Matthew Baker, Radisson Hotel; Margaret Ulloa, Teibel's Family Restaurant; Jill Albright, The Free Enterprise System.

TRANSPORTATION

Mayor **Karen Freeman-Wilson** of Gary announced appointments to the board of the **Gary/Chicago International Airport Authority** and welcomed the new appointment of

continued from page 42

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“YOU JUST HAVE TO KEEP TRYING”
Mike Falk of Falk PLI Engineering and Surveying brought sophisticated surveying instruments to the steel industry.

Honoring Innovation

It can happen anywhere, and take inspiration from nearly anything.

BY MARK TAYLOR

Innovation doesn't always begin in a laboratory. It can bubble up from a manufacturer's shop floor or rise from an office brainstorming session, or even be inspired by a mother's love for her ailing son. The 2013 class of inducted Fellows of the Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana includes successful entrepreneurs and executives or owners of multimillion-dollar businesses, academics, professionals and scientists. It also includes a fabled group of

decorated octogenarian World War II fighter pilots.

What they share is vision and a rare talent to diagnose and solve problems. Sometimes their efforts result in useful new products or unique ways to improve the world around us. The Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana, which sponsors the awards, counts more than 300 teams and individuals as members. From that group, individuals and teams are nominated and finalists selected to be honored as Fel-

lows or awarded the Chanute Prize for Innovation.

“The judges are dedicated to the proposition that innovation is important to the future of Northwest Indiana and they're willing to invest their time because they have a passion for encouraging innovation across all walks of life,” says John Davies, assistant director of the Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center at Ivy Tech Community College Northwest, which sponsors the Society.

“Anyone can be an innovator. And what we’ve discovered is that innovation is more prevalent than people think,” says Davies, who serves as the Innovation Society’s managing director.

Six individuals were inducted as Fellows and two teams shared the Chanute Prize for Team Innovation at a ceremony at Hammond’s Horseshoe Casino on Oct. 17. The Society is a project of the Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center of Ivy Tech Community College Northwest.

The Society of Innovators is helped by principal partners ArcelorMittal, Bukva Imaging, Doherty Imaging, Horseshoe Casino, Krieg DeVault, NIPSCO, *Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly* and the Times Media Co.

Nominations are submitted annually from Jasper, LaPorte, Lake, Newton, Porter, Pulaski and Starke counties.

GERALD I. LAMKIN FELLOW FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN INNOVATION AND SERVICE
Stewart McMillan, President & CEO, Task Force Tips, Valparaiso

Stewart McMillan, the 2013 winner of the Gerald I. Lamkin Fellow for Outstanding Achievement in Innovation and Service, believes that innovation can be taught. More accurately, he says, the word is “nurture.”

“You must nurture a climate that is supportive of creativity,” explains McMillan, the president and CEO of Task Force Tips in Valparaiso, one of the world’s leading producers of fire department equipment. “Not every idea is a good one. Ideas come out of something like a rock tumbler. You add rocks, soap and water, put them into a tumbler and when they come out, they’re polished. I love that metaphor: people rubbing against each other and playing off their ideas. It just takes the tiniest spark to light a fire. When you have people playing off each other, that spark turns into a blaze and then an inferno. Everybody in the room gets energized by

what they can do with each other.”

And by using tools such as collaborative software programs, a company blog and changing the dynamics for new product development, McMillan has created an environment that he says encourages Task Force Tips employees to be innovators and participate in new product design.

McMillan was the first full-time employee in a company started by his father, Clyde McMillan, in their family’s Hobart basement more than 30 years ago. He says Task Force Tips starts to foster a climate of innovation by opening the channels of

information company-wide.

“That’s what we do with employees,” he says. “You never know what question they will ask that will spark an idea. You have to teach people to be alert to listen and accept any idea as OK and not crush it, but look to see where it leads. Don’t tear ideas down. Accept and celebrate failure, because you learn from every failure. Leadership’s job is to make sure this happens and is not just talked about.”

An example of how that plays out at Task Force Tips is by now company lore.



“IT’S BEEN A BLESSING TO GET HIM GOOD NUTRITION” Julie Bombacino, founder and president of Just Food Blends, was inspired by the special needs of her son, who required tube feeding but needed better food choices.

PETE DOHERTY

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“King Arthur didn’t sit around with the knight at the ‘boat-shaped table.’ It was a round table,” he explains.

“We used to have a conference table that was boat-shaped. People moved and sat in different places around the table and I did an experiment to see where they sat. It was clear that they were uncomfortable sitting at the end of the table,” he says. “So one year ago, we ripped out the conference table and custom-built a 14-foot round table so everyone would feel equal. Everyone already knows where the power is, who the president is. But if you put yourself at the end of the table, you’re lost before you get started, because you put yourself in the position to crush any idea.”

TFT’s primary customer base is fire departments, mostly municipal, although many serve private employers. TFT also serves military and commercial aviation clients. He says the company’s focus is delivering



PETE DOHERTY

“IT JUST TAKES THE TINIEST SPARK TO LIGHT A FIRE” Stewart McMillan, president and founder of Task Force Tips in Valparaiso, holds a copy of the napkin on which his father drew up the company’s original business plan years ago.



SHAWN SPENCE SHAWNSPENCE.COM

“WE NEED TO POINT OUT IMPROVEMENTS IN RETURN ON INVESTMENT” Better patient outcomes are the top priority, but health-care innovations can make financial sense, too, says, Lisa Hopp, Ph.D., R.N., founding director of the Indiana Center for Evidenced-Based Nursing Practice at Purdue University Calumet.

products that make firefighters safer and more efficient. About 45 percent of TFT’s fire and aviation equipment is sold globally, with annual sales approaching \$40 million.

McMillan says he’s tired of hearing that American manufacturing is dead.

“We are still the world’s largest manufacturer and we’re becoming more efficient. We’re automating, producing more products with fewer jobs. It doesn’t mean manufacturing is dead. On the contrary, American manufacturing is growing dramatically. The cheap labor advantage of poorer countries will disappear,” he predicts. “And American innovation will come out on top.”

THE LAMKIN FELLOW

John Davies, assistant director of Ivy Tech’s Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center, says the Lamkin Fellow is awarded not for a single innovation, but for an accretion of power for good over many years. Lamkin is the visionary President Emeritus of Ivy Tech Community College and the prize in his name is awarded to encourage future dreamers, visionaries and innovators.

FELLOWS

Julie Bombacino, entrepreneur, founder and president, Just Food Blends

Julie Bombacino of Chesterton believes the old adage that necessity is the mother of invention. When her second child, A.J., was born with a brain malformation that caused repeated seizures, he was unable to chew and swallow food without aspirating and vomiting.

A.J. became one of an estimated one million Americans who require regular tube feedings that bypass the mouth and taste buds and go directly into the stomach.

However, when Bombacino fed A.J. the commercial feeding tube formulas, he had trouble digesting them. So, like many mothers of special-needs children, she searched the Internet for answers and found a “tribe” of caring parents and spouses of people who need tube feeding. Many offered helpful suggestions about blending fresh fruits and vegetables, fish and meats to offer nutritious meals for their loved ones.

“My son was not gaining weight,” she remembers about A.J., now 2 1/2 years old. “He’d tried eight different formulas before I started blending real food for him, and that made a world of difference.”

2013

innovation

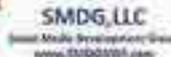
Ivy Tech Community College Northwest, which launched the Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center, joins with our Principal Partners to congratulate the 2013 - 2014 Members, Fellows and Chanute Prize recipients in The Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana. For information, contact O'Merrial Butchee, Director, at (219) 981-4942 or John Davies, Assistant Director, at (219) 981-1111, Ext. 2292.



Dr. Thomas G. Coley
Chancellor
Ivy Tech Community College
Northwest & North Central



O'Merrial Butchee
Director
Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation &
Entrepreneurship Center



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GERALD I. LAMKIN INNOVATION
& ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTER

Bombacino says the daily vomiting stopped almost instantly and A.J. was able to go to the bathroom on his own after months of constipation. "His skin color returned and he grew really well and fast on the food blends."

Then the light bulb flicked on, and in 2012 Just Foods was born.

Bombacino learned that the nearly

one million Americans requiring tube feeding consume almost \$3 billion annually in commercial formulas, formulas she said deliver little nutritional variety and often contain up to 50 percent corn syrup.

So she began experimenting, creating recipes for meals prepared with all natural, real foods for A.J., her firm's "Chief Inspiration Officer."

"It's been a blessing to get him good nutrition," she says. "But it isn't easy and traveling with fresh foods and a blender is challenging. It would be nice to have a convenient food option for him. We are trying to give people on feeding tubes access to real food with nutritional variety."

Bombacino says she believes Just Food is the first shelf-stable blended real food product for tube feeding. Her three real food meal options are processed at high heat and vacuum-sealed in plastic pouches to provide healthy options to commercial formulas. Bombacino says she raised capital to launch her company and found a firm in Oregon that agreed to produce her products, slated for release by year's end. She plans to deliver them to dietitians and nutritionists in hospitals and nursing homes to reach tube-feeding patients there and develop customers in those key market segments.

"Our goal is to demystify the idea of using real food in a feeding tube," she says. "Having these real food pouches as an option will help the families of people with feeding tubes."

Mike Falk, PE, LS - Founder and Owner, Falk PLI Engineering and Surveying, Portage

Falk-PLI Engineering and Surveying Co. was among the first to introduce fast, sophisticated and accurate new surveying instruments such as laser trackers and laser scanners to the steel industry. Founder Mike Falk says the new precision industrial alignment tools and his trained and experienced staff have helped steel mills locally and nationally to become more efficient and productive. The company now operates satellite offices in Mobile, Ala., and Pittsburgh, Pa., and is headquartered in Portage.

In a recent local news story, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence lauded Falk's firm, noting: "The success of innovative companies like Falk-PLI is proof that Hoosier ingenuity, paired with a prosperous business climate,



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can foster dramatic growth.”

Falk says laser trackers are replacing older methods of measurement and have freed his staff to examine problems differently. “The technology alone doesn’t solve the problem. It’s the people. Many others have failed with new technology because they haven’t freed themselves from the old technology methods and old approaches to problem solving.”

He says before the introduction of lasers, engineers and surveyors could take three camera shots in 15 seconds.

“Now we can take 150,000 shots in 15 seconds and the laser scanner can take 15 million shots. What is all that extra data trying to tell us? That everything in the world moves. But precisely how, when, where and by how much is what’s valuable to know.”

He says the new technology sometimes reveals structural and alignment problems that steel company execu-



“WE HAD TO BE INNOVATE OR DIE”
Nina Fonstein, Ph.D., has helped ArcelorMittal make lighter, stronger “new steel” a reality.

tives were unaware of. “We changed how to attack the problems.”

For example, Falk-PLI consults with

steel companies to provide alignment services when a new facility is being built. He said most of his clients cannot afford to buy and install new production equipment and must rely on older machinery. “We show them that they don’t always have to replace that equipment, but can improve its use and extend its life to become more efficient. We want to be a part of the solution.”

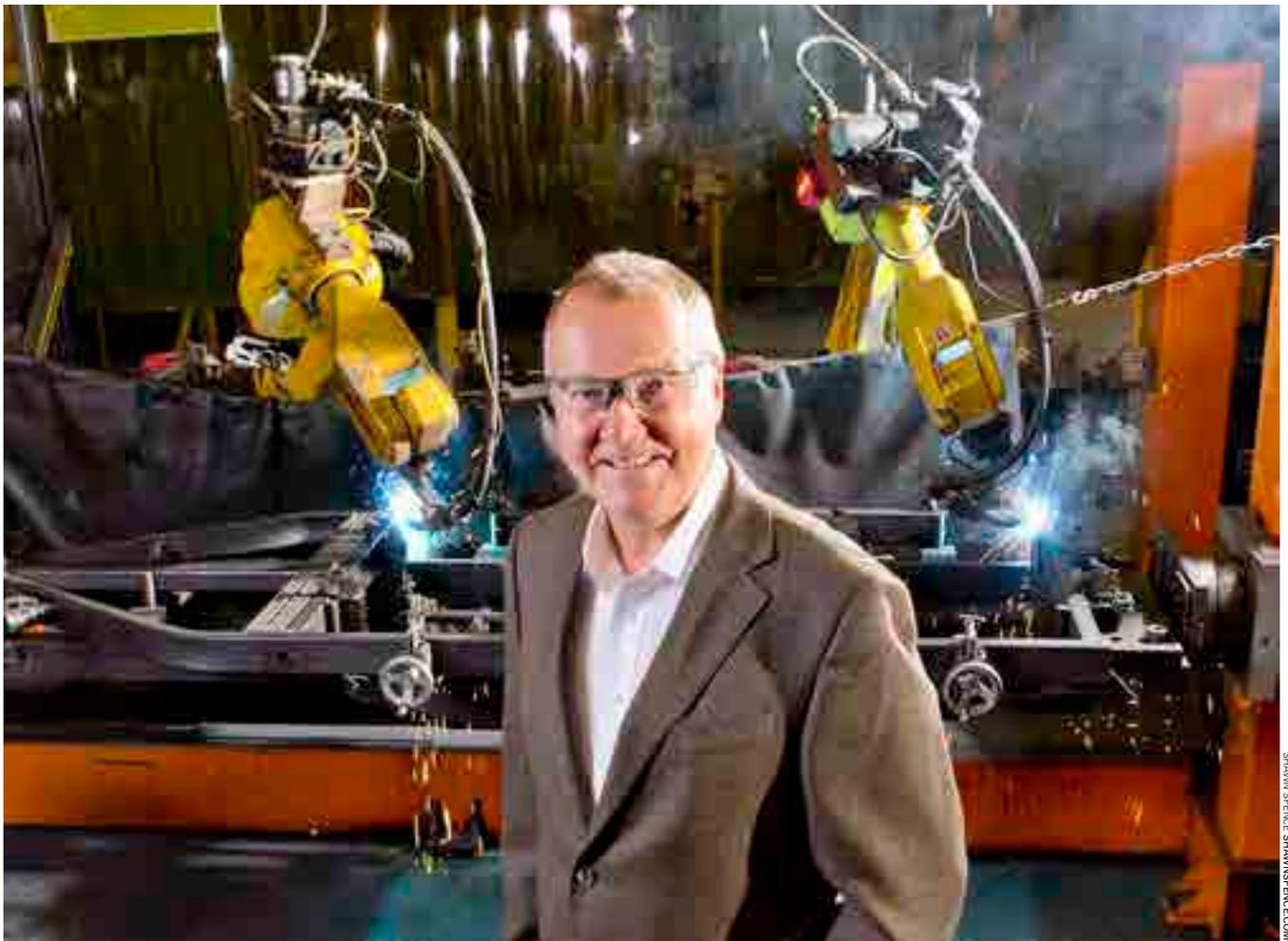
Falk-PLI owns 13 lasers and six laser scanners.

Falk, 52, a Bluffton native and Purdue University graduate, moved to Northwest Indiana with a gentlemen’s agreement to purchase a local engineering firm that hired him as a general manager. He was fired 18 months later.

“I cried in my beer, got back on the horse and launched Falk-PLI from my basement,” he recalls. The mark of an innovator, Falk says, is epitomized in his company credo: “You just have to keep trying.”

An advertisement for NIPSCO featuring a large white truck with a yellow crane arm. Four workers in yellow safety vests and hard hats stand in front of the truck. The text "Proud to be a Best Place to Work in Indiana" is written in orange at the top right. A circular graphic on the right contains the text "BEST PLACES TO WORK IN INDIANA 2013" and the NIPSCO logo. Two circular inset photos show people in office settings.

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“WE BELIEVE ROBOTICS WILL LEAD TO A RENAISSANCE IN AMERICAN MANUFACTURING” Don Keller is president and CEO of Tri-State Industries in Hammond, which makes robotics affordable for smaller companies.

Nina Fonstein, Ph.D., retired scientist, now consulting for ArcelorMittal Global Research & Development Center, East Chicago

Innovate or die. That’s the dilemma facing the U.S. steel industry.

“It is a point of survival,” says Nina Fonstein, Ph.D., one of the world experts on the “new steels.” “It’s no secret that there is huge competition in the steel industry. Some companies are facing big problems. To survive, every steel company has to increase the market share for its products. It’s vital for them to be better than their competitors. The new steels we are developing are a big part of this competitive edge.”

She says that new generations of cars will require breakthrough steels that are both lighter and stronger. And the American steel industry’s

ability to respond to those challenges has been aided by Fonstein and her team at ArcelorMittal.

Richard Sussman, Ph.D., Fonstein’s former boss and retired general manager of ArcelorMittal’s Global R&D Center, calls her “a pioneer among a generation of pioneers in different countries who helped introduce the so-called ‘new steels’ to the global steel industry.”

Sussman says Fonstein has been a scientist and technical manager in the steel industry for more than 45 years in Russia and the United States. She is a world-recognized expert in sheet formable steels for the automotive and agricultural industries; long products for cold heading of fasteners; and hot forging and high-strength low alloyed steels, especially for gas pipelines.

Today those steel products are

commonplace, allowing car manufacturers to produce lighter-weight vehicles that consume less fuel, are more energy efficient and create fewer carbon emissions. They also protect passengers better because of the increased steel strengths.

Fonstein, who wrote the world’s first book on the “dual phase steels” in 1986, says she couldn’t imagine then that steel could approach this level of strength, more than three times stronger today than in the ‘80s.

“The steel industry appears to be capable of creating strengths with properties we previously thought impossible,” she says. “It’s difficult to imagine how big this evolution has been in the steel and auto industries.”

From 1998 until her 2011 retirement she led the automotive steel product development group for what is now ArcelorMittal in East Chicago.

ArcelorMittal congratulates Nina Fonstein on her fellowship induction to The Society of Innovators!

S-in motion by the numbers

- 2 Number of years it took to complete the S-in motion design study
- 6 Number of worldwide research centers involved
- 43 Number of parts of a typical C-segment vehicle that can benefit today from S-in motion applications
- 6.23 Number of grams of CO₂ emissions reduced per kilometer driven by a car utilizing the lightest solutions from S-in motion
- 14 Percentage of overall total lifecycle CO₂ reduction for a vehicle utilizing the lightest solutions from S-in motion
- 14 Percentage of weight savings S-in motion can achieve for the body-in-white plus closures
- 22 Percentage of weight savings S-in motion achieve for the chassis solutions

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transforming tomorrow

Fonstein, who earned two doctorate degrees in the former Soviet Union in solid state physics and physical metallurgy, was awarded 20 patents in Russia and three in the U.S. Her reputation spread internationally with the publication of "Low Alloyed Dual-Phase Steels."

She headed the laboratory of the

I.P. Bardin Central Research Institute in Moscow from 1973-1998, when she left Russia. "We had to be innovative or die. Many research centers lost a lot of people, but we survived because we were the best," says Fonstein, now a consultant with Arcelor-Mittal. "Innovation is always part of my daily work."

**Lisa Hopp, Ph.D., RN,
Purdue University Calumet,
founding director of
the Indiana Center for
Evidenced-Based Nursing
Practice**

In 2004 Lisa Hopp observed a vexing problem: a gap in the knowledge level of nurses about what constitutes the best nursing practices. While the evidence-based medicine movement was growing worldwide, finding which practices worked best was harder in nursing.

Hopp knew that nurses spend more time with hospital and nursing home patients than physicians and have great potential to improve the quality of patient care and outcomes. Yet there were no U.S. academic or research centers for evidence-based nursing practices.

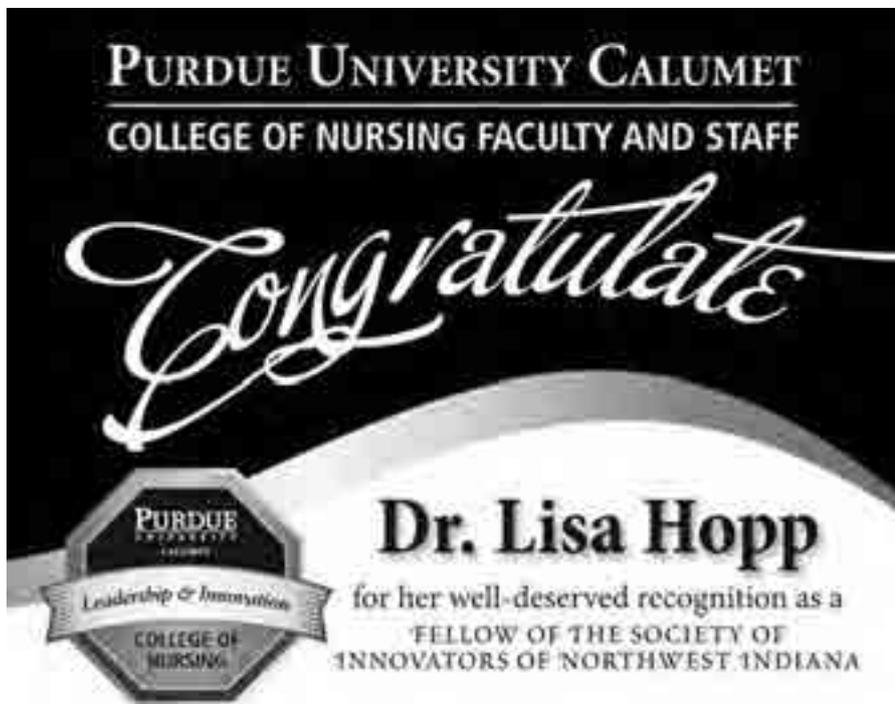
"I was focused on decisions that nurses make independently, finding the best evidence to support the kinds of things we needed to do and teach our students to do."

Then she discovered the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) of the University of Adelaide, South Australia. JBI is a global collaborative to promote the synthesis, transfer and utilization of evidence through effective health-care practices to improve healthcare outcomes.

Hopp had found her mission. She soon learned that JBI was planning to launch six centers worldwide. She went to her school's dean, Peggy Girard, to elicit support for Purdue University Calumet to become one of those centers.

"We agreed that we had the pieces in place and could assume a leadership role. PUC is a regional campus whose main mission is to teach," Hopp says. "We are not a research-intensive facility. This fits our mission, not to perform primary research, but to synthesize the research that exists, and help in transferring and implementing it."

Eighteen months later Purdue Calumet's Indiana Center for Evidence-Based Nursing Practice became the only such center in the Midwest, serving as a resource for nurses and



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**Congratulations
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Tri-State Automation would like to thank John Davies, Assistant Director, Gerald I. Lamkin I & E Center Ivy Tech Community College Northwest & Mark McLaughlin, Chief of Staff to Mayor Tom McDermitt Jr. Hammond Indiana

Visit www.tristaterobotics.com for more information



“I’M THE TYPE OF GUY TO TAKE A CHALLENGE” Edward Lambert Jr. has teamed up with Kemin Food Technologies to grow a new type of spearmint that’s a natural food preservative. Lambert is pictured with Kemin’s process engineer, Mindy Vanlaningham.

hospitals in more than one dozen states and integrating the best evidence-based practices into Purdue Calumet’s nursing courses.

Hopp says the center led to opportunities for training nurses, disseminating best practices and improving patient outcomes at hospitals throughout Northwest Indiana and Chicagoland through a program called the Evidence Implementation Fellowship in May 2012.

That program brought together

quality leaders, staff nurses and clinical nurse specialists from nine hospitals in Northwest Indiana and Chicago for a one-week boot camp. Teams identified specific hospital goals, such as reducing hospital readmissions for chronic heart failure patients, eliminating bed sores, preventing falls or cutting catheter-associated infections in their hospitals. The center offered help in implementing the best evidence-supported practices, and data analysis

and problem-solving support.

“All nine teams were successful. And some did some truly amazing things in improving outcomes,” she says. The program has improved patient care, for example, dramatically reducing patient readmissions for chronic heart failure patients at a LaPorte hospital and reducing catheter infections at several participating facilities.

“These conditions can cost hospitals a lot of money and sometimes peoples’ lives,” she says. “If you can avoid these catheter infections and reduce readmissions, you can recoup costs very quickly. In the future we need to point out improvements in return on investment, because you don’t have to even have amazing clinical results to achieve an improved return on investment.”

Don Keller, president and CEO of Tri-State Industries, Hammond

Growing up, Don Keller must have liked “The Jetsons.”

Like the iconic 1960s cartoon show, Keller envisions a world in which technology is used to improve the lives of Americans, particularly small manufacturers seeking a competitive edge. His new division, Tri-State Automation, is the first in Northwest Indiana and the Chicagoland area to refurbish and sell used robots to local manufacturers, one of only a handful nationally.

The Lake Village resident has been building a better mousetrap for 33 years at his firm’s parent company, Tri-State Industries, which operates five divisions in three buildings in Indiana and Louisiana. Tri-State produces rail car parts for Union Tank Co., welding trailers for several firms and through its JD Steel, operates a steel service center that buys bulk steel and cuts it to size.

Years ago Keller embraced the “Lean Manufacturing” continuous improvement process championed by Toyota and employs it throughout his businesses. Lean is a team-based approach to problem solving that requires supervisors to work closely

with other staff to improve safety, cut waste and improve efficiency.

Twelve years ago Keller purchased robots that now perform many of the welding operations and recognized a broader business opportunity. He says when Tri-State adopted robotics, the company found it difficult to locate vendors to help with maintenance, tooling and programming.

“As we struggled, we figured others were in the same boat. The big companies can afford to purchase new robots for up to \$200,000, work them for five or six years, then replace them with new ones. Small companies cannot. So we started a new division, Tri-State Automation, which offers training, technical support and programming, and purchases and refurbishes used robots.”

Keller says the 2-year-old automation division applies 30 years of manufacturing experience to its robotics clients.

“When we looked at robotics we saw that robotic welders can work

two to four times faster than a human being. Their productivity is off the charts and they don't get sick from exposure to smoke,” he says. “And quality improves. It's one of the most radical things any small company can do, the next big leap into technology.”

He says most robots aren't used for welding, but perform material handling, stacking and closing boxes or doors. “Welding robots comprise only 10 percent to 20 percent of the market, but will grow as it becomes more affordable,” Keller says. “We believe robotics will lead to a renaissance in American manufacturing.”

CO-RECIPIENTS, CHANUTE PRIZE FOR TEAM INNOVATION

The Chicago “DODO” Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen Inc., Ken Rapier, chapter president

The co-recipient of the 2013 Chanute

Prize for Team Innovation is not a scientific research team or technology wizard. But the Chicago “DODO” Chapter of the fabled Tuskegee Airmen knows something about teamwork and innovative thinking.

The Airmen, highly decorated African-American pilots who battled discrimination even as they fought bravely during World War II, is awarded the Chanute Prize for its Young Eagles Aviation Program. The Chanute Prize is named after French aviator and innovator Octave Chanute, whose 1896 flights along the Indiana Dunes paved the way for the Wright brothers and the growth of aviation. The Chanute Prize is co-sponsored by Krieg DeVault Law Firm, NIPSCO and Ivy Tech Community College Northwest.

The Chicago chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen launched its Young Eagles aviation program for Chicagoland youth at the former Chicago Meigs Field in 1994. Since then more



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than 14,000 youths have enjoyed free flights intended to encourage careers in aviation. The monthly program, which is operated in conjunction with the Experimental Aviation Association, moved to the Gary/Chicago Airport after Meigs Field was closed in 2003. The Young Eagles program also offers follow-up flight training and educational opportunities and mentoring to youths ages 8 through 17 interested in aviation. The flights are scheduled the second Saturday of the month, weather permitting.

"This is one of the best-kept secrets in Northwest Indiana," says Ken Rapier, 65, a Chicago pilot, flight instructor and president of the Chicago Chapter. Rapier was the first non-World War II pilot allowed to join the Airmen. He says the Young Eagles program goes beyond the free flights, which he says excite the imagination of young people of all races.

"The program also offers youngsters an opportunity to meet and interact with the original Tuskegee Airmen, some of our legends of history, who come when they're able. The Tuskegee Airmen stand for education and assisting young people," Rapier says.

Youths expressing strong interest in aviation after taking the flights become eligible for an online private pilot course, which they can take free of charge. And every year at least one youngster over 16 who has successfully completed that online pilot course receives a private flight training scholarship to obtain a pilot license. Other programs include a one week aviation youth program every summer at O'Hare and its Legacy Flight Academy to further pilot training.

Rapier says the chapter name "DODO" was adopted tongue-in-cheek by the Tuskegee Airmen after the extinct bird that lost its ability to fly. He says after proving their skill and valor during World War II, the pilots were often denied the opportunity to fly commercial aircraft because of their race. And like the dodo, seemingly lost their ability to fly.

He conceded that time is thinning the ranks of the Tuskegee Airmen. The 12 local surviving chapter airmen are between 87 and 93. "We're losing them at much too rapid a rate," he says. "Theirs' is a story that needs to be told and we're trying not only to preserve that legacy, but to continue it," says Rapier.

Kemin Food Technologies Inc., Des Moines, Robert Stomp, director of operations, and Edward Lambert of Lambert Farm, North Judson

This year's other Chanute Prize for Team Innovation co-recipient is responsible for creating, farming, harvesting and processing a new breed

CONGRATULATIONS



Michael O. Falk

President & CEO, Falk PLI

Recipient, 2013-2014 Innovation Fellow Award from The Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana, Ivy Tech Community College Northwest

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of spearmint that contains an antioxidant able to preserve the color, freshness and shelf life of foods.

Kemin Food Technologies, a family-owned agricultural products company based in Des Moines, Iowa, partnered with third-generation Starke County farmer Edward Lambert to grow this uniquely patented plant. These patented strains of spearmint produce an all-natural extract that replaces artificial products used to delay color and flavor loss and deterioration in human and animal foods.

Robert Stomp, Kemin's director of operations, says the project began in 2007 in the greenhouse stages and the first real crops were harvested in Starke County fields in 2012.

The commercial product, known by its brand name of Fortra, is a potent antioxidant known in the industry as a botanical extract. In 2012 Lambert Farms produced 80 tons of the spearmint extract on 225 acres and in 2013 Stomp says the farm doubled acreage and doubled capacity. Stomp says the water-soluble product can be used in vegetable oils, dairy beverages and products such as ketchup, as well as pet foods.

"The market for food antioxidants is enormous," Stomp says. He says that Kemin's first challenge was finding the right farmer partners, locations and agronomic practices.

"This isn't for people who aren't entrepreneurial. This isn't a publicly traded commodity like corn or soy. We worked together on the growth part. We were developing plant lines that would require great heartiness and survivability and weren't susceptible to plants or insects," he says.

Edward Lambert Jr. is a third-generation family farmer who, with his brothers, Dave and Chris Lambert, raises corn, soybeans, peppermint and spearmint on more than 3,000 acres in Starke County. Lambert says Kemin worked through the Indiana Mint Market Development Council, a trade group for mint farmers, to recruit farmers to plant, nurture and harvest the patented spearmint

plants. He says the Kemin plants are distinctly different from other spearmint he's grown whose oils are used by such companies as Wrigley and Colgate.

He says several other local mint farmers were approached by Kemin, but refused the opportunity to plant the new product.

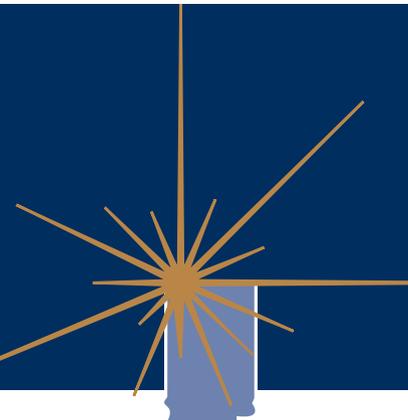
"I'm the type of guy to take a challenge. That's what it boils down to," he says. "Some people are happy with the status quo. But some like me are looking for the next new product. Now we have our process working well and we're ending our second full year. We've proven that this works." ■

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Companies to Watch

Northern Indiana companies with eye-catching futures.



BY STEVE KAEUBLE

They've innovated, they've found new niches and caught the leading edge of hot new trends. Among other things, the 11 Northern Indiana organizations on this year's Indiana's Companies to Watch roster have brought high-tech to sewers and historic buildings, state-of-the-art equipment to filmmakers, gourmet ingredients to chefs, trendy furniture to homeowners, even unusual spatulas to backyard barbecue aficionados.

Indiana's Companies to Watch were chosen by experts with the Indiana Economic Development Corp., the Indiana Small Business Development Center and the Edward Lowe Foundation. The 2013 list includes 33 privately owned companies that are beyond startup and are demonstrating strong, sustainable growth. As a group, they increased revenue by an average of 36 percent every year from 2009 to 2012, and grew their total employee count by 39 percent annually. They expect to



GETTING THERE IN STYLE Royal Excursion in Mishawaka offers comfortable transportation for groups as well as excursions to fun places.

add another 36 percent in sales this year, and boost employment by 23 percent.

Read on to learn more about the Companies to Watch from the northern tier of the state.

ATC TRAILERS

Updating and upgrading business practices has been a significant key to the success of Nappanee-based ATC Trailers. That, and unusual flexibility. For starters, though ATC is short for

Aluminum Trailer Co., the company is happy to build a trailer out of steel if that's what the customer wants—few other trailer companies can do that with all models.

As for processes and practices, lean manufacturing helps keep customers' costs in line and the company growing. ATC reduces overhead by stocking only the materials needed in the short-term, streamlining the production process and employing advanced quality control measures to reduce waste. The company, founded in 1999 and led by CEO Steve Brenneman, works closely with dealers on annual planning so that everyone's on the same page. And it's small enough to have strong, hands-on involvement of owners.

Smaller than a lot of trailer companies, yes, but definitely on the move. Revenues in 2012 were up 30 percent and employment was up 23 percent. Its employee roster is expected to grow from 123 to 140.

COMPLEXUS MEDICAL

Northern Indiana is a great place from which to serve the orthopedic device and implant industry, given the number of major players operating not far away in Warsaw. Complexus Medical makes the most of its prime location as it manufactures complex orthopedic instruments with multiple components and very demanding tolerances, and it's enjoying significant growth in the process. "We have increased employment by 46 percent in the last 18 months," says David A. Behrens, president. "We have almost doubled our sales in that same time period."

The company started out as a Mishawaka tool-and-die shop, was formerly known as F&F Machine Specialties, and it grew by machining orthopedic parts, taking overflow business for other companies. It built its capabilities and expanded its business, and it works on a continual basis to improve on function, cost and time to market. "We have also invested heavily in new machining technologies and plant expansion," he says.



FROM LOBSTER TO VEGAN Integrative Flavors of Michigan City offers gourmet soup bases that simplify the work of chefs.

It takes a lot of talent to succeed in an environment with such exacting standards, and Complexus benefits from developing and hanging onto that talent. "The most important element to our success is our employees," Behrens says. "We still have employees here from 1990 when I bought the company."

EMNET LLC

There's nothing terribly high-tech about sewers, right? Wrong. You could say that South Bend-based EmNet LLC has put information technology down the drain, and it's saving municipalities millions and millions of dollars.

Ancient wastewater and stormwater sewer systems are causing trouble across the nation, because in times of heavy rainfall combined systems can become overwhelmed, overflowing raw sewage into rivers and other waterways. Upgrades aimed at eliminating these problems can cost millions or even billions of dollars—some experts estimate that in total, American sewer systems are in need of at least a trillion dollars' worth of upgrades.

EmNet has a different approach,

using smart sewer technology to monitor, gather and analyze real-time intelligence and use optimization to minimize the overflows. With its technology, sewer operators can maximize the infrastructure they have, putting off the need for costly upgrades. The technology helped its hometown of South Bend save \$100 million in infrastructure upgrades—enough to catch the attention of *Fast Company* magazine. Other Indiana cities that have signed on include Fort Wayne, Elkhart and Evansville. Growth prospects are high, and EmNet is exploring opportunities across the country.

FRATCO INC.

Back in the early 1970s, FRATCO Inc. saw the writing in the clay. The Francesville company was a maker of clay drainage tile, and switched to the manufacture of plastic pipe instead. These days, plastic is the standard, so the move was a smart one, setting FRATCO up for growth rather than extinction.

Today, the company makes a wide range of corrugated pipe and related components. It has grown by adopting new manufacturing technologies,



BIGGER JOBS, LOWER COSTS Protective Coatings of Fort Wayne adds linings to pipes and tanks to prevent corrosion.

finding new applications that need specialty products and moving into new markets. The company had 101 employees in 2012 and was expecting to have 110 on the payroll this year. It recorded annual growth of 30 percent between 2010 and 2012.

Christopher S. Overmyer, president, says the company has its people to thank for a lot of its success. “We understand that in some ways, the

business is a family,” he says. “Recognizing and treating employees as important, intimate cogs in the machine goes a long way to promote buy-in and morale.”

Working in Indiana is another plus, he says. “It’s a great place to find employees who work honestly and are proud of what they do, and a great place to find customers who are loyal and appreciate growing

with us. In Indiana, the word ‘values’ still has meaning.”

INTEGRATIVE FLAVORS

This Michigan City company has been making food bases since the 1930s, and early on it manufactured bouillon for World War II military rations. Today, it serves chefs with a wide range of soup bases and related products.

“We don’t try to be everything to everyone,” says the company’s president, Georgeann Quealy. “We focus our efforts on opportunities that are in alignment with our company vision.”

That said, its gourmet product line is diverse—from chicken base to lobster base to organic vegetable base to natural vegan bacon-flavored base. There are products with reduced sodium, products that avoid the eight most common allergens, gluten-free bases, natural and organic bases, products without MSG, and choices aimed at vegetarians and vegans.



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Innovation is the name of the game, according to Quealy. "We tend to focus more on what we're planning to do than what we've done in the past. We're looking at growth in the future that translates into hiring and greater opportunities."

KESSLER CRANE INC.

Talk about explosive growth—Kessler Crane in Plymouth got its start about 10 years ago, had a couple of employees six years ago, and is up to 48 now. Clearly there's quite a market for the kinds of filmmaker tools the company makes.

President Eric H. Kessler says the secret to the company's success is "the dedication to truly innovate tools that help people do their jobs, and dedication to offering the highest level of customer service possible." Those tools include tripods, slider and dolly equipment, motion control devices, cranes and related accessories.



PERFECT FOR TAILGATING Sportula Products of Warsaw makes spatulas carrying the logos of sports teams.

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The company's lightweight equipment pairs nicely with the digital technology that has become the industry norm. And its motion control system was the first on the market in a price range more accessible to the average filmmaker. According to Kessler, some of its competitive edge comes from its Indiana address. "Indiana offers a large diversity of skilled workers as well as suppliers, at the same time at a lower cost than other places in the U.S."

PROTECTIVE COATINGS INC.

"In order to achieve success in today's marketplace, I believe you must have perseverance and integrity in all you do," says Michael Murrell, president of Fort Wayne-based Protective Coatings Inc. "The customer must know that what we say we can do, we will do to the best of our ability."

Protective Coatings, which lines pipes and tanks to prevent corrosion, must be delivering on those promises, because it's growing at impressive rates. According to Murrell, sales were about \$5 million in 2011 but about \$11 million in 2012 and 2013. Employment has grown from 25 in 2011 to 42 today.

New technologies have helped the company cut labor-intensive steps from its manufacturing process, boosting productivity and allowing speedier delivery. And it upgraded processes to allow it to line the inside of much longer pipes, which helps customers reduce their installation costs.

The company started in 1958 and was originally focused only on lining tanks. That's a cyclical business, so the company found related areas in which to expand. It now provides molded rubber parts, specialized belts and single-ply rubber roofing systems, among other things.

It has stuck with its Indiana location, though. "Indiana is a business-friendly state," Murrell says. "Whenever we have had an opportunity to expand our business, we have been afforded the chance to make our case to the government agencies that have oversight, and



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ROYAL EXCURSION

Want to get where you're going safely and in style? Shannon Kaser's company can help. Kaser is president of Royal Excursion in Mishawaka, which offers motorcoach transportation for executive groups, sports teams, families and just about any other kind of group. The company will also give you a lift from South Bend, Mishawaka or Elkhart to the Four Winds Casino for a couple of bucks.

Royal Excursion was founded in 1988 and maintains a fleet of motorcoaches, limos, SUVs and cars that can provide transportation for groups of varying sizes. It built upon its business by offering event packages, such as a "Mystery Tour" in October and a trip to Pigeon Forge, Tenn., next May.

According to Kaser, the company had revenues of \$25,000 its first year, by 2005 had moved the decimal point two places over for \$2.5 million revenues, and was up to \$9 million last year. It grew from a single employee in 1998 to 120 last year.

It's those people that make the difference, Kaser says. Yes, its vehicles are luxurious, but "we rarely get feedback on our high-end equipment—90 percent of the time it is about our people. Customers come back because of the relationships they build with quality people that care."

Indiana's central location is a great advantage, too, for a company that relies on ground transportation. "We are in a good part of the country," says Kaser. "We can travel almost anywhere in a day. This gives customers the opportunity to use our services over air travel and other transportation means."

SPORTULA PRODUCTS

Take one guess what the company called Sportula Products makes. Yes, it's really what it sounds like. It may never have occurred to you that there's big money in spatulas carrying the logos of sports teams, but it's certainly working out for David Bazzoni, president of parent company iDNA Brands.

The Warsaw company has a product catalog celebrating different sports teams from Indiana and Purdue universities to Notre Dame to select NASCAR teams to all major league baseball, football and hockey teams. There are also specialty spatulas for moms, dads, firefighters, police and people from Texas. Beyond spatulas, there are complete sets of barbecue tools as well as coasters.

"We live out our dreams because we have the right people to make those dreams a reality," Bazzoni says. Those dreams are getting bigger all the time, he adds. "In 2014, we

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STRATASHOPS

These days there are many home décor ideas passed around on websites such as Pinterest, among many others, and a lot of the ideas are focusing on higher-end outdoor settings. Buyers are not only doing their furniture research online, they're more and more comfortable making their actual furniture purchases from their computers, too.

Enter StrataShops. The Elkhart company founded in 2008 runs a family of several online shops that focus on furniture, much of it for outdoor use but plenty for indoor comfort, too. To name a few, WickerCentral.com has all-weather wicker furniture, TheLivingQuarters.com features various kinds of casual patio and indoor furniture, and StoneCrestFurniture.com specializes in furniture made of recycled plastic. And, with the holidays coming up, there'll be a lot more traffic perusing the company's ChristmasEveTrees.com selection of artificial Christmas trees and accessories.

StrataShops is a slim operation. That's because it partners with vendors that can ship directly to customers rapidly and at reasonable prices—there's no inventory at all. Employment has moved from seven in 2012 to an expected 10 this year. Founder and president John Webber has a decade of experience in web and business development, getting his start with a maker of hacky sacks and moving into web development and Internet marketing.

UNION STATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Kevin Smith has long had an interest in South Bend's Union Station. After he graduated from Notre Dame in the late 1970s, he bought the no-longer-used property to house his family business, Deluxe Sheet Metal. The business moved into the freight part of the station, and Smith renovated the passenger side to host events.

But though passenger rail traffic had

faded, a new kind of traffic moved in during the late 1980s—communications and data traffic, handled by carriers that needed a place to add and drop traffic and boost signals. By 2003, the business had evolved into Global Access Point, a hub for digital information serving data centers and others in need of its state-of-the-art connections. Lots of fiber

runs through South Bend, making it an ideal geographic location for a hub like this.

Expect lots more growth, as the company's services continue to expand. The company purchased property at the nearby former Studebaker plant, where Smith hopes to grow a first-class technology center. **BQ**



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Growing Up With the Business

Accraline's second generation looks toward a healthy future.

BY HEIDI PRESCOTT WIENEKE

When two machinists opened a small tool-and-die shop called Accraline in the late 1960s in downtown Bremen, residents who casually strolled past the storefront would stop outside the front doors, which were usually propped open, and peer inside to watch the activity. Many people in this Marshall County town had never seen the kind of heavy-duty industrial machine that Richard Cormican and his business partner, Duke Florian, used to machine castings and tooling plates. The friends had taken out a small business loan, using their homes in South Bend for collateral, so they could buy a Giddings & Lewis horizontal boring mill.

To make ends meet back then, Cormican kept his day job at another local machine shop and worked nights at Accraline, a business name derived from the words “accurate line.” The pair would split Cormican’s check to pay the bills, support their families and invest in their startup machine-by-machine, customer-by-customer.

Today, the privately held company that still calls Bremen home is managed by Cormican’s sons, Cris and Mark. The company still makes components, tools and fixtures, but its customers have become much bigger companies than Accraline served in its early years. The very first customers were other machine shops in the region, but Accraline grew in capability and capacity over the years to make components for hundreds of customers, including U.S. companies such as Caterpillar, General Electric, and overseas customers.

“Dad and his business partner worked for the local shops that needed larger parts built because their machines could handle larger parts than the average shop. They found a way to fill a niche or gap,” says Cris Cormican, general manager. “It’s like hammers. Everyone has a hammer, but only 1 out of 10 has a sledgehammer in the drawer. They kept expanding the shop so they could handle bigger and bigger capacities.”

The brothers literally grew up learning the business. Cormican remembers heading to the machine shop before dawn when he was in elementary school to help his dad dig holes to pour the foundation so they could install the boring mill.

He used to sleep on the 40-minute drive from South Bend to Bremen, because, really, how many 9-year-olds would look forward to that kind of work on a Saturday morning? But



STEVE WEAVER

everyone helped out in this family-run business. Cormican remembers his mom assisting with the books by hand and hanging purchase orders on a board nailed to a wall. Now, of course, that’s done using computers.

“My first real job was running a drill press for a penny a hole. Looking back, that was the best education





“THE BOTTOM LINE OF STAYING IN BUSINESS IS YOUR CORE” says Cris Cormican, general manager of Accraline, cofounded by his father, Richard, the company’s president. Cris’ brother Mark (left) is plant operation manager.

a person could ask for,” says Cormican, who later attended Franklin College pursuing a degree in business management.

From its roots in a 3,000-square-foot downtown storefront, Accraline moved and expanded in 1974 to a building double that size in an

industrial park on West Bike Street that offered more land for future physical expansions. Cormican says the company expanded about every 10 years through the 1980s, which was the decade Cris and Mark joined the company. “We added on for more machinery, more space, more

volume. And over time we became a contract tool shop,” Cormican says.

The business purchased its first computer numerical control machine in 1980, but Accraline continues to use manual machines for many of its custom orders. Some of those manual machines have been refurbished in-

ACCRALINE BY THE NUMBERS

Number of employees: 22

Number of customers: Hundreds

Machine Capacities: Over 10 feet

Weight Capacity: 40,000 pounds

More company info: Accraline has nine bridge cranes, 50,000 square feet of floor space, and more than 50 machines, including large and small machine tools, mills, lathes, and grinders.

ACCRALINE TIMELINE

1968 – Accraline founded in downtown Bremen

1970s – Accraline moved to Bike Street

1974 – Plant 1 was built with 4,800 square feet

1976 – Admitted into the National Tool, Die & Precision Machining Association

1977 – 3,200 square feet added to Plant 1

1980 – Accraline bought its first CNC machine

1982 – 3,200 square feet added to Plant 1

1986 – 6,400 square feet added to Plant 1

1989 – Became a certified supplier for Caterpillar

1990 – U.S. federal trademark registration was filed for Accraline

1991 – Accraline acquired Plant 2

Mid 1990s – Cormican family took complete control of Accraline

2005 – 2,900 square feet added to Plant 1

2008 – Plant 3 was built

2009 – 5,800 square feet added to Plant 1

house many times by the 20 journey-men tool-and-die makers employed by the company, Cormican says.

U.S. federal trademark registration was filed for Accraline in the 1990s, during which time the Cormican family took complete control of the company. The business complex now comprises about 50,000 square feet in three separate buildings, where the company makes tools, fixtures and components for several hundred customers.

“The bottom line of staying in business is your core. When people

“We’re a small company on steroids.”

— Cris Cormican

have heard about you, worked with you for 20 years, and they feel good about you doing a good job, that’s what keeps you going,” Cormican says. “Then it takes handing it down to the second generation.”

“You have to have someone who feels the same way you do about the business and won’t take it in a different direction. I remember my dad calling me up and asking me if I wanted to come work for him. You could say he needed me, and he made me an offer I couldn’t refuse,” Cormican says. “There’s a very old saying that goes, ‘You do what you do best.’ Mark and I knew what formula had worked for them.”

Accraline ramped up in 2008 to be able to produce more components for more customers. But the recession did not spare their company, and Cormican says sales were dras-



tically reduced. Sales still haven’t improved to pre-recession figures.

“It has been very challenging,” he says. “We’re only running the shop at 50 percent capacity. So we’re set up to go big. We’re a small company on steroids. And now we’re seeing companies ramping up again. There seems to be a renewed confidence in the economy that we see throughout manufacturing both in the U.S. and abroad.”



GROWTH POTENTIAL A 20-year journeyman tool and die maker stands at a CNC large-capacity horizontal floor mill, in the process of finish-machining a 20-ton press housing.

Some of the company's one-of-a-kind, custom-built parts include the tools and fixtures for handling gas power-generated turbines that are larger than locomotive trains. Simple parts can take five minutes to build; complex parts can take five months. "We've built and load-tested lift fixtures to handle 120,000-pound turbine parts," says Cormican, who also

describes the recent completion of a 28,000-pound forging press component. "Different shops have different specialties, and the variety of parts is so overwhelming."

By the end of the year, as part of the company's continued growth and expansion, Cormican says Accraline hopes to implement the ISO 9001 process-based quality management

system that has been requested by many of its customers.

"The thing about this industry is how it's still so foreign to the general public, even though machine shops came along in the 1800s during the Industrial Revolution," Cormican says. "There's nothing man-made in this world that doesn't pass through the machine shop. And my goal is for our shop to be around for another 45 years." **BQ**

continued from page 15

Lake County's representative on the board. Appointments include **James Cooper**, vice president and account manager at **JP Morgan Chase** in Chicago; **Denise Dillard**, (Lake County appointment), vice president of government and external affairs at the **Methodist Hospitals**, where she also previously served as the vice president of human resources; **Michael Doyne**, president of **Doyne's Marine Inc.**, in Portage; **Shontrai Irving**, attorney at **State Farm** insurance in Crown Point; **Alesia Pritchett**, director of business services/grant management for the **School City of Hammond**.

BRIEFS

NIPSCO Warns of Phone Scam Targeting Utility Customers

Spurred by customer reports, NIPSCO is warning customers about a bill payment scam in which victims are

asked to purchase a prepaid debit card to settle an overdue balance. Customers have reported receiving unsolicited phone calls from individuals falsely claiming to be NIPSCO representatives. The scammers threaten disconnection of the customer's electric service if an immediate payment is not made. They direct the customer to purchase a prepaid debit card—many reports specifically reference a “Green Dot Debit Card”—and call back with a receipt and PIN, giving the scammers access to the card's funds. Both residential and business customers have been targeted by the scammers. A number of reports have come from Spanish-speaking customers.

In an effort to keep customers safe from scams, NIPSCO reminds customers:

- NIPSCO never asks for customers who are behind on payments to purchase a prepaid debit card to avoid disconnection. Customers have the

following payment options: online, by phone, by mail or in person at one of NIPSCO's authorized payment locations.

- Never give personal information, including Social Security numbers and banking information, to unconfirmed sources. NIPSCO only asks for a Social Security number when a customer is applying for new service.
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Health care technologies improve diagnosis, treatment and patient comfort.

BY BOB KRONEMYER

If you haven't been a patient at one of the area's health care facilities recently, you might be surprised just how technology-centered they have become for the diagnosis and treatment of many serious health conditions. Robot-assisted surgery allows for a more precise and minimally invasive bariatric surgery for morbid obesity, while nuclear medicine is being used to image a woman's breast more accurately to detect breast cancer. Adding to the mix are hybrid operating rooms for multiple procedures and a trio of new technologies for screening and diagnosing patients with lung disease. There are even digital billboards on busy streets notifying potential emergency-room patients of the wait time.

In September, Porter Regional Hospital in Valparaiso became the first Northwest Indiana facility to offer endoscopic ultrasound as primarily a diagnostic tool for more detailed imaging of structures of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract, according to gastroenterologist Rajeev Tummuru, M.D. "Our patients no longer need to be referred to Chicago or Indianapolis," he says.

Although typical external ultrasound, or even CAT scans and MRIs, can render fairly good imaging, "for areas like the pancreas and the bile duct, endoscopic ultrasound provides for closer imaging from inside the body. "You can achieve much crisper images," Dr. Tummuru says. A diagnostic endoscopic ultrasound takes between 20 and 30 minutes, with monitored anesthesia care (usually conscious sedation).

"Often, patients have their gall



LESS PAIN, MORE SAFETY Gerald Cahill, M.D., uses daVinci Surgical System technology for robotic-assisted, minimally invasive bariatric surgery.

bladder removed, due to stones in the gall bladder," Dr. Tummuru conveys. "However, every once in a while, people can have continued difficulties from a stone that remains in the common bile duct, which is very difficult to observe during surgery. Endoscopic ultrasound allows us to detect these stones and determine if a follow-up procedure to extract the stone is warranted."

Likewise, if a CAT scan or an MRI shows a possible mass or abnormality of the pancreas, endoscopic ultrasound allows a more precise diagnosis of the mass or cyst, including whether it is cancerous or not. In addition, if a person has an upper endoscopy that detects a nodule or

lump or bump in the stomach, the technology can examine the suspicious growth more closely.

"We also have the ability to take a biopsy during the procedure," Dr. Tummuru notes. "We are able to detect certain cancers such as pancreatic and in some cases bile duct cancers at an earlier stage than traditional imaging. Earlier usually equates to smaller size. Especially for cancer management, endoscopic ultrasound is an established part of staging certain types of cancers, including pancreatic, esophageal and rectal cancers. Therefore, I can help a surgeon determine whether or not a mass is able to be removed surgically. I can also assist an oncologist

in assessing how advanced a cancer is, for treatment planning.”

One popular therapeutic application for endoscopic ultrasound is cyst drainage, which takes about 45 minutes. “Some patients who have had multiple episodes of pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) can develop a persistent fluid collection,” explains Dr. Tummuru, who is able to drain these internally through the GI tract as opposed to a drain protruding from the skin. And for patients suffering from chronic pain resulting from cancers, endoscopic ultrasound can be used to inject medications directly into some of the nerves around the pancreas for pain relief.

In July, Memorial Hospital of South Bend opened two hybrid operating rooms. “We are now able to conduct endovascular treatments in a genuine sterile, operating room setting, using state-of-the-art fluoroscopy (real-time x-ray),” says Michael Hall, M.D., an interventional radiologist for Beacon



A GPS FOR DIAGNOSING AND TREATING LUNG CANCER Bharat Barai, M.D., **touts technologies that are both safer and more effective.**

Health System, the parent organization of Memorial Hospital of South Bend and Elkhart General Hospital.

Memorial Hospital has a high trauma population, in which patients need interventions to treat bleeding and also may need interventions to treat fractures or abdominal organ injuries. “It is not uncommon for these patients to require combined interventions, with surgeons working from the outside of the body and interventional radiologists working from the inside of the body, typically in blood vessels,” Dr. Hall says. For these complex patients, several procedures can now occur simultaneously in the hybrid operating room (OR): the repair of a torn artery, a neurosurgeon removing blood from the brain and an orthopedic surgeon fixing a broken femur. “Patients with complex injuries and complex vascular disease can now receive all of their treatments in one place,” Dr. Hall states.

Another common use for the hybrid

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operating suite is to treat abdominal aortic aneurysm (when the aortic blood vessel becomes enlarged). Surgeons and interventional radiologists work together in the hybrid OR to repair the aneurysm. "Instead of a large abdominal incision, the groin arteries are surgically exposed and wires, catheters and stent grafts are used to exclude an aneurysm," Dr. Hall says. The hybrid ORs are also used for patients with peripheral vascular disease who may need a stent placed in their pelvic artery, followed by a surgeon performing a bypass in the thigh.

"Previously, a portable x-ray unit would be moved into a typical OR, which did not provide the most optimal imaging for the procedures we were doing," Dr. Hall explains. "But now, state-of-the-art imaging is built into our hybrid ORs. Better imaging improves patient care and safety."

Stroke patients and patients with intracranial aneurysms will also be treated in these hybrid ORs. Historically, these patients were often transferred to another center. "I think having hybrid ORs lowers cost to some degree because we can keep these patients here rather than arranging complex air transportation to other facilities," Dr. Hall conveys.

In January, Community Hospital in Munster became the first hospital in Indiana to offer advanced positron emission mammography (PEM), a high-resolution, positron emission tomography (PET) scan of the breast to determine if cancer is present or not. However, unlike conventional imaging (mammography and ultrasound), PEM requires an injection of a radioactive nuclear medicine "that in cancer cells is going to be handled differently than in normal cells," says Mary Nicholson, M.D., a fellowship trained, dedicated breast radiologist and regional director of breast imaging services for Community Healthcare System, which also encompasses St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart. "This results in cancer cells greedily taking up the medicine and accumulating the medicine over the time of the imaging.

Conversely, cells that are not cancerous will release the medicine. Hence, the specificity rate is very high."

In comparison, an MRI uses a contrast material to show differences in blood flow but does not indicate how cells are acting and is not as specific as PEM to demonstrate whether cells are cancerous or not.

PEM is used in patients who have

already been diagnosed with breast cancer to assess the extent of disease, which in turn may affect the surgical management. "At times, we have detected a second site of cancer in the same or opposite breast," Dr. Nicholson says. Masses as small as 1.6 mm (the size of a grain of rice) can be identified. "With mammography, you typically do not detect

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masses that are that small," she says.

Imaging takes roughly two hours and patient discomfort is minimal. "We not only image the breast, but can acquire information about the lymph nodes, which is helpful in determining if disease has spread outside the breast," Dr. Nicholson explains. "Patients find the test to be comfortable." Unlike breast MRI, which typically involves the patient lying on her stomach with her breast in a special coil and the patient placed in a circular tube-like device with very limited human contact, due to the high magnetic field, PEM is performed with the woman seated upright and with continuous direct eye-to-eye communication with a technologist.

The daVinci Surgical System for robotic-assisted minimally invasive surgery is being used to perform bariatric surgery on morbidly obese patients at Franciscan St. Margaret Health in Dyer, part of Mishawaka-based Fran-

ciscan Alliance's North Indiana Region hospitals. "This makes the operation technically easier at some level, but more importantly the patient experiences less pain than traditional laparoscopic surgery, so his return to work is quicker," says Gerald Cahill, M.D., medical director of the Midwest Bariatric Institute in Dyer.

With traditional laparoscopic surgery, ports are inserted through the abdominal wall. "However, the thickness of the abdominal wall can be a large determinant as to the difficulty of the case," Dr. Cahill notes. "A lot of torque is created because of the thickness. But the daVinci takes torque out of the equation relative to the operation performance, so it becomes a safer procedure."

Furthermore, the daVinci has a three-dimensional visualization system, "so your ability to visualize certain anatomic features, especially in larger patients, is enhanced," Dr. Cahill says. "This again, improves safety."

For gastric bypass surgery with the daVinci, patients normally remain in the hospital one day only, as opposed to two days with laparoscopic surgery. "There is less blood loss and less scarring with the robot, but I do not think the use of the robot enhances weight loss," Dr. Cahill says.

Dr. Cahill, who started performing gastric bypass in 1998 and to date has completed more than 3,000 procedures, believes that the daVinci robot will continue to enhance clinical outcomes and patient safety. "Surgery is driven by technology," he points out. "The robot is a further example of enabling operations to be performed more effectively in a less invasive fashion."

Starting in June, drivers and pedestrians in South Bend and Mishawaka may have noticed one of two digital billboards displaying current wait times for the emergency room at Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center



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in Mishawaka. The billboards are updated every two to four minutes.

The health care system's website (www.sjmed.com) also displays ER wait times, both for the Mishawaka and Plymouth campus, as well as in the actual ER waiting room at both locations.

"One the biggest satisfying or dissatisfying factors to our patients regarding care is the wait," says Gregor Staniszewski, emergency department director at the Mishawaka campus. "In fact, the variable that has the highest correlation to patient satisfaction is the wait time. But it is not the wait time itself that bothers the patient the most. It is actually knowing the wait time."

Staniszewski feels it is important that Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center be transparent about the ER wait time. "Before, we were afraid to tell patients the true wait time because it can change significantly over a short period of time. We were



IMAGING FROM THE INSIDE Gastroenterologist Rajeev Tummuru, M.D., uses endoscopic ultrasound as primarily a diagnostic tool for more detailed imaging.



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concerned that patients would go elsewhere for care," he says. "But this has not been the case. We find that our wait time is much shorter than our competitors. We are also committed to reducing our wait time even further."

The Lung Care Center in Merrillville offers three new technologies for screening and diagnosing of patients with lung disease. Electro-magnetic navigation bronchoscopy (ENB) is similar to a global positioning system (GPS) for bronchoscopy. "You can guide the bronchoscope, just like GPS will guide you to whatever remote or unknown area you want to go," says Bharat Barai, M.D., medical director of the Oncology Institute in Merrillville, part of Gary-based Methodist Hospitals. "But more importantly, you can go all the way to the peripheral tumors because of this guidance and the wire associated with it."

With ENB, surgery is no longer required to reach these lesions and the procedure lasts about 30 minutes. Plus, with alternative needle biopsy, "there is a 3 percent to 5 percent change of puncturing the lung," Dr. Barai notes.

Endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) is used to evaluate a patient's lymph nodes to determine if lung cancer has spread to other parts of the body. "In the past, if the lymph nodes were enlarged, we had to perform an invasive surgical procedure to remove a sample of the lymph node," Dr. Barai says. "But with EBUS, which takes about 20 minutes, you can view the lymph node in real time with ultrasound and then pass a thin needle through the flexible bronchoscope to remove tissue for biopsy."

Both ENB and EBUS have minimal patient discomfort, according to Dr. Barai.

The Lung Care Center also offers low-dose computed tomography (CT) for those at high risk of developing lung cancer (including current and former smokers). "We are able to diagnose lung cancer at an early stage, when the lesions are smaller, and achieve a cure rate in excess of 90 percent," Dr. Barai asserts. **□**

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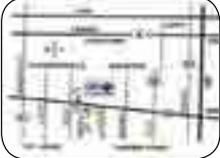
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The Future is Now

Banking technologies add convenience, but some still prefer bricks and mortar.



BY JERRY DAVICH

Today's banking customers have more options than ever regarding their finances, but also more checks and balances when it comes to daily decision-making. Should they choose old habits over new technologies? Convenience over complexities? Face-to-face interactions versus online interfacing? Pen and paper accounting versus mobile accessibility? "The future is here today," says Bob Buhle, a senior partner at Centier Bank.

Buhle, who is 60 and whose father was a banker, clearly remembers most of the modern-day upgrades in the banking industry through the decades. This growing list includes automatic teller machines, or ATMs,

debit cards, online checking and cell phone apps, to name a few of the more popular financial services and products. "But it still comes down to how you want to handle your banking through different delivery mechanisms," says Buhle, who's been with Centier for 26 years.

In the "olden days," customers had little choice but to visit a brick-and-mortar branch office to make deposits, withdraw money or conduct other transactions. And if you didn't get there on a Saturday before noon, you were stuck until Monday morning. These days are marked by evolving online bill paying, emerging iPhone and Android applications, reloadable prepaid cards and "Pop-money," a person-to-person payment

service offered by many financial institutions. Countless other options are already in the works. "Plus, there are simply more daily transactions made today than in years past," says Buhle, whose company was recently nationally recognized as one of the top community five banks for social media usage.

At Centier, roughly 35 percent of its customers use online banking, about average in the industry, with only 15 percent using smart-phone mobile banking, which is still in development.

Fifth Third Bank has seen an 11 percent spike in mobile banking over the last eight months, with a steady increase over the past three years. "In light of this constantly changing



BANKING ON THE GO Consumer adoption of mobile banking has happened at a staggering pace.

behavior of our clients, we continue to invest in our distribution network,” says Andrew Hayes, the bank’s vice president of public relations. “We’ve spent a lot of time perfecting these elements, knowing that people who are mobile and on the go want products that are fast, simple and easy to work with.”

Because ATMs can accept cash and checks, Fifth Third is now working to supplement its brick-and-mortar locations with self-service kiosks and locations throughout its footprint. Each of these locations will have a telephone allowing customers to call 24/7 to resolve problems, order checks or make appointments to meet with a local banker, among other services. “Clients today want

banking to be convenient,” Hayes says. “If they want a quick and easy transaction, they can visit an ATM. If they want to sit with someone and get questions answered or issues resolved, they can visit a branch.”

Mobile and Internet banking products allow customers to easily transfer funds, pay bills, manage credit needs and access transaction history on all of their accounts. These products have been on the market for the last eight to 10 years, though the technology behind it has been rapidly improving in more recent years. “We are hearing from older clients more and more who want to get trained on how to manage their money online,” Hayes notes. “One reason we are seeing this uptick of interest

is concern over being scammed by unscrupulous people.” With online banking, clients can instantly see their transaction history and can then thwart any problem or get answers for any issue immediately.

“It’s an interesting time to be in banking because of the constantly changing behavior of our customers of all ages,” Hayes says. Age certainly plays a role in using or relying on more modern banking techniques, industry leaders say. For instance, there is a “learning curve” with most older clients, prompting banks to educate these customers on how to navigate online banking, manage it and set up regular payments. “Some customers are leery of change and new technology, but when we

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explain that online and mobile banking will improve their banking experience, saving them time and money, they are open to trying it," says Ben Bochnowski, executive vice president and chief operating officer for Peoples Bank.

"We also emphasize that conducting banking online is more secure, since you are eliminating the chance of something getting 'lost in the mail,'" Bochnowski says. "Once customers try these services, they usually end up telling us they wish they would have tried them years ago." Though online banking became available in the late 1990s, and Peoples Bank introduced mobile banking in 2011, traditional banking is still the most popular option for most Americans. In the banking industry, it's called "expanding the physical footprint."

"There are some things you just can't do with a mobile phone and,



PERSONAL TOUCH Many banking customers still prefer to drop by the bank branch, at least for some financial-services needs.

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as a community bank, we are there for our customers when they need us,” Bochnowski says. With that said, mobile banking is growing every month and it’s expected to surpass online banking in the near future, says Jill Hasiak, vice president and product manager for Citizens Financial Bank. “As check volume continues to decline, paperless transactions

are becoming the norm,” Hasiak says. “A client will usually select an electronic payment method based on whether or not they want to control when the bill is paid.”

Banking is still a service business and its clients frequently want to talk with someone, Northwest Indiana bankers agree. “The personal touch is still important, which exempli-

fies our personal banking philosophy,” Hasiak says. Fifth Third takes a hybrid philosophy to these ongoing changes by offering a more consultative approach. “For example, when we meet with a client we can also bring a range of other bank employees with varying expertise—mortgage, investments, retirement planning, estates and trusts, business, military/veteran products and so on,” Hayes says. “The bank branch will continue to be important for us and our clients, as this is where our ‘One Bank’ term is experienced.”

Daniel Haisley, electronic business development manager at 1st Source Bank, says numerous technologically advanced processes are taking place in the background of his company. Each one is making an impact on routine transactions that clients have been making for years in banking centers. One example: Checks were previously sent by mail to the Federal Reserve for clearing, which often took several days to complete. Today, they’re imaged and sent electronically, cutting down the transaction to a one-day process. “To the client, this reduces float time and much of the uncertainty that surrounded writing and receiving checks,” Haisley says.

Financial institutions across the board are routinely upgrading their consumer and business online banking with customizable financial centers. This allows customers to access any number of services with a click of the mouse, from viewing account balances and transaction histories to initiating transfers and bill payments. However, even tech-minded banking officials such as Haisley understand that electronic banking isn’t for everyone.

“Many of our clients have worked with their same bankers for years, if not decades. And many more continue to step through doors for the first time to begin to establish those relationships,” he says. “Clients still want to know that if there is a problem, they can always look their banker in the eye and shake hands as the problem is resolved. Our mission is to help our clients build

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“From our standpoint, there’s really no selling involved. We’re happy to serve clients how they want to be served,” says Haisley, echoing other bank officials across the region. Does that mean they’re going to walk into a branch office each time to make a deposit? “Not a chance,” Haisley replies. Consumers are driving the industry towards a “convenience through self-service” model for the transactional business, such as depositing checks, making withdrawals and even applying for loans or new accounts. Banks must account for this digital-friendly shift by shaping banking centers to meet the demand.

This is being done by catering to smart phone users, utilizing iPhone and Android applications, and even

offering directions to the nearest ATMs and branches based on a client’s GPS location.

“The rapid consumer adoption for mobile banking has been staggering and it’s a real statement of clients’ desire to be able to bank ‘how’ they want and ‘when’ they want,” Haisley says. “The adoption of smart phones crosses the tipping point.”

With technology always evolving, so does the industry to keep up with market demands, customer requests and new products, such as iPads, tablets, biometric security features or Google Glass, a wearable computer with a head-mounted optical display. “The trick is being able to introduce new technologies to clients while still maintaining the world-class, personalized service that sets us apart from the competition,” says Haisley of 1st Source Bank.

The most popular and applicable high-tech service is the ability to make a “mobile deposit,” allowing

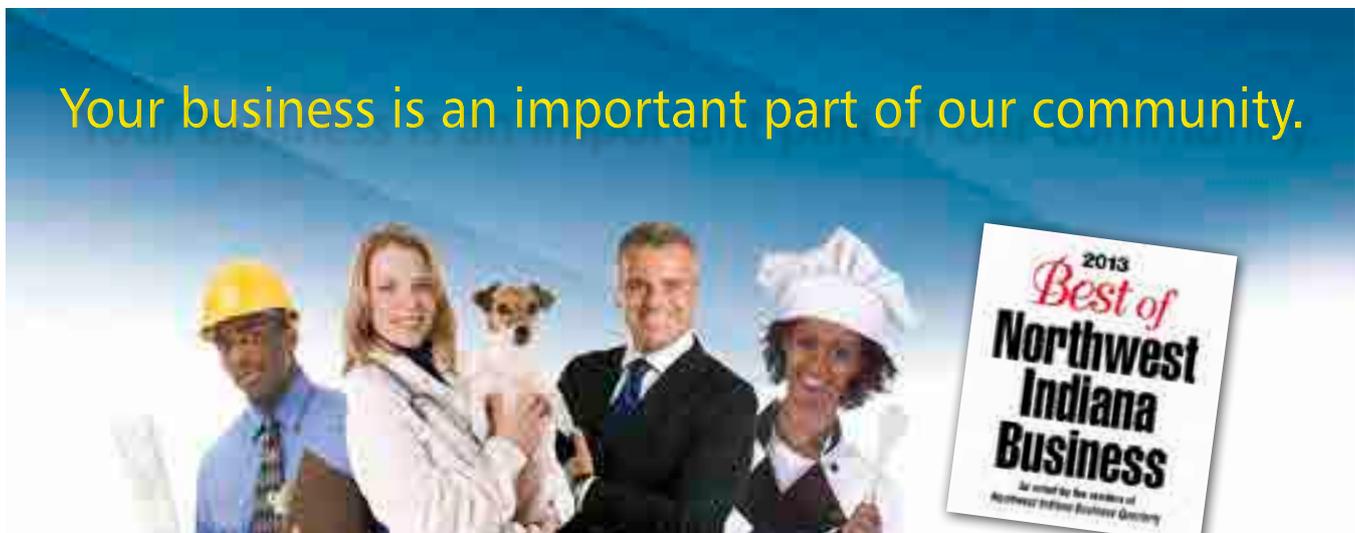
customers to take a photo of a check and submit it to a bank.

“Younger customers think nothing of taking a photo of a check while walking down the street and then having it deposited online via a mobile application,” Hayes says. In many ways, this “man versus machine” dilemma in banking reflects more universal themes in our ever-evolving society. Perks versus privacy. Technology versus dependency. Actual conversations versus virtual conveniences.

Through it all, timeless aspects remain a constant: Trust, credibility and comfort levels.

“Technology may continue to evolve, but the value in straight talk and sound advice still resonates as clients navigate the challenges of their financial lives,” Haisley says.

Buhle from Centier Bank agrees: “At the end of the work day, the nature of our business remains the same.” 



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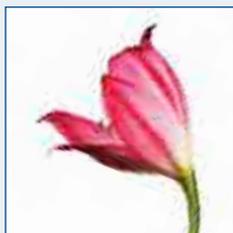
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Green Thinking

Taking the LEED in Northwest Indiana.

BY JACQUELINE VON OGDEN

In 1993, the concept of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards was not publically conceptualized. Five years later, when the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) developed LEED certification, a mere mention of the word LEED was known to raise an eyebrow. Now, in 2013 it has become

a standard, or as some might say an expectation.

Google “LEED” and you’ll get pages and pages of search results regarding LEED certification and standards. And though many believe LEED is fairly new to the scene, to put it into perspective, the concept is older than web search engine Google itself, which just celebrated its 15th birthday this year. But LEED

certification is not the only focus for businesses. “Green thinking,” focusing on the advantages and savings, is here to stay.

Carl Lisek, co-founder of Legacy Environmental Services in Crown Point, believes the public is just beginning to realize or conceptualize the true outcomes for businesses that participate in “greener ways” of doing business. “Organizations are



GREEN GROCER Strack & Van Til built a store in Cedar Lake on an existing site, reusing existing concrete from the site, with a strong emphasis on reducing energy consumption.

being certified in green building, and they are looking at the true cost of ROI to incorporate into their thinking. ‘Green thinking’ is now part of everyone’s vocabulary, for businesses and even for homeowners. We’ve come a long way,” says Lisek.

Though many businesses may be concerned about the criteria or costs associated with LEED certification, Lisek believes educating the general public about what LEED truly is and how companies can incorporate ideas into their ways of doing business is key. “For the last 10 years we have been working on creating a green partnership for the future. Every little step is important to the future of Northwest Indiana, but it is also important to the Midwest as well,” Lisek says. Legacy Environmental Services not only identifies an organization’s environmental impact, but looks at the associated costs for sustainability. Of course, looking at costs and the bottom line is nothing new to business owners.

David Wilkinson, president of Strack & Van Til, understands the business aspect to “thinking green.” “Grocery stores use a lot of energy. It makes sense to keep energy costs down,” says Wilkinson. The Cedar Lake store, which publicly opened its doors in May 2013, was built on an existing site. “We used all of the concrete that was onsite, recycled it, brought it back, and it was used



CHECK IT OUT Skylights and windows let in natural light at the Strack & Van Til store in Cedar Lake, cutting lighting usage in half.

as a base for the current store,” says Wilkinson.

With many of the chain’s stores being remodeled, and though there is not currently a plan to build another store with LEED designation, Wilkinson notes the focus is on supermarket efficiency.

“Our Cedar Lake store has a polished, concrete floor. No chemicals and

no stripping required. We have in-house recycling. Plastic bags and cardboard are recycled, and we donate leftover food to local pantries,” says Wilkinson. “Hot water-heat is recaptured, and we use pre-heating to reduce energy. With the natural light and skylight windows, we reduce the lighting in this store alone by 50 percent.”

TYPES OF LEED PROJECTS

New Construction & Major Renovation

Core & Shell

Schools

Retail: New Construction & Major Renovations

Retail: Commercial Interiors

Health Care

Commercial Interiors

Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance

Homes

Neighborhood Development

Source: U.S. Green Building Council, www.usgbc.org

“Green thinking’ is now part of everyone’s vocabulary, for businesses and even for homeowners.”

—Carl Lisek, co-founder of Legacy Environmental Services in Crown Point

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NUMBERS DON'T LIE

Benson Gabler, director of sustainability with PNC, the financial-services company that is one of the country's leaders in building with LEED certification, agrees that numbers tell the story. "People are starting to understand savings in energy efficiency. Now LED lights are more expensive, but look at what you save in energy," Gabler says. And in the savings arena, PNC seems to dominate. Since 2009, 136 PNC buildings have been new construction. And in this four-year time, PNC has saved enough energy to power 25,000 U.S. homes, reduced energy consumption by 9 percent and reduced costs by 15 percent.

PNC's regional office in Indianapolis, which completed construction in November 2010, consisted of 75 percent of purchase materials locally harvested and manufactured, with 28 percent of the materials having recycled content. The building also reduced water consumption by 35 percent. As an organization with more than 200 certified projects, and the first major U.S. bank to apply green standards to all newly constructed or renovated retail offices, PNC recently opened a branch in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., that with green technologies and 211 solar panels, actually produces more energy than it consumes.

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"People are starting to understand savings in energy efficiency. Now LED lights are more expensive, but look at what you save in energy."

—Benson Gabler, director of sustainability with PNC

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POINTS & LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION

LEED rating systems generally have 100 base points plus six Innovation in Design points and four Regional Priority points, for a total of 110 points (LEED for Homes is based on a 125-point scale, plus 11 Innovation in Design points).

Each credit is allocated points based on the environmental impacts and human benefits of the building-related impacts that it addresses. Projects achieve certification if they earn points according to the following levels:

- CERTIFIED: 40–49 points**
- SILVER: 50–59 points**
- GOLD: 60–79 points**
- PLATINUM: 80+ points**

Source: U.S. Green Building Council, www.usgbc.org

LEED 2.0) is located in Pittsburgh. “The decreased cost in utilities and efficient performing helped put Pittsburgh on the map in the green effort,” says Gabler.

Though some business owners may question the higher construction costs for “going green,” Gabler notes that many need to look at the big picture. “Looking at to what the payback is, we look at every component,” says Gabler. The big picture is set to include PNC’s new global headquarters, which is due to open in 2015 as the greenest office tower globally.

MOVING FORWARD

With the flexibility applicable to all building types including commercial, residential and application through design and construction, maintenance and operation, LEED projects are pertinent in almost any setting. “We hired a consultant. Then we used all local contractors. We worked within 150 miles of the site,” Wilkinson says. “Our customers do know it’s LEED. And they notice the difference when they enter the store.”

Though there are no current plans for LEED certification with every store, Wilkinson believes that some type green thinking will be utilized with stores moving forward. “It makes sense to do. All will have energy-efficient lights moving forward. Many will have concrete floors now. Our new roof allows more heat to get reflected. It may be more of

a challenge with older construction, but with new construction, you can do it.”

Says Lisek of green thinking, “Thankfully, it is becoming more of the norm than the exception. We need to ask ourselves: How can we cut our utilities? We need to be stewards of the environment. Education is the key.” **BO**

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Training for the Future

Times are changing for the region's construction workers.

BY JACQUELINE VON OGDEN

January 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of musician Bob Dylan's well-known song "The Times They Are a-Changin'." And though the list of changes within the technological and automotive industries is large enough to be a novel within itself, it is a reminder that there is constant change. Businesses change. Industries change. Communities change. Moreover, training—especially for those within the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 697 and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)—has been no stranger to change.

The 2011 opening of the IBEW Local 697 and NECA Training & Apprenticeship Center provided a signal for not only an upturn for the industry, but for the training and future apprentice expectations. The LEED-certified training center prepares those with an interest in achieving apprentice of journeyman status within the electrical and video, voice and data (installer-technician) industries. Says Ken Jania, IBEW training director, "A big part of the training our workers is on being more energy-efficient. It's always been part of our mindset. We've tried to take this to a whole new level."

Brian Sullivan, executive manager of the Northern Indiana chapter of NECA, notes that the economic downturn in 2008 did affect not only the industry, but the organization as well. "The past five years have been an upswing for us. More and more people are showing an interest, and its bringing people our way," says Sullivan, who has spent the last 13 years with NECA. He also points out that with the advancements in training, the workforce and occupations continue to advance.



A NEW LEVEL Today's construction training programs include a stronger focus on energy efficiency.

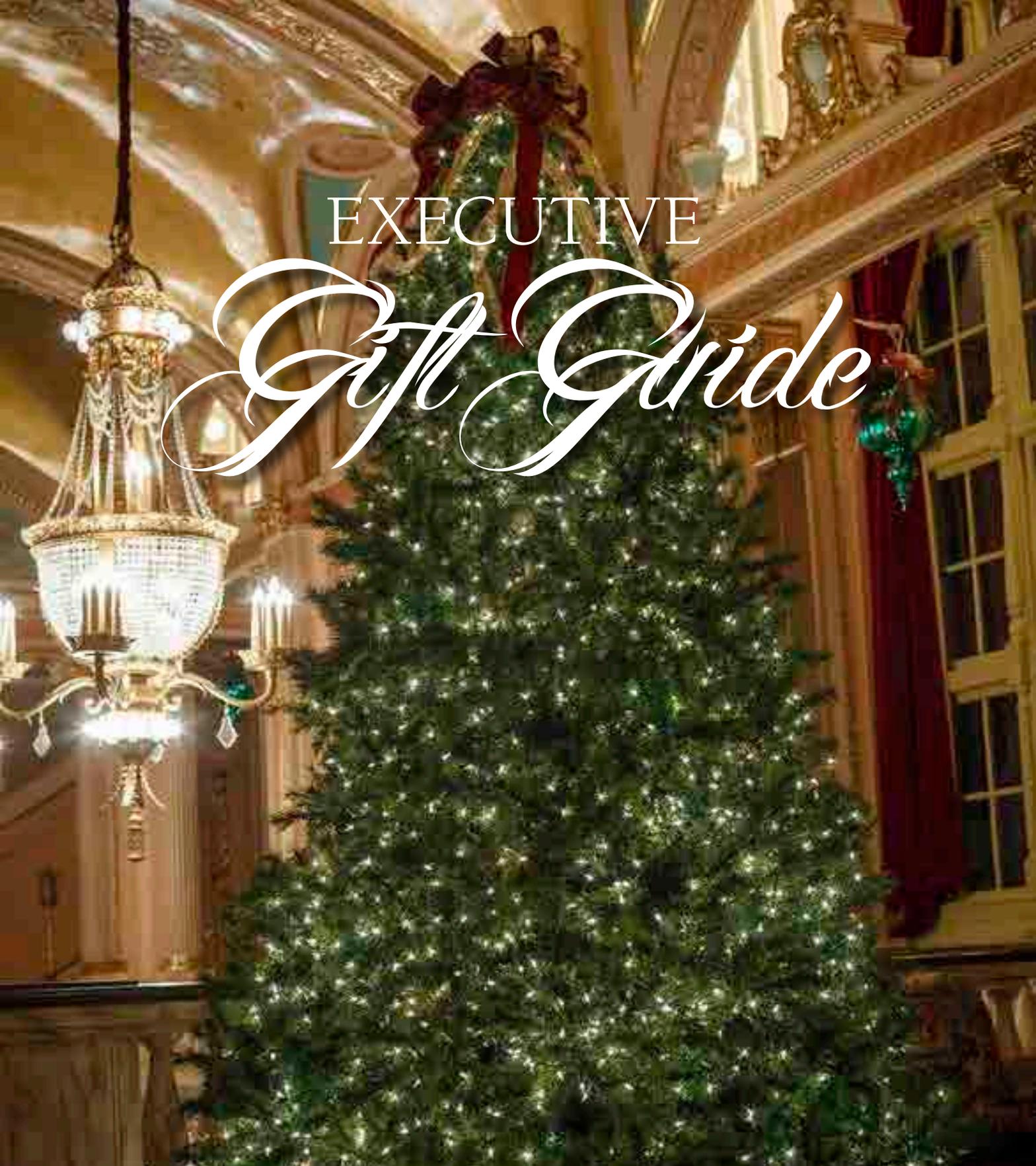
"First, there has to be an interest in the industry. A big part of what we do is mathematically based. But this is a very intricate kind of work. Situations can be very dangerous. We always want to make sure we have the right person for the program," says Sullivan. And NECA attempts to do just that, beginning with the marketing of the program itself. Within the scope of marketing, a labor management co-op committee was formed, and with the help of community-based advertising, the goal is to get the message out to the right audience. Says Sullivan, "Advancements in training have changed not only the industry, but the training itself."

Nick Meyer, director of external communications for NIPSCO, agrees that industry advancements have changed the scope of how people look at electricity and power. "There is a growing interest in renewable energy services and being green and a growing interest in programs," Meyer says, as he notes the types of programs and services not available

in 2008. "Electric vehicle programs, green power rate programs. Wind power. The environment is changing in terms of our customer's interest," says Meyer. "We're changing to meet the needs and interests."

For Dan Waldrop, IBEW 697 business manager, changing to meet the needs of the customer is essential. "We built the training center with gold certification, and when we set out to do this, LEED was not a household term," says Waldrop. "We have adjusted our curriculum. We have a wind turbine used for training. We have an electric charging station for electric cars," Waldrop says about the advanced training apprentices receive in what he describes as a "career of a lifetime."

"But above all, those who enter into the program must excel in the field. Our standards are high," Waldrop says. "I look at it like working in a pharmacy. Accuracy is at that same level. It's critical. You have to be able to focus like a pharmacist in this field. And we prepare them for that." **EQ**



EXECUTIVE *Gift Guide*

It's fall in Indiana! The colorful leaves are falling now, but soon crisp, white snow will usher in the holiday season. Whether you get in the holiday spirit by canvassing the stores for the perfect gift for everyone on your list or prefer the convenience of online shopping, here are some great gift ideas that will give you a head start on all your holiday shopping. You might even find a few ideas to put on your own wish list! — By Shari Held

For Him

RINGO'S GOLF CENTER
(ringosgolf.com)

Located in Crown Point, Ringo's has a great selection of all things golf-related—the top golf club lines are TaylorMade, Ping and Titleist. Be sure to pick up some ProV1 golf balls as stocking stuffers.

WE RECOMMEND: He'll appreciate a new putter, wedge or driver but to be on the safe side, give him a Ringo's gift certificate.

SPORTSMEMORABILIA.COM

You'll find autographed baseball, football, hockey, tennis and collegiate sports memorabilia. Offers free shipping on select items—ground shipping is only \$4.99 on orders of \$50 or more—and "Deals of the Day."

WE RECOMMEND: A signed tennis ball in a domed display case or an autographed football helmet would look great in his office.

A night out on the town in Chicago is always welcome gift. He'll love tickets to a Broadway show such as "The Phantom of the Opera," which opens in January at the Cadillac Palace Theatre or "Alton Brown Live," which opens in February at the Ford Oriental Theatre. Be sure to take advantage of holiday offerings offered by hotels while you're there.

WE RECOMMEND: The Conrad



Watches and pendants from Martin Binder Jeweler

Chicago. Its "Just Chilling" package includes two American Breakfast vouchers to The Terrace Restaurant, two sleep amenities from the Sleep Menu, two Chillcation cocktails from the Terrace Bar, a 25 percent discount off food and beverages and two Chillcation mugs, plus other perks.

For a night out closer to home, there's no place better than *The Morris Performing Arts Center* (morriscenter.org) in South Bend. "Home for the Holidays" performed by the South Bend Symphony Orchestra (Dec. 21-22) and featuring soprano Juliette Petrus and the Home for the Holidays Festival Choir will get you in the holiday mood. The Nutcracker (Dec. 14-15), featuring the Southold Dance Theater, is another favorite classic.

WE RECOMMEND: A dinner package with tickets for the Broadway Blockbuster, *Jersey Boys* (Nov. 26-Dec 8). You'll reap the benefits of unharried parking, preferred seating and a tasty buffet dinner at the *Morris Bistro*.

JOHN CICCOS MENSWEAR (johnciccocosmenswear.com)

Check out the Merrillville store's "Made in the USA" lines this year featuring Hart Schaffner & Marx suits, Barbara Blank ties, Stetson Dobbs dress hats and others. Purple, lavender, orange combined with black or brown and earth tones are popular this year.

WE RECOMMEND: A flip side, reversible half-zip sweater by Tommy Bahama paired with a sports shirt with contracting collar and cuffs.

MARTIN BINDER JEWELER (martinbinders.com)

Located in Valparaiso, this family-owned store has been in business since 1940. Binder's carries a variety of men-pleasing items, including an impressive selection of men's watches.

WE RECOMMEND: The new Rolex Oyster Perpetual GMT-Master II. This watch, which was first introduced in 1959, is made of 904L steel. It features a rotatable bezel insert made from two-color ceramic Cerachrom, which represents day and night. The insert is scratch-proof and highly corrosion resistant, and boasts a diamond-polished surface of exceptional luster.

WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED (valparaiso.wbu.com)

Located in Valparaiso, Wild Birds Unlimited has everything to keep a bird-lover happy all year round. You'll find a big selection of birdhouses and feeders. A basic pole system for feeders starts at \$69.99 and he can use his manly talents to go from there—1,000 combinations are possible.

WE RECOMMEND: Eagle Optics binoculars (\$49.99 and up) will make it easy for him to identify birds and make it more enjoyable.



Drivers, putters, wedges and gift certificates from Ringo's Golf Center

For Her

MARTIN BINDER JEWELER
(martinbinders.com)

The two biggest jewelry trends for the season are pendant earrings and large crosses inspired by period crosses. Dangly pendant earrings have a chandelier-shape decorated with stones and intricate metal detailing. Made from sterling silver or yellow gold with gemstone accents, these statement crosses can be worn as pendants, earrings or over-size rings.

WE RECOMMEND: Get her something from the Konstantino designer line, which offers oversized to dainty unique creations handmade in Greece. The collections are inspired by art, architecture and mythology and feature sterling silver and 18-karat yellow gold with accent stones.

STATE OF MIND SALON & SPA
(stateofmindspa.com)

Located in Crown Point, this award-winner is one of the 200 fastest-growing spas in the nation according to *Salon Today*. Shoppers can create their own instant gift certificates on the site.

WE RECOMMEND: A customizable Renewal or Retreat Spa Package.

INN AT ABERDEEN
(innataberdeen.com)

Give her a cozy weekend get-a-way at the Inn at Aberdeen in Valparaiso. The historic inn dates back to the mid-1800s and boasts a Queen Anne décor. During the holidays beautifully decorated trees and greenery make it magically festive. Opt for the Dinner & Romance or Day of Luxury to make it extra special.

WE RECOMMEND: Enjoy a weekend getaway during the holidays to wind down or make reservations for the Valentine Wine Tasting event on Saturday, February 15. Each of the six courses is perfectly paired with wine. Rooms include a Jacuzzi for two, fireplace, flowers and candy.

COPPER BUTTERFLY
FINE ARTS & GALLERY

The Copper Butterfly in Crown Point features one-of-a-kind items for the home and office. You'll find unusual antique accents, lamps, serving trays, jewelry, birch bark wreaths, tote bags and accessories as well as higher-end antique pieces.

WE RECOMMEND: Browsing until something catches your eye. Several artisan lines are represented alongside works by local artists.



Delicious and local gift ideas from A Taste of Indiana

TIFFANY'S TEAROOM
& BAKERY CAFÉ

Tiffany's in Crown Point offers crepes, quiche, gourmet salads and French onion soup in an eclectic shabby chic décor.

WE RECOMMEND: High Tea. Enjoy scones with Devonshire cream, cheese & crackers, finger sandwiches and pastries served on a three-tier stand and unlimited tea. \$20 per person/24-hour advance reservation.

Classic, well-dressed female executives shop at area boutiques. At *Fashion Affair Hair Salon & Boutique* in Merrillville you'll find everything from sportswear to evening wear and labels such as Elliott Lauren, Joseph Ribcoff and Tadashi formalwear.

WE RECOMMEND: An Ivy & Blu dress can take her from day to evening in style.

She'll also appreciate something fashionable from *Elizabeth Fashions* in Schererville or *Judee's* (judees.com) in LaPorte. At Elizabeth Fashions Frank Lyman (casual and dressy), JSS Knitwear (timeless suits and dresses) and Zeldia of Paris (professional suits) are three of the most popular brands. At Judee's, Joseph Ribcoff, Frank Lyman, Comfy USA and Pure Handknit are best sellers.

WE RECOMMEND: Lifestyle clothing from Comfy USA or Pure Handknit



Tickets for "Jersey Boys" at The Morris Performing Arts Center

and a Brighton handbag from Judee's. From Elizabeth Fashions, a JSS Knitwear suit (\$700-\$1,100) will take her to the boardroom or on a business trip in style and comfort.

For Employees

Show your appreciation for your employees by getting them something for the holidays. Nothing beats a holiday bonus this time of year, but gift cards to favorite restaurants such as *Lucrezia* (lucreziacafe.com) in Crown Point or *Gamba Ristorante*

(gambaristorante.com) in Merrillville or retail stores such as *Barnes & Noble*, *Amazon.com* and *Best Buy* are always welcome. Weekend hotel packages for nearby cities such as Chicago or Indianapolis and fitness center memberships also rate high scores with employees. Other options include tickets to a favorite sporting event or concert or gift baskets filled with delectable food items or personal care products.

WE RECOMMEND: Gift cards. What they sacrifice in originality, they make up for in practicality. A gift

card for *Lighthouse Place Premium Outlets* in Michigan City can be used at any of its 120 outlet stores. Or get a Simon Gift card at *University Park Mall* in Mishawaka which can be used anywhere American Express is accepted in the U.S.

Food Gifts

FAIR OAKS FARMS (fofarms.com)

Cheese lovers will appreciate hand-crafted cheeses made from the milk of cows that are antibiotic- and hormone-free. Call 877-273-1814 or order custom holiday or corporate gifts—they ship anywhere in the world!

WE RECOMMEND: The Champion Collection includes three one-pound packages of the farm's top award-winning cheeses in a decorative hatbox.

DEBRAND FINE CHOCOLATES (debrand.com)

You can't go wrong with the popular Classic or Truffle collections but an edible chocolate art box filled with chocolates is extra special. \$9.95 gets delivery anywhere in the continental U.S. If you're undecided, you can send a personalized e-gift card that's instantly delivered.

WE RECOMMEND: The Chocolate of the Month (3, 6 or 12 months) is a great gift that will keep you in their thoughts throughout the year.

ATASTEOFINDIANA.COM

GT South's Barbecue Sauce, Hollyhock Hill Lettuce Dressing, Crazy Charlie's Salsa, Dillman Farms Preserves and Hickory Smoked Hams straight from the farm—all that and more is available online.

WE RECOMMEND: A U-Pick Basket (\$48 to \$75) lets you select the items you want from a list of delectable Indiana treats.

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market, operated by Opportunity Enterprises, a Valparaiso-based not-for-profit organization that provides jobs for disabled individuals.

WE RECOMMEND: A gift basket of assorted gourmet popcorn—Butter Caramel, Chicago Mix or Gourmet Cheddar are big crowd-pleasers—fudge and candy and nuts from Albanese Candy in Merrillville.

GOOD TO GO BY LUCREZIA
(goodtogobylucrazia.com)

Lucrezia's gourmet market and wine shop in Chesterton carries infused extra virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar, olives, salami, cheese, Italian pasta and other gourmet goodies. Pick up a platter of sandwiches or dinner to go from Lucrezia (sold by the pound).

WE RECOMMEND: A gift basket of savory goodies. Create your own or have them do it for you. (FYI: No online wine purchases goodtogobylucrazia.com.)



Gourmet chocolates in an edible box from DeBrand Fine Chocolates

THE SOUTH BEND CHOCOLATE COMPANY (sbchocolate.com)

You can't go wrong with packs of holiday treats such as the Twelve Cookies of Christmas, Christmas

Cookie Crunch or Christmas Oreos. There's also a selection of holiday gift boxes to choose from.

WE RECOMMEND: A gift basket with an assortment of chocolate treats from turtles to the popular double-dipped peanuts.

Holiday Entertaining

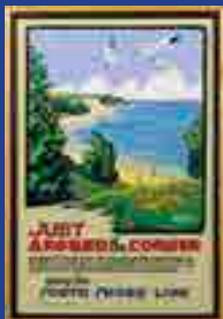
BALAGIO RISTORANTE & BANQUETS (balagio-restaurant.com)

Located in Homewood, Ill., Balagio features a large variety of traditional and original fresh pastas plus seafood, meat and chicken entrees. The restaurant can serve up to 200 people from its family style menu in its banquet room or cater events for up to 1,000 people.

WE RECOMMEND: Dig into these popular dishes—Meat Lasagna, Baked Eggplant Marinara or Country Style Rigatoni, one of Balagio's Signature Tossed Pasta dishes.

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LIGHTHOUSE RESTAURANT
(cedarlakelighthouse.com)

Located on Cedar Lake, the Lighthouse features steaks, fresh seafood, pastas and homemade soups in a spectacular setting. For the undecided, add-on side items are plentiful. The second floor, which can accommodate events for 25 to 250 guests, is open for both lunch and dinner and the downstairs restaurant, which seats 250, can be rented for parties.

WE RECOMMEND: Steaks, the restaurant's signature dish, are served on a sizzling 500-degree plate and can be served blackened, Cajun-style or with a variety of toppings.

TEIBEL'S FAMILY RESTAURANT
(teibels.com)

This family restaurant in Schererville dates to 1929 and specializes in home-cooked favorites. The private banquet rooms can accommodate parties from 40 to 400, and the restaurant also caters office parties (20+ people) in the Northwest area.

WE RECOMMEND: The signature fried chicken, homemade rolls and coleslaw are not to be missed. The lake perch is also popular.

STRONGBOW (strongbowinn.com)

This full-service, casually elegant restaurant and banquet centre, located in Valparaiso, started as a small turkey sandwich stand in the 1930s. You won't want to miss the Wednesday night or Sunday brunch buffets. Banquets can be buffet-style or plated and served, and Strongbow also offers off-site catering for corporate events.

WE RECOMMEND: The Strongbow Turkey Dinner complete with old-fashioned trimmings, Strongbow (Turkey) Schnitzel or Duck-Bacon Wrapped Scallops.

DON QUIJOTE (donquijotevalpo.com)

This Valparaiso restaurant, which is celebrating its 29th year in business with the original owners, serves family-style, authentic

Iberian cuisine in a setting reminiscent of Old Spain. The menu features more than 25 kinds of tapas and four kinds of paella. The banquet room is perfect for small gatherings of up to 30.

The restaurant also caters larger events.

WE RECOMMEND: The roast suckling pig is popular during the holidays, and makes a beautiful presentation, but any of the house specialties are crowd-pleasers. 



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The Automotive New Year

Americans are gearing up to replace their aging vehicles.



GETS THE JOB DONE The GMC Sierra 2500HD pickup has a sturdy, hydroformed, fully boxed frame with high-strength steel, cutting road noise and allowing smoother driving.

BY JERRY DAVICH

With the sluggish economy in our rearview mirrors and new car sales back in high gear, vehicle makers are revving

up their coming attractions for 2014.

Luxury cars, family sedans, pickup trucks, sexy sports cars—there's a rising demand again for all new vehicles despite average sales prices this

year up almost \$1,000 over last year's sticker prices. New car sales spiked 17 percent in August alone, the highest jump in the past few years and, analysts predict, a hopeful harbinger

for the new year. Not to mention low interest rates, lower gas prices, the need to replace aging vehicles and an expected jump in end-year sales.

“For 2013, the auto industry is at the 15.5 million mark in total vehicle sales and the industry is growing again with a bigger pie for the market,” says Alan Adler, spokesman for General Motors in Detroit. “We continue to see improvement from an economic standpoint and, for whatever reason, the auto industry is really leading the country’s economic recovery.”

With the average age of a vehicle on the road at 11 years old, consumers are now returning to dealerships to replace their aging vehicles and this trend is expected to continue into 2014, Adler says.

“There’s a lot of pent-up demand out there and this is part of the reason for higher sales expectations,” Adler says. “There’s quite a bit of replace-



STYLISH REBEL The Mercedes-Benz CLA-Class has world-leading aerodynamics, avant-garde coupe design, radar-based collision prevention assist and lots of imitators.

ment demand taking place already.”

Perry Watson III, president of Lexus of Mishawaka, attributes high sales expectations for 2014 to, in part, automakers aiming at a younger demographic of customers. “A lot of the 2014 cars coming out are red hot with a lot of curb appeal for this

group,” says Watson, who’s expecting red-hot sales of the new Lexus IS 250 and Kia Cadenza. “The Cadenza is absolutely gorgeous.”

Tom VanProoyan, president of Schepel GMC Cadillac in Merrillville, points to the 2014 Cadillac CTS, the GMC Sierra pickup truck and

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COMFY AND EFFICIENT The Jeep Cherokee Limited has heated leather seats, a remote starter and lots of room—and it gets 31 mpg on the highway.



42 MPG The Toyota Corolla LE Eco model blends style with technologies that make it the most fuel-efficient gasoline-only compact sedan with an automatic transmission.

the Buick LaCrosse as most promising. “Many of these 2014 vehicles are brand new or significantly redesigned,” he says.

Bill Fennell, sales and lease consultant at Arnell Chevrolet in Burns Harbor, also expects strong sales next year and in 2015. “We also expect to see a larger number of people who lease vehicles, as more people realize the benefits of leasing,” he says.

Fennell says the 2014 Chevy Impala is redesigned, attracting a lot of interest and sales are already brisk. *Consumer Reports* and *The Wall Street Journal* have both given high accolades to Chevy’s new “luxury vehicle.”

Also, the 2014 Chevy Silverado is now going head to head—or grille to grille in this case—for the title of best truck in America with a fuel-economic V8, improved horsepower and payload capacity.

“The surprise vehicle of 2014 will be the new Diesel Cruze, boasting 46 miles per gallon on the highway with many early customers reporting 53 miles per gallon,” Fennell says. “Our fleet of vehicles is pushing the edge in fuel economy and safety. With the addition of the EV Spark, we are pushing into zero emissions as demand for more fuel efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles grows.”

Brad Hallal, general manager of Griegers Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep in Valparaiso, reports an increase in new car sales this year by more than 20 percent. “All things lead to an even stronger 2014,” he says, noting that the industry is still playing catch-up to the federal government’s fuel economy requirements.

In 2012, strict fuel economy and carbon emission mandates were announced, forcing what’s considered to be the toughest challenge to the industry since earlier government regulations in the 1970s. The new regulations call for the equivalent of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025, compared to 29.7 mpg last year.

Although no “major shifts” are expected next year in regard to new regulations, manufacturers are in

overdrive to meet these looming gas-mileage criteria.

"Lexus and Toyota are way ahead on this issue already because of our hybrids," says Watson of Lexus of Mishawaka. "We have the highest number of hybrid vehicles of any luxury brand on the market. For instance, one luxury sedan that gets 40 miles to the gallon."

Adler, from General Motors, says, "We're working diligently on this. Since coming out of bankruptcy in 2009, GM has invested about \$9 billion in manufacturing in the U.S."

Hallal from Griegers says Chrysler's eight-speed and nine-speed transmission will help his company gain some traction on this pending regulation.

"The eight-speed available in our Chargers, 300s, Grand Cherokees and Ram trucks has increased our fuel economy significantly. The nine-speed is the transmission in our new Cherokee," Hallal says.

TEN SETS OF HOT WHEELS

Here are 10 of the most anticipated 2014 vehicles hitting the market—and soon the streets of Northwest Indiana and surrounding counties.

Lexus IS 250
Cadillac CTS
Chevy Cruze
Dodge Dart
Toyota Corolla
Jeep Cherokee
GMC Sierra pickup truck
Buick LaCrosse
BMW 4 Series
Kia Cadenza

That automaker is heavily advertising the 2014 Jeep Cherokee, which replaces the Liberty model with the latest technology, such as park assist, adaptive cruise control and wireless charging for smart phones. "It's truly a car platform, not a truck platform,

as it used to be," Watson says.

Hallal agrees, noting, "It drives like a luxury car but has the capability of a Jeep. It is possibly going to be our largest-selling nameplate this coming year. It's a real game changer."

The other highly featured car is the new Dodge Dart, smartly priced starting at \$17,995 and already one of the most awarded vehicles in its class. "It's like crossing an American muscle car with an Italian Alpha Romeo," Hallal says.

GM is in the midst of a "very aggressive product onslaught" across its four U.S. brands, Adler says. In 2013, the automaker launched 18 all new or significantly updated cars, trucks and crossovers.

"Several of these are 2014 model year vehicles and, in the 2014 calendar year, the new products continue with an additional 14 new or updated models," Adler says. "We're very excited about 2014, and so is the auto industry." **BQ**

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What to Do and See

*Mid-Century Modern, holiday pops
and the beloved leg lamp.*



John Cain

BY JOHN CAIN

South Shore Arts is traveling back in time to a more glamorous age with *Mid-Century Modern: Style in the Age of Mad Men*. The term “Mad Men,” while associated today with the AMC cable television drama, was actually a slang expression coined in the 1950s by advertising executives working on Madison Avenue to refer to themselves.

The South Shore Arts exhibition is a tribute to the Mid-Century Modern movement in architecture and design that provided a visual accompaniment to this memorable era of slick consumerism and swinging style. Fifty years later, Mid-Century Modern remains a historical milestone, reflected in today’s best furniture, architecture, art and design. Charles and Ray Eames, George Nelson, Harry Bertoia and Eero Saarinen are among the designers whose work will be featured in the show.

This exhibition is being curated by David Carter, who, along with his wife, Amy, is proprietor of Pegboard Modern, a Chicago-based showroom specializing in vintage modern furniture and design. The exhibit runs through February 2, 2014. A VIP reception and wine-tasting will be held on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, from 6 to 9 p.m. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

The Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under the direction of Maestro Kirk Muspratt will present the annual Holiday Pops Concert on Thursday, December 12, at 7:30 p.m. at the Star Plaza Theatre in Merrillville. This best-selling concert of the year is a South Shore holiday tradition to be celebrated with family and friends—a mixture of spiritual music for people of all beliefs, entertaining music that is



STYLE IN THE AGE OF MAD MEN George Nelson’s 1956 Marshmallow sofa.

germane to the holiday season, and music for people of all ages throughout the community. Tickets range from \$25 to \$65 and student tickets are just \$10. Tickets can be purchased online at www.nisorchestra.org or by calling the Symphony box office at 219/836-0525.

What are the most memorable scenes for you from the classic holiday movie, *A Christmas Story*? The pink bunny suit, the “evil” elves at the department store or Christmas dinner at the Chinese restaurant? If you love these scenes, then you’ll love the “*A Christmas Story*” Comes Home exhibit at the Indiana Welcome Center, located at the intersection of I-80/94 and Kennedy Avenue in Hammond.

The exhibit focuses on six animatronic window displays originally from Macy’s Department Store in New York City, each featuring different scenes from the iconic movie. Visitors will see the Bumpus hounds as they steal the family Christmas dinner, watch as dad lights the leg lamp in the living room window or stand by as Flick gets his tongue stuck to the flagpole. Related activities during the exhibit include the Mommy’s Little

Piggy Mashed Potato Eating Contest, the Oh Fuuudge Relay Race and photos taken atop Santa’s Mountain with a slide. The exhibit runs from November through mid-January (www.southshorecva.com).

The short stories the movie is based on were written by Hammond native Jean Shepard and based on his experiences growing up in the area. Shepard was also the voice of the older Ralphie, the narrator of the movie.

South Shore Arts reminds you to visit its online Regional Art Calendar at www.SouthShoreArtsOnline.org for listings of local arts events. The calendar lists exhibits, concerts, plays, lectures, film series, dance performances and more, all taking place in your neighborhood. Don’t forget the South Shore Arts Facebook page where you can also keep up to date on exhibit schedules and opening receptions, class signups, outreach programs and special events. Local artists also post their events and share local art experiences. **EQ**

Find out more about area arts activities and events by watching Lakeshore Public Television’s “Eye on the Arts,” every Thursday evening at 6 p.m. on Lakeshore News Tonight.

Communications Company of South Bend

“Communications” is not just a name, but the key to success.

BY MICHAEL PUENTE

It has been quite a year for Daniel Schmidendorff and Communications Company of South Bend.

In June, Schmidendorff, who serves as president and CEO of Communications Company of South Bend (CCSB), was named Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration Indiana District Office. That allowed him to travel to Washington, D.C., to attend a dinner where he was a finalist for a nationwide honor. While Schmidendorff didn't receive the national award, he says it was still an honor just to be able to mix and mingle with top-notch business types from across the nation.

“The people who won it were well-deserved for sure. It was a phenomenal event. They treated you with utmost respect and made you feel really important,” Schmidendorff says. “In talking to some of the other business owners, we swapped some ideas, talked about market share and how people got to where they are going. They had some great presenters. They had Angie from Angie's List. The whole experience was just fantastic.”

In business since 1976, CCSB has been designing, installing and servicing communications systems not just in the Michiana area, but also as far away as Chicago, Fort Wayne and Grand Rapids, Mich.

CCSB provides state-of-the-art life safety, security, audio-visual and communications systems to clients

in the health care, education, government, industrial commercial and entertainment markets.

Sometimes the company offers services that can include something as simple as the cord connecting to your desktop computer, but also can provide intricate systems for sports arenas, hospitals, schools and businesses.

“We provide the phone on your desk but we also do the fire alarm system that protects your building, the paging or intercom system in your children's school and the code blue patient/staff communication system in your hospital,” Schmidendorff says. “We also provide the security camera and the card access system to your building.”

Schmidendorff says his company's system allows administrators to be able to monitor their building's security system from areas even off-campus.

“We might do a mass notification system that ties all that together and allows you from multiple locations or from anywhere to see the cameras on the campus to unlock a door, to do a mass notification of a message that a tornado is coming,” Schmidendorff says. “So you can have a district of schools that can have 15 or 20 schools and we can tie them all together.”

Schmidendorff started working at the company in 1996 and a decade later, in 2006, he purchased the business with partner Barry Schleiger. At that time, the company barely had

a dozen employees. Today, it has grown to more than 40 to keep up with demand.

“I would say in some areas the demand has slowed down but there are areas where it has increased. In each of those industries there is change. Overall, the demand for security and a company's awareness has increased,” Schmidendorff says. The projects and clients Schmidendorff and his company have been involved with is a list of who's who in Northern Indiana among hospitals. For example, CCSB installed the nurse call, paging system, televisions and security at the new 633,000-square-foot St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Mishawaka.

“The hospital was able to merge their wireless telephone system with the nurse call, giving the nursing staff the ability to answer patient calls immediately. Thus patient care is delivered faster and hospital satisfaction scores continue to grow,” says Schmidendorff. CCSB has also been a longtime partner with Memorial Hospital of South Bend working on a variety of projects. The latest project was on the hospital's new surgery center (also known as South Pavilion). In this latest project, CCSB expanded the existing nurse call system as well as completed upgrades to its closed caption television system with more than 150 cameras and a dozen networked digital video recorders.

Another project occurred at the Community Hospital in Munster,



BUSINESS HONORS Dan Schmidtendorff, president and CEO of Communications Company of South Bend, was named Indiana Small Business Person of the Year and was honored in Washington by Karen Mills, former administrator of the Small Business Administration.

where CCSB provided a nurse locating system for the hospital's new emergency department and West Tower projects. This project also included installation of a wireless phone system that allows for real time data on the amount of time nurses are providing to patients.

In 2011, CCSB assisted in the design and engineering of the renovation to the Stanley Coveleski

Stadium, home of the South Bend Silverhawks. The company upgraded a video scoreboard and enhanced other park amenities, including the installations of new JBL speakers and Crown amplifiers. "They have a phenomenal sound system," says Schmidtendorff. "We provided them with a quality sound system."

The company also worked with installing a Siemens fire alarm system

to the entire campus at Valparaiso University. "We have integrated the system throughout the campus, tying in all the buildings to a main station for centralized monitoring of the system," Schmidtendorff says. "This ensures the students, faculty and staff are well protected." CCSB has also worked a number of safety projects with the University of Notre Dame.

According to Schmidtendorff, CCSB's philosophy is not just about the quality products provided, but more about customer services. "It's not about the product, it's about the customer. What is going to fit their needs," Schmidtendorff says. "We're not trying to push a product. We really lead with what their needs are and spend a lot of time trying to discover what their challenges are and how we can help them with technology." Schmidtendorff says much of his company's success is because of how strongly he feels for his job.

"I'm definitely very passionate about what we do. I'm passionate from a security standpoint in all of our schools," Schmidtendorff says. "I'm also very passionate about helping people. I enjoy going into a hospital and look at the process to increase their patient satisfaction."

Schmidtendorff sees only bright skies for his company for the future. "I see us growing and expanding our territory," Schmidtendorff says. "We're better now than we've ever been. We have plans to expand our business. We're definitely going to be growing over the next couple of years."

While 2013 has been an award-winning year for CCSB, it's just the latest in a string of honors in the past few years. In 2010 and 2011, *Inc.* magazine listed CCSB as among the fastest-growing private companies in the U.S. In 2010, the company was on the list of Indiana Companies to Watch.

"I really enjoy what we do," Schmidtendorff says. "And I'm really proud of all the accolades that we've received over the last three to four years. It's just been phenomenal." **EQ**



GREW UP WATCHING PUBLIC TELEVISION
James Muhammad is the new president and CEO of Lakeshore Public Media.

James Muhammad

New Lakeshore leader is a lifelong consumer of public media.

BY JERRY DAVICH

James Muhammad fondly remembers as a young boy falling asleep in front of a glowing television set after watching a plethora of public media programming. Educational programs, children's shows, award-winning documentaries, scientific shows, cultural music events and so on—his family's TV guide was earmarked early in his childhood.

"My parents taught me at a young age that public media has the power to change the trajectory of a young person's life... anyone's life really," Muhammad says from behind his desk at Lakeshore Public Media, where he's the new CEO and president. "I guess you can say I've been drinking the Kool-Aid of public media my entire life."

Once he first had a taste of its life-changing benefits, Muhammad has enjoyed gulping down the core values of public media, such as trust, context and credibility. "Public media's overall goal is to create and

foster a better informed citizenry," says Muhammad, 43, who earlier this year moved to Crown Point with his wife, Shelia Culpepper-Muhammad, and 15-year-old son, Salih. He previously served as director of radio services for WVPB, a National Public Radio station in West Virginia. There, he oversaw many major productions, such as NPR's "Mountain Stage," the national jazz holiday special "Joy to the World," and the Peabody Award-winning documentary "The Great Textbook War."

Under Muhammad's leadership, West Virginia Public Broadcasting won its first Gabriel Award, Peabody Award, Alfred I. duPont Silver Baton and National Edward R. Murrow Award. He also spearheaded major outreach projects for the West Virginia Senate Select Committee on Child Poverty with PBS Frontline's Jezza Neumann, PBS and PRI's Tavis Smiley and PRI's Dr. Cornel West. "We did a lot of good work there that I'm proud of," said Muhammad, who

started at Lakeshore on May 20. After a lengthy national search for its new CEO, Lakeshore's board of directors knew they had their leader after meeting with Muhammad.

His immediate reaction to the news? "Very surprised," he replies with a smile. Still, the board chose him unanimously above all other job candidates, some with very strong credentials. Plus, all but one staff member ranked him as their first choice, too. "James is a real leader with a mission, a vision and a well-rounded background," says Bonita Neff, Lakeshore's board chairwoman who also served as interim director for several months. "He has a lot of energy and he understands our mission. We've already received a lot of positive feedback about his work."

Muhammad says the same about his new bosses: "I was very impressed with the board of directors and what they want to accomplish here."

Neff says Lakeshore has a "complex situation" at hand with its newly

enhanced multimedia approach, including radio, television and Internet broadcasts. It needs a leader who is experienced, enthusiastic and with a certain veteran savvy. "He not only understands public media's core values, he lives them," Neff notes. "He's authentic."

Authentic indeed. Just as Muhammad's parents were "big believers" in public media, so is he, believing it fosters local conversations about national issues that other media outlets don't explore enough. In many ways, Muhammad is both a product and a reflection of public media, mirroring its rise in our society.

At age 22, as a college senior, Muhammad started as an intern at Alabama Public Radio at the University of Alabama, following a suggestion from a journalism professor. Initially, Muhammad thought to himself, "That's got to be the corniest place on earth to work." But he soon got intoxicated from the aforementioned Kool-Aid and he ended up working at that station for four years, serving as a reporter, producer, classical host and operations manager. He also worked as a production assistant and narrator for "The Center for Public Television" on campus.

After receiving his bachelor of arts degree in mass communications from Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, he kept drinking in public media's rewards.

"If I were to ever leave public media on a professional level, I would still enjoy its life-enriching benefits on a personal level," he says during a break in his busy day. At Lakeshore, he typically gets to work around 7 a.m. to handle things before his staff of 50 or so arrives. Sometimes he doesn't get back home until later that evening, depending on various meetings, public appearances or CEO-related duties. "It's important for people in this region to know who I am and what we do," he says. "I really enjoy it and I feel comfortable here."

Under his new leadership, Lakeshore is working on increasing revenue, new fundraising opportunities and building name recognition as a trusted source in Northwest Indiana.

"I want people to think of us as a community resource," he says. "Public media is all about localism and involving community residents on issues that matter." Not all public media viewers and listeners are Prius-driving, latte-sipping culture-vultures, despite popular stereotypes to the contrary. Instead, they share a familiar thread that needles through their busy lives.

"They are all curious people," says Muhammad, echoing his own second nature.

"James has brought a strong sense of direction to our organization in the short time he has been here," says Roger Wexelberg, Lakeshore's vice president of development and public relations.

"He also has done a great job in engaging the Northwest Indiana business community with the Lakeshore mission. In our work environment, he has been a breath of fresh air with new ideas and setting a sense of direction and purpose," Wexelberg says. "Because of his strong public media background, our stations have been focused more on the public aspect of the broadcast world under his leadership. I'm excited to be part of Lakeshore's future role in the region."

Since May, Muhammad has studied the region from a crash course of public events, guest speaker engagements and in-house meet-

ings to expand Lakeshore's reach. "We're capable of doing so many larger things here," he says. Muhammad has been working on larger projects in public broadcasting for many years as a regular consultant for "The Tavis Smiley Show," "The Motley Fool Radio Show," and "Ask Me Another," among others.

"Our goal is to never talk down to people, but to educate and inform them while adding context to their world," Muhammad says. The context to his world begins with his wife, Shelia, his college sweetheart before the couple married in 1996. For enjoyment, he also plays golf, more as a stress reliever than as a stressful sport, and listening to jazz, rock, soul and classical music.

One question he's often asked by new friends or associates is if he's an Alabama or Auburn fan.

"I'm from Tuscaloosa," he replies with a loud laugh, tipping his hand toward the Crimson Tide. "It's a serious issue in that state." When not at work, he enjoys hanging with his son, Salih, who likes to skateboard and—what else—gulp down public media broadcasting like his father. "He really enjoys shows about science, technology and international politics," Muhammad says proudly, happy to pass down the life-changing family tradition. **EQ**

Nominations are now being accepted for leading CEO's in the categories listed below:

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- Banking & Financial Services
- Government, Education & Nonprofit Organizations
- Real Estate & Construction
- Retail & Services

To nominate go to www.NWIBQ.com and follow the instructions.

Deadline for entries is November 29th at midnight.

**Northwest
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A Green Arena

LaPorte native making plans for environmentally friendly development.

BY HEIDI PRESCOTT WIENEKE

Paul Boardman acknowledges there are some important details about the multipurpose sports and entertainment venue he is planning in Northwest Indiana that have not yet been announced. He has not revealed the site on which Duneland Arena would be located, for instance, or released a rendering to give Porter County residents a look at the planned facility.

But the LaPorte native, business leader and environmental sustainability champion passionately describes his vision for a \$70 million investment that would serve as a landmark destination. The arena also would serve as an economic catalyst by ultimately creating thousands of jobs and providing more than a hundred events each year, ranging from concerts to amateur and professional sports.

Boardman says his goal is to integrate new capabilities and technologies in building the world's first LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Platinum arena of its size in the world. His desire is for the privately funded arena to generate not only its own power, but also excess power.

"For the last 10 years, I have talked to people about using my capabilities to bring jobs to Indiana," says Boardman, who is chief executive of IG Co. and serves as a national public policy expert. "I have made the commitment to put my time, effort and resources into this project and Porter County is the right place to build it."

Boardman founded nonprofit

Duneland Family Sports and Entertainment in 2012 to specifically examine the feasibility of constructing and operating an arena that will push the sustainability envelope of net-plus building design in Indiana. He first conceived the project more than a decade ago, but Boardman says he waited for the right timing to move forward.

"I believe that a primary factor to success is our local approach fostered as a long-term Northwest Indiana native," he says. "I am an advocate of this approach because I have deep roots in the community going back several generations. My grandparents were grocers and grew up here."

He commissioned a feasibility study last spring that took six months to complete. In early September, Boardman announced the project that he named "Game On!" along with some early details about size and scope. He continues moving forward with plans relatively quietly and out of the public spotlight. Chesterton-based parent Duneland Sports Authority will seek private capital to fund the arena and supplement Boardman's private investment.

"I have a passion for economic development and that's what this project is all about," he says. "My vision is well under way, executing with a consortium of interested parties, including top professionals with local, national and global experience who want to make this happen."

Boardman, a 1983 Valparaiso University graduate, says he has been engaged with local, state and national

academic, government and corporate research facilities. This includes learning from Valparaiso University's experience in launching LEED technology and solar technology on its campus. "Valparaiso University is a national leader with one of five solar research labs in the country," he says. The university also has the only LEED Platinum academic building in Indiana.

The architectural firm that will be hired to design the building will be a LEED-certified company with experience in environmentally friendly design. With the specific criteria the arena will have to meet for LEED Platinum certification, Boardman says it could take a year for the architectural drawings to be done.

More than 800,000 residents of Porter County and Northwest Indiana will be served by the arena, which would offer family-friendly sporting events and entertainment along with concerts, community events, trade shows and corporate, religious and cultural events, Boardman says.

With a location in mind, Boardman tentatively hopes to commence construction of Duneland Arena in 2015, with the project generating about 250 construction jobs. He hopes the venue would open sometime in 2016. "We're designing something that has not been done. This is an original design. There has not been a LEED Platinum arena of this size, a LEED Platinum multipurpose facility completed in the United States or maybe the world," says Boardman. "If we create a net-plus arena, that's an incredible statement for North-



FUN AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY Paul Boardman is planning to develop a multipurpose sports and entertainment venue in Northwest Indiana.

west Indiana because it has not been done before. We want more efficient buildings—that is not a debatable issue in America any more. We want to achieve that. Ultimately, ‘Game On!’ is about doing the right thing for our community.”

Duneland Sports Authority will partner with established leading LEED planners, engineers, researchers and universities to ensure the building achieves platinum certification, which he says is a challenging

starting goal. “We want a landmark building that is extremely well designed. The LEED and conservation sustainability effort that’s going on across the country is a key focal point of this project. In fact, that is the primary driver.”

The venue is also in line with Northwest Indiana’s 2030 economic and quality of life initiative goals to create a global model for green manufacturing and sustainability. Boardman says the project’s challenge is

“to create a design that fills the gap between the hypothetical and the possible.”

Another green initiative Boardman hopes to execute is the creation of a local food supply chain for concessions. “Through our studies, we have found all our needs can be obtained locally from beverages to meat producers and vegetable growers. Products for almost every kind of concession are available locally, so we will source our concessions from our backyard, from the bread basket of the world.”

Boardman also wants to support children’s sports initiatives, including coach development, with revenues above operating costs. “We want it to go into training and back into the community,” he says. Even the name of the arena still could potentially change. “We’re talking with companies and individuals about naming rights.”

No matter its name, he believes the arena will drive additional long-term economic development across the region, Boardman says. Duneland Sports Authority will work with commercial real estate developers on additional development, which could push the project investment to about \$115 million.

Boardman believes his experience running for U.S. Congress in the 1990s in the West Los Angeles Hollywood district, serving as an advance man on the 1984 Reagan presidential campaign in Washington, D.C., and working in private equity and business development, has provided him the leadership skills and training to see this project through construction and to ensure it is operated and managed professionally.

“The best thing I could do is build an arena for incredible sports and entertainment and have it be a focal point for the business community and a building everyone can be proud of. With that, will come a lot of visitors and other needs,” Boardman says. “I’m a local person and that means everything. I want to do the right thing for our community.” 

Lucky Number 12

Andrew Luck comfortable as the Colts' face and cornerstone.

BY BEN SMITH

Begin with the shoes. There are four or five pairs, all athletic shoes, every species from cross-trainers to plain knockabout sneakers. Left where their owner dropped them, they spill out of Andrew Luck's locker in a haphazard spray, and after a few seconds it comes to you that this looks like—the perfect chaos of a teenager's closet.

Say hello to the man who carries the Indianapolis Colts' future in his back pocket. "It's in all of our offices, every single office up and down the hallways: A big circle with 'Protect 12' (Luck)," Colts head coach Pagano says. "As long as 12 is upright and on his feet, we've got a much better chance of winning than losing."

The conclusive evidence turns up everywhere these days, on the backs of kindergartners and teenagers and grown men whose wardrobe changes reflect the changing times.

Once upon a time, they all wore Colts jerseys with 18 on the back, for Peyton Manning. Now the number *du jour* is 12, for Andrew Luck.

A year after showing up as the NFL's surest bet for quarterbacking stardom in perhaps 30 years, Luck has become both the public face and absolute cornerstone of a franchise that is accustomed to winning. Under Tony Dungy and Luck's certain Hall of Fame predecessor, Peyton Manning, they made the playoffs nine straight seasons, won at least 12 games seven straight times and played in two Super Bowls, winning one.

But Dungy has retired and Manning is now in Denver, and this is Luck's team now. Wherever the Colts go from here begins in the locker between those of offensive lineman

Samson Satele and running back Vick Ballard, where both the untidy pile of shoes and the neat stack of binders and iPads on the shelf above open a window into who Andrew Luck is.

To start with, he's not Manning, the Grim Scowler whose on-field intensity was legendary. "Oh, he's much more laid back," says Colts place-kicker Adam Vinatieri, who knows all about high-end quarterbacks, having played with Drew Bledsoe and Tom Brady in New England and Manning in Indianapolis. "Peyton was very, very serious all the time. Very intense, until after the game when we're on the bus or something. He kind of calmed down and it gets a little more fun."

"I think Andrew's more just enjoying it like a kid. It's a kid sport to him. He goes out there and (it's like) 'I'm having a good time, I'm gonna run around and throw this ball around,' where Peyton was more serious about it," says Vinatieri.

This may explain why Luck was such an immediate success, and the Colts with him. One year after winning just two football games, they went 11-5 and made the playoffs yet again, and Luck's kid-like tendency not to get caught up in the moment was a big reason why. Seven times, he led fourth-quarter drives to secure victories—the most ever by a rookie and the most by any quarterback since the NFL and AFL merged in 1970.

In addition, the Colts' 11 victories with Luck at the helm were the most by a No. 1 overall draft pick in NFL history, and his 4,374 yards passing were also the most for a rookie quarterback in NFL history.

Little wonder that the Colts spent

much of the offseason, and a significant amount of money, shoring up an offensive line that got Luck sacked 43 times last season. They also brought in two more weapons in running back Ahmad Bradshaw and wide receiver Darrius Heyward-Bey, and hired as offensive coordinator Pep Hamilton, Luck's offensive coordinator in his college days at Stanford.

"I think Ryan (Grigson, the Colts general manager) and his staff have done such a great job," Pagano says. "Prior to bringing these guys in, they did a great job evaluating. We talk about all the time finding guys with 'Horseshoe' traits, so they're bringing in the right guys. And then having that veteran leadership that we have in our locker room that's already in place, the culture, the environment. All that stuff that's already in place, these guys really have no choice but to buy in."

Luck, for his part, bought in immediately. And then some. "When he walked into the very first training camp, the very first meeting, the very first OTA (optional training), he just kind of owned the huddle, owned the field," Vinatieri says. "He was calling plays, and they're like, 'Oh, hold on a second, we're not even supposed to be there yet.'"

And now, with a season under his belt, he comes to 2013 as the undisputed leader of a team looking to duplicate or exceed last year's 11 wins against a tougher schedule.

"He's taken it to another level," tight end Dwayne Allen says. "His control and command in the huddle is superior now. You feel it whenever you get in the huddle. If it gets a little chatty, he's not afraid to tell people to shut up."

"I think that everything has obviously slowed down for him," Pagano says. "The things that he saw last year, he's recognizing now. He's managing things better, he sees things and he understands."

Luck acknowledges as much. "Much more comfortable," he says. "Having a year under your belt ... I think it's easier to work on football. You're not worrying about forgetting someone's name, or knowing where the meeting room is or being late to something. So, a lot more comfortable."

Matt Hasselbeck was a rookie quarterback with the Green Bay Packers, playing behind the legendary Brett Favre, when his quarterbacks coach, Andy Reid, told him something he'd never forget. "He was like, 'Listen, I'm not here to work on your mechanics, your fundamentals,'" says Hasselbeck, who's 37 now and Andrew Luck's backup. "You're not gonna learn that from Brett either. What you need to do and work on are the things people like to call intangibles—how you speak in the huddle, how you are in the weight room or around the building."

Hasselbeck looks across the locker room. Andrew Luck is answering questions in his stocking feet. He looks comfortable. He looks in command. He looks like a man with his intangibles stacked as neatly on the shelf as all those playbooks, a man ready to lead the Colts back to the playoffs again—no matter how many fourth-quarter comebacks it takes.

"I think the team is comfortable with it because we practice it a lot," Luck said, after leading yet another in the Colts' season-opening win against Oakland. "Coach Pagano makes it a point of emphasis, all the different situations. There's a Pandora's Box sort of, with situational football and end-of-game and end-of-half things. We practice those a lot, (so) you know what you're trying to accomplish."

And then you go out and do it. It's an unfazed attitude from a profoundly unfazed young man who,



PROTECT 12 Andrew Luck is the public face and cornerstone for the Indianapolis Colts.

when you ask him what was the toughest adjustment from the college game to the pro, doesn't mention anything about the actual playing of the game.

"The length of the season was interesting," he replies. "In college you

play 13, 14 games I think, and then you're playing the four preseason games, the 16-game regular season schedule, and then we played a play-off game last year. So the length of the season was eye-opening." Hardly anything else seems to have been. **EQ**

Planning for Recovery

Be sure your technology is prepared to survive failure or disaster.

BY GREGORY P. SCASNY

In the event of hardware failure, file loss, theft or even natural disaster, it's imperative that your business is able to resume without delay, in order to sustain productivity, revenue, customer satisfaction and success. A Recovery Time Objective (RTO) plus business continuity and backup plans can make downtime a thing of the past.

Everyone knows the necessity of a backup for mission critical data and applications; backup has been a baseline IT function from the first time computers were fired up. But what happens if your mission-critical systems go down? Do you know how long it will take to get those systems back online and functioning? The average business loses more than \$160,000 a year from lost productivity during downtime.

Recovery Time Objective, or RTO, is a term used to describe how fast a downed application, or server, can be restored to a functioning level. With many businesses having terabytes of data, it can take days to weeks to retrieve that data, depending on your method of backup.

Industry estimates reveal that 40 percent of organizations without business continuity and recovery plans will go out of business within a few years of a major disaster. According to a 2013 study by the Aberdeen Group, risk of business interruption is the key market driver for business continuity and disaster recovery plans, with business/regulatory requirements, cost of downtime and loss of business critical data ranking high as well.

RTO goes beyond data restoration, it also includes hardware, phone systems, etc., which is why it's essential to have end-to-end business continuity solution and contingency plans in place.

The potential for technological misfortune is somewhat limitless. What happens if you lose a server, or all of your servers? How long will

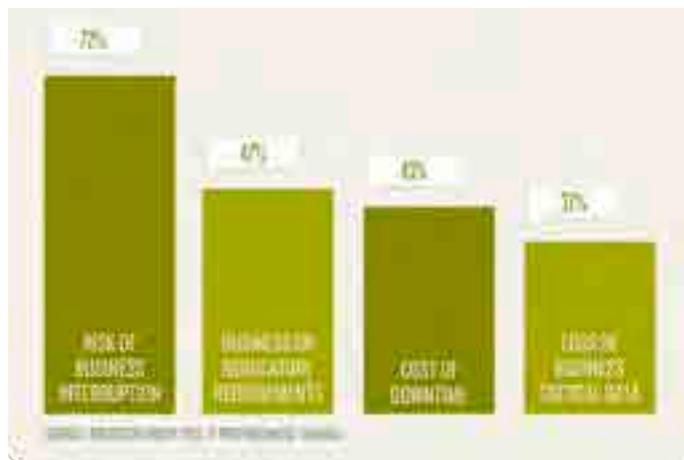
infrastructure doesn't fail. These platforms mirror your entire business in the cloud, allowing for simple data restoration from any device.

When email servers go down, having an "emergency inbox" is like having a redundant email system running in the background, allowing users to continue to access their email. For telephone systems, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services can be designed to handle calls from your business' phone number during a crisis, allowing staff to answer calls anywhere as long as they have an Internet connection and a computer.

For true mission-critical applications, there are services that will run a "hot spare" of a server, which is used as a failover mechanism to provide reliability in system configurations.

All data is automatically synched to the hot spare and is available as a backup. These services are not only robust, but also affordable to deploy and help to assure your business is prepared to survive nearly any potential disaster. Business owners should meet with their IT teams or IT service partners regularly to discuss plans for RTO of all business applications, services and communications. The plan should be tested annually. The more proactive and informed your business is about your RTO, business continuity and contingency plans, the more prepared everyone will be if disaster strikes. This preparedness will maintain both uptime and your bottom line. **BO**

Gregory P. Scasny is a co-founder of Golden Tech, an IT Management company.



BE PREPARED Key market drivers for business continuity and disaster recovery.

it take to get replacement hardware? Can you restore all of your backups, assuming they are offsite, to dissimilar hardware? What is the maximum amount of time/data that you can lose? Where and how will employees work if the office is uninhabitable? How will customers communicate with your business if email or phone systems are down?

Luckily there are solutions to all of these potentially disastrous situations. Properly designed business continuity and contingency plans can take an event that could put most companies out of business and make them a minor inconvenience.

New cloud platforms are designed for today's "always-on" business environment, virtually eliminating data loss, keeping applications running, and ensuring that your IT

Code Red Safety

Helping heavy industry safely complete dangerous work.

BY KATHY MCKIMMIE

“**W**e started selling hard hats and safety glasses,” says Michael J. Miller, describing the early days of Code Red Safety, headquartered in Hammond. Founded in 1995 by Miller and two of his fraternity brothers from Indiana University, Gregg Mohoi and Robert Tepperman, it’s now a multimillion-dollar business with nine locations in four states providing complete safety services to heavy industry, primarily to the steel, oil and gas, chemical and power segments.

The three founders didn’t get together right after graduation. They each began other careers but stayed in touch. Miller, who had worked in sales and management for Inland Steel and Baxter Healthcare, formed Miller’s Precision Enterprises (MPE) in Hammond in 1987, selling recycled Tyvek protective garments. Tepperman became part owner of MPE in 1992 (the company is still in business). Three years later, Miller, Tepperman and Mohoi jointly established Code Red Safety.

They concentrated their initial efforts with industries in the Northwest Indiana and Chicago region, and built their services block-by-block from confined space to equipment sales and rental, to safety staffing and OSHA training. “By 2001 we were fully integrated,” says Miller.

The company’s confined space equipment and services, for workers required to enter a small, enclosed space, are particularly important to the companies they serve. Equipment includes gas monitors, ventilation systems and air supply bottles. They can provide training for their customers’ employees as well as provide temporary employees who are on hand to provide rescuing if needed.



READY FOR TROUBLE Code Red Safety of Hammond specializes in equipment and services for those working in confined spaces.

The year 2004 brought some significant changes. Gregory Cofoid, another IU grad, was brought on board as a principal, while Mohoi left Code Red Safety and founded GM Safety, Calumet City, Ill., a member of the Chicago Minority Business Development Council.

Miller gives Cofoid, a CPA with experience with startups and high-growth businesses, much of the credit for Code Red’s rapid growth. Its first location beyond the Hammond headquarters was St. Louis in early 2004, then Houston opened later that year. Those expansions necessitated a name change for the company, which was first called Great Lakes Safety. The rest of the company’s growth has occurred along the Gulf Coast in Texas and Louisiana, serving the oil and gas business both on the drilling and refining sides. Although most of its staffing and rescue services are concentrated in areas near their office locations, they will provide those services anywhere in the 48 contiguous states, and have even

provided staffing outside the U.S.

Code Red currently has about 200 regular employees, the W-2 kind, but also has an additional 300 who get paychecks through its safety staffing services where companies might request a safety supervisor for a couple days or a couple years. It has a proprietary database of nearly 10,000 experienced safety personnel, nearly all supervisors, from which to draw and meet customer demand.

“We try to hire vets,” says Miller. “We made a big push a year ago with special classes for vets only. We’re looking at doing that again.” In the future, the company plans to add locations where there is a significant industrial concentration. “My job as chairman of the board,” says Miller, “is to, No. 1, grow the company and, No. 2, empower employees to help them grow and serve our customers.” It is this second area in which he gets most passionate. “We talk about asking for forgiveness not permission and getting it right for the customer.” 

Reaching for the Stars

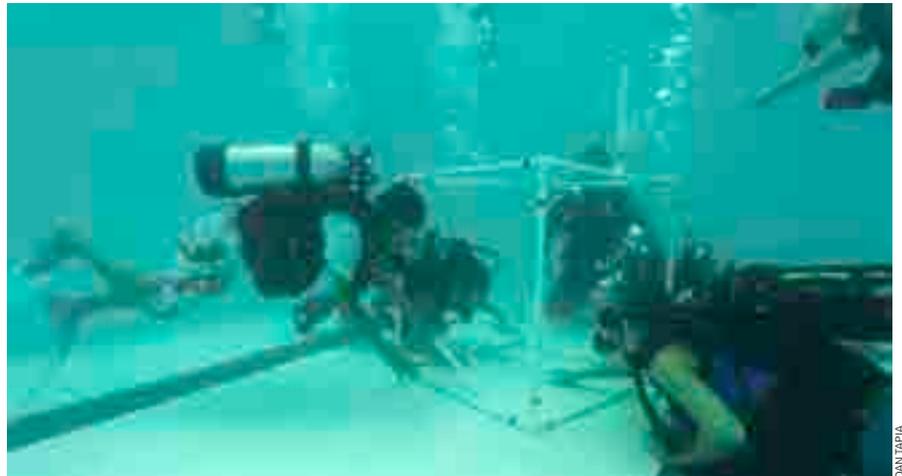
Challenger Learning Center promotes science, engineering and space.

BY MICHAEL PUENTE

Educators often stress to students to “reach for the stars.” When Rebecca Manis says it, she means it, literally. “Our mission is to inspire and engage students in the STEM fields, science, technology, engineering and math. We do it through simulation. We try to make it as realistic as possible and expose them to those 21st century learning skills like collaboration, teamwork and critical thinking,” says Manis, director of the not-for-profit Challenger Learning Center in Hammond. Manis’ working environment looks, feels and sounds like Mission Control at Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

The 16,000-square-foot facility is complete with computers, experiment bays, video monitors and, if that’s not enough, a state-of-the-art planetarium. Although the Challenger Learning Center (CLC) welcomes some 17,000 students in Northwest Indiana and Chicago’s south suburbs every year, it kind of flies under the radar of the public’s knowledge that it even exists. “It’s not just a museum where kids just walk around and push buttons. It’s much more than that,” Manis says. The Challenger Learning Center is the legacy left behind by the crew of Space Shuttle Challenger/STS-51L. Dubbed the “Teacher in Space” mission, the seven-member crew included 38-year-old Christa McAuliffe, who was not a trained astronaut but a high school social studies teacher from New Hampshire.

On Jan. 28, 1986, Space Shuttle Challenger set off for its mission but exploded 73 seconds after liftoff. In the aftermath, the crew’s families came together and committed to carrying on their loved ones’ education mission. In April 1986, the Challenger Center for Space Science Education was created. The first center opened



DAN TAPPA

PREPARING FOR SPACEWALKS Underwater astronaut training campers build a PVC structure in a pool, simulating the type of training astronauts face in the Neutral Buoyancy Lab in Houston as they prepare for missions that involve spacewalks.

in 1988 in Houston. Today, there are 42 centers in the U.S., Canada, South Korea and the United Kingdom. The CLC of Northwest Indiana joined the network of centers in 1999 on the campus of Purdue University Calumet primarily because of the efforts of Lisa Austgen, a former teacher at Lake Street Elementary School in Crown Point.

“Lisa thought Northwest Indiana should have its own. She truly thought the experience can be life-changing.” Manis says that Austgen knew Northwest Indiana’s contribution to the nation’s space legacy is impressive, including retired astronauts Gary native Frank Borman and Crown Point native Jerry Ross.

In fact, Manis says Austgen used to work with Ross’s sister, Jan Rattazzi, who is now a teacher at Crown Point High School.

Austgen went to work to make the center a reality. She helped raise \$6 million to build the CLC. Austgen served as the center’s director until 2007 when she lost her battle with leukemia. A mural of Austgen can be seen at the CLC, along with Jerry Ross. A former teacher herself, Manis joined the center when it opened its

doors as lead flight director and was named director of the CLC in November 2011.

Manis points out even though the CLC is on the campus of PUC, it is not affiliated with the university in any way and does not receive funding from it. Therefore, she says, fundraising plays an important role in keeping the doors open at the CLC. Although that can be a challenge, getting students excited about technology and math is made easier with its space missions. “I think people are naturally engaged in space exploration. It’s just a natural hook to educate the community as best we can in preparing a strong workforce,” Manis says. “We know these kids come in here and are inspired.”

But it’s not just students who are welcomed to the center.

Everyone from preschoolers to teachers to the community at large are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the center’s exciting offerings. **EQ**

The Challenger Learning Center of Northwest Indiana offers a variety of programs for the public and hosts events throughout the year. For more information, visit clcnwi.com.

Avoiding Discrimination Claims



J. Brian Hittinger



Carrie L. Flores

Seven steps that could save your company millions.

BY J. BRIAN HITTINGER
AND CARRIE L. FLORES

Would a \$39 million settlement of a gender discrimination claim or a \$160 million settlement of a race discrimination claim create an immediate need to shore up your company's anti-discrimination program? It probably would if you were Bank of America or Merrill Lynch, both of which agreed to settle discrimination claims brought by employees claiming that each company systematically gave out work assignments that negatively impacted either female or African-American employees. An employer should put a strong anti-discrimination program into place before an employee "breaks the bank" by filing a discrimination claim. Here are some tips for avoiding that scenario:

1. Adopt, publish and obtain written acknowledgements from employees of your company's EEOC statement advising employees that your company does not discriminate on the basis of protected classes.

2. Identify which federal and state non-discrimination laws apply to your company based on the number of employees you have. For example, most companies are prohibited from discriminating against applicants or employees on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, disability, age, genetic information and veteran status.

3. Determine if any local ordinances provide protected status to applicants and employees on the basis of gender identity or sexual preference. Many large metropolitan areas have local ordinances that do just that. In May 2012, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commis-

sion ruled that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects transgendered employees from unlawful sex discrimination. Transgendered individuals are those who self-identify as a different gender from their biological sex. Though the Supreme Court has long recognized that an

An employer should put a strong anti-discrimination program into place before an employee "breaks the bank" by filing a discrimination claim.

employer may not take a person's biological sex or gender into account in making employment decisions, the EEOC decision is important because it was the first time the EEOC has addressed whether Title VII covers transgendered individuals.

4. Include non-discrimination and non-harassment provisions in your company policy or employee handbook. Include specific directions on how an employee who believes unlawful discrimination or harassment is taking place can file a complaint about or report the situation to a supervisor, the human resources department or top-level management. Promptly investigate any complaint or report and, if necessary, take immediate corrective action. Document this process.

5. Implement the heightened requirements for the use of criminal background checks (including arrest and conviction records) before taking an adverse employment action, e.g., refusing to hire. In 2012, the EEOC provided updated guidance for using criminal background checks so that

those checks do not adversely impact applicants of certain races or national origins. For example, the EEOC now requires employers to show that the use of criminal background checks is "job related and consistent with business necessity," which may include the employer's development and use

of individualized assessment for those excluded by background checks.

6. Train managers in all of the above areas. When training managers to prepare employee performance evaluations, make sure that the supervisor is using measurable criteria that are non-discriminatory. Use the same performance criteria tool for all genders, all races, all ages, etc. Measure employee performance in terms of productivity; goals met; percentage compliance with rules; or rates of error. Managers and supervisors should also systematically check employee progress by confirming that all employees are receiving similar training; similar tasks or assignments; and even-handed opportunity for advancement.

7. Seek assistance from an employment law attorney before letting an everyday problem erupt into a workplace crisis or, worse yet, a lawsuit against your company. **EQ**

J. Brian Hittinger is a partner and Carrie L. Flores an associate with Krieg DeVault LLP.



Daniel Lowery, Ph.D.

The Region's Priorities

Summit brings leaders together to reach public-policy consensus.

On October 3, the One Region organization sponsored a session attended by 70 leaders from throughout the region. The event was designed to tap the wisdom of the participants concerning the public-policy choices we face as an extended community. The assembly included representatives from the business community, education, social service organizations, elected officials and the media. I had the good fortune of facilitating the daylong retreat.

Using a variety of techniques, we tested for consensus as to how we might proceed with respect to a broad range of emerging opportunities and persistent challenges. The participants first brainstormed public-policy initiatives of various kinds. This was followed by the development of criteria to be used in discerning priorities. After time devoted explicitly to open advocacy for one initiative or another, a voting process ensued. The top priorities that emerged from this process were then evaluated in terms of their current "location" in the public-policy process and the steps needed to move each of them forward.

Two priorities tied for the most votes: first, advocate and fund early childhood education; and second, secure the long-term funding of the Regional Development Authority (RDA). The participants thus put great weight on one of the criteria agreed upon earlier in the session: Our top priorities should provide a foundation for other positive developments. School readiness and the funding and leadership provided by the RDA both meet this critical test.

The other priorities selected for detailed analysis included the following:

- Take steps to improve both the reality and the perception of public safety through community involvement and other crime prevention strategies.
- Support the expansion of the

has greatly improved, but there is more to be done. This will not be enough if we are to leave a better future to our children and grandchildren. Our conversation on October 3 showed that broad consensus still exists on a critical set of issues. Now is not the time to rest on our collective laurels.

Our top priorities should provide a foundation for other positive developments. School readiness and the funding and leadership provided by the RDA both meet this critical test.

South Shore Rail Line and the Gary-Chicago Airport.

- Improve access to affordable health care through Medicaid expansion and other statewide and community-based strategies.
- Take steps to more effectively and consistently connect industry and education in order to strengthen the workforce.
- Expand and repair local infrastructure, including mass transit.

In my view, this meeting served a much-needed purpose. There is a sense among some that consensus regarding what needs to be accomplished in order to improve our quality of life has flagged a bit in recent years. With the RDA established and property tax reform enacted into law, we seem to have scaled back on our expectations. Yes, critical infrastructure projects are now underway, and the efficiency of local government

So where do we go from here? That depends, of course, on key decision-makers and other stakeholders who are responsible for wrestling with these kinds of public-policy priorities. And it depends on the rest of us as well. "Many hands make the lifting light." The participants at our meeting on October 3 got us off to a good start. They articulated concrete steps that can be taken over the next one to two years with respect to each of the identified priorities. We have a blueprint of sorts for action.

Just as important, the meeting again demonstrated the value of talking across business and organizational sectors and across county lines as well. The One Region organization should be congratulated for its ongoing efforts in this regard. □

—Daniel Lowery, Ph.D., is president of Calumet College of St. Joseph.



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