Top Young Professionals of 2010 Announced

LAFAYETTE, IN – Tippy Connect Young Professionals and Greater Lafayette Commerce are recognizing ten outstanding young professionals in Tippecanoe County this afternoon at an awards luncheon at the Holiday Inn City Center. This award celebrates and promotes the contributions of young professionals in our community.

The winners were nominated by coworkers, peers, friends and family community wide. The criteria for nominating a young professional is as follows, must be 21 to 39 years of age, live in the greater Lafayette area, excel in professional development, demonstrate servant leadership and exhibit strong leadership skills, and be actively involved in the community. The nominees were then reviewed by a panel of seven community leaders and selected based on professional achievement and philanthropic dedication.

The 2010 Tippy Connect Top 10 Under 40 Award winners are:

• **Mindy Paulet** is the Administrative Director for WorkLife Programs at Purdue University. She was recognized in 2009 as a Purdue Hero, and has worked within her office to promote community involvement by encouraging staff to interact with area community organizations and have representatives from those organizations speak at staff meetings to engage the staff. She also helped coordinate Healthy Planet 2010 at Purdue and volunteers time at Civic Theatre.

• **Maricela Alvarado**, the first director of the Latino Cultural Center at Purdue University. Maricela was awarded the United Businesses Serving the Community – Service Award in 2008. She has spent the last six years at Purdue helping build and manage the Center’s publications, public relations and programs promoting Latino heritage at Purdue. She was also a co-founder of the Indiana Latino/a Higher Education Council, of which she is currently vice president.
• **Andrew Antonio**, director of Engagement, Diversity and Alumni Affairs at Ivy Tech Community College. In addition to his role at the college, Andrew co-chairs the Arts and Education Committee for the Tippecanoe Arts Federation. He also co-chairs the Tippecanoe Latino Festival and serves on the Ivy Tech Diversity Council, which implemented the college’s Diversity Awareness Initiative. He also served as the first chair for the 2009 Run for the Red Committee.

• **Andrea Gregory-Kreps**, senior research administrator for the Purdue University Center for Cancer Research. Andrea actively volunteers her time at the Lafayette Crisis Center and the St. Thomas Aquinas Center at Purdue in a number of capacities, and she received the Distinguished Service Award from WorkLife Programs Ambassadors at Purdue University for 2008-2009.

• **Gregory Loyd**, as deputy prosecuting attorney at the Tippecanoe County Prosecutor’s Office, Gregory was designated as one of five Outstanding Prosecutors by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute in 2005. More recently, he’s served as Vice President, legal advisor and a big brother at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Wabash Valley, and as part of a select group of deputy prosecuting attorneys on the Fatal Alcohol Crash Team, which investigates and prosecutes intoxicated drivers who cause death or serious bodily injury.

• **Cory Marshall**, principal at Wea Ridge Middle School. In 2008, he was designated the Indiana Association of School Principals District IV Principal of the Year, and he has served on the Indiana Association of School Principals Board of Directors since 2008. In addition to the 640 students with which he interacts on a professional basis, Cory volunteers as a youth sports coach after hours.

• **Alisha Kuckartz** serves as an academic advisor in the Purdue University College of Liberal Arts as well as being the Purdue Band Golduster Dance Team and Twirling Director. She is also a senior partner of the College of Liberal Arts New Employee Mentor Program. In 2008, she was awarded the Professional Excellence in Academic Advising Award for the College of Liberal Arts. She is also co-owner of Golden Steps Studio for the Performing Arts, where she acts as curriculum and instruction director.

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• **Christina Wright**, director of development for the College of Consumer and Family Sciences at Purdue University. Christina serves on a benchmarking committee to improve the Advancement Training and Orientation Process. She also served as the assistant volunteer coordinator for the 2009 Taste of Tippecanoe as part of a three-person task force organizing over 400 volunteers. In addition, she acts as faculty advisor to Impact Kenya, an organization devoted to bettering lives in the Nyanza province of Kenya.

• **Lynnise Smith**, supplier diversity specialist at Purdue University. Lynnise is a member of the Diversity Roundtable of Central Indiana and a faculty fellow for the Residents Life Program at Harrison Hall for the 2009-10 academic year. She was voted treasurer of the Great Lakes Division of the National Association of Educational Procurement at its 2009 Regional Conference. She also assisted with the reactivation of the Greater Lafayette Chapter of the Indiana Black Expo and chaired its 2009 Back to School Rally, which collected donations to prepare 300 book bags for local K-12 students.

• **Michael Daugherty**, IT consultant at Abstract Technology Group LLC. A professional engineer, Michael has engaged the community beyond being a small business owner. He coaches for a number of sporting teams in Lafayette, including Lafayette youth baseball. He volunteers as an interview mentor at Ivy Tech for students nearing graduation, acts as a Greater Lafayette Commerce Chamber Ambassador and started Daugherty Racing, where he was Kamp Motor Speedway Rookie of the Year in his first year as a driver.

Tippy Connect, the first young professionals’ organization in Tippecanoe County, was founded in 2006. A dynamic and energetic group, they strive to develop dedicated, career focused individuals into future business leaders. The organization focuses on enrichment through education, networking, and community service. Tippy Connect is a division of Greater Lafayette Commerce. Visit [www.tippyconnectyp.com](http://www.tippyconnectyp.com) for more information.

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