



2022-23 COMMUNITY GUIDE





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1499 Windhorst Way, Suite 160 Greenwood, IN 46143

> 66 Water Street Franklin, IN 46131

info@AspireJohnsonCounty.com 317.888.4856 AspireJohnsonCounty.com



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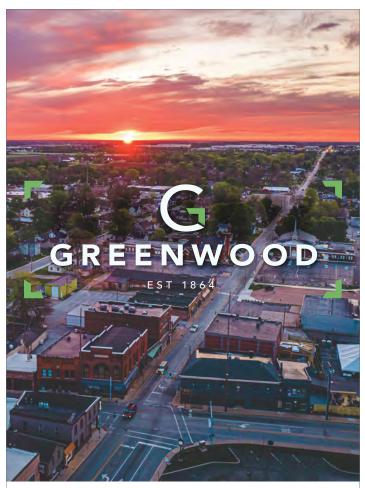




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ABOUT ASPIRE

Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance drives economic development and business success in Johnson County and southern Indianapolis. We lead the area's business community by leveraging community development opportunities and providing comprehensive member services for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and large corporations.

Every business and community aspires to achieve success, but each defines it differently. With our specialized resources and support, we provide members, investors, community partners - and all those looking for a welcoming community in which to start or expand their business a chance to succeed.

Aspire's Key Service Areas are what make us a critical economic institution in our community. Aspire is simultaneously an economic development organization and chamber of commerce with a dual purpose of driving development and promoting business success.

As a local economic development organization, Aspire delivers strategic services to enhance returns on investment. This includes site location and business attraction, expansion, and retention. Aspire also works in talent attraction and retention to build up a workforce that is in high demand by employers.

As a chamber of commerce, Aspire's extensive connections throughout the



PHOTOS BY ASPIRE JOHNSON COUNTY

business community makes us the go-to for support and resources for entrepreneurs. We support businesses every step of the way from concept to launch to expansion. We can connect our members to resources for technical coaching and microlending programs. Aspire also hosts educational events on topics of importance to the business community.

Our public policy advocacy, lobbying campaigns, and educational programs are founded on a pro-business and community development philosophy. Aspire specializes in programs to convene business leaders and elected officials in Johnson County. We believe a prosperous and growing economy is at the base of a thriving society.

Membership with Aspire is the leading access point to a large network of business



leaders and industries in all areas of Johnson County and southern Indianapolis. Members will have ample networking opportunities to grow your financial, human, and social capital. Members have first-hand access to resources such as public policy and economic updates, business savings and targeted marketing.

Aspire's community development work goes beyond helping businesses succeed to include our local residents. We develop and execute plans that enhance our quality of life, infrastructure, and public services. We uncover barriers, gaps, and opportunities for growth through community engagement, planning and placemaking.

Aspire's role in the area is to serve and bring together workers and employers, consumers and producers, students and educators, and taxpayers and government officials. Investing in Aspire is to be a part of our mission to drive economic development and create an environment for lasting business success.



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ASPIRE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

BRENT TILSON • PRESIDENT & CEO, TILSON HR

CONTINUING A 200-YEAR FAMILY LEGACY

The Tilson family has had a long-standing history on the Southside of Indianapolis. Beginning with a family farm in Franklin close to 200 years ago, the Tilsons have made their imprint as a family deeply invested in the Southside community. Brent Tilson has continued to carry that baton with his dedication to serving the citizens in the area he has been timelessly connected with.

Beginning his career as a CPA, Tilson gained experience with a large firm before hanging his own shingle as a sole proprietor at BR Tilson and Co. As he worked with many of the small business in the area, he noticed a common theme that seemed to trouble many of the business owners, which was back office operations (Taxes, payroll, benefit admistration etc.)

"I thought, I wonder if there's a way that I can take on that responsibility and handle all those employment-related tasks and responsibilities and they can just run their business. So in 1995 I started a company which is now Tilson HR and we now provide comprehensive suite of HR services." Tilson shared.

Tilson HR took off and grew quickly. In 1999-2000, it was the 11th fastest growing company in the Inc. 500



PHOTO BY ALLYSON CHARLES

and the fastest growing company in Indiana. From there the company continued to grow and evolve. This year the company is celebrating its 27th year in business with clients being serviced from the 48 contiquous states in the US.

"We handle clients from just a few employees to others who have close to 500 employees. I do a lot of benefits through Tilson HR but also through a group health insurance agency we opened called Tilson Benefits group." Tilson mentioned.

"I also built a building in Greenwood called the Signature building where my office is, but also where Raymond James has come over as a tenant as well as Core

Managed and Northwestern Mutual." He added.

While building his business and serving a growing list of clients, Tilson also found time to write a book, serve as president of the redevelopment commission in Greenwood and spend time with his six grandchildren. His book, "Go Slow To Grow Fast," hit the Amazon's best seller list a few years back. It was written to help business owners understand the lifecycle of business growth and to help them set the foundation to grow quickly without straining the business to the point of failure.

"In my industry, I was also fortunate to serve as the chairman of the industry the year where we had legislation passed to be codified in the

IRS and our industry became federally recognized. It was a watershed moment for us as an industry." He said.

Tilson credits his support system as his way of being able to keep up with all the demands of his job, community involvement and family life.

"It's really been those people that have worked alongside me who execute and excel in their roles that has allowed me to accomplish much of what has been done over the years. As a leader, I was fortunate to have the wherewithal to allow them to do just that." Tilson explained.

For more info, visit: brentrtilson.com.

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ASPIRE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT-

JEN HAGNER • CO-OWNER, BAYBERRY SPA

A RESPITE FROM THE **BUSYNESS OF LIFE**

Bayberry Spa has an unusual origin story, beginning with a fire that left Co-Owners Alison Giebler and Jen Hagner searching for a new place to continue their massage practices.

"Alison and I had worked together previously in private practice and the building we were in caught fire. So we were scrambling to find a new location. As we were looking around we came across The Nest, which was larger than the two of us needed at the time. So we decided to put our heads together and see what opening a spa would be like. We got some more partners in the community to come in and join us and that's how we took off," Hagner recalled.

"We outgrew the space at The Nest in three years and found the beautiful historic building on the corner of Madison and Broadway. When we saw it we fell in love with it. Things got put into motion and we bought that building and moved into that location. Now we have been there for just over a year and it's just been so exciting seeing all the changes that have happened over the last four years," she continued.

The goal for the Bayberry staff is that people can leave their stress at the door upon



PHOTO BY ALLYSON CHARLES

entering the spa.

"The moment someone walks into the door we're ready to greet them and offer them a bit of a reprieve. We have complimentary herbal tea and infused waters available. They get to pick their lotion scents products for their services. When they come into the treatment room we stop and listen to all of the specialty concerns they have for us and customize that service around what those needs are for the client," Hagner explained.

"Once they're finished, we have a quiet room that's available if someone wants to extend their service they can go upstairs and get cozy and relax as long as they like. We have a large front porch with seating out front for people to just take their time. We're not in a rush, they can just draw that time out as long as they like and have some more beverages or some snacks if they like. The checkout process is just the same because our support staff is top notch and they care just as much about the individuals as our service providers do," she added.

Hagner attributes much of the growth of Bayberry to the fact that she and Giebler are not just the owners, but also practicing massage therapists themselves. They have developed their business in a way that they feel they would have wanted people to do for them.

"Partnering with quality people has made a huge difference. We all have a

similar vision when it comes to how we view our clients. We want to be that place where everything stops, as far as demands put on a person, when you come to the door. I think our staff feels a connection to us because of the fact that we are owner/operators, so we understand those needs that are important to them," Hagner noted.

"Being in the heart of downtown Greenwood has also contributed to our growth allowing us more visibility and more of a presence in our community. A lot of our clients hear about us through word of mouth," she noted.

You can find out more about Bayberry Spa by visiting their website at: Bayberryspa.com.

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Tom Vander Luitgaren | Eric W. Prime Ty M. Craver | Matt S. Schoettmer

ASSOCIATES

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ASPIRE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT-

CHAD PAULIN • OWNER, CMP PLUMBING

DOING THINGS RIGHT THE FIRST TIME

Entrepreneurship was a trait that Chad Paulin, owner of CMP Plumbing, had from a young age. He learned the plumbing trade while attending Center Grove High School and took a two-year construction program at Vincennes University. At that time, he had the thought to open a home building business with a friend but got cold feet.

"I went back to plumbing because that's what I knew. I worked for someone for about 10 years but I never really lost that entrepreneurial feeling. So at 25, I decided to make the jump and go off and do my own thing," Paulin said.

It wasn't an easy decision for Paulin because he was close with his former boss and didn't want to step on his toes as he transitioned into his own business. Instead of directly competing with his former boss, he decided to go a different route for a while and started off as CMP Trades. His training from Vincennes University had taught him how to be a well-rounded tradesmen and pretty much do it all when it came to houses. He kept some of the plumbing work going that he had developed himself, but started building decks as a gesture of respect for his friend.



PHOTO BY ALLYSON CHARLES

Eventually, the plumbing trade ended up finding Paulin through a mutual connection that referred him to a builder in Carmel. The quality work he did led him to get connected with another builder who he began to work with for many years. During this time he transitioned his business to CMP Plumbing. The drive to Carmel wasn't ideal for Paulin but the work was keeping him busy so he continued to do it until he could build some relationships closer to his home on the Southside.

"I finally got my grass roots down here and got a couple small customers that built down here on the Southside so my work kept coming

closer to home. About 18 years ago I got connected with Mike Duke, one of the premier builders in Johnson County," Paulin explained.

Today, Paulin has grown his business to include both new home builds, commercial builds and a service department. They are now doing strictly plumbing and have changed the name to CMP Plumbing. One unique service they provide is called hydronic flooring, which can heat floors and driveways with water or steam running underneath them. CMP is a family-owned business. His wife, while working at a bank, helps Paulin with the marketing side of the busi-

ness. One thing that Paulin is known for is his dedication to quality.

"The thing that stands out for CMP is our quality of work. I've always been a stickler on doing it right the first time and making sure the customer is happy. If people want Chad to come do their plumbing, they know it's going to be done right. That helped me weather through a lot of difficult times- when things got tough with Covid, there were still people we could rely on," Paulin remarked.

For more info, visit: cmptrades.com.

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ASPIRE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT—

PAM PARKER • OWNER, JP PARKER FLOWERS

A SMALL-TOWN **FARM GIRL WITH A BIG VISION**

Pam Parker, owner of JP Parker Flowers grew up on a multi-generational farm in Needham, Ind. She developed a love for flowers at a young age and went on to study horticulture at the University of Minnesota. While in Minnesota, she began to work various jobs at local floral shops. During this time, she learned a lot about the floral business, especially when it came to doing events. "While I was working at these floral shops, I was able to get a background in events that I never would have gotten in Indiana. They were doing large events long before businesses in Indianapolis started doing this type of thing. I got thrown into the arena of doing large events, which I loved." Parker remembered.

After 13 years in Minnesota, Pam returned to Indianapolis when her father became very ill and soon passed away. She came back to the farm to help the family with nothing but a briefcase in hand. It was around that time when she met Bob Borns, who would later become well-known for renovating Union Station. "I had a vision for how I would decorate their huge space for the holidays coming up. I like big. I like big jobs and thinking big, even though the bigger the job the bigger the gamble- and at that time



I didn't really even have a company." Parker said.

This is where Parker really found her chance to shine in Indianapolis. Even though she had done events like this in Minneapolis before with large companies, she took this one on with very little help available. "We did an enormous amount of work and I just kept hiring people and I was thrilled because it turned out really beautiful. But I really had to put my whole self into it. And I would never in a million years do it again!" Parker exclaimed. You can see the work Parker did at union station on her website: jpparkerco.com. This event led to a contract with union station that lasted 15 years. "Doing this job definitely put us on the map. We were then in the circles of producing

events with event planners very quickly. At the time, Indianapolis hadn't really become the event city that it's working up to be now, so it was fortunate for us to be able to make our name pretty quickly." Parker explained.

JP Parker Flowers later opened its first brick and mortar location in Franklin. Later on, she opened a shop across from Shapiros that really opened the doors to the Indianapolis scene. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the riots, they had to close that location. "Fortunately, all the companies we connected with at that location followed us to Franklin. In this day and age with social media no one cares where you are. So being in Franklin is not a problem- we deliver all over the metropolitan area and

beyond for events." Parker noted.

Looking forward, Parker is very excited about the outlook for her company. "In 2022 we have more weddings than we've ever had and we have more booked for 2023 than we have ever had in the past as well." Parker said. She credits her team for helping keeping the company as strong as it is. "As an entrepreneur, I know better than to just be on my own. I have the best bookkeepers and financial advisors. I have two designers who have been with me for years- Karen Morgason for 26 years and Jasmine Farris for 17. I'm actually looking for people now-I'm ready to bring on a professional designer and an event salesperson with experience as we continue to grow!" Parker shared.



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ASPIRE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT-

ERIN SMITH & SUSAN MCCARTY • CO-OWNERS, SPOTLIGHT STRATEGIES

GETTING THE JOB DONE "NO MATTER WHAT"

A little more than 10 years ago, two working moms had a chance encounter at a Marsh grocery store that would change the trajectory of their business and their lives going forward. At the time, Erin Smith and Susan McCarty were running their own businesses and hadn't quite found the recipe for success they both knew they were capable of attaining. After exchanging a quick greeting, Smith picked up on the fact that McCarty wasn't feeling quite as "fine" as she tried to project. They wound up going out for a martini right afterwards and discussing some of what was going on.

"She shared with me her business challenges and I shared some of my business challenges and I distinctively remember saying 'This is ridiculous. We are both smart, determined women running our business and feeding our families. We should be able to figure this out," Smith shared.

"After that, we decided to co-brand and co-market our companies and just try and get through the recession going on at the time. We ended 2009 with the best sales year yet for both of our companies, respectively. I remember getting to the end of that year and thinking 'We got something here- I don't know what it is exactly but



PHOTO BY ALLYSON CHARLES

the things that I do really well, she doesn't really like to do and the things she does really well, I don't like to do.' It just seemed like it was the perfect fit for us to bring our companies together," she added.

The next year, Smith and McCarty brought a board of six people together to help them walk through the pieces needed in order to officially bring the two companies together. On Jan. 1, 2011 Spotlight Strategies was officially formed and Smith and McCarty have not looked back as co-owners of their shared business.

"We called the company Spotlight Strategies because we brought together printing, apparel, promotional products and then later on added a design division to our portfolio," McCarty explained.

Since 2011, Spotlight Strategies has had explosive growth and they continue to stay at the forefront of the industry as their business evolves and continues to develop. Their core values have been the guide that has helped them stay on track as they serve their customers, their staff, and even their families. They consist of: Integrity, Servant Leadership, Efficiency, and being solutions focused.

As a company, Spotlight offers a wide variety of services and sometimes people don't even realize how much they can do. Smith explains their service offerings in a very simple way:

"Basically, if you need something that has your brand on it, we're going to be able to either do it for you and produce it in house, or we're

also going to provide you a solution if we can't do it," she said.

More recently, Smith and McCarty have seen more and more customers drawn toward their online web store service, where they create a store for their customers to market and sell products online. This has allowed them to reach customers both locally and abroad. They also purchased a DTF machine which stands for "direct to film." The machine will open up opportunities to produce more products much more quickly and keep Spotlight ahead of the game and ready to deliver on their promises.

For more info, visit: spotlight-strategies.com.

ASPIRE BUSINESS - SPOTLIGHT

ROBERT PESTO • OWNER, RESTORATION LANDSCAPE



PHOTO BY ALLYSON CHARLES

BEAUTIFYING THE SOUTHSIDE OF INDIANAPOLIS ONE **PROPERTY AT A TIME**

Restoration Landscape was born out of creativity and a love for design. Owner Robert Pesto has spent over 38 years in the "green industry," which encompasses a variety of landscape-related services. He began as a kid working with his dad, who ran a landscaping side business. Later on he got his degree in landscape architecture from the University of Kentucky, where he found a passion for the design and installation side of landscaping.

After spending years working for different landscape companies and working his way up into management positions, Robert realized he wasn't out in the field doing what he loved most. At that point he decided to open his own company so that he could get back outside and get his hands dirty again. So in 2014, Restoration Landscape opened its doors for business on the Southside of Indianapolis.

"The name 'Restoration Landscape' came about out of my passion for nostalgia and old things. Old cars, old homes, old musical instruments and old music. That extends into the landscape as well. It's something that's been around for hundreds of years. Depending on where you are in the world, the landscape can be indicative of culture and also what people consume," Pesto

explained.

As the company grew, Pesto began to really zero in on doing the type of landscaping he enjoyed the most.

"I really don't do a lot of lawn mowing anymore; I do subcontract that out when it is tied to a project that I really like doing. We work with people to come up with a plan and help them implement it, then we usually follow up with maintaining it with things like seasonal pruning and mulching," Pesto described.

"Since 2020, the hardscape market has really started to get popular. People may have had vacation plans that got postponed because of Covid and were looking for something to be able to provide outdoor living space. So we really got into

that, creating outdoor rooms and incorporating that with landscaping," he added.

Educating customers is a big part of what Restoration Landscape provides. Many people are not familiar with horticulture and how it can be used in designing a landscape that provides seasonal balance.

"We help people to understand native plants, which typically thrive the most in their natural environment. We also help to recommend plants that provide a lot of color throughout the year. We can recommend a balance of plants that will look good in the wintertime as well as summer, spring and fall," he continued.

As the business began to grow, Robert's wife Elaine stepped in to help him manage the incoming customer inquiries and maintaining the schedule. She helps coordinate the back-end side of the business, allowing Robert to stay out in the field doing the designing.

One of Pesto's goals is that people will be able to recognize his work just by looking at a property he has designed.

"We are working toward that and it helps that most of our work is in Johnson County or southern Marion County so it's mostly in the same area," Pesto said.

For more info, visit: restoration-landscape.com.

ASPIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

A strong, vibrant community and a skilled workforce make Johnson County Indiana stand out among Midwestern communities. We believe that these assets can be used as catalysts for further development.

To establish a path forward for the county, Aspire has developed a 5-year strategic plan that identifies opportunities and corresponding goals. By 2025, we hope to achieve two key goals:

- · Attract and develop 50% more advanced industries jobs
- · Grow average annual wages by 15% for all workers

Our data-driven approach has helped us develop a series of goals that will ensure our economy and communities flourish in the next five years and well into the future. When measured collectively, these goals will have a positive impact on the wider community.

Our FIRST GOAL is to drive innovation to boost business and industry development. We will do this by integrating a tailored approach to target aspirational industry cluster initiatives, such as the advanced industries, to expand business attraction, retention, expansion, and startups.

We will target our business attraction efforts to Advanced Industries and the upstream and downstream



PHOTOS BY ASPIRE JOHNSON COUNTY

supply chain by creating a framework for decision-making. We plan to increase functionality of incentives for high-impact projects and recalibrate the incentive matrix for other important, but lower-impact projects. We will utilize technology like virtual tours and drone video to increase site selectors and corporate end users.

Essential to our plan is to support the expansion of entrepreneurship programming in the local school systems. Increase partnerships with higher education institutions and existing employers to support technology-based development programs oriented toward entrepreneurial development, risk capital, and the commercialization of research into new companies and products.



Finally, we will formalize and market a Business Retention and Expansion program.

GOAL TWO is to boost site development for catalyst projects. We will achieve this goal by deploying infrastructure including broadband, roads, water, sewer, electric, and natural gas to strategic sites along commercial connectivity nodes. We will develop a strategic opportunity initiative to

define targeted inventory for developable land and redevelopment sites for each partner community and throughout Johnson County.

Aspire will convene developer roundtables to showcase inventory with a marketing package of data and maps. We will launch planning forums to help Johnson County's elected leaders, planning department staff, and economic

developers identify and implement best practices in planning and development. Lastly, we will study and implement plans for transportation and transit corridors to ease transportation challenges, including impacts of I-69 development.

GOAL THREE involves nurturing community collaboration and engagement. This starts by reinforcing regionalism by expanding and deepening communication channels among community partners to build trust, unity, and a common vision. Johnson County is predicted to have 190,000 residents by 2040.

This goal includes creating and/or supporting youth and young professional civic engagement initiatives to develop long-term community-enhancing policies. Providing support and mentoring to young professionals seeking public office is key for this goal's completion.

THE FOURTH GOAL is to embrace and pursue opportunities for enhanced livability and quality of place. The county Master Plan includes recreational infrastructure projects such as the building 226 miles of trails.

Strategies to do this involve collaboration with housing stakeholders to understand issues and develop solutions to housing problems. We seek to establish community conversations focused on inclusivity and engagement of other cultures and demographics. It is important to work with the Convention, Visitor, and Tourism Board on marketing campaigns to target talent and industry profiles.

We will investigate availabil-

ity and quality of healthcare and mental healthcare services and its impact to employers and workers and encourage small-business development to increase locally owned retail establishments and restaurants or to support industries complementing the targeted Advanced Industries.

GOAL FIVE of Aspire's strategic plan is to magnify and deliver robust education and workforce endeavors. 20.2% of Johnson County residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, 92% of residents have a high school diploma or higher, and 8.4% have an associate degree or higher. Aspire seeks to increase talent connection to 21st century skills through pipeline development of youth, training (and retraining) of the existing workforce and talent attraction.

This goal can only be accomplished through organizational partnership development with university and college partners, such as Franklin College, Ivy Tech Community College, University of Indianapolis, Indiana Tech, Indiana Wesleyan University, and IUPUI.

Why has Aspire set the bar so high and created such ambitious goals? Because it is based on the collective feedback from one hundred business and community leaders Aspire engaged in the initial strategic planning process whose resounding message was clear: don't settle for "good" but aspire for "great." Aspire Johnson County was formed to create a stronger, more unified engine to drive economic growth and business success. Setting the bar high is in our name.



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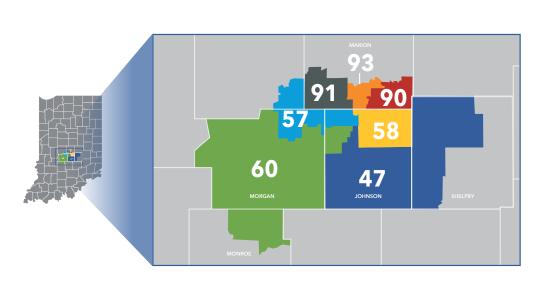
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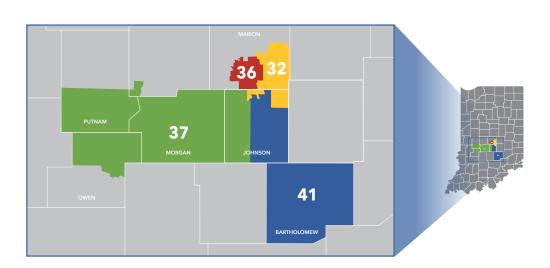


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STATEHOUSE DISTRICTS **FOR JOHNSON COUNTY**



INDIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



INDIANA SENATE

The Indiana General Assembly is our state legislature and is made up of two houses responsible for enacting the laws for which the state is governed. The Indiana House of Representatives is the lower house and composed of 100 members that serve two-year terms without term limits. The Indiana

Senate is the upper house and composed of 50 members that serve four-year terms without term limits. A list of the local delegates is below with their email address. The phone number for the Indiana House is 317.232.9600 and the Indiana Senate is 317.232.9400.

INDIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 47

Rob Greene (R) h47@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 57

Craig Haggard (R) h57@iga.in.gov

Michelle Davis (R) h58@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 60

Peggy Mayfield (R) h60@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 90

Mike Speedy (R) h90@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 91

Robert Behning (R) h91@iga.in.gov

Julie McGuire (R) h93@iga.in.gov

INDIANA SENATE

DISTRICT 32

Aaron Freeman (R) s32@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 36

Jack Sandlin (R) s36@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 37

Rodric Bray (R) s37@iga.in.gov

DISTRICT 41

Greg Walker (R) s41@iga.in.gov

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Gift giving is often associated with holidays and your loved ones. However, giving gifts to clients, colleagues, and other important figures in your life can strengthen emotional bonds, create better work environments, show gratitude and respect, and make you stand out from competitors. Here is a list of traditional days associated with showing appreciation and giving gifts. Use the directory provided in this publication to find Aspire member investors to purchase your gifts from.

JANUARY 9TH

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

FEBRUARY 4TH

Thank Your Mailman Day

FEBRUARY 14TH

Valentine's Day

MARCH 8TH

International Women's Day

MARCH 29TH

National Mom and Pop **Business Owners Day**

APRIL 9TH

Easter

APRIL 10TH

National Siblings Day

APRIL 19TH

Administrative **Professionals Day**

National Nurses Day

MAY 14TH

Mother's Day

JUNE 18TH

Father's Day

JULY 26TH

Uncle and Aunt Day

AUGUST 11TH

National Son and Daughter Day

SEPTEMBER 10TH

Grandparents Day

OCTOBER 5TH

World Teachers' Day

OCTOBER 16TH

Boss's Day

OCTOBER 21ST

Sweetest Day

DECEMBER 25TH

Christmas

DECEMBER 26TH

Kwanzaa begins





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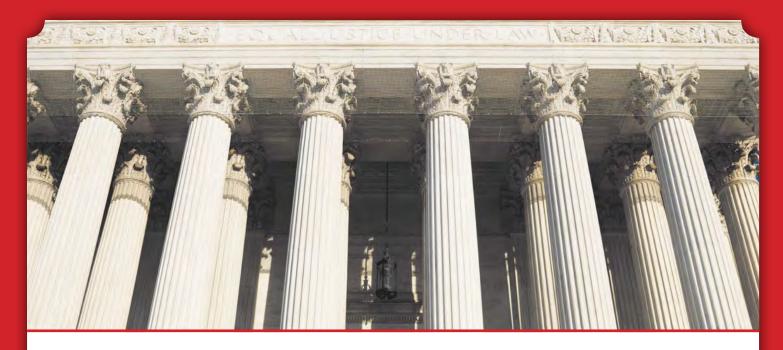
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