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EDITOR'S PICK

## **Northwest Indiana Influential Women Association honors Region's 'most influential women'**

**Joseph S. Pete**

Sep 30, 2024



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**T**he Northwest Indiana Influential Women Association recognized the "most influential women in Northwest Indiana" at its annual awards banquet.

The nonprofit honored 226 finalists selected out of 430 nominees at the 2024 Influential Women of Northwest Indiana banquet at Avalon Manor in Hobart. Each finalist was awarded a medallion.

"Each year, this event gets bigger and better as we recognize the achievements and talents of women in our region," said Andrea Pearman, executive director of NWIIWA. "We had a record-breaking number of attendees to the banquet this year, and I am so thrilled to see so many come out to celebrate and support all those who truly deserve this honor."

LaQuisha Jackson of Soulful Kitchen/Hope for the Hungry won an up-and-coming Influential Women of Northwest Indiana award in the arts category. Debra Bolanos of Xel-Ha Escuela de Danza won the award in the arts category.

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Shaya Wimple of MarlynGrace Boutique won the up-and-coming award in the business category. Rhonda Zaluckyj of Patti's All-American won the influential award.



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Melissa McLindon with NIPSCO won the up-and-coming award in the construction/manufacturing category. Morgan Davis with The Blue Phoenix Institute won the influential award in the construction/manufacturing category.

In the economics/government category, Robin Arvanitis of the Schererville Town Council won the up and coming award and Julie Wendorf of the Crown Point Community Library won the influential award.

In the education category, Roxanna Lugo O'Rourke of the Hammond Education Foundation won the up and coming award and Gisele Casanova of Purdue University Northwest won the influential award.

In the finance category, Shvonne Barber of Horizon Bank won the up and coming award with Katie Craig of BP won the influential award.

In the health care field, Kele Ivey of the Methodist Hospitals STAR Center won the up and coming award while Regina Nelson of the Optimal Neuroscience Services won the influential award.

In the law category, Courtney Smith of Smith Legal Group won the up and coming award while Amy Nowaczyk of O'Drobinak & Nowaczyk PC won the influential award.

In the marketing profession, Susan Thompson of Illiana Indoor Billboards won the up and coming award while Christi Hardesty of Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana won the influential award.

In the nonprofit world, Brittany Caraballo of Geminus Regional Care Group won in the up and coming category while Sheila Chandler of TradeWinds Services earned the influential award.

In service/tourism, Tracee Jury of Steamwhistle Coffee Roasters earned the up and coming award and Jeny Burkhart of The Waxi Taxi received the influential award.

In STEM, Rachel Ritte [REDACTED] health won the up and coming award while Alyssa Nyberg of The Nature [REDACTED] turned the influential award.

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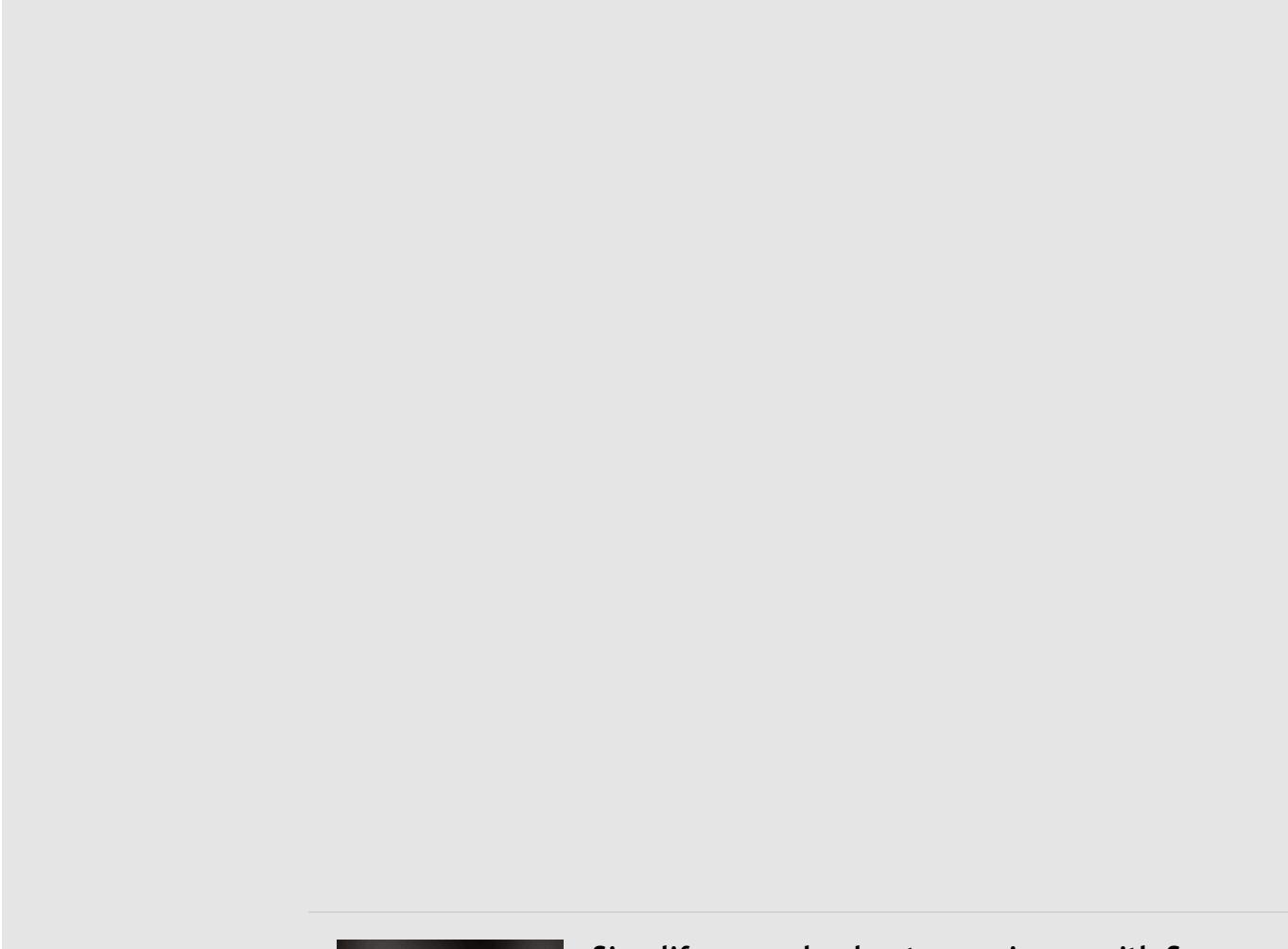
Dr. Maria V. Hughes of Purdue University Northwest earned the Overall Up and Coming Woman of the Year, Amy Henningfield of Superior Construction Co., Inc. the Overall Influential Woman of the Year, Maddie Wimple of Madisyn's Spread the Love Project the Nonprofit Youth Award and Aida Haigh of NiSource the Supporter of the Year Award.

Mayor Angie Nelson Deuitch of the City of Michigan City earned the Community Leader of the Year Award. Andrea Pearman of Diversified Marketing Strategies won the Lifetime Achievement Award.

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## A look back at Northwest Indiana businesses that closed in 2023

A look back at Region businesses that closed in 2023



**Beer Geeks craft beer bar closes, to reopen as B-Side Bar & Lounge**

Joseph S. Pete | Updated [REDACTED]

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