

2024 Entrepreneur of the Year Finalists

JUSTIN LOWHORN/HOOSIER AUTOMOTIVE – This entrepreneur, through their leadership, the business has grown and moved to a new location on State Rd 3. Their focus on adapting to local needs, from offering specialized services to catering to a wide variety of customers, showcases their innovative approach to business. By providing high-quality vehicles and exceptional customer service, the business has become a trusted name in the local automotive industry, attracting customers from New Castle and the surrounding areas. This not only keeps business local but also contributes to the economic circulation in the region, supporting local commerce and boosting consumer confidence. The dealership's ability to meet the diverse needs of the community, including offering specialized services for fleet vehicles and oversized vehicles, with their new addition to a larger bay, ensures its continued success and relevance. This young entrepreneur sees a need in the automotive industry and works to fill it as his business, offering more for his customers.

In addition to their business success, they have consistently given back to the community by donating to local schools, sponsoring youth sports teams, and supporting local events. Their values, deeply rooted in family and community, inspire others in their field and make them a respected role model. This entrepreneur's dedication to continuous improvement, their work ethic, and their unwavering commitment to the community reflect the qualities of an exceptional leader. Their efforts continue to honor their family legacy while making a lasting difference in their community.

MARY HOBBS/BEEHIVE BODY CO. – This female veteran-owned business exemplifies resilience, innovation, and community commitment. What started as a therapeutic outlet after military service and a career-ending accident has grown into a thriving small business in the heart of Henry Co. Since its official launch, it has expanded from a small operation to a storefront, participated in markets and festivals, and established wholesale and private label partnerships, contributing to the local economy and creating jobs. She participates in Indiana Grown and Homegrown by Heroes, which promotes local agribusinesses and veteran entrepreneurs. She loves providing a wide range of products for diverse customers—even products for pain management.

Beyond business growth, community engagement is at its core. The company collaborates with local farms, supports female and veteran-owned businesses, and participates in initiatives that promote local agribusinesses and entrepreneurship. They also give back through donations to local nonprofits, reinforcing their dedication to the community. Their success story highlights the power of passion, craftsmanship, and unwavering support for fellow small businesses.

MIKE & TERESA SCHEMBRE/BLUE RIVER TAPHOUSE - This entrepreneur has transformed the local craft beer scene and created a welcoming, family-friendly environment that has become a cornerstone of the downtown community. Their business is more than just a gathering place—it is a hub for local partnerships, actively supporting small businesses, artisans, and entrepreneurs. Through collaborations with local vendors, wineries, and artists, they have fostered growth and strengthened community ties.

Their hands-on dedication is the driving force behind their success. Whether managing brewery operations, crafting menu items, or personally engaging with customers, they continuously invest time and effort to make their business thrive. Their willingness to evolve and listen to the community—through events like trivia nights and themed dinners—has kept their establishment fresh, engaging, and a beloved local destination.

Beyond their business, they are deeply committed to giving back. They create opportunities for others by hosting events, showcasing local talent, and forming meaningful collaborations that uplift the entire community. Their passion, hard work, and innovative spirit have made a lasting impact, solidifying their role as true entrepreneurs dedicated to the growth and prosperity of their town.