

Be Noble

Noble County Economic Development



February 2021

**Noble County
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020



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Let's celebrate longevity

Each year, the Governor of Indiana recognizes businesses that have remained in operation for at least 50 or 100 years and have demonstrated a history of community service. The Noble County Economic Development team would like to help bring the recognition our local, long-standing businesses have earned and deserve. If you know a Noble County business that may be eligible, please let us know. Call (260) 636-3800 or email us using the button at right before February 28, 2021.

CELEBRATING LONGEVITY



Email business leads for recognition

Dana closing Albion facility

Dana Light Axle Products LLC issued a notice to the state of plans to close its service parts and export packaging center in Albion. All employees will be affected by the move, though some may receive offers to work at other Dana locations. The layoff affects about 43 permanent employees and 30 temporary employees. The closure is reportedly an effort to maintain competitive during challenging market conditions. Other local facilities in Fort Wayne and Avilla are not mentioned in the scope of layoffs.



More about survey

Instructions for participants

Take the survey

2021 (Wage &) Benefit Survey opens February 1

Though the goals remain the same, to assist existing employers in efforts to evaluate current compensation programs with regional market data and provide local economic developers competitive information for attracting new investments, the methodology is changing as the 2021 Noble County and Northeast Indiana survey gets underway. This year, employers in four categories (goods producing, construction, logistics; professional, finance, information systems; healthcare; leisure, hospitality, retail and restaurants) are asked to participate in the survey of employee benefits information. Wage data is now available through other mechanisms, so is not being requested from employers. The survey will be open from February 1 through March 5.

Indiana sets ED record

Despite the hit Indiana's economy took from the pandemic, \$5.6 billion in investments through 282 commitments helped set a new record for annual economic development in Indiana in 2020. 42 projects in the pipeline are expected to create 31,300 new jobs paying an average salary of \$58,000, according to reports. In addition, Indiana's Small Business Development Center reported 333 new business starts with 1,459 new jobs and delivered COVID-19 relief and recovery assistance for many, including some in Noble County.



Cromwell makes plans for grant application

Cromwell Town Council members have laid out a path to applying for a Community Crossings Grant to help address aging infrastructure in the community. Members recently directed an engineering firm to update the community's asset management plan in order to be ready to apply for a grant in July. Among the town's priorities are to address the condition of water and wastewater utilities and streets.



[Learn more](#)

Habitat to build in Kendallville

The Kendallville Board of Works and Public Safety recently approved the sale of a vacant lot west of downtown to Habitat for Humanity of Northeast Indiana for \$10.00. Mayor SuzAnne Handshoe noted the transfer will allow the non-profit organization to build a new home for someone in need and put the lot back on the city tax rolls. Before construction can begin, an eligible family must be identified. Interested parties may call Habitat for Humanity at (260) 925-2508 to learn more.

Displaced Vibracoustic workers eligible for TAA assistance

Workers soon to be former employees of Vibracoustic in Ligonier are eligible for assistance through the Indiana Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. TAA offers funding for up to 130 weeks of full-time or part-time training paid at 100%, income support, a wage subsidy of up to \$10,000, job search reimbursement, a relocation allowance, healthcare premium assistance, and more. Interested workers are encouraged to contact Kristi Henderson at KHenderson@dwd.in.gov or call (317) 967-1999 for information, or get started online to apply:

[Vibracoustic TAA Assistance - Start Here](#)

Trine, Black Pine form partnership

Trine University is now offering educational opportunities to employees and volunteers at Black Pine Animal Sanctuary, including customized courses online or on-site, as well as access to educational grants and scholarships. The new partnership also enables Black Pine to tap into student opportunities, campus programs, and university events to help raise awareness of their mission. Black Pine also hopes to recruit Trine students to participate in their internship program, which offers an opportunity to gain valuable experience in the Midwest's only accredited exotic animal sanctuary where dozens of species reside.





Reliable Tool and Machine approved for tax break

The Kendallville City Council approved a three-year tax break on an investment of \$460,000 in new machinery for Reliable Tool and Machine. The planned upgrades include a computerized horizontal mill and a robotic welder. The equipment, according to the company, will help them retain 122 current employees and add five new positions with an average wage of \$47,000 each. The company has seen a boost in sales even during the pandemic and forecasts growth of about 15% this year.



Granite Ridge to build in Albion

10 residential lots in the Village of White Oaks on Albion's west side are now slated for single-family home construction by Granite Ridge Builders, after reaching an agreement with Monarch Development. The builder will have an option to develop 11 additional sites as well, according to recent reports. Plans to build previously hit a snag in October 2019, but Albion officials are optimistic the new agreement with Granite Ridge will have construction underway in earnest soon.



Each month we celebrate the accomplishments and achievements of Noble County's people and places. Congratulations!

The HUFF 50K Trail Race held at **Chain O' Lakes State Park** in Albion in December saw more than 400 runners register, including a new record-setter and men's champion Nick Arndt of Keene, NY. The race will return to Chain O' Lakes in 2021 to celebrate a silver anniversary.

Norman Lortie has been appointed to serve as Noble County's floodplain administrator. Lortie, also the county's building inspector, fills a vacancy that has existed since former county plan director Kenneth Hughes left his post last May.

Phase II of the **Strawberry Valley Trail** in Ligonier was recently completed, adding another 3/4 mile of paved public trail along the Elkhart River. Regional Cities funding, and a gift that helped leverage it from the Noble County Economic Development Investment Trust Fund, helped make the project possible. Phase III construction will complete the downtown loop.

Dr. Tom Jansen announced his semi-retirement from Jansen Chiropractic in Kendallville, ending 45 years of service in the community. The business will continue with his brother, Dr. Jerry Jansen, and Dr. Maleah Robertson, serving client needs. Tom Jansen is also stepping back from decades of serving the Kendallville Parks Department as well.

East Noble Student Council and **Kendallville Mayor's Youth Advisory Council** recently stocked a new children's interview room at the **Community Learning Center** with stuffed toys to help young victims and witnesses of crimes cope. The new space provides more flexibility for officials and the toys will enhance efforts to provide a comfortable, quiet, and calm environment for interviews.

Bell ringers who rang to benefit **Common Grace Ministries**, the **Salvation Army** Service Extension Unit for Noble County, exceeded 2019's total by \$3,022.72, bringing in \$45,545.82 during the 2020 Red Kettle Campaign. 10% of the funds will pay for administrative costs of running the local campaign. The other 90% will remain in Noble County to help citizens facing evictions or utility disconnections, provide assistance for medications, job and housing resources, and various other supplies for area youth and the elderly.

Flint & Walling contributed \$2,500 to Hoosiers Feeding the Hungry's "Meat the Need" initiative to help an estimated 4,400 residents who struggle regularly with food insecurity.

About 13 **volunteers** from across the county are performing a wide variety of tasks including registration, triage, and administering injections at each of Noble County's COVID-19 vaccine clinics. Many of the same people who assisted during the 2009 H1N1 vaccination effort have stepped up to help in 2021. Noble County Emergency Management Agency Executive Director **Mick Newton** said "It's inspiring. I'm impressed with the way people step up and help. Noble County people step up and help."

Crossroads United Way, which now comprises the former United Way of Noble County, granted more than \$247,000 in funding through 2021 to local community partners and agencies that provide emergency services in response to needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. A full list of funding can be found at www.crossroadsuw.org.



Where you live!



NOBLE COUNTY

Support our entrepreneurs and small businesses.



Engage young people to help retain local talent.



Celebrate and enjoy local artists and cultural activities.

Invest your time, talent, and treasure to better the community.

Lead with the community's future in mind and cultivate emerging leaders.



Learn more!

thrivenoblecounty.org

Save the date!



Thrive Noble County
COMMUNITY CELEBRATION
October 14, 2021

Community Learning
Center

Sponsored by


COVID-19 RESOURCES & UPDATES



Noble County EDC, 110 S Orange St, Albion, IN 46701, 260-636-3800

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