

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



GROW
WABASH
County

MISSION

Together, Growing a Prosperous Wabash County

VISION

Wabash County will be the model for small town America, making a relevant impact on the global community, by offering vibrant cultural experiences, enriching lifestyles and growing economic opportunities while building on our heritage.

WHO WE ARE

Grow Wabash County is an organization that strategically combines the county-wide economic development organization and Chamber of Commerce. Grow Wabash County is a one-stop-shop for economic and community development efforts. The team focuses on five main areas: Entrepreneurship, Business Development, Workforce Development, Livability, and Investor Services. Grow Wabash County also provides local incentives and other benefits to businesses looking to locate or grow here. Leveraging our community assets with regional partners and local municipalities, Grow Wabash County strives to fulfill our mission of *Together, Growing a Prosperous Wabash County*. The kind of collaboration needed to achieve our mission is possible because when it comes to economic development, Wabash County cities and towns are all in.



Entrepreneurship

Livability

Workforce
Development

Investor
Services

Business
Development



THE GROW WABASH COUNTY TEAM



Keith Gillenwater
President & CEO



Tenille Zartman
Vice President



Chelsea Boulrisse
Project Manager



Sarah Delgadillo
Director of Global
Citizenship



2021 Intern
Bridget Nash



Marilyn Custer-Mitchell
Parkview Wabash
Board Chair



Tod Minnich
The Honeywell
Foundation
Vice Chair



Gary Larson
Ford Meter Box
Treasurer



Emily Boardman
Crossroads Bank
Secretary



Parker Beauchamp
INGUARD



Jason Callahan
Indiana State Dept.
of Education



Keith Gillenwater
Grow Wabash
County



Lisa Gilman
Redemption
Development, LLC



Patty Grant
Community Foundation
of Wabash County



Brian Hauptert
Wabash County
Commissioner



Bob Krouse
MPS Egg Farms



Doug Lehman
Douglas C. Lehman,
PC



Mayor Scott Long
City of Wabash



Adam Penrod
Town of North
Manchester



Patrick Sullivan
Beacon Credit Union



BOARD OF
DIRECTORS



**A LETTER FROM 2021 BOARD CHAIR,
MARILYN CUSTER-MITCHELL,
*PARKVIEW WABASH HOSPITAL***

In many ways 2021 was a continuation of 2020 with many of the same challenges we faced as a county.

Luckily Grow Wabash County was again able to rise above the challenges and to achieve many great accomplishments throughout the year.

Once again, we can be proud of the resiliency and perseverance of Wabash County both as individuals and collectively. Through the ongoing challenges, Grow Wabash County kept a focus on many activities essential to the success and growth of our county and businesses.

Grow Wabash County assisted individuals improve their skills by leveraging over \$311,000 in workforce training funds. Specifically, Grow Wabash County facilitated awarding \$85,793 in local scholarships to 37 Wabash County residents to attend training courses with grants from Community Foundation of Wabash County and the Wabash County United Fund.

Grow Wabash County also worked on behalf of 13 projects in Wabash County to help secure \$50 Million in READI grants for NE Indiana. In addition, Grow Wabash County has worked on the housing issue with the City of Wabash, Town of North Manchester and county to develop new housing prospects. One visible sign of this is the purchase and demolition of East Market Street in Wabash, to prepare for a new housing project.

Lastly, Grow Wabash County continued working on the population initiative in the county, co-chairing work with the Community Foundation of Wabash County. The results of which will soon be released to the public with recommendations and actions for follow up.

We look forward to what 2022 brings and the many achievements throughout the county that will make Wabash County more prosperous.



Awards & Accomplishments



Grow Wabash County Gets the Gold!

Mid-America EDC Entrepreneurship Award

During its annual conference in December 2021, the Mid-America EDC presented its 2021 Entrepreneurship Award for Small Communities to Grow Wabash County for our ongoing work in developing a comprehensive network of programming and support for student entrepreneurs through the Wabash County High School Entrepreneurship Collaborative.



Duke Energy Excellence in Economic Development Partner Achievement Award

Our President and CEO, Keith Gillenwater, was presented with an award by Duke Energy in 2021 to recognize the incredible work being done by the Grow Wabash County team, especially in regards to the work done to attract talent, business, and investment to Wabash County and Northeast Indiana.

Hoosier By Choice

Chelsea Boulrisse, our project manager, became a familiar face across the state in 2021 after being selected as one of the first Hoosiers By Choice to be featured in the state's talent attraction campaign. Chelsea is originally from Cape Cod, MA, but has proudly called Wabash home for almost 6 years. Her HBC video and testimony have been shared on multiple platforms and mediums in and around the state.



Organizational Development

Tenille Zartman

Grow Wabash County Vice President, Tenille Zartman, graduated from the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute (OU EDI) on April 29, 2021. OU EDI is an intensive 117-hour certificate program which provides a broad spectrum of advanced education for the economic development professional. She is now in preparation to sit for the exam to become a Certified Economic Developer.

Chelsea Boulrisse

In 2021, our project manager, Chelsea Boulrisse, completed a Microsoft Excel training course to increase her efficiency to track metrics and data relevant to our organization and investors. Chelsea also attended a workshop series led by Content Creative about how to build better marketing campaigns to share the Grow Wabash County brand and mission.



Grants & Partnerships



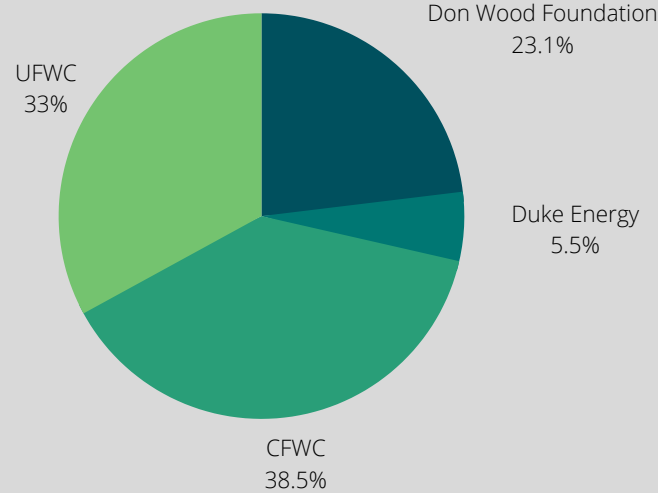


2021 Grants by the numbers

\$91,000

in grant funding secured by Grow
Wabash County

2021 Grant Partners



Grant Awards for 2021

Don Wood Foundation Grant - \$21,000

Grow Wabash County was once again fortunate enough to partner with the Don Wood Foundation (formerly the 80/20 Foundation Trust) to continue our work to promote student entrepreneurship in Wabash County. With the funds provided by the Foundation, Grow Wabash County purchased an extensive library of books from Dave Ramsay's EntreLeadership series. Every school received 100 books and an additional set was purchased for community use at the Grow Wabash County office.

The funds were also used to renew the license for the CO.STARTERS Generator curriculum and pay upfront costs for the 2022 INnovate Wabash County pitch competition.

Wabash County United Fund Grant #1 - \$15,000

Much of the success of filling Spring 2021 training programs was due to the \$15,000 in grant funding awarded to Grow Wabash County by the Wabash County United Fund to provide scholarships to applicants that were negatively affected by COVID-19 and were in search of a chance to skill up and find a higher-wage job. In total, the WCUF grant helped pay tuition for 4 students that were financially negatively impacted by COVID19. These participants participated in the following courses: two welding students (\$3,750 each), one CNC Machining Student (\$3,000) and one CDL Driving Student (\$4,500). In the Spring of 2021, GWC and its partners successfully filled several classes including: MSSC-CPT Industrial Maintenance course (March 30), Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machining course (May 17), and a Welding course (June 8th). We have also helped connect people with trainings to become an EMT or receive their Class A CDL license.

Wabash County United Fund Grant #2 - \$15,000

GWC was able to remove barriers completely again for four additional Wabash County residents that did not qualify for other funding avenues whom were all negatively impacted by COVID19 thanks to the generous support of the Wabash County United Fund. As a result, we completely expended the \$15,000 awarded to us through the Basic and Essential Needs R3 Workforce Grant. These scholars included: two welding certifications students, one Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) certification student, and one Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machining certification student scholarships. Award recipients noted that in addition to the trainings, these classes help obtained knowledge to better perform at their current job, obtained a pay raise from their existing employer at current job, received a promotion or new job opportunity at current employer, and/or found a new career opportunity at a new employer or within a new industry.

Community Foundation of Wabash County Workforce Grant - \$35,000

The primary use for this grant was to develop our local workforce through the removal of financial barriers for Wabash County residents looking to pursue professional certifications in a variety of high-demand skills and industries.

We were able to successfully expend the entire \$35,000 to cover tuition costs for 36 Wabash County residents that pursued certifications in CDL A licensure (3); Lean Six Sigma (1); Certified Clinical Medical Assistance (1); Welding (12); Chimney Sweeping (2); EMT (11) and CNC Machining (6).

Almost 40% of applicants stated that they had been negatively impacted by COVID, with several stating that they had lost their jobs or had their hours severely cut during the pandemic and 79% of applicants were identified as low-to-moderate income individuals, despite most working full-time hours.

In addition to providing access to education, the grants also helped major employers looking to fill empty positions with newly certified candidates eager to take on these high-wage jobs.

Duke Energy Marketing Grant - \$5,000

Duke Energy and Grow Wabash County enjoy an incredible partnership that has spanned several years. In 2021, Duke Energy awarded Grow Wabash County marketing grant funds to purchase the LinkedIn Insights software and provide training for that software for Tenille Zartman, vice president of Grow Wabash County.

As Wabash County explores opportunities to grow its population and attract talent to our communities, this software will allow Grow Wabash County to connect with and attract potential newcomers.

2021 Partners

Grant Partners

- Community Foundation of Wabash County
- Don Wood Foundation (*formerly 80/20 Foundation Trust*)
- Duke Energy
- NIPSCO
- Wabash County United Fund
- Wabash Valley Power Alliance

Workforce Partners

- Freedom Academy
- Heartland Career Center
- Indiana University of Kokomo
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Manchester Community Schools
- MSD of Wabash County
- Next Level Jobs
- NCI-SHRM
- Northeast Indiana Works
- Wabash City Schools
- WorkOne Northeast Indiana

Development Partners

- Becker Consulting
- City of Wabash
- Downtown Wabash (*formerly Wabash Marketplace, Inc.*)
- Manchester Alive
- Manchester University
- Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership
- One Lucky Guitar
- Planning NEXT
- Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana
- Town of LaFontaine
- Town of Lagro
- Town of North Manchester
- Town of Roann
- Wabash County Commissioners
- Visit Wabash County

Business Support Partners

- Barnes & Thornburg, LLP
- Content Creative
- Six Point Consulting
- Small Business Development Center
- Wabash County Business Journal



Entrepreneurship





Entrepreneurship *by the numbers*

600

*EntreLeadership books
purchased for local schools*

\$5,000

*awarded to student entrepreneurs
at INnovate Wabash County pitch
competition*

10

*clients referred to SBDC by
Grow Wabash County*

Wabash County High School Entrepreneurship Collaborative

Grow Wabash County firmly believes that innovation has no age requirement. In 2021, Grow Wabash County was able to expand and consolidate its many efforts to promote student entrepreneurship through the development of the Wabash County High School Entrepreneurship Collaborative. Through the Collaborative, supported in part by grant funding from the Don Wood Foundation, Grow Wabash County was able to provide our local schools with a robust variety of resources and programs to support entrepreneurship in the classroom.

CO.STARTERS Generator

When speaking with the business educators at our local high schools, their main feedback was the need for a structured, mainstreamed curriculum that allowed every teacher to use the same concepts, vocabulary and best practices with their students. The Generator curriculum from CO.STARTERS is geared toward students, breaking down the important concepts and processes for starting a business. Every business educator was trained to become a licensed CO.STARTERS instructor and was provided the materials and workbooks to teach the Generator curriculum in class.

STARTed UP Chapter

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year, Grow Wabash County helped launch northeast Indiana's first chapter of the STARTed UP Foundation. Every month, 25 freshmen and sophomores from each Wabash County high school meet in the Grow Wabash County conference room to work together to brainstorm solutions for challenges presented by guest speakers. The goal of this program is to empower students to think and work critically and collaboratively and teach them how to professionally present (or pitch) their ideas to a prospective client.

Guest speakers for this program have included: Grow Wabash County, Arc of Wabash County, Transform Consulting Group, Small Business Development Center, Wabash County Solid Waste Management.



EntreLeadership Library

In the interest of providing even more opportunities to teach and inspire student entrepreneurs, Grow Wabash County purchased a complete collection of books from Dave Ramsey's EntreLeadership series. Over 600 books were purchased and delivered to all five Wabash County high schools. An additional library of the books will also be located at the Grow Wabash County office for use by entrepreneurs of all ages.

INnovate Wabash County Pitch Competition

After being forced to cancel our 2020 competition, the INnovate Wabash County student pitch competition made its triumphant return in 2021!

By using the CO.STARTERS canvas outline and the Generator curriculum, entrepreneurship students went through the process from idea to business pitch, learning about important topics along the way such as funding, target audiences and marketing.

Once their ideas were solidified, every student team was given a \$100 Visa gift card to use as seed money for their business. Some students used the money to create merchandise and marketing pieces, while others invested it into their business ventures to purchase equipment or products that allowed them to operate as an actual business.

On April 28, 2021, 17 student teams, representing every Wabash County high school, pitched their business ideas to a panel of local business owners, mentors and professionals on stage at the Eagles Theatre.

The panel of judges included:

- **Joe Messer**, Professor of Business, Manchester University
- **John Hoffman**, entrepreneur & business mentor
- **Keith Gillenwater**, President & CEO, Grow Wabash County
- **Lisa Gilman**, local entrepreneur
- **Wes Shie**, SBDC Advisor

The slate of businesses pitched by the students reflected the diversity of innovation and passion of our community. In the end, four teams were recognized for going above and beyond in their business ventures.



First Place - \$2,000
Bizzy Bees Apiary



Second Place - \$1,500
Tackett Auto Detailing



Third Place - \$1,000
Arklight Tours



Fourth Place - \$500
Candor

While the top four teams won \$5,000 in total cash prizes, none of the students walked away empty-handed. Manchester University presented every student that competed with a \$500 scholarship to attend MU. Ivy Tech Community College also awarded the first place team with vouchers to take one free course.



Workforce Development





Workforce Development *by the numbers*

\$311,000

*in funds leveraged by Grow Wabash
County for direct financial assistance*

\$10,000

*provided to fund SACA equipment
program at MHS*

100+

*Wabash County residents attended
certification programs at NO COST to them*

Certification Training Programs

It became clear in 2021 that in this post-pandemic "new normal," that there was a clear deficit of skilled workers, especially in health care and manufacturing, leaving many key roles at local companies vacant. Grow Wabash County responded by working with educational partners in and around Wabash County to develop and launch a series of classes to help people earn certifications in high-demand skills.

As a result, Grow Wabash County launched 9 certification programs in the following disciplines:

- CNC Mill & Lathe Operation
- Gas Arc Welding
- Certified Clinical Medical Assistant
- MSSC-CPT Industrial Maintenance
- Class A CDL Licensure

These courses were developed in partnership with Freedom Academy, Ivy Tech Community College and Heartland Career Center.

Scholarships

Grow Wabash County spent a great deal of effort to remove financial barriers for as many Wabash County residents as possible looking to attend these training programs and receive industry certifications.

Our organization leveraged over \$311,000 in direct financial assistance for Wabash County residents. GWC helped many of the students qualify for funding through the state's Next Level Jobs program, and an additional \$85,793 was awarded in local scholarships to 37 recipients thanks to grants awarded to GWC by Wabash County United Fund and Community Foundation of Wabash County.

In addition to providing scholarships for people to attend the various certification trainings developed in part by Grow Wabash County, funding was also awarded to Wabash County residents pursuing specialized programs including EMT training and Chimney Sweep certification.

Success Story - Jake Collis



Jake Collis attended a Welding course facilitated by Ivy Tech Community College thanks to a scholarship from Grow Wabash County.

Before taking the course, Jake had a general understanding of welding and could carry out basic welding projects, but Jake was hoping to expand his skills in welding, knowing the doors it would open up for him professionally.

As luck would have it, Jake found out about the welding course and the scholarships available through Grow Wabash County through social media and knew it was a sign that he needed to pursue this further. The opportunity to have it all paid for was too good of a chance to pass up.

Now, Jake is certified in welding and has already been able to put these advanced skills to good use at 10X. The jobs he used to do before with hesitancy he is able to carry out with confidence knowing they are done correctly and will help his team and 10X become more effective and efficient in their business.

His advice to anyone considering pursuing a certification course in welding, or in any sort of trade that is popular right now, is to "get on it" He believes "knowledge is power" and if there are opportunities to take a course and maybe even get it paid for by a local organization, employer or state program, than there is no reason to not do it.

Hiring Support

Not only did Grow Wabash County help grow the local skilled workforce, we also helped local employers, of all sizes, better connect with that workforce and find the ideal candidates to fill their vacancies.

Job Postings

In 2021, we posted close to 100 jobs for 33 Grow Wabash County investors, and the Job Directory was one of top pages visited on our website, averaging around 125 page views per month.

We also utilized our social media channels to promote open jobs advertised by our investors as well as the GWC Job Directory, many posts resulted in dozens of shares, likes and comments to further spread the word about these exciting job opportunities in Wabash County.

Manufacturing Job Fair

Grow Wabash County teamed up with WorkOne Northeast and Northeast Indiana Works in Fall 2021 to host a Manufacturing Job Fair. On Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021, 12 major employers from the Wabash County manufacturing sector, all of which were eager to fill their job openings with skilled applicants, hosted a booth at the Heartland REMC building.

To garner excitement for the event, Grow Wabash County enlisted the help of Nick's Dog Cart and WKUZ KISS FM to set up at the event and help draw more people to the job fair.

Over 100 people attended the job fair, including students from Heartland Career Center looking to build rapport and network with employers that could hire them on in the near future as interns, apprentices or full-time employees.



Heartland Learning Center Project

The **Heartland Learning Center** received **\$5 million** from the **Economic Development Administration** and Grow Wabash County has been working closely with HLC to raise the required **20%** match locally. This expansion will allow our footprint to grow by constructing a **37,000 square foot** building to create an adult education center that will offer advanced manufacturing and health credentials.

Leadership Development Wabash County

After a hiatus due to COVID-19, Leadership Development Wabash County made its triumphant return in October 2021 with 25 emerging leaders, with a few notable changes made behind the scenes. Following the retirement of Jim Smith, Grow Wabash County's Vice President, Tenille Zartman, took up the reins as program facilitator. The program signed a contract with Indiana University of Kokomo, allowing professors from the IU network to present a variety of topics related to leadership.

Other guests, including Sue Roesner Chapman, Anthony Juliano and Carrie Gillenwater, have also presented their own perspectives on how to be effective leaders.

The cohort was also tasked with using the Strategic Doing method to select community service projects that best fit each group's talents, passions and resources.

This cohort also included Bailey Roberts, the inaugural recipient of the Jim Smith Scholarship, which allowed for her to attend the program at no cost to her.

Core Sponsors: Bippus State Bank, City of Wabash, Community Foundation of Wabash County, Wabash County Commissioners

Network Sponsor: Town of North Manchester

Lunch Sponsors: Duke Energy, Heartland Career Center, Josiah White's, Manchester Alive, MPS Egg Farms, NIPSCO

Young Professionals of Wabash County

The Young Professionals of Wabash County stayed busy in 2021 by finding new and creative ways to encourage local young professionals and emerging leaders to engage with each other and their communities. The launch of the Board Engagement survey has allowed YP to be the connector between young people looking to be more involved and organizations in search of new talent on their boards and committees.

The YPWC Steering Committee organized a robust slate of events that invited YPs to explore Wabash County more.

This year's events took young professionals to Lagro to hike at the Kokiwanee Nature Preserve, to North Manchester to promote YP at the Manchester University Involvement Fair, and even onto the Wabash River via White Rock Recreation canoes and to help out during the annual River Clean-Up.

We also helped many local entrepreneurs and business professionals celebrate their success by hosting events at Jojo's OI Factory & Co., 950 Speakeasy Bistro, BABE of Wabash County, and Market Street Grill.

Thanks to a \$5,000 Good Deeds grant awarded to YPWC by the Community Foundation of Wabash County, 2022 is slated to be another exciting year, featuring more events to connect our young and emerging leaders to each other and the Wabash County community at large.





Livability





Livability

Housing Committee

Grow Wabash County leads several housing development efforts in conjunction with our local partners across Wabash County. Since its inception, Grow Wabash County has partnered with and advised the Town of North Manchester on its Chester Heights subdivision which is underway and has several houses already constructed with more on the way in 2021.

Grow Wabash County also leads the City of Wabash's Housing Committee, which is comprised of a group of community stakeholders who advise Mayor Long and Grow Wabash County on needs, wants, and various other aspects as related to housing need in our community.

We currently have several housing projects underway – the redevelopment of the former Parkview Legacy Site, the development of the GDX site as we progress through the environmental remediation of the land, and several other properties that have been identified as potential housing projects. At least one of these projects should move forward and break ground in mid-2021.

Grow Wabash County also partnered with Indiana Landmarks and pledged **\$10,000** payable in 2021 to preserve 6 of the most historic houses and architecturally significant homes in a concentrated area out of 23 that came up for auction in City of Wabash in fall of 2020.

Finally, Grow Wabash County and our supporting foundation the Wabash County Business Alliance Foundation, Inc., in partnership with Mayor Scott Long & the City of Wabash have been working to acquire and redevelop the northside of East Market St between Allen and Huntington Streets. As of this writing, we own most of the properties on that street, and with the help of the City of Wabash Street Department have removed most of the structures.

Once we finish the property acquisition process in Spring 2021, we will start an RFI process to redevelop the site into premium market-rate urban residential homes.

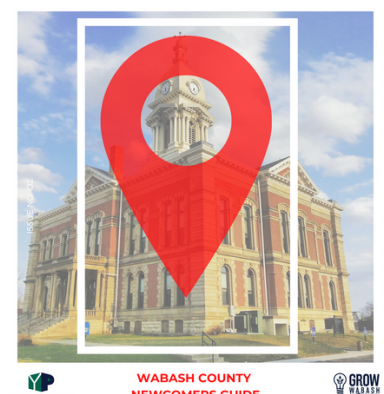
Attraction and Newcomers Efforts

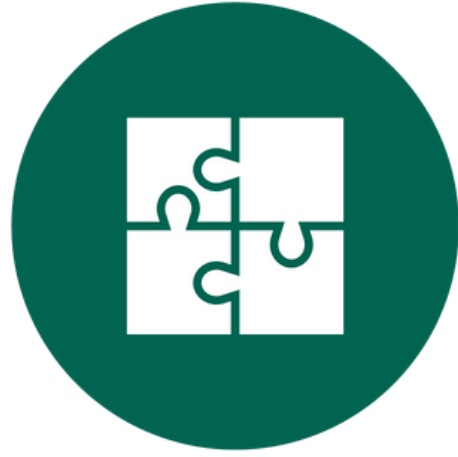
As Grow Wabash County and its many partners expanded their efforts to attract new families and young professionals to the community,

The Wabash County Newcomers Guide was published in early 2021 on the Grow Wabash County website and continues to be updated periodically to include new services, businesses and resources that could be helpful to people considering the move to Wabash County.

Thanks to grant funding from Duke Energy's Marketing Partnership grant program, Grow Wabash County was able to purchase LinkedIn's Insight software. Tenille Zartman, vice president of Grow Wabash County, was trained on the software so that we can utilize its extensive metrics and lead generation to target specific individuals and industries and attract them to Wabash County.

YOU ARE HERE
AND WE'RE SO GLAD YOU ARE





Investor Services





Grow Wabash County in the Media

48
*press releases sent to local,
regional media*

2,006
avg. website hits per month

12
*ribbon cuttings for new or
growing businesses in Wabash
County*

1,713
email subscribers
2,345
Facebook followers
138
LinkedIn Connections

Investor Services

Investors are the catalyst for everything we do at Grow Wabash County. They are the ones that have stepped up to show their support not only for the work done by our organization but for the overall growth and prosperity of Wabash County.

Grow Wabash County Website

The Grow Wabash County website remains a primary source for the community as well as those seeking more information about Wabash County. At the start of 2021, our website continued to provide up to date resources regarding COVID-19. As we transitioned into a post-pandemic world, our website became a key component for many companies marketing their job openings and career opportunities.

While maintaining our current website, the GWC team also began the process of renovating our website to better serve our investors, community partners and business prospects. In collaboration with Golden Shovel, the new and improved Grow Wabash County website became a reality in early 2022.

Email Campaigns

Grow Wabash County remained a constant thread of networking and information for its investors as well as the community at large through our weekly email blast. Each week, this newsletter is updated with promos for upcoming GWC events as well as highlights of our investors that are doing great work in Wabash County. We also utilize this platform for specialized emails targeted at specific demographics and groups and to spotlight certain events or programs that require extra attention.

Total Subscribers: 1,713

Open Rate: 26% ; Industry Average - 9%

Engagement Rate: 7% ; Industry Average - 2%

Social Media

In this constant contact world, Grow Wabash County did their best to stay relevant and present on social media channels to encourage interaction as well as help followers stay informed.

Total Facebook Followers: 2,345 ; 8% growth from 2020

LinkedIn Connections: 138 ; 106% growth from 2020

State of Our Communities - Thursday, April 1, 2021

With our communities still shuffling through the "new normal" of post-pandemic life, the many communities of Wabash County set intentions to continue to move forward and put effort into the plans and initiatives, large and small, to push Wabash County forward into future growth and prosperity.

The 2021 State of Our Communities event was hosted at the historic Eagles Theatre, the first event to be hosted in the newly renovated theatre. It was certainly a memorable one, but despite a few hiccups, our representatives from every community passionately and excitedly talked about the plans for the future of their communities and left everyone energized and ready to jump into the new year.

Attendees: 177

Sponsors: 24

Speakers:

Allen Miracle, Town of North Manchester

Bob Ferguson, Town of Roann

Brian Hauptert, Wabash County Commissioners

Diana Heath, Town of LaFontaine

Keith Gillenwater, Grow Wabash County

Justin Gillespie, Town of Lagro

Mayor Scott Long, City of Wabash



Grow Wabash County presents...

2021 State of Our Communities

Celebrate Wabash County's 2020 successes and set our sights for 2021 goals

Thursday, April 1
7:30 - 10 a.m.
Eagles Theatre, 106 W Market St, Wabash

REGISTRATION OPEN!
REGISTER FOR TICKETS & SPONSORSHIPS!
www.growwabashcounty.com/soc2021

The poster features a lightbulb with a green plant growing inside it, set against a background of a field and a blue sky with clouds.

Salute to Agriculture - Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Agriculture is one of the most important industries in Wabash County, and every year Grow Wabash County finds it imperative to celebrate and highlight the diversity in agriculture in the county.

The 2020 Farm Family of the Year award went to Clover Blossom Honey, a bee apiary owned and operated by the Shenefield family. Clover Blossom Honey has been an incredible advocate for protecting and growing the bee population and highlighting the importance of honey bees to all of agriculture and food production. Dave Shenefield has also been a mentor for many young beekeepers in northeast Indiana, including to the owners of Bizzy Bees, an up and coming honey and apiary business started by two Wabash County students.

Attendees: 112

Sponsors: 31

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Kenneth Foster

2020 Farm Family of the Year: Clover Blossom Honey



Honor Student Luncheon - Thursday, April 15, 2021

As we consider the future of Wabash County, one of our greatest assets are the bright, enterprising students that graduate from our county high schools every year. Our goal, every year, is to show these top students that there are people all over Wabash County rooting for them and want to help them find a meaningful and successful career right here in Wabash County.

This year's Honor Student Luncheon, featured a panel of local professionals who live and work in Wabash County. They talked about why they chose Wabash County and the opportunities that these students may not know are available to local students. Our goal is that when these students receive their degrees or other post-secondary educations, they seek out Wabash County to kickstart their lives both professionally and personally.

Attendees: 100

Sponsors: 36

Emcee: Neil Bever, *Hoosier Chiropractic*

Panel Speakers:

Roger Cromer, *Crossroads Bank*

Kelly Stouffer, *Ford Meter Box*

Marilyn Custer-Mitchell, *Parkview Wabash Hospital*

David Pyle, *POET Biorefining*



Celebrate Wabash County's best and brightest
senior students at the
20th Annual

Honor Student Luncheon

Thursday, April 15
Noon
Honeywell Center

Register to sponsor a student or support this event at:
growwabashcounty.com/HSL2021

WACCY Golf Outing - Wednesday, June 9, 2021

There are a few things better than a beautiful day on the golf course. The only thing that could make it better is when there's a Golf Ball Cannon on the 18th hole! That was the kind of fun our golfers had during the 2021 WACCY Golf Outing.

Teams from all over Wabash County came together to tee-off and enjoy a day on the greens. Grow Wabash County and the Honeywell Public Golf Course made it more interesting with competitions and games along the course like the putting green contest, longest drives and, of course the ever-popular Golf Ball Cannon!

The winner of this year's golf outing became the inaugural recipient of the WACCY Golf Championship belt!



Teams: 21

Sponsors: 31

Winners:

- 1st Place - *Wings, Etc.*
- 2nd Place - *Gaunt & Son Asphalt*
- 3rd Place - *Gaunt & Son Asphalt*



Annual Celebration Dinner - Thursday, October 14, 2021

The tradition and importance of the Annual Celebration Dinner precedes Grow Wabash County as an organization. Every year, it brings our community together to take stock of the work we all have done over the past year, to celebrate with our friends, neighbors and fellow business owners, and to recognize those among us that went above and beyond over the past year as champions of Wabash County.

The 2021 Annual Dinner Celebration was no different. We celebrated MPS Egg Farms, one of the longest running businesses started in Wabash County, as our 2021 Business of the Year. Curt Campbell, a longtime pillar and educator in the ag community and member of the Salute to Ag committee, was presented with the Volunteer of the Year Award. Finally, Liz Hobbs was selected as the 2022 Distinguished Citizen of the year for her work in the community, including as part of the Access Youth Center.

Attendees: 308

Sponsors: 36



Ribbon Cuttings & Groundbreakings

New beginnings are exciting times for both businesses and the Wabash County community as we welcome new innovations, people and enterprises. Even when things were tough in the middle of the pandemic, businesses still grew, still opened up and dared anything to stop them from being successful.

This year, we hosted ribbon cutting ceremonies for: Charley Creek Inn, JoJo's OI Factory & Co., Poole's Performance Market, Wellbrooke of Wabash, BABE of Wabash County, Wabash CrossFit, Ruoff Mortgage, CoCoJo's Campground; Wabash Castings, Lighthouse Mission of Wabash, Community Foundation of Wabash County, Groups Recover Together.



Advocacy & Legislative Engagement

Grow Wabash County is always proud to be a mouthpiece and advocate for our local business community.

Throughout the year, we hosted elected officials like Sen. Todd Young, in our office and invited local industry leaders and community stakeholders for frank and honest discussions about what these constituents needed from their elected officials.



Educational Events

One of the benefits of being a Grow Wabash County investor is the chance to attend FREE educational events throughout the year to help them learn about a new skill to grow their businesses.

Patrick Sullivan from Beacon Credit Union gave our business owners information about cybersecurity, while Anthony Juliano gave a presentation on how to stay on track and get things done during meetings. Adam Bartrom also paid us a visit to talk about what employers can expect to happen in 2022 when it comes to COVID regulations, employee recruitment and remote working.

Finally, we hosted a marketing workshop series with Melissa Meredith who broke down marketing our businesses and orgs to the basics. The capstone was a half-day workshop to apply those concepts in the real world.



Grow Wabash County Gift Checks

In the spirit of holiday giving and shopping local, Grow Wabash County experienced a large number of requests this year for Grow Wabash County gift checks. In the months and weeks leading up to the holiday season in November/December, Grow Wabash County printed over 3,000 gift checks totaling over **\$56,000**. These checks are accepted at all Grow Wabash County investors and ensures the money is spent locally.



2021 INVESTOR LIST

- 105.9 the BASH/ Dream Weaver Marketing
- 10X Engineered Materials, LLC
- 85 Hope
- 950 Speakeasy & Bistro
- Advanced Ag Resources
- Agro-Chem, Inc.
- AgVenture McKillip Seeds, Inc.
- **American Eagle Lawn - Landscaping***
- American Health Network
- Anytime Fitness
- **Arc Light Media***
- Arc of Wabash County
- Atlas Building Services, Inc.
- Autumn Ridge Rehabilitation Center
- B. Walter & Co
- Badger Tool Belts
- Bailey's Pizza Parlor
- Barnes & Thornburg LLP
- Bass and Bucks Inc
- Beacon Credit Union
- Belgian Draft Horse Corp. of America
- Benson & Son LLC
- Besiege LLC
- Bippus State Bank
- Black Sheep Events & Design
- Borders & Beyond
- Bott Mechanical Company, Inc.
- Bowen Center
- Brady Benefits & Associates, LLC
- **Brass Feed Ammo Co. LLC.***
- Briner Building, Inc.
- Bucheri McCarty & Metz LLP
- Builder's Mart
- Bulldog Battery Corporation
- Burger King
- Cannonball Lanes
- Carole & William Konyha
- Ceres Solutions Cooperative, Inc. (North central coop)
- Charley Creek Inn
- City of Wabash
- **CoCoJo's RV Campground***
- Comfort Keepers
- Community Foundation of Wabash County
- Consumer 51, LLC
- Countryside Veterinary Hospital
- Crossroads Bank
- Crystal Glass & Exteriors, LLC
- D & J Radabaugh Construction, Inc.
- Daniel's Place, Inc
- Dave's Carpet Cleaning
- Dawes & Pugh CPA's, LLC
- Denney Motor Sales, Inc.
- **DNE Construction LLC***
- Douglas C. Lehman, PC
- Downs Tandy & Petruniw, P.C.
- Duke Energy
- Eads & Son Bulldozing Inc.
- EcoWater Systems
- Edward Jones & Company - Office of Amy Sullivan
- Ellen's Bridal & Dress Boutique
- Emily Boardman
- Family Optometry
- First Farmers Bank & Trust
- First Friends Early Learning Ministry
- First Merchants Bank
- Fisher & Ireland
- **Flack Farms, Inc.***
- Flagstar Bank
- Flight1 Aviation Technologies
- Flow-Tech Plumbing & Heating, Inc.
- Ford Meter Box Company, Inc.
- Fowler, Bing M., Family Dentistry
- Freedom Academy
- Friermood Tire & Alignment
- G6 Communications LLC
- Gaunt & Son Asphalt
- Gebhart Holdings
- Gidley Appliance Repair LLC
- Global Precision Parts, INC
- Gorman Center for Orthodontics
- Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service
- Green Hat
- **Groups Recover Together***
- Grow Wabash County



2021 INVESTOR LIST

- Guenin Law Office
- Halderman Real Estate and Farm Management
- Hands of Hope, a division of Family Service Society, Inc.
- Hank's Construction, Inc.
- Heartland Career Center
- Heartland REMC
- Hidden Diamond Homes, LLC
- Hipsher Tool & Die
- Hoffman Nursery & Landscaping Inc.
- Holiday Inn Express
- Honeywell Public Golf Course
- Hoosier Chiropractic, LLC
- Hoosier Jiffy Print
- Hoosier Payment Solutions
- Indiana American Water Company
- Indiana Estate & Elder Law
- Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance
- Indiana Tech
- Indiana University Kokomo
- INGUARD
- Intertech Products, Inc.
- Intrasect Technologies
- Ivy Tech Community College
- J&K's Mega Pet!
- J.M. Reynolds Oil Co., Inc.
- Jessica Parrett - Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance
- Jim Smith
- Jim Widner
- John H. Stephens RLS
- **JoJo's OilFactory & Co.***
- Jones Contracting, Inc.
- Josiah White's
- Kalenborn Abresist Corporation
- Keith & Carrie Gillenwater
- Kellam, Inc.
- KenapocoMocha Coffee Shop
- Kirtlan Automotive Machine & Repair, Inc.
- Kitchens Plus
- Learn More Center
- LIFE Center
- Lighthouse Mission Thrift Store
- Living Essentials
- Living Well in Wabash County COA, Inc.
- Lundquist Appraisals & Real Estate
- Lutheran Health Network
- M & B Body Shop, Inc.
- Manchester Alive
- Manchester Community Schools
- Manchester University
- Martin Yale Industries, LLC
- Mattern, Robert J. DDS
- McDonald's Restaurant
- Metronet
- Metz Title Company
- Miami - Wabash Paper
- Midwest Eye Consultants, PC
- Miller's Merry Manor
- Milliner Printing Co., Inc
- MJV Group, Inc.
- Modoc's Market
- Mosier's Tarps
- MPS Egg Farms
- MSD - Metropolitan School District of Wabash County
- Nancy J's Fabrics
- Nicole A. Howard Photography
- NIPSCO
- Northwestern Mutual
- Novae Corp
- Office Concepts, Inc.
- Ohh My! Cakes
- Oswald-Thomas Sales & Service
- Owens Corning - Thermafiber, Inc.
- Papa John's Pizza
- PaperWorks Industries, Inc.
- Parkview Wabash Hospital
- Pathfinder Services, Inc.
- Paul Speicher-Ralph Naragon Advised Non-Permanent Fund
- Penguin Point (NM)
- Penguin Point Restaurant
- Perry ProTech
- Pettit Printing, Inc.



2021 INVESTOR LIST

- Pleasant Home Farm, Inc.
- POET Biorefining
- Poole's Meat Market
- Precision Medical Technologies, Inc.
- Pro Resources Staffing Services
- Purdue Extension
- Quality Electric, Inc.
- R.P. Home & Harvest of Wabash
- Rabb/Kinetico Water Systems
- Rea Logan & Co., LLC
- Real Alloy Recycling, Inc.
- Real Alloy Specification, Inc.
- REALTORS Association of Central Indiana, Inc.
- Red Earth CPA, LLC.
- Redemption Development, LLC
- Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana
- Republic Services
- Rick's Auto
- River Bend Farms, LLC
- Robert Halderman
- Roofs Unlimited
- Rosen Farms, Inc.
- Rotam Tooling Corporation
- **Ruoff Mortgage***
- Ruth Ann Masiongale
- Schlemmer Brothers Metalworks
- Senior Helpers
- Skyline Business Technology, LLC
- Spirit Wear
- SRT Aluminum
- Staffing Resources, Inc.
- Star Excavating
- **The Fried Egg Restaurant***
- The Hagerman Group
- The Honeywell Foundation
- The MainView
- The Paper of Wabash County, Inc.
- Thorne Insurance
- Tom Latchem
- Transform Consulting Group
- Trophy Center Plus
- Troy Eads Excavating, LLC.
- TTG Equipment
- United Tool Company, Inc.
- Vanderpool Law Firm, P.C.
- Vernon Health & Rehabilitation
- Visit Wabash County
- Wabash Appliances & Electronics
- Wabash Carnegie Public Library
- Wabash Castings, Inc.
- Wabash City Schools
- Wabash County Historical Museum
- Wabash County Solid Waste Management Dist
- Wabash County United Fund, Inc.
- Wabash County YMCA
- Wabash CrossFit
- Wabash First United Methodist Church
- Wabash Friends Counseling Center
- Wabash Hardware & Rental
- Wabash Marketplace, Inc.
- Wabash MPI/Carver, Inc.
- Wabash Plain Dealer
- Wabash Valley Abstract Company, Inc. of Wabash
- Wabash Valley Chrysler LLC
- Walmart
- Webb's Family Pharmacy 3, LLC
- Wellbrooke of Wabash
- Wendt & Sons
- Wesley Academy
- White Rock Recreation
- Wings Etc.
- Wireless Zone of Wabash
- WKUZ - KISS FM 95.9
- Wooden Ivy Boutique and Floral

New Investors in 2021*