**ICEA Executive of the Year Award**

**Nomination, Kristin Craig**

**Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce**

It is with great pleasure that the staff of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce nominate Chamber President Kristin Craig to be considered for the ICEA Chamber Executive of the Year.

As the first female and youngest President of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, Kristin is a leader and trailblazer within our community; not just for business but the overall greater good of West Central Indiana.

In July 2019 Kristin was [named Chamber President by the Board of Directors](https://www.tribstar.com/news/local_news/terre-haute-chamber-marks-year-of-new-beginnings/article_f3845b68-02eb-5460-add1-125560c7c5c6.html). (*TH Trib Star*) She started her career at the Chamber in 2002, serving in numerous capacities, including Vice President and Director of Operations and Communications. A native of Argenta, Illinois, Craig is an alumna of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in journalism. She returned to The Woods in 2016 to receive her master’s degree in leadership development. Her thesis study focused on the future of the Terre Haute Chamber.

Just months after being named President of the Terre Haute Chamber, Craig was named one of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives Top 40 Under 40 for 2019.

Since taking on the role of President of the Chamber, Craig has worked to develop a new strategy, branding and mission for the Terre Haute Chamber[. In October 2019, the Chamber unveiled a new logo and four “pillars” that encompass the mission and goals of the Chamber](https://www.tribstar.com/news/local_news/terre-haute-chamber-reveals-new-logo/article_e8a2b310-4186-5776-a939-4666de2f88ff.html). (*TH Trib Star*) The pillars; advancing business development, advancing advocacy for impact, promoting community vibrancy and quality of life, and providing excellent services to members also coincide with the Chamber’s mission of “Building Business. Building Community.” of which Craig developed.

Continuing on plans to fully realize the potential of the Terre Haute community, Craig, along with Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett and Union Health CEO Steve Holman, [developed the “See You In Terre Haute” Community Plan](https://www.tribstar.com/news/chamber-launches-see-you-in-terre-haute/article_9ec2e7fa-c29f-11e9-8cbc-237031fc29f9.html) (*TH Trib Star*). The plan’s first two goals include; halting population decline and reverse the trend of decreasing per capita personal income by 2025. The plan continues with Craig’s newest staff hire, [local businesswoman and former Chamber Board member Marla Flowers](https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/41826502/terre-haute-chamber-hires-director) (*Inside Indiana Business*).

Craig has also diligently worked with local, state and federal leaders to advocate for two economic projects for the community; [a casino](https://www.tribstar.com/news/local_news/gibson-terre-haute-get-casino-license/article_c0ffe55e-dc54-576a-ae49-b7c8f8323a6b.html) and downtown convention center. The idea is to [bring a tourism hub to West Central Indiana](https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/41367860/terre-haute-envisions-tourism-hub). (*Inside Indiana Business*)

Also under the Chamber umbrella and Craig’s guidance; [West Central 2025](https://www.tribstar.com/news/news_columns/mark-bennett-terre-haute-confronts-realities-of-a-declining-population-need-to-reverse-trend/article_30958833-cd25-56be-9a3e-a8b4f9a403d2.html), the [West Central Indiana Defense Network](https://www.wcidefense.com/), [Leadership Connect of West Central Indiana](https://www.leadershipconnectwestcentralindiana.com/), Better Health Wabash Valley and Downtown Terre Haute.

In addition to her role at the Chamber, Craig serves on the board of several organizations, including: Art Spaces, Inc., United Way of the Wabash Valley, Leadership Connect, Wabash Valley Leadership Institute and Rediscover Clinton.

**Additional Awards and Accomplishments**

* 2015, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Graduate Leadership and Service Award
* 2017, Terre Haute Tribune Star Top 12 Under 40.
* 2019, Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives Top 40 Under 40

**Recommendations**

* Brian Kooistra
  + COO of Garmong Construction
  + 2019 Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce Board Chair
  + 2019 Chamber President Hiring Committee

As the 2019 Chair of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, I had the great fortune of working with Kristin on numerous occasions, along with serving on the hiring committee that ultimately hired Kristin as the Chamber’s newest President.

Kristin has shown great leadership and vision during her time at the Chamber. We have several initiatives underway and with Kristin at the helm we have great momentum going into the future.

I highly recommend her for the honor of ICEA Chamber Executive of the Year. There are not many people that have so thoughtfully and with so much determination dedicated themselves to a community, mission and cause.

* Marla Flowers
  + TH Chamber Director of Community Development
  + 2017 Terre Haute Chamber Board of Directors Chair
  + 2019 Chamber President Hiring Committee
  + 2015, 2016, 2017 Chamber Annual Meeting Chair

It’s not often the person you hired for a job, then becomes your boss, but the situation is a reality – and a happy one – for me.

For more than a decade I served on the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors within my role at Hulman & Co. During that time I worked alongside the Chamber staff as the Chair of the Annual Meeting for numerous years and in 2017 I served as Chair of the Board of Directors. In those years, I had the opportunity to see Kristin Craig grow as an extraordinary leader in our community. In 2019, it was without hesitation that I agreed to participate in interviewing the staff and Kristin as she was being considered for the Chamber President position. Kristin was more than qualified, extremely passionate about the position, and clearly, the best choice for the future and advancement of our Chamber.

In March of this year, I actually found myself in a position to join the Chamber team as the Director of Community Engagement to lead the "See You In Terre Haute 2025 Community Plan". Ironically, most of the people that I worked with as the Chamber Board member became my co-workers, along with Kristin, who I had just interviewed for her own role a year prior.

Now as a member of the staff, I see first-hand Kristin’s passion, effortless leadership and true knowledge of the Chamber profession. Each day she works on daily tasks with the “big picture” in mind. As we work through the Community Plan, the Chamber’s internal strategic plan and the Chamber’s four pillars I’m impressed with how well Kristin navigates each of those goals, while also leading the staff and communicating to the organization’s large board of directors. I’m proud of the woman that was hired and honored to work alongside her.