



**United We Fight  
United We Win  
LIVE UNITED**

***For Immediate Release***

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## **The “Power of the Purse” is Strong in LaPorte County**

**Michigan City, IN** – The Women United annual “Power of the Purse” dinner and auction of new and gently used purses, held on Thursday, March 15 at 6 PM at the Pottawattomie Country Club in Michigan City, IN, raised nearly \$10,000 in support of collective impact projects in LaPorte County. This year’s fundraising efforts topped last year by more than \$1,300.

160 new and gently used purses were donated to Women United by local supporters and partners for the silent and live auctions. 81 people attended the event.

Also in attendance were seven local, male celebrities who modeled the live auction purses for guests.

The Honorable Thomas J. Alevizos, LaPorte Circuit Court Judge

Marty Corley, Master Patrolman of the Michigan City Police Department and Michigan City Area

Schools Board of Trustees member

Jeff Deutch, decorated Army veteran and local volunteer

John Espar, LaPorte County Prosecutor

John Lake, Indiana Deputy Attorney General in the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

Andy Hynek, LaPorte County Drug Task Force commander

The Honorable Mark Krentz, Mayor of the City of LaPorte

Celebrity emcee Ric Federighi of WIMS AM 1420 kept the crowd laughing and excited during the live auction with his trademark energetic style, leading the crowd in several calls of his signature, “OH YEAH!” and chants of bidders names as they competed for the highly coveted designer and artisan purses. The models also competed admirably to increase the bidding for their items and win bragging rights for collecting the highest donation of the evening.

The live auction raised nearly \$1,500 with Mayor Mark Krentz earning the top bid – \$375 for a Michael Kors bag with wristlet and wallet valued at \$550 – from Kesha M Pate, owner of Ahsek Media and long-time Communications Sponsor for United Way of LaPorte County.

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**United Way of LaPorte County**

422 Franklin Street, Suite D, Michigan City, IN 46360 P (219) 210-3534 F (219) 221-6528 [unitedwaylpc.org](http://unitedwaylpc.org)



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In addition to the silent and live auctions, a 50/50 ticket raffle raised an additional \$200 when City of Michigan City Councilperson Patricia Boy donated her winnings back to Women United.

“We are so blessed to have a strong collective of philanthropic leaders in our community who are committed to providing access to health, education, and financial stability for everyone,” said Kris Pate, Executive Director of United Way of LaPorte County. “Events like this prove how much our community cares and that we can have a great time while tackling the challenges facing so many in our community.”

During the event, current Women United president Angie Nelson Deutch spoke about Kindergarten Countdown Camps – a free four week summer camp designed to prepare children with little to no preschool experience for their new roles as kindergarten students – and the important work of eliminating generational poverty in LaPorte County.

Pate followed up Deutch’s remarks by sharing several positive outcomes from the current Financial Stability Impact Collaboration and how that work is positively changing lives in LaPorte County by creating bridges to financial stability for adults and families and developing pathways to success for local youth.

David Sisk, Director of Corporate Engagement for United Way of LaPorte County acknowledged the generous contributions of the event’s sponsors and partners.

NIPSCO, Gold Level Sponsor and sponsor of the giveaway bags

1<sup>st</sup> Source Bank, Bronze Level Sponsor

Horizon Bank and Kabelin Ace, Partner Level Sponsors

Patrick’s Grill also provided a gift certificate for the night’s door prize, and Chico’s of Lighthouse Place Outlet Mall promoted the event, served as a collection site for purse donations, and contributed coupons and chocolates to the giveaway bags.

Women United is a women’s initiative of United Way of LaPorte County. Women United members are Leadership Givers who donate \$1,000 or more annually (\$500 or more for women under 35 or retired). For more information about Women United and how to join, please contact Kris Pate, Executive Director at (219) 210-3534 or kris@unitedwaylpc.org. More information can also be found on the United Way website at [unitedwaylpc.org/womenunited](http://unitedwaylpc.org/womenunited).

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## Photo Captions

**Image 01** – Left to Right: Women United president Angie Nelson Deutch, Mayor of LaPorte Mark Krentz, and United Way of LaPorte County Executive Director Kris Pate.

**Image 02** – Women United and “Power of the Purse” committee member Lisa Pierzakowski with United Way of LaPorte County board member and purse model Marty Corley.

**Image 03** – LaPorte County Prosecutor John Espar enthusiastically tells Unity Foundation’s Deb Varnak about the artisan purse he is modeling for the live auction.

**Image 04** – Decorated Army veteran and local volunteer Jeff Deutch gets an enthusiastic reaction from a guest for the designer backpack he is modeling.

**Image 05** – Left to Right: Michigan City Councilperson Pat Boy with United Way of LaPorte County Executive Director Kris Pate.

**Image 06** – Guests peruse the 160 new and gently used purses in the silent auction.

**Image 07** – Celebrity emcee Ric Federighi of WIMS AM 1420 keeps the crowd laughing and excited during the live auction.

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