

Be Noble

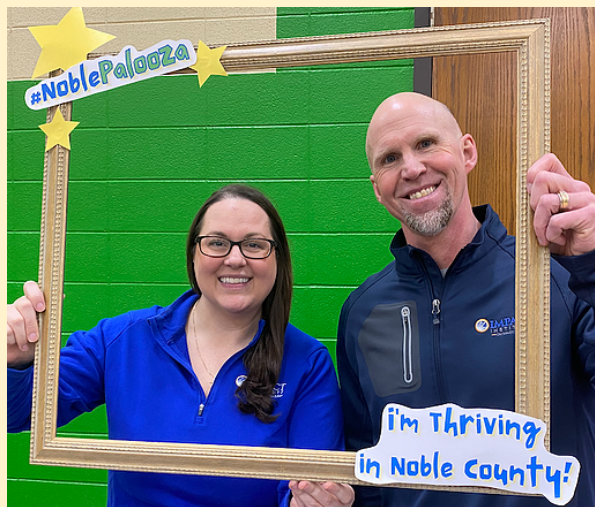
Noble County Economic Development



February 1, 2023

2022 Annual Report of Be Noble Inc.

Our annual report was just released! Click above to read/download.



Is it for you?

Growing NoblePalooza for 2023

NoblePalooza brings Noble County together!

NoblePalooza, an Expo to Thrive will return for the second consecutive year to the Community Learning Center in Kendallville on Saturday, March 11 from 10 AM to 2 PM. This event provides an opportunity to educate and inform residents of the county, newcomers, potential clients, future volunteers, and others about your organization's products, services, community investments, leadership opportunities, youth programs and activities, and other efforts to improve Noble's quality of life. Booth registrations are open now through February 18 with more than 75 already registered to participate. Together, we can make NoblePalooza the must-do event of 2023 for Noble Countians! Register and learn more at www.noblepalooza.com.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER EXHIBITS/VENDORS NOW

INOVEC introduced in Noble

Setting the stage for stakeholders to thrive

A small group of employers, economic developers, and government representatives in Noble County met with leaders of a project called INOVEC on January 24 in Avilla, Indiana. INOVEC is an acronym for Indiana Off-highway Vehicle Innovation Center. INOVEC is not yet a place or a thing, it is an idea that has moved into a second stage of development, having completed a pre-feasibility study in 2022.

Continue reading...



2022 Report

Great strides in child care in 2022

Topping off an impressive 2022, Thrive by 5 kicked off the new year by announcing an expanded strategy that now includes both Noble and LaGrange Counties. The expansion to

combine efforts effectively doubles the resources to tackle strategies to enhance affordability, availability, and quality of child care and early learning opportunities. Thrive by 5 is launching what is believed to be the state's first Tri-Share Program. Jenna Anderson, program coordinator, recently testified at the Indiana Statehouse advocating for Senate Bill 368 to establish low cost-sharing across all 11 Northeast Indiana counties. Anderson is also supporting efforts in Albion to construct a new child care center that would serve about 150 kids.

How child care fits into economic development



On My Way Pre-K reports record numbers

On My Way Pre-K is a program that awards grants for four-year-old children to attend high-quality pre-K education when the family meets income guidelines. A record 17 Noble County families qualified for grants for the 2022-23 school year. Qualifying kids may attend Avilla Elementary Preschool or the Kendallville Day Care Center. More county pre-K program operators are applying to be able to accept On My Way Pre-K grants in the future. To learn more, visit the program website.

[On My Way Pre-K website](#)

Unemployment in Noble dropped to 2.5% in December 2022.



New computers for Be Noble Inc.

A year-end gift from Wabash Valley Power Alliance, of which Noble REMC co-op is a member, will enhance office productivity in support of local economic development. Two new laptops and peripheral devices were acquired for the Be Noble team, thanks to the power alliance's support. This generous gift was in addition to the company's annual investment in support of Be Noble's general operating budget. Be Noble Inc. became a 501(c)3 nonprofit, charitable organization at the beginning of 2022, making all donor contributions tax deductible to the

extent allowed by law. Be Noble's 2023 annual campaign to support ongoing operations is now underway. Learn more and contribute at noblecountyedc.com/investment.

GIVE TODAY



Brett Slone

Slone in race for Kendallville mayor

Brett Slone, a lifelong resident of Kendallville and retired, longtime employee of the city's park department, has entered the race for Mayor. Slone filed as an Independent. Only one other candidate filed by the spring deadline. Police Chief Lance Waters is seeking the Republican nomination.

Holcomb announces 2023 agenda

Governor Eric Holcomb announced his vision for 2023 and it includes, as previously promised, \$500 million to fund another round of READI projects. This and other initiatives come as Indiana sits on a record \$5 billion budget surplus. His plan also outlines \$40 million to help manufacturers modernize, twice the amount previously funded, and another \$300 million to create a new fund to help close business attraction deals. A new innovation grant is also proposed, to be funded by the proposed allocation of \$25 million in federal funds, to pay for and include licensing support for employer-sponsored childcare options. Holcomb has also proposed increasing school tuition and textbook funding, increasing the total to \$17.5 billion over the biennium, thereby eliminating textbook fees. Additional budget increases are also proposed for higher education and policing. The legislative session kicked off on January 9 and legislators are now considering the state's next two-year budget.





Grace Caswell

Caswell earns scholarship for ITA

Noble County will benefit from the selection of Grace Caswell, executive director of Visit Noble County, to receive a scholarship to attend the Indiana Tourism Academy. She is one of just 13 tourism professionals in Indiana selected to participate in the 2023-24 academy. The ITA's mission is to provide education, resources, and networks needed to develop travel professionals for the state of Indiana.

Housing market holding steady

In an Inside Indiana Business report recently, Greg Cooper with Compass of Indiana said Realtor.com ranks Fort Wayne as number 5 among the Top 20 housing markets in the nation. Despite reports of the national housing market slowing down, Northeast Indiana continues to fare better than other regions, a sentiment echoed by the Indiana Association of REALTORS in a December announcement. A group of more than 20 leaders from across Noble County are serving on the Housing Coalition of Noble County as



[Learn more](#)

the steering committee tasked with, under the guidance of Housing Resource Hub, developing and implementing a strategy to enhance the pace of housing growth across the county. A housing symposium for the public is planned to take place early in 2023.



Recognizing employers who HIRE veterans

Vets Medallion applications opened January 31

Employers of any size that invest in efforts to recruit, employ, and retain US veterans are eligible to apply for recognition under the Hire Vets Medallion Program, administered by the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service. Applications are sought each year to help raise awareness and celebrate those employers who find value in supporting veterans. Past Noble employers recognized by Hire VETS include Parker Hannifin in Albion and No-Sag Products Division of Leggett & Platt in Kendallville. The program was launched in 2018. Learn more and apply at hirevets.org.



Bosch grants support local educators

East Noble School Corporation announced nearly \$12,000 in Bosch Best Teacher Grants awards. Grants were awarded to multiple East Noble teachers in support of STEM education programs, sensory play, drone picture and video editing, raised flower beds and birdhouses for research, and a bioactive habitat project. Bosch is a company that seeks long-lasting solutions to make the communities in which they work better. Bosch employs more than 300 people in Albion and expanded its footprint in 2020.





The Bridge: Pathways to launch and grow businesses

Located in the heart of Noble County is a maker space that provides access to technology and equipment not found in most homes and absent even in many well-established businesses. The machines featured include 3D printers, laser cutters, a CNC machine, heat press, poster printer, and more. Be Noble is beginning discussions with The Bridge to explore opportunities to collaborate in the development and enhancement of Noble County's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

[Read more about The Bridge](#)



Noble County's red kettle campaign raised over \$31,000 during the 2022 holiday season. The campaign, coordinated by the county's Salvation Army unit chairwoman, Angie Kidd, and Common Grace Ministries, fell shy of the \$35,000 goal. The shortfall was blamed on a bitter cold stretch of weather. Twenty-two local volunteers participated in ringing the bells around the county. Seventy percent of the funds raised will directly support individuals and families in Noble County. Another twenty percent will be used for disaster response and war aid by Salvation Army. In 2022, 552 households received assistance from the local funds.

Congratulations to local, on-air celebrity Fred Inniger for being awarded Indiana High School Athletic Association's Distinguished Media Service Award for District 1. Inniger is a long-time WAWK radio broadcaster and champion of the community. He resides in Kendallville.

Kendallville is a Tree City USA community. In order to recuperate from the destruction of mature trees lost to windstorms, maintain a shade canopy to help reduce energy consumption, and provide shelter for wildlife, volunteers on the city's tree commission used a \$10,000 Community and Urban Forestry grant to purchase and plant 64 new trees on city properties. Boy Scout Troop 169 planted another 40 sycamore seedlings at Bixler Lake Park. Other tree plantings were made possible by an annual Arbor Day seedling giveaway.

Congratulations to the City of Kendallville on hitting their goal, generating just over two million kilowatt-hours at the McCray Solar Power Generation facility during 2022. The array completed the first full year of operations and data collection on January 10, 2023. It provides about 85% of the power needed to run the city's wastewater treatment plant.

Daniel Diggins is celebrating 50 years in law practice with Emerick, Diggins & Zabona in Kendallville. Though Diggins is nearly fully retired, he does still provide consulting services and maintains a law license. The firm was founded by Diggins' father, Merritt W. Diggins, in 1945.



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