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CHAMBER

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FEBRUARY/MARCH 2024



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The mission of the Chamber is to be the leading resource for making connections that foster collaboration which serves and promotes efforts to strengthen the Greater Elkhart business community.

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Right Here, Right Now



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Levon Johnson
President/CEO
ljohnson@elkhart.org

In 1991, the British band Jesus Jones released the song “Right Here, Right Now”. To be honest I never listened intently to the lyrics, other than the chorus, until the other day. Then as I was driving and thinking about this article, the following lines caught my attention:

*"Oh, I saw the decade in,
When it seemed the world could change
At the blink of an eye
And if anything
Then there's your sign of the times
I was alive and I waited, waited
I was alive and I waited, waited
Right here, right now*

*I was alive and I waited, waited
I was alive and I waited for this
Right here, right now
There is no other place I want to be"**

Here we are 33 years later and it does seem like the time has passed and so much has changed in the blink of an eye. In addition, if we think about the transformation of the Greater Elkhart community, our world has really changed.

Like the song says, “*There is no other place I want to be.*” There continue to be so many positive things that are happening to make the place we do business and call home such a great place to be alive, but unlike the song, we haven’t waited and we aren’t waiting.

There is much to celebrate and much remains to be done.

Looking back, it seems as if 2023 zoomed by in the blink of an eye, but the conversations, meetings, and

plans that came last year were only a sign of the times of things to come. 2023 was a year of ideation and 2024 will be a year of implementation.

With unprecedented investment in housing initiatives, arts and culture, and support for strong kids and families, Greater Elkhart is continuing to position itself as a thought and action leader.

The word that will drive this work is “collaboration.”

It will take all of us to continue driving what we want to see our community continue to become. Through private-public partnerships we have seen the transformation of many parts of our region. Those partnerships will continue to push us forward. The beauty of where we are headed is that we all have a role to play.

Greater Elkhart business community, *Right Here, Right Now* is the time for us to attack the present and forge the future.

On March 1, we will hold our Annual Meeting Luncheon, presented by Lake City Bank, at 11:30 am in the Crystal Ballroom at the Lerner Theatre.

We are excited that Bethany Hartley, President and CEO of South Bend Elkhart Regional Partnership; Jon Hunsberger, Executive Director of Elkhart County Convention and Visitors Bureau; Chris Stager, President/CEO of Economic Development Corporation of Elkhart County; and Candy Yoder, Chief Program Officer at Community Foundation of Elkhart County will be on our panel to have a discussion about why **right here** (Elkhart, Bristol, Elkhart County, and the South Bend Elkhart Region) and **right now** is the perfect time to invest in our businesses, communities, and people.

Greater Elkhart, let’s continue to be intentionally impactful!

Welcome the Chamber's New Team Members!



Jes Elam, Member Engagement Specialist

As Member Engagement Specialist, Jes will implement retention and collection programs for the Chamber and assist members in connecting with Chamber programs, services and involvement. She will also collaborate with staff on member platinum, gold and silver sponsorships and serve as staff liaison to the Ambassadors Council.

Jes is a graduate of the 2022-23 class of the Elkhart Leadership Academy. She has a degree in Hospitality Administration from Ivy Tech Community College and experience in Business and Resource Development. She enjoys networking and building relationships. Her specialty is not only connecting with people, but connecting people to people. She is looking forward to the opportunity to use her talents and passions to engage with and strengthen our community. Jes and her 4 year old daughter love spending time together outside in the summer and fall.



Lauren Matthews, Administrative Assistant

Lauren's duties include serving as Office Receptionist and support for Membership, Signature Events, and Accounting Services. She performs general office duties in support of the Chamber as a whole.

Lauren is a native of the Elkhart Community. She earned her BA of Psychology and Criminal Justice degrees from Indiana University and pursued work in the mental health field for several years. With a growing desire for involvement in her own community, she transitioned her career path towards non-profit work and explored different ways to serve locally as she also took the opportunity to stay home and raise her young children. In addition to community involvement, Lauren is currently working on a MS in Organizational Leadership degree to continue pursuing her interests in organizational health and leadership. Lauren has served alongside her husband, Pastor Scott Matthews of River Oaks Church-Elkhart, for the past 6 years.



Kristen Smole, Strategic Initiatives Officer

As Strategic Initiatives Officer, Kristen will oversee Economic Development Initiatives which include redevelopment, business retention, expansion, and recruitment, works on local, state, and federal advocacy business impact issues, engages in regional initiatives. She serves as staff liaison to the Young Professionals Council.

Kristen graduated from Purdue University, studying political science and public policy. Prior to joining the Chamber team, she worked for the City of Elkhart as the Assistant Director of Economic Development. She has extensive experience in capital development and community building. Kristen has worked on negotiation agreements and incentive packages for many projects. Outside of the office, she enjoys staying active in the community and volunteering wherever she can make an impact. Kristen is in this year's cohort of the Elkhart Leadership Academy.

2 Millimeter Shifts

*Inspiration that can strengthen your faith
and encourage you to love the life you live.*

Speaker: Kim Becker from Hello Gorgeous! of HOPE, Inc.

Thursday, February 15

11:30 am - 1 pm

Hubbard Hill, 28070 CR 24, Elkhart



Event
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Hosted by the Women's Council

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Business Recognition Award

The Builders Association of Elkhart County, 25428 CR 20, Elkhart, has received a Business of the Month Award from the Greater Elkhart Chamber Business Recognition Council. Founded in 1967, the Builders Association of Elkhart County (BAEC) is a not-for-profit trade association that is the respected voice of the professional building industry. The founding vision is still the driving mission today: growing the members through strong partnerships between builder members and associates, dedicating efforts to continued community education, and advocating for effective legislation resulting in affordable quality housing. They coordinate and produce thirteen major annual events to showcase member products and services. The BAEC is the second largest association in Indiana by membership numbers, and all members must agree to abide by a code of ethics and are expected to meet or exceed the Indiana Quality Assurance Builder Standards. Their leadership board has industry leaders and professionals from a variety of backgrounds who have a passion for the greater Elkhart Community and the building industry as a whole. The BAEC Education Committee works to ensure that high school students are aware of the opportunities available in the industry, and that the talent pool and future leadership pool remains strong for the industry in the years to come in Elkhart County.



Member Celebrations



The Hunny Pot Studio, a paint your own pottery studio, is now open! Visit them at 421 S 2nd St in Downtown Elkhart to create your own piece of pottery and fun memories. All levels of experience are welcome! facebook.com/thehunypotstudio.com



Celebrating the Grand Opening of **Tolson Center for Community Excellence**, a centerpiece for an enlivened South-Central Elkhart, a premier destination for neighbors near and far, and a pathway to equity and opportunity for all. www.tolson.org

Emergency Action Plans and Electronic Fire Extinguisher Training

Presenters: Chad Carey, Heartland RV, and Kerry Lane, Pyrosoft

Wednesday, March 20 7:30 am
Matterhorn Conference Center, 2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

Annual Sponsors



PATRICK



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An OSHA Council Training Breakfast Register at www.Elkhart.org Pre-registration required

Women's Health

Join us for a panel discussion on Women's Health

Speakers include Dr. Laura Munkel, Beacon;
Dr. Sharrell Gibson, Goshen Health Physicians;
Mackenzie Clark, Indiana Physical Therapy; and
Katie Okeley, Boling Vision

Thursday, March 21 11:30 am - 1 pm
Elkhart Health & Aquatics, 200 E Jackson Blvd, Elkhart



Hosted by the Women's Council
Register at Elkhart.org

Startup Business Series

The Business Diversity Initiative has developed a Startup Business Series to help those who have a business idea and are ready to take the initial steps.

Business or Hobby? – March 11

Helping participants determine if they should pursue their passion as a business or keep it as a side gig

The next three sessions will guide participants in the necessary elements for the creation of a business plan.

Building Your Business Plan Part 1 – March 18

What should be included in a business plan

Building Your Business Plan Part 2 – March 25

Marketing strategy, operational plans, and county/city regulations

Building Your Business Plan Part 3 – April 8

Accounting, financial projections and needs, funding strategy, and business insurance

These sessions will be held from 9 - 10:30 am at the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce, 418 S Main St, Elkhart.

There is no cost to attend, but preregistration is requested. It is recommended that participants attend all four sessions, but is not required. Register at www.elkhart.org/events or email mrojas@elkhart.org for more information.

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Elkhart Community Schools

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at the Bristol Opera House

20 YEARS

ETHOS Innovation Center

15 YEARS

Food Bank of Northern Indiana
WBND/ABC 57

10 YEARS

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GDC, Inc.
Housand Insurance Agency
Shoff Security Systems

5 YEARS

Cultivate Culinary
North End Cycle
R Yoder Construction
Stephenson's of Elkhart Inc.

1 YEAR

Alzheimer's Association
American Cancer Society
Barnhart Crane & Rigging
Beacon Insurance
CTR Commercial Cleaning Services
Dynamic Packaging Solutions
Eden Barber Academy
Essence Restaurant + Bar
Hartwood Tree Care
Hoosier Spot
Monogram Foods
Northern Indiana Hispanic Health Coalition
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Woodland Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation
WW Mobile Notary Service

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Kim Barrier
Nonprofit Organizations

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(574) 391-1020
Greg Szymarek
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Referred by Dwight Fish

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Joe Wilson
Renewable Energy and Recycling

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(317) 685-6600
David Elser
*Environmental & Safety/Health
Consultant*

Kid City USA

kidcityusa.com/locations/indiana/elkhart/
631 Simpson Ave
Elkhart, IN 46516
(574) 444-3543
Rex Martindale
Child Care Services/Day Care Centers

Kingdom Community Center

www.kingdomcommunitycenter.us
2501 S Nappanee St, Ste I
Elkhart, IN 46517
(574) 850-9450
Octavia Tate
Community Center for Entrepreneurs
Referred by Business Diversity Initiative

Lexington Event Center LLC

112 E Lexington Ave
Elkhart, IN 46516
(574) 361-2151
Jeremy Perez
Event Space
Referred by Business Diversity Initiative

NextReality Studios, LLC

www.nextrealitystudios.com
1919 Cassopolis St
Elkhart, IN 46514
(574) 675-6629
Damon Miles
Entertainment
Referred by Business Diversity Initiative

Small Miracles

Learning Center LLC
www.smallmiracleslearningcenterllc.com
58025 CR 9
Elkhart, IN 46517
(574) 333-3513
Shar McDaniel
Child Care Services/Day Care Centers
Referred by Business Diversity Initiative

The Hunny Pot Studio

facebook.com/thehunypotstudio.com
421 S Second St, Ste B
Elkhart, IN 46516
(574) 366-2184
Christina McCormick
Pottery Studio

Town of Bristol

bristolindiana.org
303 E Vistula St
PO Box 122
Bristol, IN 46507
(574) 848-7007
Jill Swartz
Government

NEWS ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

Ancon Construction has broken ground on its new corporate headquarters office at 2121 Wilden Ave. in Goshen.

Barnes & Thornburg has relocated its office to 240 E. Jackson Blvd, in downtown Elkhart.

Mariana Reyes, of **Centier Bank**, was recently named Volunteer of the Year by **Junior Achievement of Elkhart County**.

The Community Foundation of Elkhart County announces the addition of **Guy Fisher** as Career Pathways Program Officer; **Melinda Freeze** as Administrative Coordinator for Program Initiatives; **Alyssa Gilbert** as Digital Marketing Manager; **Michelle Davis** as Staff Accountant; and **Jackie Rodriguez**, as Associate Program Officer.

Greencroft Communities Inc. has appointed **Dr. Hugh Davis**, RN, DNP, NHA, RMC, as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Jessica Thompson has joined the **Healy Group** as a Personal Account Manager.

Shelley Pulaski has been named Vice President, Business Lender, for **Interra Credit Union**.

J. A. Wagner Construction announces the appointment of **Andrew Harman** as President and **Tony Harman** as Secretary/Treasurer.

Indiana Governor Eric J. Holcomb has appointed **Amish Shah**, CEO of **Kem Krest**, and **Jacqueline Barton**, Founder/President of **Specialized Staffing Solutions**, to the Governor's Workforce Cabinet through 2025.

NIBCO Inc. has promoted **Chris Mason** to Senior Vice President, Supply Chain, and **Dawn Bloch** to Chief People Officer.

Speedgrip Chuck Co. has been awarded a Manufacturing Readiness Grant by the Indiana Economic Development Corp. to boost the company's investment in advanced manufacturing technology and products.

Surf Internet has appointed **Kord Kozma** as Vice President of Human Resources.

Submit your company's news and information to marketing@elkhart.org

Ambassadors of the Month presented by **J2 Marketing**



Chris Cossin
Lighthouse Leadership Group, LLC
lighthouselg.org

"Being a Greater Elkhart Chamber Ambassador has been a wonderful experience. It's allowed me to do what I enjoy most, connecting with great people and adding value to our community. My company has benefitted from our chamber membership. It's easy to advocate for our chamber when you're so impressed with it yourself."

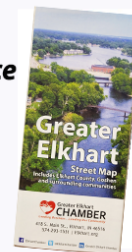


Julie Vigue
Logistick, Inc.
www.logistick.com

"The Greater Elkhart Chamber provides amazing resources while celebrating member and community accomplishments. As an Ambassador, I am grateful for the opportunity to meet remarkable business leaders. It is an honor and privilege to be a member of this incredible organization and council!"

2024-25 Street Map & Resource Guide

The Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce is working with Town Square Publishing to publish a new, full-color Elkhart Area Street Map and Resource Guide.



Lunch with the Mayor

Thursday, March 28 11:30 am

Elkhart Health & Aquatics, 200 E Jackson Blvd, Elkhart

Presenting Sponsor



Limited Seating - Register at Elkhart.org

A Luncheon hosted by the Young Professionals Council - all ages welcome

CHAMBER EVENTS

FEBRUARY

1

OSHA 10 Hour General Industry Training

January 31-February 1, 8 am
Matterhorn Conference Center
2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

2

New Member Welcome

8:30 am
Greater Elkhart Chamber
418 S Main St, Elkhart

9

Third House Meeting

Noon
Greater Elkhart Chamber
418 S Main St, Elkhart

15

Inspirational Speaker - Women's Council Luncheon

11:30 am
Hubbard Hill
28070 CR 24, Elkhart

21

OSHA Breakfast - Lock Out to Lock In Safety

7:30 am
Matterhorn Conference Center
2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

22

After Hours - hosted by W.A. Zimmer

4:30 - 7 pm
Ribbon cutting at 4:30
51233 CR 5, Elkhart

MARCH

1

Annual Meeting 2024

11:30 am
Crystal Ballroom at the Lerner Theatre
410 S Main St, Elkhart

5

OSHA 20 Hour General Industry Training

Mar 5-7, 8 am
Matterhorn Conference Center
2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

8

Third House Meeting

Noon
Greater Elkhart Chamber
418 S Main St, Elkhart

11

Startup Business Series

March 11, 18, 25 and April 8
9 - 10:30 am
Greater Elkhart Chamber, 418 S Main St, Elkhart

20

OSHA Breakfast - Emergency Action Plans

7:30 am
Matterhorn Conference Center
2041 Cassopolis St, Elkhart

21

Women's Health - Women's Council Luncheon

11:30 am
Elkhart Health & Aquatic Center
200 E Jackson Blvd, Elkhart

28

YP Lunch with the Mayor

11:30 am
Elkhart Health & Aquatic Center
200 E Jackson Blvd, Elkhart

Please visit Elkhart.org/events for more information.



After Hours

February 22 4:30 - 7 pm
51233 CR 5, Elkhart
Register at Elkhart.org/events. Ribbon cutting at 4:30 pm



THIRD HOUSE MEETING

Friday
February 9 and
March 8
12:00pm-1:30pm
presented by
weIMPACT
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Leading Business...Leading Our Community
418 S Main St
Elkhart, IN
or Virtually on Zoom
register at www.elkhart.org

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MONDAY, JUNE 24
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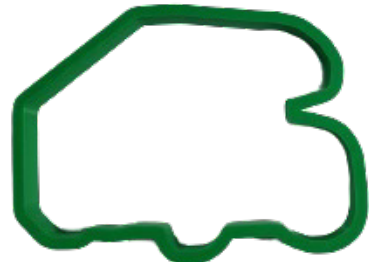
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Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting | March 1 | 11:30a

Crystal Ballroom, The Lerner Theatre
410 S. Main St
Elkhart, IN

panel discussion featuring



Jon Hunsberger

Elkhart County
Convention &
Visitors Bureau



Candy Yoder
Community
Foundation of
Elkhart County



Bethany Hartley
South Bend Elkhart
Regional Partnership



Chris Stager

Economic
Development
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Limited Seating

Register at www.Elkhart.org

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