

Avery Njau Black Leader of Tomorrow

At age 9, Avery Njau auditioned for a lead role in the Cardinal Stage production of *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. She had no training, and although she didn't make the lead, she *was* cast as an Oompa Loompa.

Since then, Avery, 15, has been in several Cardinal productions. A freshman at Bloomington High School North, one of her favorite school subjects is biology. "I've always been attracted to life sciences," Avery says. "I want to be a doctor, so that is super interesting to me."

Avery makes a connection between her interest in acting and medicine. "I see both of them as giving service to people," she says.

Photo by Rodney Margison



Photo by Rodney Margison

Diane Legomsky Helping Asylum-Seekers

As executive director of the Bloomington Refugee Support Network (BRSN), Diane Legomsky was originally tasked with helping settle refugees in Bloomington who are coming to the U.S. amid the global refugee crisis. But a change in policies following the election of President Donald Trump forced BRSN to refocus its efforts toward helping asylum-seekers.

Established in 2016, the BRSN provides counseling, legal and health care referrals, and other services to asylum-seekers and other immigrants living in Monroe county. "There could be 100 to 200 asylum-seekers in the Bloomington area," Legomsky says. "It's a question of reaching out to them safely."

Legomsky is also a liaison to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society for Beth Shalom Congregation and is a caseworker with the Community Justice and Immigration Center.

Mary & Morris Hickman Foster Parents

In 29 years of foster parenting, Mary Hickman and her husband, Morris, helped raise 54 foster children alongside their own four children. Some stayed as long as 10 years.

Their first foster child was one of the most challenging. He tore up a bedroom, drew gang symbols on a mirror, and threatened to kill their children. Mary says one of the biggest challenges was helping her own children understand this kind of behavior. "I would say, 'These are children that do not have love, and they are starved for love, so we have to be patient with them,'" she says.

The Hickmans said goodbye to their last foster children in May. "We need a little bit of time for ourselves now," Mary says.

Photo by Martin Bolling



Photo by Martin Bolling

Steve Dawson Engineer & Artist

"I was four months out of surgery and a little stir crazy, and I saw that Ivy Tech was offering an adult learning course in painting," says Bloomington native Steve Dawson. "That's how I fell into art."

Dawson, 50, president of Harrell-Fish Inc. (HFI), a Bloomington-based mechanical-contracting firm, painted constantly, read a lot about painting, and even began teaching the art.

Dawson works in oils, watercolors, and pastels, painting mostly landscapes. He has sold to California and New York collectors, and his work is on display at Nashville's juried Brown County Art Gallery.

"I find truth in the landscape that I can't see in a photograph," he says. "I can look at one of my paintings and I still hear the red-winged blackbirds singing in the trees."

Betsy Greene Named Best Lawyer In State

Every year, *Super Lawyers* magazine ranks Indiana attorneys. The top 5% are designated Super Lawyers, and Betsy Greene has been one since 2004. She was awarded Top 10 status in both 2017 and 2018. In 2019, the publication named Greene Indiana's No. 1 attorney. She was the only woman on 2019's Top 10 list and is the first Bloomington attorney to be named No. 1.

"I feel pretty darned good about it," says the founder of Greene & Schultz Trial Lawyers. "I think it's a reflection of what I've given to the state."

A 1982 Indiana University School of Law graduate, Greene has been president of the Indiana Trial Lawyers Association and Indiana's chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates.



Greene (right) with law partner Fred Schultz. Courtesy photo

Charlie Nelms From Picking Cotton to Leadership at IU

Charlie Nelms, the first African American Indiana University chancellor (IU-East, in Richmond) and an IU-Bloomington vice president, has been retired and living in Bloomington since 2012. His days aren't especially retiring, however.

Nelms, 72, consults for clients like the United Negro College Fund, travels for public appearances, mentors, and writes. His latest book, *From Cotton Fields to University Leadership: All Eyes on Charlie*, a memoir, has just been published by Well House Books, an IU Press imprint.

He grew up in the "American-style apartheid" of the 1950s and 60s. His family were subsistence farmers, their lives governed by cotton growing.

"I was going to do everything I could to change it," he says. "Education is the engine of opportunity for historically disenfranchised people."

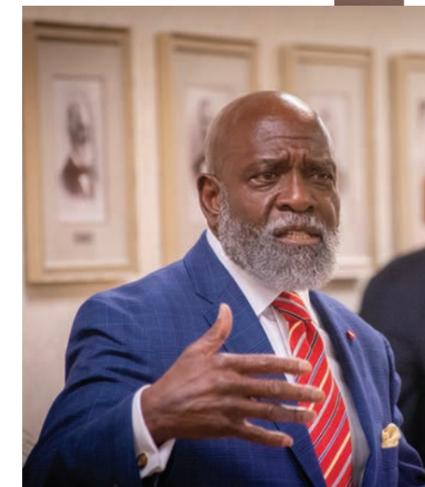


Photo by Rodney Margison

"Upside down world?
Count on Nature's Way"

44th
Anniversary

nw Nature's Way, inc.
Interior and Exterior
Landscaping and Design
812-876-7888 • naturesway.net

Belinda Johnson-Hurtado Attorney

Belinda Johnson-Hurtado overcame many obstacles to get where she is today, a partner in the Bloomington law firm of Clendening Johnson & Bohrer. She left college when she became pregnant. "I got married and had my first baby at 19, and my second at 21," she says.

A job as a paralegal got her interested in law. She divorced and began attending night school, where she earned an associate degree, then a bachelor's, and finally a law degree. In 2018, the Indiana State Bar Association's Women in Law Committee gave her the Women in the Law Recognition Award for her commitment to helping people overcome adversity. "It's important to me to help people," Johnson-Hurtado says. "I got to where I am because I got lots of help myself."

Photo by Martin Boling



Photo by Martin Boling

Jacky Comforty Documentarian

Jacky Comforty is a documentary filmmaker and oral historian with two seemingly disparate subjects: Holocaust studies and inclusive education.

But, he says, the two are not so dissimilar. Whether he is filming Holocaust survivors or children with disabilities, his documentaries serve a cause. "Inclusion is central in my work and my values," Comforty says.

Founder and president of Comforty Media Concepts, Comforty has lived in Bloomington since 2013. His best-known film, *The Optimists*, tells the story of the survival of Bulgarian Jews, including his parents, during World War II. The film, finished in 2001, won several international prizes.

"I wanted to preserve the entire community," Comforty says. "Cultural preservation is not just about the Holocaust; it's about friendship, resilience, memory."

Amanda Biggs Again Gracing World Stage

Opera singer Amanda Biggs grew up in a family of traveling Pentecostal church musicians.

After graduating from high school, she directed a gospel choir. Then she discovered opera. "I saw *Carmen* at Indiana University. The human voice could make this sound?"

Biggs moved to Kentucky, where her partner was studying, and auditioned at Western Kentucky University, receiving a full scholarship for her spinto voice (a type of lyric soprano) to be trained.

She enjoyed a brief foray in the New York City opera world and recently relaunched her career. In May, she performed at Carnegie Hall as a finalist in a New York Lyric Opera competition. In June, she represented the United States at the Nicola Martinucci International Voice Competition in Lucca, Italy.

Photo by Martin Boling



Liz Mitchell 'Returns' to Africa to Honor Her Ancestors

Historian Liz Mitchell tells stories of overlooked African Americans through radio programs, stage dramas, videos, and more. A retired postal clerk, Mitchell was honored last year with the Indiana Historical Society's Hubert Hawkins Local History Award.

Mitchell fulfilled a 40-year dream, traveling with her husband, James "Jim" Mitchell Jr., to Africa, visiting the places her ancestors last saw before being sold into slavery. She braced for the strong emotions she would feel, especially when visiting Elmina Castle's Door of No Return in Ghana.

At the site, she captured her feelings by recording into her cell phone: "... I pray that my ancestors are proud of me, that I have not failed them in my actions as a human being."

Photo by Rodney Margison



2019

Stay in control of your finances

No matter where you are.

Manage your IU Credit Union account 24/7, even from the palm of your hand!

- Mobile Banking* with Mobile Deposit (and touch ID for iPhones with touch ID capability)
- Online Banking & Bill Pay
- Online Loan Applications
- Bank-by-Phone
- eStatements & eNotices

*Message and data rates may apply. Check with your mobile provider.

To learn more, visit:

www.iucu.org



Stay connected!

Stay connected through Facebook, email and our website at iucu.org.

IU Credit Union

812-855-7823 • iucu.org