

Development groups, Chamber announce merger

Unified organization will align the interests of business and residential communities

EVANSVILLE — Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville and Southwest Indiana Chamber announce actions by their respective Boards to merge the three organizations, effective April 1, 2021. Through a shared vision and coordinated efforts, the new organization will advance the interests of businesses and fuel economic and community growth in the Evansville region.

“All three organizations have a proud tradition of accomplishment,” said Greg Wathen, President and CEO of the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana. “By pooling and unifying essential economic development functions into a single structure, we have an opportunity to better serve the region with a bolder vision for the future.”

The unified organization will work to advance regional prosperity and global relevance by building on the trusted relationships and legacy of its predeces-



sor organizations. Together they will carry forward areas of impact, including business attraction, retention and expansion, pro economy public policy work, community development, entrepreneurship, talent attraction, quality of place enhancement and regional growth strategy.

“The process to craft a new organization was very deliberate by design to give each community their respective voice,” said Ben Shoulders, Vanderburgh County Commissioner President. “I’m confident that the organization will meet the future needs of Vanderburgh County as well as the other counties who make-up Southwest Indiana and it is equally important that the new organization will focus on being diverse and inclusive.”

A merger committee composed of appointees from all three organizations has been meeting since early October to build on the work the three organizations have been doing cooperatively since the onset of COVID-19 impacts. Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke praised the action of the boards: “These organizations have worked as one over the past year facilitating and serving the needs of Evansville and the region. The Reopen Evansville Task Force depended on this partnership to effectively serve our citizens.”

“While many pursue a merger or organizational realignment in response to challenges, we did so in recognition of, and in pursuit of, heightened opportunity,” said Tara Barney, President

SEE **MERGER/PAGE 11**

CenterPoint Energy seeks to diversify electric generation portfolio

As a number of CenterPoint Energy’s electric generation units are quickly coming upon the end of their useful lives, the company is embarking on a process to transition to new generation resources that will deliver an all-of-the-above, reliable energy mix while helping to position the state of Indiana as a national energy leader.

Following the 2019/2020 Integrated Resource Plan process, which included a series of four public meetings and engagement with dozens of large customer and business leaders to analyze their energy needs, it is clear CenterPoint Energy customers want the company to transition from a mostly coal-fired generation fleet to a mix of reliable generation that includes cleaner options. Renewable power has become more cost competitive and, when coupled with other resources such as natural gas, provides for cleaner, reliable power. Meanwhile, it’s expected some Indiana coal generation will remain part of CenterPoint Energy’s portfolio.

On Feb. 23, the company announced it is seeking approval from the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to enter into an agreement on the acquisition of a 300-megawatt (MW) solar array and to enter into a power purchase agreement for an additional 100 MWs of solar energy.

SEE **DIVERSIFY/PAGE 12**

Holcomb appoints Massey to Vanderburgh County Superior Court

INDIANAPOLIS — Gov. Eric J. Holcomb today announced Thomas A. Massey as his appointment to the Vanderburgh County Superior Court. Massey will succeed Judge Richard G. D’Amour who will retire in April.

Since graduating law school in 1984, Massey has been in private practice in Evansville with a focus on family law and civil litigation.

Massey earned an undergraduate degree from Purdue University



TOM MASSEY

and a law degree from Valparaiso University Law School.

Massey will be sworn in as the judge of the Vanderburgh County

Superior Court on a date to be determined.

ABOUT NEWLY APPOINTED VANDERBURGH COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE TOM MASSEY

Sensitive to the needs of anyone going through a family law issue, Thomas A. Massey treats clients with compassion. As the founder of the Massey Law Offices, LLC, he guides people in Evansville, Indiana, and the surrounding areas through complicated

matters involving child custody and divorce. He also represents clients in business law cases.

In 1981, Mr. Massey received a Bachelor of Science in management from Purdue University, where he made the dean’s list. He then attended Valparaiso University Law School, serving as a member of the school’s law review and graduating with a Juris Doctor in 1984.

Licensed in Indiana, Mr. Massey is admitted to practice before the

Supreme Court of the United States, the Indiana Supreme Court, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Indiana and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit.

Though he has successfully taken a number of cases to trial, Mr. Massey believes in reaching a solution outside litigation when

SEE **MASSEY/PAGE 10**

COMMENTARY

State Senator Becker an outstanding public servant

BY THE CITY-COUNTY OBSERVER STAFF

We consider State Senator Vaneta Becker an amazing lady who was born to serve those in need.

She is not your typical self-assured and flamboyant know-it-all politician. Senator Becker is a laid back and likable political leader that is known to take on legislative challenges by researching the subject and turning the information into a common-sense approach to debating information on the Chamber floor that forces needed change.

She also has the reputation as the go to person to the get the answers to complicated and complex governmental questions and issues that concern them. Her constituents also give her high marks for the way she responds to the issues that concern them.

Originally from Alton, Illinois, on the Eastern part of the state, Senator Becker comes from a family of five brothers and sisters. Her parents are deceased, her living family members have a lot to be proud of, given Becker’s achievements, accomplishments and contributions to the State of Indiana.

Senator Becker earned her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Southern Indiana and has served as Senator to Indiana since 2005. She works on issues with legislation, budget constraints and parameters, economic-development, and the demands of education. Currently, she is also a Broker Associate with FC Tucker.

One of Senator Becker’s passions is insuring the completion of Interstate 69, within the budget restraints and on schedule. This will make an easier commute to our state’s capital for all citizens and bring economic prosperity to our region.

Big on philanthropy, Senator Becker is one of the founding members of the Albion Fellows Bacon Center. She helped find the original real estate for the organization on Grand Street. She was also on the board with ARK Crisis Children’s Center which works in Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) for thirty years. The organization serves as the State’s last free-standing emergency child day care center. Furthermore, she has helped pass Hoosier Healthwise legislation. Hoosier Healthwise helps provide health care children coming from low income families, creating a healthy living and learning environment for all youth.

As a key member of the legislature for the University of Southern Indiana, Senator Becker was able to contribute toward higher education and growth of the school. College enrollment has risen from 3,000 previously, and now has made its way to approximately 15,000 students. Her contributions over to years has helped establish USI as an independent university which has grown and flourished.

She also a strong advocate and supporter for Community College education. She stresses the necessity



VANETA BECKER

and importance for vocational/technical training as well for field studies and advance manufacturing

Senator Becker has also served on the Indiana Commission for Women and was co-chair to the Office of Advisory Board to Women’s Health. In the Evansville community, she is active with Leadership Evansville Alumni and the United Methodist Church, as well as supporting many other community organizations.

Senator Vaneta Becker has received honors from various organizations, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from ARC of Indiana. ARC has supported children and persons with disabilities since it was founded in 1956.

Senator Becker has outstanding listening skills, and helps others to further their education, by strengthening their communication skills, both written and verbal. She reiterates that it is not only important for the workplace, but also for the legislature.

Senator Becker has worked to improve the quality of life in her community. As a woman with an amazing passion for social services, bettering the quality of life and contributing to the State Legislature, she

is indeed an outstanding public servant.

HER ELECTION HISTORY AND POLITICAL COMMITTEES APPOINTMENTS

- Served In The Indiana House of Representatives from 1981-2005.
- Was elected to the Indiana State Senate in 2005 to present.
- Health & Provider Services, Ranking Member.
- Local Government.
- Public Policy.

EDUCATION

- University of Southern Indiana, B.S.
- Real Estate & Insurance Broker License.

ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- Indiana Commission for Women.
- Leadership Evansville Alumni.
- Advisory Board of the Office of Women’s Health, Indiana State Department of Health, Co. Chair.
- Past Member of Board of Directors, ARK Crisis Prevention Nursery.
- Past Member, Commission for Excellence in Health Care.

HONORS THAT STATE SENATOR VANETA BECKER HAS RECEIVED OVER THE YEARS

- Civility in Government Award, Association of Retired Members of the Indiana General Assembly, 2015.
- Capitol Caregiver, American Association of Retired Persons, 2014 and 2015.
- Legislative Champion Award, Indiana Area Agencies

on Aging, 2012.

- Oscar McCulloch Social Services Award, Indiana Coalition for Human Services, 2011.
- Lamar Public Service Award, Leadership Evansville Celebration of Leadership Winternheimer, 2011.
- Outstanding State Senator, Indiana Retired Teachers Association, 2011.
- Lifetime Achievement Award, The Arc, 2011.
- Friend of Education Award, Evansville Teachers Association, 2011.
- Bacon Award, Albion Fellows, 2010.
- Ark Crisis Center Dedication to Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010.
- Bobby Sloan Symbol of Hope Award, Komen Evansville Affiliate, 2009.
- Legislator of the Year Indiana, Trial Lawyers Association, 2009.
- Legislator of the Year, Indiana Primary Health Care Association, 2008.
- Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence Empowerment Award, 2008.
- Advocate of the Year, Indiana Association for Home and Hospice Care, 2007.
- Legislator of the Year, Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education, 2007.
- Service Award, Indiana Home Care Task Force, 2001.
- Lampion Center Advocacy Award, 1999.
- Outstanding Leadership Award, ALCOA, 1995.
- Distinguished Alumni Award, University of Southern Indiana, 1995.
- Legislator-of-the-Year, Indiana Association of Ophthalmologists, 1995.

COMMENTARY

WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

The right to assemble and to seek redress of grievances is enshrined in our Constitution

BY STAFF THE OF THE CITY-COUNTY OBSERVER

Over the last several months we have witnessed peaceful and violent protests alike throughout America.

It’s obvious that outside groups and agitators are attempting to foment lawlessness and unrest to advance their own objectives to cause anarchy in America. We are a nation born of the revolutionary spirit of protest, coupling expressions of grievances

against injustice with the desire to be free.

We deplore the theft, lotting, and burning of businesses and historical landmarks caused by the random acts of lawless anarchists and thugs. In fact, we believe that these lawless thugs should be arrested and thrown in jail.

Everyone has been on edge, waiting to see when and where the next protest or riots will break out and chaos reign. We’re optimistic

that restraints will be displayed by both the protesters and law enforcement alike.

However, criminal behavior, such as harmful objects being thrown at members of law enforcement, looting, and burning down businesses and historical sites shouldn’t be tolerated and the lawless thugs should immediately be arrested and thrown in jail.

Law enforcement officers are human and

they make mistakes. We know that the overwhelming majority of law enforcement officials understands that carrying a badge carries a responsibility and understands when to use force and when to use restraint. We believe they also understand that they know what one bad decision will unleash. Finally, we oppose the DEFUNDING of law enforcement!

We support those who have taken to the streets

to peacefully exercise their First Amendment rights to and express their opinion, anger, sorrow about issues that concern them. We don’t support social disobedience or anarchy.

We also oppose economic, social, religious and political discrimination of people of all races, color, creed, and sexual orientation.

May God continue to bless America and help guide us through these troubling time.

COMMENTARY

Three bills damaging quality education for K-12 schools

Vouchers. Public Education. Accountability. Teacher Pay. Government Mandate.

Dear Veda Morgan and Chris Rickett:

Now that I have your attention, please be aware of three bills in the Indiana General Assembly now that will hurt Indiana’s economy by damaging access to quality K-12 education. If passed, House Bill 1005, and Senate bills 412 and 413 will harm Indiana’s ability to attract new jobs and economic investment because of continued lack of equity in education for 90 percent of students.

The three bills strip millions of dollars from open admission public schools and provide those funds to selective admission School Choice private/parochial schools. And new this year, education savings accounts (ESAs) will begin to give up to \$7,000 with very few restrictions to qualifying home school families to use for a broad array of ancillary educational expenses including unaccredited, unsupervised, unassessed home schooling. This is a race to the bottom for Indiana.

Advertised as an efficient use of state education funds and promoted as holding public schools to account, the three bills’ selective funding mechanisms help only 10 percent of Indiana’s K-12 students. Legislators are taking that funding from the remaining 90 percent of children who attend Indiana K-12 public schools.

These same public schools have been critiqued, taunted, mandated and squeezed by state interference since 2010, but they are Indiana’s only schools that welcome, enroll and educate all students — from the genius to the most profoundly disabled or traumatized. Yes, public schools struggle to assure true equity, but that is largely because so much money is being stripped to fund inequitable types of schools.

It bears repeating: The General Assembly takes money away from public schools while requiring these same schools to enroll and educate every child to state-mandated excellence. At the same time, the General Assembly gives ever more money to selective admission School Choice private/parochial schools and homeschools and applauds them for doing a great job with a relatively small number of pre-selected kids.

The admission guidelines in various private and parochial schools’ online handbooks show that these schools select their students. Students and their families apply to School Choice schools, they do not simply enroll.

Last week I found two local (Evansville, IN) online parochial school handbooks with admission policies that say incoming transfer applicant-students must show the principal their previous report cards and standardized tests



ANN M. ENNIS

results. “These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at XXXX-School will meet the educational needs of the student,” the booklet says. “If after admission the education and/or behavioral needs of the student exceed what is reasonable, the student may need to be separated from the XXXXX School.” (emphasis theirs)

When the stakes are high and monetary, it is not surprising that private and parochial School Choice voucher schools encourage complex students to consider other schools that can better meet unreasonable extra needs like transportation, most special education, English language learner classes, meal assistance, tolerating and helping students and parents with mental illness or who won’t sign a code of conduct, and accepting overly-independent, emotionally or physically disabled, exceptionally high intellect, or LGBTQ students.

Stakes are high. Rankings matter. Voucher-eligible private/parochial schools naturally encourage students-in-need-of-services to find an option that can meet those needs. Selective admission K-12 policies contribute to artificially improve performance results of selective admission schools, and artificially stifle diversity in those schools. This is all posturing for a pat-on-the-back and more money from the State, but it hurts Indiana workforce development overall.

With the three bills in the Statehouse now, these schools may get more voucher money. Public schools will get less. Guess which school-type will get the most criticism about performance? Guess what this does to our economy?

Public schools produce an enormous number of MBAs, PhDs, MFAs, JDs, MDs and DDSs. They produce Indiana’s middle class, too. Draining funds from these schools is already creating a dearth of high to middle income tradesmen and women; senior and middle managers; and health, service, and industrial technicians. A state cannot exist without people who can read a blood pressure cuff, install a toilet, and clean our teeth. Public schools successfully teach our plumbers, electricians, carpenters, fireman and policeman; doctors, dentists, dental hygienists and certified nursing assistants; state senators, bishops, CEOs, and ministers. Without well paid teachers and complete funding for the full array of diverse students they instruct, our public schools cannot do the job required.

No part of HB1005 or Senate bills 412 and 413 helps Indiana workforce development. These bills are a direct threat to the Hoosier economy. Employers, employees, taxpayers and government officials need to carefully consider the repercussions for Indiana’s workforce development should vouchers expand and ESAs are allowed in our state.

Sincerely,
Ann M. Ennis
Evansville, Indiana

COMMENTARY

Merging economic development is the right thing to do

The recent announcement that the Coalition for Economic Development, the Chamber of Commerce for Southwest Indiana and the Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville is a welcome merger that will provide regional actions to focus the growth and elevation of the entire region.

I was the founding CEO of the Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville that was formed along with the Coalition that was headed by Greg Wathen in 2007. My good friend Greg has been the only CEO of any of the organizations to have served continuously. GAGE and the Chamber have both had multiple CEOs over the last 12 years with all of them including myself moving on to bigger and better things. This merger is an opportunity to choose the right leader and compensate them in a way that the revolving door of leadership is ended.

The Innovation Pointe Building in downtown Evansville was also opened that same year with all three of these organizations plus the Indiana Economic Development Corporation and the Workforce Development team all under the same roof. In the beginning we all understood that regionalism and cooperation for the greater good was the optimal way to foster positive economic growth. It worked fluidly in the early days and much progress was made. The vision of regional unity was physically established but the organizational structure was never put into place. All of the organizations played a vital role yet clung to their independence at the board level like a dog guards a bone. Politics interfered with unity and focus.

I recently wrote an article called The Virus of the Century is the Opportunity of the Century that has been published in several venues in California. My premise was that the hardships and re-evaluations that people

and organizations have endured due to the COVID19 epidemic, have exposed both the glaring and subtle weaknesses that blunt the pursuit of excellence. With those weaknesses identified for all to see, corrections can be made to emerge from the ashes of the pandemic stronger, wiser and better. This merger is the



JOE J. WALLACE

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For a Safer America!

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Community News

Harrison Jr. appointed to Election Board

Joe Harrison, Jr. Appointed to the Vanderburgh County Election Board

Prominent Evansville attorney, Joseph H. Harrison, Jr. has been appointed to serve as the Republican member of the three (3) person Vanderburgh County Election Board by Vanderburgh County Republican Party Chairman, Wayne Parke.

Harrison replaces Republican Thomas A. Massey, who was recently appointed Judge of the Vanderburgh Superior Court by Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb to succeed the retiring Honorable Richard G. D'Amour.

Harrison, a former Vanderburgh County Republican Party Chairman, earned his undergraduate degree from DePauw University and his law degree from Indiana University School of Law.

Harrison is a former Vanderburgh County and City of Evansville attorney. Harrison's father, Joe, Sr., served on the Vanderburgh County Election Board during the 1970's and 1980's.

Mr. Harrison son, Joe Harrison III is married and is also an attorney.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT JOE HARRISON, JR.

EDUCATION

- Reitz Memorial High School – Evansville, IN (1977)
- B.A., DePauw University, B.A. (1981)
- J.D., Indiana University School of Law (December, 1984)

LEGAL BACKGROUND

- Attorney/Of Counsel, Massey Law Offices, LLC (2010 to Present)
- Partner, Bowers Harrison, LLP (2000 - 2010)
- Partner, Bowers Harrison, Kent & Miller (1993 - 2000)
- Associate, Bowers, Harrison, Kent & Miller (1985 - 1993)

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Indiana Supreme Court (1985)
- United States District Court, Northern and Southern Districts of



JOE HARRISON JR.

Indiana (1985)

- United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit (1999)

PRACTICE AREAS

- Governmental Law
- Business and Corporate Matters
- Civil Litigation
- Wills and Estates
- Personal Injury Law

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Member, Vanderburgh County Election Board (2021 to Present)
- Attorney, Posey

County Council (2020 to Present)

- Attorney, Posey County (2019 to Present)
- Commissioner, Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (2014 to Present)
- Attorney, Evansville - Vanderburgh County Building Authority (2002 to Present)
- Attorney, Vanderburgh County (1997-2001, 2012 to 2019)
- Attorney, Area Plan Commission of Evansville - Vanderburgh County (2002 to 2012)
- Attorney, Evansville - Vanderburgh County Building Authority (2002 to Present)
- Attorney, City of Evansville (2002 - 2009)
- Attorney, Vanderburgh County Election Board (2001- 2002)
- Attorney, Vanderburgh County Council (1991 - 1997)
- Chairman, Vanderburgh County Republican Central Committee (1993 - 1997)
- Member, Oak Meadow Country Club



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AMERICA’S BEST



Evansville Teachers FCU named nation’s best credit union for checking

EVANSVILLE — Evansville Teachers Federal Credit Union has received a significant accolade from a major financial publication. The credit union was named America’s Best Credit Union for Checking by Investopedia, a financial website based in New York City that attracts 17 million unique US viewers monthly. The acknowledgment comes as part of Investopedia’s newly released Best Credit Unions of 2021 list. In total, six credit unions nationwide are recognized in specific categories.

The publication cites Evansville Teachers Federal Credit Union’s free Vertical Checking as “one of the best high-yield options anywhere.” Vertical Checking offers a high interest rate of 3.30% APY, plus free ATMs worldwide.

The local credit union is attracting national attention at an increasing rate in recent months. ETFCU’s Vertical Checking has been listed in Kiplinger’s Personal Finance among its list of the nation’s Top Checking

Accounts each month since July 2020. Among the four checking accounts listed, ETFCU’s Vertical Checking offers the largest potential earnings.

In 2020, Evansville Teachers Federal Credit Union returned \$8,215,357 to members through checking accounts alone. This is an increase of 48% over the 2019 total.

ETFCU operates 24 branch offices in Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee, with four other locations under construction.

Evansville Teachers Federal Credit Union was named the nation’s top credit union for checking. There are about 5,500 credit unions nationwide.

Along with Evansville, there are offices in Owensboro (2), Henderson, Princeton, Fort Branch, Vincennes, Mount Vernon, Newburgh and Washington, and have expanded in the past three years into Bowling Green, Louisville and Greater Nashville, putting us up to 24 locations with four more currently under construction.

Checking Your Social Security earnings may help you down the road

For many individuals, Social Security is an important source of retirement income. When it comes time for you to retire, the amount of benefit you will receive is based in part on your career earnings. That’s why it’s critical that you review your Social Security earnings record and report any inaccuracies.



BRYAN RUDER

Full Earnings Record Now” to view your taxed Social Security earnings. Carefully review each year of listed earnings and check them against your own records, such as W-2s and tax returns. Should you spot errors, notify the Social Security Administration by calling (800) 772-1213.

If at any point during your career your employer did not properly report your work earnings, you could potentially miss out on tens of thousands of dollars in Social Security benefits over your lifetime. And as time passes, it may become harder to access past documents. You may even find that your past employer is no longer in

business. So it pays to review your earnings record sooner rather than later. In addition to viewing your earnings record, with a “My Social Security” account, you can also access other important information, such as your annual Social Security statement and the monthly benefit you’re eligible to receive.

Article provided by Bryan A. Ruder, CFP®, MSPFP, CRPC®, AWMA®, AAMS®, AIF®, MPAS®. Mr. Ruder is Associate Vice President/ Investments, Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Incorporated, Member SIPC and New York Stock Exchange, who can be contacted in the Evansville office at (812) 475-9353 or ruderb@stifel.com.



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Lawmakers wrap up first half of legislative session

The Indiana General Assembly is halfway through the 2021 legislative session. The House of Representatives will now consider Senate bills while the Senate considers House bills.

This session, I am authoring legislation that would help combat human trafficking and expand protections for young Hoosier victims. I also authored a bill that would establish a grant program to help students experiencing learning loss due to the pandemic. These bills cleared the House and can now be considered by the Senate.

In the first half of session, I also supported a responsible state budget proposal that invests in Hoosiers and would

accelerate the economy. We continue our strong commitment to K-12 education, which accounts for 50% of the two-year state budget. We also include strategic investments to support small businesses and jobs, improve public health, enhance public safety, promote regional economic development and expand rural broadband. Our proposal is balanced and maintains prudent reserves to protect our state against any future economic downturns.

To follow these bills and others as they move through the process, visit iga.in.gov. If you have any questions or input on proposals for new laws, please contact me at 317-232-9815 or h76@iga.in.gov.



Legislation to prohibit bank from financing people with tax debts

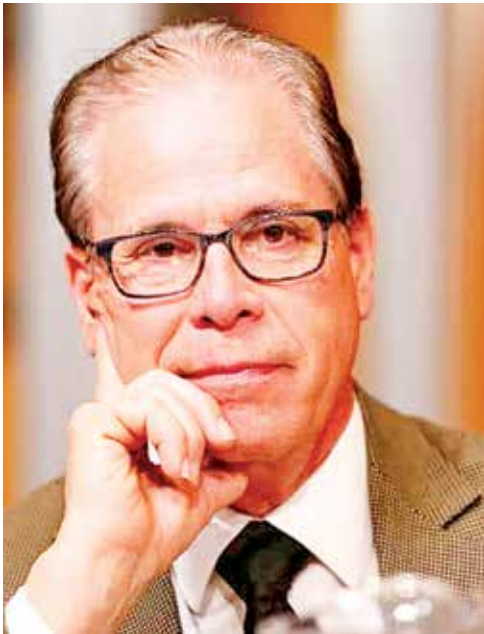
U.S. Senator Mike Braun (R-IN) and U.S. Senator John Kennedy (R-LA) introduced legislation that will prohibit individuals delinquent on their taxes from using the Export-Import Bank.

“The Export-Import Bank should not serve as an ATM for tax delinquents and this legislation will address this loophole, while also rooting out potential fraud from dozens of companies,” said U.S. Senator Mike Braun.

“American taxpayers shouldn’t be forced to subsidize businesses that haven’t even paid their own taxes, and I’m proud to work with Sen. Braun to bring accountability to the Export-Import Bank,” said U.S. Senator John Kennedy.

BACKGROUND:

The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) requires companies applying for certain financing to self-certify



U.S. SENATOR MIKE BRAUN

that they do not have delinquent federal debt. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) analyzed federal data and identified billions of dollars in authorized EXIM transactions associated with dozens of companies that potentially fraudulently applied for financing.

GAO FINDINGS:

- Federal law states that applicants who are delinquent on federal debts may

not receive federal direct loans, loan guarantees, or loan insurance until the delinquent debt is satisfactorily resolved.

- Financial pressures potentially incentivize participants or employees to commit fraud on applications to use the EXIM.
- Using data from the System for Award Management (SAM), GAO found that, from calendar years 2014 through 2016, EXIM authorized transactions with an aggregate authorization value of about \$1.7 billion that were associated with 32 U.S.-based companies that had a delinquent federal debt indicator in SAM in the same month EXIM authorized these transactions.

CHANGES TO EXIM:

- The EXIM bank could use SAM data and data-analytical approaches to detect applicants and participants with potential delinquent federal debt and work with

the Internal Revenue Service to confirm delinquencies.

- Companies who have fraudulently certified not having federal debt would lose access to the EXIM funding, and applicants would similarly be denied if they held such federal debt.
- The bill allows the President to waive the prohibition if the President determines that the work being carried out by an entity with delinquent federal debt significantly affects the interests of the United States.
- The bill does not consider seriously delinquent federal debt as debt that is being repaid in a timely manner.
- EXIM concurred with GAO’s recommendation to use available data instead of self-certification to prevent companies with delinquent federal debt from using the EXIM.

WALLACE

FROM PAGE 3

manifestation of taking the bull by the horns to actualize the opportunity of the century in the Greater Evansville region.

Economies of Scale: The first opportunity of the century is to consolidate executive management first by building an organization around one Chief Executive Officer as opposed to three. In today’s competitive world for executive leadership, this move alone can save a significant amount of taxpayer

dollars that can be redeployed into tactical activities. Similar economies of scale can be created in departments like finance, marketing and operations leaving more potential for programmatic investments.

Focusing the Mission: Merging these worthy organizations will offer the opportunity for the region to maintain a regional focus on efforts to improve the economy whether it is through fostering entrepreneurship, attracting businesses to the region, influencing business friendly legislation, or even

promoting education and lifestyle enhancing activities under a single umbrella. It will also enable the elimination of redundant board meetings as many of the same people populated the three boards. Finally, with the private business support that the Chamber of Commerce of SW Indiana has spent years putting into place, economic development efforts may be liberated from the heavy handed and often misguided ambitions of elected officials that also seem to change frequently.

The New Path to Prosperity: With the advent of remote

working and the acceptance of telecommuting by the coastal enclaves of excellence, regions like Greater Evansville that have affordable housing, shorter commutes, and a more relaxed lifestyle can upgrade their workforces by attracting telecommuters. This attraction has the potential to elevate the capabilities of the local workforce, increase the earnings power and dare I say, minimize carbon emissions by substantially eliminating commuting. This is a prosperity where the

people who choose to relocate will become better and make Greater Evansville better just by their presence.

As a member of the founding team for unity in economic development, I applaud and congratulate the decision to merge the economic development entities of the Greater Evansville region. I wish all of my friends and former neighbors good fortune and prosperity in emerging from the pandemic stronger and better. It is your time as a region and our time as a nation to move forward boldly to a better future.

Deaconess Sports Park eyes synthetic infields

Approximately ten years ago, local, civic, and political leaders sought to develop a baseball/softball sports complex that would become a tourism economic attractor for Evansville and all of Vanderburgh County. That vision led to Deaconess Sports Park development, which opened back on May 30, 2015. This eight-field complex features state-of-the-art amenities for girls', women's, and men's fast and slow-pitch softball as well as boys' 12 & under baseball tournaments. The initial cost to build Deaconess Sports Park was \$15.2 million and was approved by the Vanderburgh County Council.

The project was funded by a bond issue, where debt is being retired and paid from the Tourism Capital Improvement Fund (TCI fund receipts). The TCI fund is funded by 3.5% of the hotel innkeepers' tax. The total Vanderburgh County's Innkeepers tax is 8%, with 2% of such going to the Convention Center and 2.5% to Visit Evansville for operations including sales and marketing. This revenue is collected primarily by out-of-town visitors attending meetings or conventions and by sports teams that stay in Vanderburgh County hotels while competing at Deaconess Sports Park.

The TCI fund still has a substantial reserve well above what it is paid for these Park bonds, allowing other projects' funding. Some of the other proj-



ects funded by the TCI fund include: Mesker Park Zoo, Deaconess Aquatic Center, the Reitz Home, the LST 325, and many more. Since its opening in 2015, the Deaconess Sports Park has generated over 95,000 hotel rooms with an overall estimated economic impact of over \$85.6 million which has been felt throughout Vanderburgh County. Many restaurants, hotels, and a variety of retail businesses have been positively impacted by the out-of-town guests that have brought their players and teams to the Deaconess Sports Park.

Visit Evansville, which oversees Deaconess Sports Park's management, has proposed refinancing Deaconess Sports Park's bonds. Due to current favorable bond rates, refinancing the bonds will save the County and the TCI fund money by reducing the bi-annual payments made on the bonds, and it would also free up roughly \$1.9 million to reinvest back into Deaconess Sports

Park. We anticipate reinvesting the \$1.9 million into replacing all eight infields with synthetic infields, including the batting cages and possibly the warmup pitching mounds.

There are several reasons why this reinvestment is vital for the future of Deaconess Sports Park. First, this investment will allow the facility to extend its season so we can host more weekend tournaments. The added benefit means additional revenue brought into our local economy by all the traveling teams and families. Second, by having synthetic infields in place, we can restart games just 30 minutes following a rainstorm, all but eliminating tournaments that would have been canceled due to the rain. Third, we will be able to attract new tournaments such as the 13-year-old boys' baseball, and more 12 and under baseball tournaments to go along with our strong schedule of girls' softball tournaments each season. Lastly,

we want our facilities to remain competitive and by keeping Deaconess Sports Park updated, it helps to ensure its success in the years ahead.

There is ever-increasing competition on the horizon as more cities are investing into their sports facilities. Owensboro, KY reinvested \$2.9 million at Jack C. Fisher Park to give their softball facility a much-needed facelift. The Grand Park Sports Campus located in Westfield, Indiana continues to expand and renovate their very impressive sports complex. Elizabethtown, KY Sports Complex is another competitor that continues to reinvest into their facility. Henderson, KY just released its plans to develop six baseball/softball fields and at least one multi-purpose field as part of the city's proposed new sports complex on recently purchased property by the City of Henderson on Airline Road.

Two additional new developments in youth sports worth mentioning include the recent opening of the 24-acre Norton Healthcare Sports and Learning Complex, an indoor track facility in Louisville, KY, and the recent opening of the 103,000 sq. ft. Bluegrass Sportsplex, an indoor multi-use youth sports facility in Elizabethtown, KY. The message is simple, youth sports continue to be big business for cities and businesses, especially right here in Evansville, Indiana.

Shively Reappointed Chief Judge of the Vanderburgh Superior Court

The Vanderburgh Superior Court has reappointed the Honorable Les C. Shively to the position of Chief Judge for a term expiring December 31, 2021. The position of Chief Judge is essential to the successful operations of the Court.

Judge Shively is a graduate of the I.U. Robert H. McKinney School of Law. He joined the Vanderburgh Superior Court in 2013 after a 33-year career in the practice of law.

The Honorable Judge Les Shively took the bench several years ago upon his appointment to the Vanderburgh County Superior Court by former Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels. Judge Shively's appointment served to fill the vacant position left by the Honorable Judge David Kiely after his election to the Vanderburgh County Circuit Court. When the Judge Kiely began his duties within the Circuit Court his position remained vacant until March, during which time Governor Daniels reviewed numerous applicants for the position, ultimately settling on the vastly experienced Judge Shively.

Judge Shively prac-

ticed law for a total of 32 years prior to his appointment to the bench. During his 32 years practicing his primary focus was real estate litigation. His practice dealt with numerous issues concerning property rights, issues with development, contract disputes, land use regulation, property taxes, and construction matters. In 2004 Judge Shively served as the chair for the Zoning and Land Use section of the Indiana Bar Association as well as representing the Evansville Association of Realtors for fifteen years.

Judge Shively realized that he wished to pursue law during his sophomore year of high school. His parents ingrained him with a high level of respect and taught him how to behave and interact with adults at a very young age. As a result of this, he received exposure to professionals at a very early age, mainly attorneys that were friends of his family. During his sophomore year of high school, Judge Shively had the opportunity to shadow then prosecutor William Brune and deputy pros-



LES C. SHIVELY

ecutors Jack Davis and David Miller as part of a school program that allowed students to shadow professionals for a week. Judge Shively had the opportunity to observe a jury trial during this time and was fascinated with the experience.

Judge Shively went on to Indiana University to receive his B.S. and accounting degree in 1976 and his Masters of Business Administration in 1980. During graduate school, Judge Shively also attended the IU School of Law in Indianapolis and received his Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1980.

During his time in law school, Judge Shively came to know Dean Harvey. Harvey told Shively that law school would only account for a small percentage of necessary preparation to be a lawyer. Harvey went on to say that the

first firm an attorney went to work for after school was vital to the shaping of a good lawyer. Judge Shively, with Harvey's words in mind, sought work with the Johnson, Carroll, & Griffith law firm upon his completion of law school and worked at the firm from 1980 to 1989. "Working for Johnson, Carroll, & Griffith was an amazing opportunity." Shively spoke very highly of his time at the firm, "I am very grateful to the attorneys that I was fortunate enough to work with directly out of law school. They are outstanding attorneys and the knowledge that I gained while working was invaluable." Judge Shively stated that the subsequent experiences working with Terry Noffsinger and the firm of Fine & Hatfield were also instrumental in his professional development.

Judge Shively has also been a part of numerous boards and associations. He has served on the Indiana University Board of Trustees, Indiana State Student Assistance Commission, Indiana Board of Law Examiners, the Vanderburgh County Election Board and State Board

of Trustees for Ivy Tech Community College.

Judge Shively's appointment comes at an interesting time when a new expungement law known as the "Second Chance Law" became law. This law, as its name suggests, allows for offenders to have their offenses expunged contingent on their fulfillment of certain statutory pre-requisites. The idea behind the law is to allow past offenders to have a chance to obtain jobs that they may not have previously been able to obtain with a felony on their record.

One of Judge Shively's most rewarding experiences has occurred in family law cases. Those decisions he hopes, have fostered a foundation for parents to work more effectively for the best interest of their children post-divorce.

Though Judge Shively's time is spread thinly through his involvement in the community and his time on the bench, he does find time to himself. It is in these moments that he enjoys the quiet hobby of reading and travel with his family facilitated by his wife, Linda, who is a travel agent.

Education

AmeriQual, Ivy Tech partnership to provide employment and advancement opportunities

Ivy Tech Community College Evansville and AmeriQual have partnered to give AmeriQual's current and future team members a greater opportunity to advance and increase their income.

Ivy Tech Community College and AmeriQual have offered the opportunity for team members to obtain a college education through Achieve Your Degree for several years. By making use of tuition reimbursement dollars and deferred payment until semester completion, team members have benefited and earned degrees and credentials.

Now, AmeriQual's current and future team members who have not

completed their high school diploma will have the opportunity to earn their High School Equivalency Diploma through Ivy Tech.

The program, which is individually-based and can be completed in as little as eight weeks, will hold free classes on-site at the Evansville north-side manufacturer. Upon successful completion, participants will receive a \$500 bonus and advancement opportunities.

"AmeriQual and Ivy Tech are excited about this expanded partnership to skill-up the Southwestern Indiana Workforce," according to Kyla Dowell, Lead Employer Consultant. "This is an innovative



approach to workforce development." AmeriQual will offer the Ivy Tech High School Equivalency classes on-site and pay employees their regular rate, even while taking the classes. The program will be taught by an Ivy Tech instructor, free of charge to students through an Indiana

Department of Workforce Development grant received by Ivy Tech Evansville.

According to Mirsada Salihovic, AmeriQual's Vice President of Human Resources, "Investing in personal and professional development of our workforce is a critical component of AmeriQual's

long-term strategy that will allow the organization to continue to create skilled jobs in a highly competitive job market.

"Ivy Tech is a great partner and we are excited to bring another innovative recruitment and talent development program to our organization," Salihovic said.

Daniela Vidal, chancellor of Ivy Tech Evansville said, that the college is pleased to be able to offer both the High School Equivalency program, as well as Achieve Your Degree opportunities for AmeriQual's team members. "Education is a valuable commodity, and will enhance the company, its team members, and also our communities."

Stoneking named Executive Director of USI Outreach and Engagement

Dr. Mohammed Khayum, University of Southern Indiana Provost, has named Dawn Stoneking as Executive Director for Outreach and Engagement effective January 1, 2021. Stoneking had been serving as Interim Associate Provost for Outreach and Engagement and Director of Lifelong Learning since August 1, 2019.

As Executive Director, Stoneking will serve as the liaison to develop and maintain partnerships between USI and community, state, and regional groups and organizations. She will oversee an extensive set of programs and services including: the Center for Applied

Research; College Achievement Program; Historic New Harmony; Historic Southern Indiana; Lifelong Learning Noncredit Courses; Corporate Partnerships and Customized Trainings; Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC); Service Learning; Southern Indiana Japanese School; Veteran, Military and Family Resource Center, among others.

Stoneking has served as the Director of Lifelong Learning at USI since January 2016 and was previously the Assistant Director of Enrollment and Degree Management at Virginia Tech University. While there, she also served as Assis-



DAWN STONEKING

stant Director for Distance Learning Initiatives and in leadership positions within Continuing and Professional

Education in Outreach and International Affairs.

Stoneking holds memberships in the University and Professional Continuing Education Association (UPCEA), Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce and serves on the Board of Directors for the Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville (GAGE). She received a bachelor's degree in psychology in 1995, and a master's degree in social work in 2000, both from Radford University in Radford, Virginia. She is currently working on a doctorate in public administration and public affairs from Virginia Tech.

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IVY TECH STARTS TRUCK DRIVING CLASSES

Ivy Tech Community College announces new financial aid eligible CDL+ Program

EVANSVILLE — Ivy Tech Community College Evansville Campus, along with DriveCO CDL Learning Center, is launching a commercial truck-driver training program which is eligible for federal financial aid. CDL+, a one-semester program, includes both on-the-road driver training and academic instruction.

Classes begin Monday, March 22. CDL+ will be offered in Evansville, Ferdinand, and Tell City.

Vic Chamness, executive director of Ivy Tech's Career Coaching and Employer Connections (CCEC) said truck driv-

ing is in high demand in this area. "According to the 4th Quarter 2020 Economic Growth report for our Indiana region, job ads for truck drivers is at the top and more than double the next high-demand job of nursing. Our new CCEC division and the School of Business, Logistics and Supply Chain, worked collaboratively to create this program to meet this high-demand job need for our region."

The American Trucking Association projects freight volumes to grow 36% over the next decade. Over that same period, the truck-



ing industry will need to hire roughly 1.1 million new drivers to keep up with demand. Additionally, freight movement is a critical component of national supply chains with over 70% of the \$650 billion in goods that move through Indiana every day being done so on the state's highways.

The CDL+ Program differs from existing driver-training programs in several significant

ways. Students will exit the program with not only their commercial driver's license but also additional driver training and 17 hours of academic credit. "The fact that the program is also eligible for federal financial aid, is unusual as it is not the case for programs at commercial driving schools," said Kyla Dowell, lead employer consultant for Evansville's CCEC.

Ann Mills, program chair of Supply Chain Management, indicated another advantage is graduates can also move right into an associate degree pathway at Ivy Tech — enhancing their career options, if desired. "The credits

earned in the CDL+ program will transfer into an associate degree in Supply Chain Management, providing an avenue for further education as well as future career development and advancement in the supply chain/logistics industry."

Chris Canada, program manager, said the first two steps to qualify for the program include filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.gov; and applying to be a student at Ivy Tech at www.ivytech.edu/applynow. More information is available by talking with faculty advisor Ann Mills at 812-429-1451 or email amills57@ivytech.edu

USI spring 2021 commencement exercises to be held in person

Additional ceremonies, reduced capacity, tickets and masks required

The University of Southern Indiana will hold reduced capacity, in-person Commencement Exercises in the Screaming Eagles Arena over the weekend of May 7 — 9, 2021. Due to safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to limit capacity, the University plans to host eight ceremonies instead of the traditional five. The additional ceremonies will reduce the number of graduates per ceremony to allow for adequate physical distancing.

Tickets will be required for guests and each graduate will be allowed two guests. Graduates and guests will be required to follow safety protocols including wearing a face covering, practicing good hand hygiene and adequate physical distancing when entering and leaving the Arena.

"Safety has guided our thinking since the beginning of the pandemic. As the number of COVID positive cases have been precipitously dropping in our community and vaccinations are being made available to more citizens, we are



cautiously optimistic about holding in-person Spring 2021 Commencement Exercises," said Ronald S. Rochon, USI President.

"Celebrating our graduates' achievements with our entire community is always the best part of the academic year. We know that restricting the number of guests will be difficult for graduates, friends and families, but we will offer a live stream of the ceremonies for additional virtual participation. Drastically reducing density is our best option. Due to COVID conditions, we were forced to host an entirely virtual celebration last December. We will continue to consult with health officials as we approach May."

The in-person ceremonies are planned for the following

dates and times:

Graduate Studies Ceremonies (masters and doctoral candidates)

- Friday, May 7 — two ceremonies, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. (Graduates should save the date and will be notified which ceremony to attend after registration.)

Undergraduate Ceremonies

- Saturday, May 8 — three ceremonies: Romain College of Business, 9 a.m.; College of Liberal Arts, 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. (Graduates should save the date and will be notified which ceremony to attend after registration.)

- Sunday, May 9 — three ceremonies: Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education, 9 a.m.; Col-

lege of Nursing and Health Professions, 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. (Graduates should save the date and will be notified which ceremony to attend after registration.)

In order to obtain an accurate count for each ceremony, graduates must register to participate in Commencement by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 23. Graduates are asked to frequently monitor their USI email for important information, including access to the registration link. Following registration, graduates will be provided with an email containing a link to select two, reserved seating guest tickets. The guest tickets will be electronic tickets, or may be printed, and will be required for admission at the door. No additional tickets will be available. Face coverings must be worn for admission and at all times while in the Arena.

Ceremonies are anticipated to last up to one hour. Sufficient time is being allotted between ceremonies to allow for cleaning of the Arena.

Graduates are encouraged to regularly visit the Commencement website (www.usi.edu/commencement) for updated information.

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Area News

Art exhibit ‘The Hustace World View’ on display at UE

The University of Evansville presents “The Hustace World View,” an exhibit by Cedric Hustace, on display at the Krannert Gallery through Sunday, April 4. The Krannert Gallery is located in the Krannert Hall of Art & Music on the UE campus.

The gallery is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from noon until 8:00 p.m. on Sundays.

A public reception for the artist will be held on Thursday, March 18, at 6:30 p.m. The reception will be held in the Krannert Gallery.

These events are free and open to the public. They are part of the Emerging Contemporary Artist Lecture Series, sponsored by the Efroymson Family Fund and the UE



Department of Art.

A native of Hawaii, Cedric Hustace is a retired attorney as well as an accomplished musician and impressionist artist. After serving in the Army for three years, he practiced law for nearly 40 years in St. Louis and Evansville.

Hustace’s works are in collections in the United States and overseas locations including the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Australia, India, and more. Today, he serves as president of the UE Friends of Art.

For more information, contact the UE Art Department of Art at 812-488-2043, email art@evansville.edu, or visit the gallery’s Facebook page.

Winners of 6th Annual Changemaker Challenge announced

Several high school students were awarded significant scholarships on Monday during a virtual awards ceremony for the University of Evansville’s sixth annual High School Changemaker Challenge. The competition was sponsored by Toyota.

In previous years, the High School Changemaker Challenge has been held in person and open to local students who compete in teams. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s competition was hosted in a virtual format and accepted individual entries from students around the world.

The High School

Changemaker Challenge, supported by the UE Center for Innovation and Change, is designed to motivate young people to take a leading role in identifying and solving challenges in the world around them through innovation and creativity.

UE awarded first, second, and third place to individuals from each of the two categories: social & environmental justice and health. The scholarship amounts, renewable for a total of four years, are:

- 1st place: full tuition
- 2nd place: \$18,000 tuition and \$5,000 housing

- 3rd place: \$13,000 tuition and \$5,000 housing

Below is a list of the winners of the 2021 High School Changemaker Challenge:

SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- 1st place: Grace Davidson; North High School, Evansville, Indiana; Helping victims of sexual assault receive compassionate care
- 2nd place: Ilya Budd; Arcola High School, Arcola, Illinois; Rethinking recycling
- 3rd place: Barak Hall; Evansville Christian School, Evansville, Indiana; Sustainable housing

Additional finalists who competed in this category include:

- Evelyn Hipp; Nolensville High School, Nolensville, Tennessee; Helping LGBTQ students feel supported
- Mosad Kamal Mohammed; El Sheikh STEM School, El Hamoul City, Egypt; Multifunctional Proteins Classification Model
- Blayre Walters; Friends’ Central High School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Improving mental health for children
- Aneesh Alapati; Castle High School, Newburgh, Indiana; Working to end gun violence in Evansville

HEALTH

- 1st place: Patricia Solliday; White River Valley High School, Switz City, Indiana; Portable health care for the elderly
- 2nd place: Ali Scott; Northeastern High School,

Richmond, Indiana; Basic healthcare for K-12 kids in need

- 3rd place: Omaira Khan; Signature School, Newburgh, Indiana; Clean needle exchange

Additional finalists who competed in this category include:

- Amanda Deutsch; North High School, Haubstadt, Indiana; Food insecurity
- Madison Lucas; Evansville Christian School, Evansville, Indiana; Developing a virtual blood bank
- Lydia Preske; Signature School, Evansville, Indiana; Infant formula temperature control
- Anish Patel; Woodbridge High School, Irvine, California; The Empowerment Gym

MASSEY

FROM PAGE 1

possible. He knows the importance of preserving relationships among family members, even in highly disputed issues. As a registered mediator, he helps people navigate difficult decisions and find an outcome that serves their best interests.

When he is not with clients, Mr. Massey remains busy through presenting seminars as a faculty member of Indiana Continuing Legal Education Forum and on behalf of the Evansville Bar Association’s Continuing Legal Education program. Outside his practice, he is a member of the Vanderburgh County Election Board.

Mr. Massey holds the highest peer rating possible of AV Preeminent* from Martindale-Hubbell. Martindale-Hubbell® is the facilitator of a peer review rating process. Ratings reflect the anonymous opinions of members of the bar and the judiciary. Martindale-Hubbell® Peer Review Rating™ fall into two categories — legal ability and general ethical standards.

Tom and his renowned artist wife Joanne have three children: Rachel, Scott, and Ellie.

All three children attended Purdue University majoring in a variety of studies. Rachel, the oldest daughter, works at Eli Lilly and lives in Indianapolis with her husband, Cory. Scott is the founder and CEO of Heliponix, a hydroponics company that sells refrigerator-sized appliances that allow consumers to grow to produce in the comfort of their own home. Tom and Joanne’s youngest daughter, Ellie, is a junior at Purdue currently completing her degree in Industrial Management.

LISTED BELOW ARE PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF NEWLY APPOINTED SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE TOM MASSEY

- Dean’s List, Purdue University.
- Note Editor, Valparaiso University Law Review.
- Teaching Assistant, Legal Research and Writing Program, Valparaiso University Law School, 1983-1984.
- Registered Family Law Mediator, 1992—. Advisory Board, University of Evansville Legal Studies Program, 1987-2005.
- Adjunct Faculty, University of Evansville, 1990; Lockyear College, 1988-1990. Faculty,



Indiana Judicial Conference, Annual Meeting, 1996. Board Member, Indiana Continuing Legal Education Forum, 1999-2006; Indiana Equal Justice Fund, 1998-2008.

- Faculty Member, Indiana Continuing Legal Education Forum (ICLEF) Seminars: 7th Annual Family Law Institute, October 14-15, 2009; Master’s Series — Advanced Family Law, December 13-14, 2008; Dissolution and Family Law Matters, February 14, 2008; Master’s Series — Advanced Family Law, November 7, 2007; Family Law Update, December 7-8, 2005; Tips for Handling Asset Divorce Cases,

December 9, 2003; Family Law for Practitioners, November 1, 2001; Tougher Topics of Family Law, October 10, 2001; Divorce Law 301, July 17, 1996; Family Law Notebook, August 23, 1995; Child Support: Litigating the Guidelines, July 13, 1994; Family Law Practice, October 22, 1993.

- Intermediate Divorce Law, October 11, 1991. Faculty Member, Numerous Evansville Bar Association Continuing Legal Education Seminars. Master, American Inn of Court No. 36. Managing Partner, Bowers Harrison, LLP, 1999-2008. Partner, 1989-1999 and Associate, 1984-1989, Bowers, Harrison, Kent & Miller.

ENJOY THE FINEST CUISINE AT CAVANAUGH'S ON THE RIVER

Flawless steaks. Fresh seafood. Impeccable service. Enjoy the finest cuisine paired with sweeping river views at Cavanaugh's On the River located in Tropicana Evansville's Riverfront Event Center. Cavanaugh's menu features starters, salads, prime rib, signature steaks, seafood, sides and desserts. Gluten free options are available.

The casual upscale atmosphere of the Piano Bar at Cavanaugh's is the ideal place to meet friends and enjoy drinks and the full dinner menu



of Cavanaugh's. Live entertainment is provided by regional musicians.

See the main menu and entertainment lineup at TropEvansville.com. Reservations are recommended. Call 812-433-4333 or

reserve online any time at OpenTable.com.

— OpenTable overall Score: 4.7

"We love this restaurant. It is some of the best steak I have ever had. Everything is perfectly prepared in a beautiful relaxing atmosphere." — Missy

on OpenTable

— Tripadvisor overall Score: 4.5

"My husband and I went there for our Christmas dinner. We were offered 2 options for seating, so that was nice. We choose to set by the fireplace. Was nice and quiet, but was a little hard to have conversations at times with the music. Music was a great touch though, so we didn't mind. The bread was amazing with the twist of the garlic butter. Our steaks were cooked to perfection, and mine could have been cut with a butter knife. Ended our meal with the turtle cheesecake,

which was wonderful.

All the staff were very nice and welcoming. Will definitely be back again. Would recommend. Worth the money." — 92tammya on Tripadvisor

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MERGER

FROM PAGE 1

and CEO of the Chamber. "The new partnership is a proactive alignment of complementary efforts to unify as one voice to deliver economic development services for the region and to market our strengths to businesses and talent looking for a great location to operate a business, to live, and to thrive."

The group completed significant due diligence around finances, strategic integration of various programs, public policies, and technology along with a commitment to ensure that the new organization will address diversity, small business development and the unique value that the public and private sectors bring in delivering success throughout the Evansville region.

"We are very pleased that after months of document review, discussion and best-practice research—including study of similar regions seeking increased velocity—we have clear direction and authorization from our collective Boards to aggregate the work, the assets, the staffs, and the expertise of three very sound organizations into one," stated Lynell Walton, Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville Board Chair.

The new partnership will operate within Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties while continuing strategic partnerships with the entire MSA some of which is in Kentucky, the Southwest Indiana SBDC, area local Chambers, WorkOne and other entities that strengthen the region's opportunity to prosper.

"Warrick County has been a strong regional voice and as one of the original partners in creation of the Coalition, we're excited to take this next step in the formation of a new vision for Southwest Indiana," said Dan Saylor, Warrick County Commissioner.

"The new organization gives Posey County an even stronger voice than we have had in the past," Jenna Richardt, Executive Director of the Posey County Economic Partnership. "That collective voice along with the ability to invest in larger regional development strategies will add more value to Posey County businesses and residents."

Though the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville and Southwest Indiana Chamber will combine business operations during the coming year, details of a new brand and name will be released by early April 2021. During the transition, the executives of the Coalition and the Southwest Indiana Chamber, Greg Wathen and Tara Barney have agreed to serve as co-CEOs. An early order of business for the new group will be the selection of executive leadership as well as the appointment of the new entity's first Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

A temporary landing page for the new economic partnership has been created: evansvilleregion.com.

About Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana

The Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana acts as the marketing arm and regional economic development organization for Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh, and Warrick Counties in Southwest Indiana. Since its formation in late 2006, the Coalition has helped to secure over \$3.2 billion in new investment and 4,213 new jobs from existing and new companies, such as Haier America, Berry Global, Toyota Boshoku, Reckitt Benckiser, Midwest Fertilizer and AT&T. Another important aspect of the Coalition's multi-faceted job description is helping the communities it serves build new capacity for future development. The

Coalition has helped secure over \$118 million in grants for such things as expansion of water and sewer systems, building new community centers and making improvements to the region's levee system, which protects thousands of acres.

About Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville

Headquartered in Downtown Evansville, Ind., the Growth Alliance for Greater Evansville (GAGE) was created in early 2007 as a public-private non-profit partnership through the concerted efforts of government, business and higher education. The Growth Alliance team connects businesses, talent, ideas and experts to elevate the economic prosperity of Greater Evansville. Focus areas include business retention and expansion; innovation and entrepreneurship; quality of place and talent; and new business attraction.

You can learn more at www.growthallianceevv.com.

About Southwest Indiana Chamber

Since 1915, the Southwest Indiana Chamber has been a trusted ally of the regional business community. Today we are one of the state's largest, strongest, and most impactful nonprofit business organizations, representing a total membership of almost 1,400 businesses, organizations, and agencies. About one-third of members have invested in our organization for 10 or more years. While nearly all major employers in our region invest in the Southwest Indiana Chamber, 71% of our member businesses have 25 or fewer employees. Learn more about the Chamber, our members, and the Southwest Indiana regional business community at www.swinchamber.com. 318 Main St., Suite 401, Evansville, IN 47708.

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Mayor Winnecke the 34th Mayor of Evansville

Lloyd Winnecke was inaugurated on January 1, 2012, as the 34th Mayor of the City of Evansville, Indiana. He was re-elected twice thereafter by overwhelming margins.

A native of Evansville with a successful business background in banking communications and news information, Mayor Winnecke held numerous public and private sector management positions before he assumed the role as the city's top executive official.

Prior to becoming Mayor, Lloyd's position as Senior Vice President and Marketing Director for Fifth Third Bank taught him the business skills he brought to city government. Before joining the bank, Lloyd spent nearly two decades in the television news industry working in several markets, including Louisville and Indianapolis. He was News Director at WEHT-TV News 25 in Henderson, Ky., before switching from news to banking.

In the public sector, he was elected to the Vanderburgh County Commission in 2008 and served as President of the County Commissioners. Prior to that, he served nine years on the Vanderburgh County Council, including three years as County Council President and one year as Council Finance Chairman. As a county official, Lloyd proposed balanced budgets for 11 straight years and held per capita spending to 43% below the state average. He has never lost an election.

Mayor Winnecke and his wife, Carol McClintock, are members of Saint Benedict Cathedral and are active members of the community. In 2014, the Downtown Evansville Rotary Club designated Lloyd and Carol as a Paul Harris Fellows in recognition of their shared purpose with the Rotary to build world understanding and peace. In 2013, Mayor Winnecke was named an honorary member of the West Side Nut Club for his enthusiastic support of the community and the City's West Side.

In 2012, Lloyd and Carol were honored with the Keep Evansville Beautiful Volunteer of the Year Award for launch-



LLOYD WINNECKE

ing the monthly litter pick-up initiative Clean Evansville and inspiring others to help keep Evansville beautiful. Last year, the Indiana Association of City and Towns recognized the City of Evansville with the 2013 IACT Community Achievement Award and the 2013 IACT Green Community of the Year Award for promoting civic pride, work ethic, and the spirit of volunteerism through various city activities, in particular Clean Evansville.

The Mayor has served on the Boards of Evansville Civic Theatre, Gilda's Club of Evansville, the American Red Cross, the Evansville African American Museum and the University of Evansville Purple Aces Club. He also serves on the executive committee of the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana and the ITAC (city-county information technology committee). He is a past board member and current volunteer for the Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center, and a past cabinet member for the local United Way campaign. Other organizational involvements include the Evansville Parks Foundation, Wesselman Nature Center, the University of Evansville Theatre Society, Reitz Home Museum, University of Southern Indiana Arts and Humanities, and Junior Achievement.

Mayor Winnecke is a graduate of Central High School with a Bachelor of Science in Communication from the University of Evansville. He is the father of one daughter, Danielle, who resides in Tucson, Arizona, with her husband Steve and their sons, Holden and Oliver.

DIVERSIFY

FROM PAGE 1

"The construction of this solar array and the additional energy obtained through the power purchase agreement will further CenterPoint Energy's Smart Energy Future® strategy. Ensuring continued reliability, addressing sustainability needs for the region, and tailored to utility ownership values, these projects will contribute significantly to CenterPoint Energy's commitment to deliver clean and reasonably priced energy to its customers," said Steve Greenley, Senior Vice President, Generation Development.

This transition is underway and will lead to more economic development opportunities in the state and provide quality of life enhancements along the way to the many communities served. Less carbon-based fuel will continue to enhance local air quality while enabling additional job growth.

"We understand the complexity of the regional transmission market and our obligation to serve all customers while managing costs," said Greenley. "Our plan saves customers \$320 million over business as usual while enhancing reliability and sustainability paths for customers."

CenterPoint Energy is also working with legislators to increase customer savings

by piloting financing tools like securitization to generate additional, immediate savings, and a policy path to solve uneconomic, retiring generation asset problems.

The majority of CenterPoint Energy's renewable mix will be located in Indiana providing additional tax base and construction jobs. This transition allows Indiana to lead on generation mix and control its own carbon destiny from increasing national policy pressure.

CenterPoint Energy's commitment to Indiana remains strong. In 2020, the Foundation contributed nearly \$6 million dollars in the state of Indiana. We are also looking at workforce development solutions to assist legacy generation workers prepare for opportunities supporting Indiana's future.

Implementing a cleaner energy future will allow CenterPoint Energy and its customers to achieve carbon reduction goals, better serve our communities and neighbors in need, and provide the business and economic development tools needed to take Indiana to the next level.

CenterPoint Energy acquired Vectren Corporation in 2019 and serves 145,000 electric customers in the Evansville area, and about 800,000 natural gas customers in the southern two-thirds of the state. CenterPoint Energy is based in Houston and serves utility customers in eight states.

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Sports

Safety protocols of NCAA Championships At Ford Center

Reopen Evansville Task Force & Evansville Sports Corporation announce safety measures

BY STEVE SCHAEFER
DEPUTY MAYOR, CITY OF EVANSVILLE

EVANSVILLE — The state of Indiana will soon be the center of college basketball and the action begins in Evansville. The first automatic bid to the NCAA tournament will be awarded at the Ford Center, as the Ohio Valley Conference Men’s and Women’s Basketball Championship will be held March 3-6. Later in the month, the Division II Midwest Regional will be played March 13-16 and the Division II Elite Eight & National Championship on March 24-27 in downtown Evansville.

“Our community is proud to host the OVC & Division II Basketball Championships and looks forward to welcoming the teams, student-athletes and fans,” said Steve Schaefer, Deputy Mayor & Chair of the Reopen Evansville Task Force. “As we continue to reopen and host major sporting events in Evansville, safety remains our top priority.”

In preparation for the basketball tournaments, the Reopen Evansville Task Force convened with medical professionals and key stakeholders to develop a COVID-19 safety plan of action for the events. Players and coaching staffs will be tested prior to arriving to Evansville. Through a partnership with Deaconess Hospital, participants in the OVC tournament will also be tested prior to each game of the tournament.

“We want to ensure participating fans, coaches and student athletes are healthy throughout this event,” said Schaefer, who also serves as the Chairman of the Evansville Sports Corp. Board. “Following months of meetings between the Task Force,

Evansville Sports Corporation, Vanderburgh County Health Department (VCHD) and medical professionals from both Deaconess Hospital and Ascension St. Vincent, these protocols were developed to keep the tournaments on track at the Ford Center in Downtown Evansville.”

In addition to testing, a number of additional COVID-19 health and safety protocols will be in place, including;

- Temperature check at entrance
- Masks/face coverings
- Limited concessions
- Hand sanitizing




STEVE SCHAEFER

- stations
- Enhanced cleaning and sanitation processes
 - Security officers and ushers
 - Informational Signage;
- Fans attending this year’s event will be temperature screened upon entering the Ford Center and will be required to where a face covering/mask at all times. Spec-

tator seating for the events will be limited to 2,500 fans and will be divided into socially-distanced pods. Pods will be spaced by the CDC prescribed safety distance of at least six (6) feet apart from other seating pods. This buffer is common in front and behind the group being left vacant as well as a minimum of three seats on either side of the pod. All aisle way seats will be left vacant in order to maintain a buffer from patrons as they move to their assigned seating locations. All spectator seats will be sanitized before use and there will be increased sanitization performed in all commons areas. Participating teams are also required to follow all COVID-19 protocols set forth by the Ford Center and the hotel properties. “COVID-19 has had a huge impact on our organization and the industry as a whole,” said Evansville Sports Corp. Executive Director Eric Marvin. “As we continue to reopen and host major sporting events in Evansville, safety remains our top priority. Thanks to guidance from VCHD and local medical professionals, 2021 should be a record setting year.”

Tickets must be purchased in socially-distanced seating pods of two or four. Fans can purchase single-session tickets through ticketmaster.com or at the Ford Center ticket office.

2021 Ohio Valley Conference Basketball Championships				
Women's Championship Bracket				
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3 & THURSDAY, MARCH 4 <i>(First Round)</i>		FRIDAY, MARCH 5 <i>(Semifinals)</i>	SATURDAY, MARCH 6 <i>(Championship)</i>	
#1 UT Martin		GAME 5 - 1:00 p.m. (ESPN+)	GAME 7 - 2:00 p.m. (ESPN+)	 OVC Champion and NCAA Automatic Qualifier
GAME 1 Wednesday, March 3 - 1:00 pm (ESPN+)				
#8 Eastern Illinois				
#4 Jacksonville State		GAME 6 - 3:30 p.m. (ESPN+)		
GAME 3 Thursday, March 4 - 1:00 p.m. (ESPN+)				
#5 Tennessee Tech				
#3 Southeast Missouri				
GAME 4 Thursday, March 4 - 3:30 p.m. (ESPN+)		GAME 6 - 3:30 p.m. (ESPN+)	All Times Central	
#6 Murray State				
#2 Belmont				
GAME 2 Wednesday, March 3 - 3:30 p.m. (ESPN+)				
#7 Austin Peay				
Men's Championship Bracket				
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3 & THURSDAY, MARCH 4 <i>(First Round)</i>		FRIDAY, MARCH 5 <i>(Semifinals)</i>	SATURDAY, MARCH 6 <i>(Championship)</i>	
#1 Belmont		GAME 5 - 7:00 p.m. (ESPN+)	GAME - 7:00 p.m. (ESPN+)	 OVC Champion and NCAA Automatic Qualifier
GAME 1 Wednesday, March 3 - 7:00 p.m. (ESPN+)				
#8 SIUE				
#4 Jacksonville State		GAME 6 - 9:30 p.m. (ESPN+)		
GAME 3 Thursday, March 4 - 7:00 p.m. (ESPN+)				
#5 Murray State				
#3 Eastern Kentucky				
GAME 4 Thursday, March 4 - 9:30 p.m. (ESPN+)		GAME 6 - 9:30 p.m. (ESPN+)	All Times Central	
#6 Austin Peay				
#2 Morehead State				
GAME 2 Wednesday, March 3 - 9:30 p.m. (ESPN+)				
#7 Southeast Missouri				

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