Award Winners, Business Leaders Embody Hoosier Spirit



We're excited to celebrate our 37th Annual Awards Dinner this November and give much-deserved kudos to the individuals and community that embody what makes Indiana great:

- **Ogletree Deakins Business Leader of the Year:** Roger Penske (IMS/Penske Entertainment). His continued investment in the Indianapolis Motor Speedway has elevated one of Indiana's most iconic institutions while reinforcing its role as a major driver of tourism, jobs and statewide visibility.
- **NextEra Energy Resources Dynamic Leader of the Year:** Indiana University President Pam Whitten. She has advanced IU's focus on student success, research, workforce development and economic opportunity, while elevating key priorities such as innovation, athletics and IU Indianapolis.
- **Keystone Group-Indy Eleven Entrepreneur of the Year:** IBJ Media's Nate Feltman. He has brought entrepreneurial leadership to Indiana business media, strengthening local ownership of IBJ Media while expanding its statewide reach, events platform and role as a convener of business and civic leaders.
- **Birch Bayh-Richard Lugar Government Leader:** Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen. He has helped guide significant growth and investment in Noblesville, with major infrastructure, quality of place and economic development initiatives supporting business expansion and talent attraction.
- **Yamaha Community of the Year:** La Porte. The city's steady growth is boosted by economic development and housing options, and its leaders are leveraging its outdoor amenities to build a strong quality of life for its residents.

This edition also examines key business and economic trends affecting Indiana. Topics include generational business succession and next-generation ownership, employer strategies to improve productivity through technology and process improvements, and how smaller Indiana communities are positioning themselves for growth through housing, downtown revitalization and quality of place investments.

As we close out the year, these pages also highlight members and partners that helped make 2026 memorable.

We spotlight First Merchants Corporation, a Chamber member since 1918 and our longest continuous member, and Forvis Mazars, a member since 1932. In the ExecConnect Q&A, incoming Indiana Chamber Board Chair Scott McCorkle of Metaimpact shares his top insights, while a guest column from Jean Wojtowicz showcases Cambridge Capital's growth story and its ripple effect on many Hoosier enterprises. Ogletree Deakins also looks ahead to the key labor and employment legal matters businesses should watch in 2027.

We hope you find these articles informative, and, as always, thanks for reading!

Rebecca Patrick
Senior Vice President, Communications and Marketing

Indiana Chamber Mission:
Cultivate a world-class environment which provides economic opportunity and prosperity for the people of Indiana and their enterprises.

BIZVOICE®

www.bizvoicemagazine.com
November 2026 | Volume 29, Number 4

BizVoice®

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To inform and influence

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BizVoice® (ISSN 1521-0146) is published quarterly by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, 115 W. Washington, Suite 850S, P.O. Box 44926, Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926. *BizVoice®* magazine is provided as a benefit of membership in the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. Non-member subscriptions: $25.20 per year (includes sales tax). Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BizVoice®, 115 W. Washington, Suite 850S, P.O. Box 44926, Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926.

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