



2024 Business Appreciation Banquet

May 2nd, 2024 at Blue Chip Casino Hotel & Spa

Program

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 5:00 - 5:30 pm | Arrival of Award Recipients / Cocktail Hour |
| 5:30 - 6:00 pm | Arrival of Guests / Cocktail Hour |
| 6:00 - 6:40 pm | Welcome & Awards Presentation
(Anniversary Awards; Investment Awards) |
| 6:40 - 7:40 pm | Dinner Service (Buffet Style) |
| 7:40 - 8:45 pm | Awards Presentation Continued (Restaurants,
Phoenix Awards, Leadership, Lifetime Awards) |
| 8:45 - 9:00 pm | Closing Remarks |

Music provided by Quartet from the Michigan City Chamber Festival

Presenting Sponsor

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Sullivan Palatek

SoLa

HealthLinc

PNW

Hitachi Global Air Power
US, LLC

D. Martin Enterprises

Mikropor America

Beachwood Development
Group LLC

McColly Bennet Commercial
Advantage

McKissack

Award Categories

Milestones

15 Years

Shady Creek Winery

Mersino Dewatering, LLC

20 Years

Bubbles Ice Cream

Power Drive, LLC

30 Years

Panniccia Heating & Cooling, Inc

Holly's Restaurant

35 Years

KTR Corporation

St. Andrews Products, Inc

40 Years

FiTech, Inc - Division of Ashley Ward

Sullivan Palatek

Filtration Plus, Inc

60 Years

Fiber Bond

70 Years

B&E Marine, Inc

Dwyer Omega

Special Milestones

25 Years

Granny's House Christian Family Child Care

50 Years

Vanair Manufacturing, Inc

Haas & Associates, LLC

75 Years

WIMS - Gerard Media, LLC

Flanigan Tires

100 Years

Dunes Optical

105 Years

Blocksom & Co.

Investment Awards 2022 - 2024

Mid-City Supply Co., Inc.

HealthLinc

Bay Logistics

Dunkin Donuts

MidwesThrift

Blue Chip Casino Hotel & Spa

Michigan City KIA

F.H. Paschen

Barker Mansion

Lakeshore Café

NWI Development Group

Restaurant Investments 2022 - 2024

Cafe Farina

Buffalo Wild Wings

Holly's Restaurant

Kolasa's Polish Peasant

Cuané

Phoenix Awards

Burn 'Em Brewing

Lakefront Salon & Spa

Ritz Club Tavern

Leadership Award

Beth Wrobel

Shannon Eason

Lifetime Achievement

John Shaefer (Posthumous award)

Dr. Barbara Eason Watkins

Economic Development Leadership Awards

Our honorees have left a significant mark on our city's economic development through their service to quality of life in our communities. Through their roles, the award winners have focused on how quality health care and connections to the outdoors elevate the lives of our residents.



Beth Wrobel

Retired CEO of HealthLinc

- Wrobel recently retired from HealthLinc, a federally qualified health center that serves Northern Indiana, including Michigan City.
- During her tenure, which began in 2002, she led the organization to growth and development. It now includes 14 locations and more than 500 employees.
- She fortified the link between health care and quality of life, ensuring that the underserved members of the community had access to medical, dental, optometry and behavioral health services.
- She was instrumental in the new Michigan City facility that opened in early 2024. The building behind Ivy Tech Community College offers expanded health services, provides hands-on learning opportunities to Ivy Tech students and an avenue to provide outreach and connections to community members.



Shannon Eason

Superintendent of the Michigan City Parks & Recreation Department

- Eason is a lifelong resident of Michigan City and has worked with the Parks Department since 1995.
- She worked her way up in the department, starting as a payroll clerk up to assistant superintendent before being named by Mayor Angie Nelson Deutch to the role of superintendent in 2024.
- She focuses on preservation, public access and historical restoration by honing her passion for the environment on projects and initiatives. She has teamed with Save the Dunes, worked to remove invasive species and led the effort for the Singing Sands Trail.
- She has served as a chair of the Trail Creek Watershed Partnership, treasurer of the Michigan City Public Art Committee, member of the Storm Water Advisory Group, member of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission's Ped, Peddle and Paddle committee and the high school's Wolves Environmental Restoration team.

Economic Development Lifetime Achievement Awards

Our honorees paved the way for an uplifted level of economic development in Michigan City and LaPorte County through their visionary guidance and servant leadership. Their lasting imprint on our communities has been evident throughout their careers and community involvement.



John Schaefer

Posthumous Award

- Schaefer was a lifelong resident of Michigan City.
- He had a successful career in accounting, serving the Indiana State Board of Accounts for 20 years and then running his own firm for 25 years.
- He worked with a range of businesses, nonprofits, industries, and individuals as a CPA.
- He was a founding board member of the EDCMC and served as City Controller for the City of Michigan City during Mayor Charlie Oberlie's term.



Dr. Barbara Eason Watkins

Superintendent of the Michigan City Area Schools

- Dr. Eason Watkins has served as superintendent since July of 2010, strengthening the school system and offering additional education opportunities for the students and families of Michigan City.
- Under her leadership, the school system has provided additional career and technical offerings, gifted and talented programs and magnet schools. Initiatives include the Early College Program, Compressed Air Academy, Little Wolves Early Learning Center and a K-12 technology program.
- She was previously Chief Education Officer of the Chicago Public Schools. For 50 years, she has always pushed to bring together students, parents and the community to establish the optimal educational experience as well as create workforce development opportunities.
- She has served various board of directors, including the EDCMC, Michigan City Chamber of Commerce, United Way of LaPorte County, Ivy Tech Community College and the Unity Foundation of LaPorte County.

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Visit



Michigan City Economic Development Corporation

Two Cadence Park Plaza, Michigan City, IN 46360

Visit edcmc.com for more information.