

TOWNSHIP TEA



**DENITA WASHINGTON,
TRUSTEE**

ADAMS TOWNSHIP
TRUSTEE.



February 2026

A Message Of Hope And Forward Movement For 2026

As we step into 2026, we are given something both powerful and rare: a fresh beginning. A new year doesn't erase what we've been through—but it does give us the opportunity to grow beyond it. For many, the past year carried challenges, missed opportunities, difficult decisions, or moments we wish we could revisit. Yet 2026 stands before us with open hands, offering space to learn, rebuild, and move forward with clarity and purpose.

Growth begins when we pause long enough to reflect—on where we've been, the choices we've made, and how those choices have shaped our outcomes. Every decision, large or small, carries weight. Some move us closer to our goals; others quietly pull us away. The good news is this: today, and every day ahead, we have the ability to choose differently.

This year invites us to embrace life more fully—its responsibilities, its possibilities, and its potential. It's a time to move beyond past failures without denying them, to turn lessons into wisdom, and to walk into the future with intention rather than regret.

As you plan for 2026, here are a few simple but meaningful ways to start fresh and stay consistent:

- Be honest with yourself. Growth starts with clarity. Name what worked, what did not and why.
- Set realistic, measurable goals. Progress is built step by step, not all at once.
- Create healthy routines. Consistency often matters more than intensity.
- Choose accountability. Share your goals with someone who will encourage you and hold you steady.
- Give yourself grace—but stay disciplined. Mistakes are part of the process; quitting doesn't have to be.

Think long-term. Today's choices shape tomorrow's outcomes.

Adams Township is filled with resilient people, strong families, and untapped potential. My hope for this year is that we move forward together—more thoughtful in our decisions, more intentional in our actions, and more hopeful about what lies ahead.

May 2026 be a year of growth, renewed focus, and positive change—for individuals, families, and our entire community.

With respect and encouragement,
**Pastor Albert Brownlee, Senior Pastor,
Come As You Are Community Church**



**Committed To
Community Through
Service And
Accountability**

**Adams Township
Trustee Office**

1125 Hartzell Street
New Haven, IN 46774

Mon-Thurs:
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
(closed 12:00 PM to
1:00 PM)

Fri-Sun: CLOSED

Phone: 260-749-4162

Fax: 260-749-6086

Email:
info@adamstownship.org

[Check Out Our Website!](#)



[Visit Our Facebook Page!](#)

Community Information

Congratulations Trustee!: Journal Gazette 2026 Citizen Of The Year

Denita Washington manages Family and Community Engagement at Fort Wayne Community Schools, serves as Adams Township Trustee, chairs the Southeast Area Partnership, volunteers on several boards and leads Girlz Rock, a program that connects girls across Allen County with female mentors and leadership development opportunities designed to build confidence and resilience. For her leadership and extensive community service, Washington is **The Journal Gazette's 2025 Citizen of the Year**.

Denita Washington grew up in a supportive family with two loving parents. But as a young woman with a baby and toddler, she soon learned that a strong nuclear family alone was not enough. She needed people beyond her household. Coaches, teachers, and mentors helped shape her sense of identity and possibility. *"I had such a village that I do not remember difficulty,"* Washington said. *"What I remember is the responsibility. The reality sets in that now you have somebody else you are responsible for."*

But that responsibility did not arrive with confidence. Washington traces her discomfort with leadership to middle school, when her cheerleading coach at Metro Youth Sports named her captain. *"I became captain, and the girls on the walk home from Memorial Park to McCormick Place, where I lived and grew up in the Fort Wayne Housing Authority, they taunted me,"* she said. *"It left a mark in my soul. It set up fear versus me walking in faith for a lot of years."*

Motherhood ultimately reframed that fear. After the birth of her two sons, Washington began to understand leadership not as authority but as relationship building, affirmation and trust. That tension between fear and responsibility has shaped how she leads as an adult. It is why she gravitates toward building support systems rather than standing alone, and why her counsel is sought by adults as well as young people.

Washington was instrumental in launching the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne's Women's Fund in August 2020 and now chairs its Young Women and Girls Committee. *"All of the Women's Fund's work when it comes to the 2022 Young Women and Girls Report of girls in Allen County, she was instrumental in that,"* said Women's Fund Director, **Cassie Beer**. Washington connected the Women's Fund with Girlz Rock to conduct focus groups and later helped design the report's launch, ensuring girls were not only studied but heard. Beer said Washington's leadership is grounded in authenticity. *"Denita fully shows up as herself,"* Beer said. *"She is not afraid to be the challenging voice in the room. She comes into a space and she shapes it and the people in it for better and for good."*

That same approach carries into Washington's public service. She has served as Adams Township trustee since 2019, a role that allows her to work directly with residents facing crisis and instability.

"She sees people where they are," **Mayor Sharon Tucker** said. *"She can relate and empathize with them because of how she grew up in McCormick Place. She takes that understanding into the township office with her."*

Community Information

Citizen Of The Year Continued...

Washington also took over as chair of the Southeast Area Partnership during a period when the organization had gone inactive. *"She stepped in during a time when there was no leadership,"* said **6th District Councilwoman Rohli Booker**. *"The neighborhoods were able to stay connected to city departments, which is really important."*

Across her work, Washington brings what colleagues describe as a consistent ethic of care. *"Her heart always goes out to those whom society might consider the least of these,"* said **Albert Brownlee**, chief compliance officer at Genesis Outreach. *"She believes there are amazing journeys and successes waiting to happen... What speaks to us most are people who serve because it is the right thing to do,"* Brownlee said. *"We should all be keepers of our community, and she is one of them."*

Washington talks about experience and exposure, two things can change a girl's life. *"If I can do it, you can do it, too: That's always been the Girlz Rock message,"* **Jessica Collins-Trammell** said. Collins-Trammell is a therapist and licensed clinical social worker with Art It Out Therapy, a creative counseling center for children, adolescents and adults. She goes on to say, *"It takes only one person to be the example and to give somebody else that hope. Yes, I've been through hardships. Yes, I had obstacles against me. But you can overcome it."*

She ends with this quote, *"Her personal experiences have set the foundation for her program to impact the lives of many others that she's been able to impact. Sometimes, I think, she doesn't even realize the impact that she has and that she carries for so many people."*

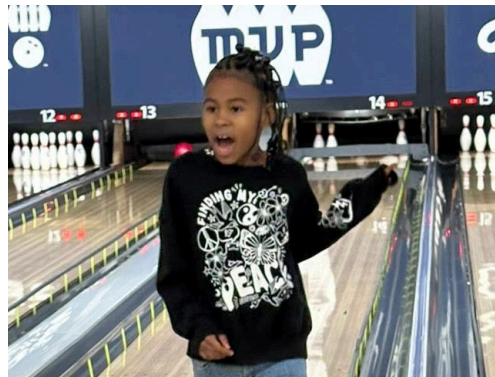
Journal Gazette



"The greatest leaders recognize they are here to serve, not to be served."

Community Information

With the holiday season behind us, **Trustee Washington** and the **Adams Township Staff** would like to sincerely thank all of our community friends and sponsors for helping make the 2025 holiday season amazing for the residents of Adams Township and Allen County! This Christmas celebration was truly a testament to the power of love, laughter, and community. Witnessing parents and their kids revel in a day of entertainment, complete with delicious food and activities for all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, was a heartwarming experience. I extend my sincerest gratitude to my exceptional Township Team, who bring my vision to life every year, creating life-changing experiences for the families we serve. **Sandra Kay Payton, Yolanda Walker, Tamekia Holliness, Janet McComb**, your tireless efforts to lead with love and compassion for the families we serve are a shining example of selflessness and dedication. I am forever grateful to lead such strong and caring people in this community. Thank you to our friend, **Tony Starks**, and sponsors **Dana Berkes** (NIPSCO), **Brandi Schorey** (Anthem), and **Kelly Thompson** (Donation) for your generosity and support. The best is yet to come!!!



FREE TAX PREPARATION

VITA
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance



**JANUARY 26 -
APRIL 8, 2026**
Don't Wait to File!

WHAT TO BRING

Valid Picture ID: If married and filing jointly both spouses must be present and both must bring a picture ID.

Social Security or ITN Cards and Birth Dates: Bring information for you, your spouse, and any dependents you are claiming. No photocopies.

Tax Forms: This includes W-2 forms, unemployment forms, and 1099 forms for ALL jobs held in 2025.

Scan the QR code for a complete list of documents you should bring to your appointment.



FOR MORE
INFORMATION CALL:
2-1-1 OR
1.866.211.9966

INCOME UNDER \$69,000
Available to All Ages

TAX PREPARATION SITE

Allen County - Drop Off ONLY

St. Mary's Catholic Church

1101 S. Lafayette St. Fort
Wayne, IN 46802

Site closed February 18



FREE ONLINE TAX FILING

File your taxes for FREE. Get the assistance you need.

MyFreeTaxes is a free online filing program and is available for households with an income less than \$89,000 in 2025.

MyFreeTaxes helps people file their federal and state taxes for free, and it's brought to you by United Way.

Go to www.myfreetaxes.com to file.

Monday: 1:00 PM to 6:30 PM
(doors open at 12:30 PM)

Tuesday & Wednesday:
1:00 PM to 5:30 PM
(doors open at 12:30 PM)

Saturday: 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
(doors open at 8:30 AM)

**MY
FREE
TAXES®**

Community Information

Thank You!

Words cannot express how thankful we are to **Todd and Jennie Hockemeyer, Michael and Abby Hanson, Andy and Jen Young**, and the **County Line Church Of God** for gifting multiple families with winter coats and hoodies. Your generosity and continued support for the families that we serve is truly appreciated. THANK YOU! It is my prayer that the families in all of Adams Township that we serve together, have memories of how good we made them feel in this season. No matter their zip code, gender, race or party line we *"Lead with Love."*



Food Distribution Locations

The Impact Center (WOW), Every 2nd Tuesday, 11-1, 3420 E. Paulding Rd, Fort Wayne, IN

First Baptist Church, Every Thursday, 1-4, 1716 Werling Rd, New Haven, IN

New Haven Food Bank, Every Tuesday, 9-11:45, 800 Green St, New Haven, IN

Wellspring Interfaith Social Services, Monday & Wednesday, 9-11, Tuesday 4-6, Thursday, 2-4, 1316 Broadway St, Fort Wayne, IN

New Haven Community Center (WOW), Every 4th Tuesday, 10-12, 7500 SR 930 East, New Haven, IN

The League (WOW), Every 4th Thursday, 10-12, 5821 S. Anthony Blvd, Fort Wayne, IN

CALL 211 TO LOCATE MORE FOOD BANKS AND PANTRIES



Financial Resources

In As Much (Broadway Christian Church)
930 Broadway Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802 (Door #11)
Contact Info: 260.422.3498

Salvation Army
2901 N. Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46805
Contact Info: 260.744.2311

211 First Call For Help For More Resources

Mental Health Resources

Raphael Bosley, Licensed Therapist, 260.255.4182

Women's Bureau
260.424.7977

Parkview Behavioral Health
260.373.7500

Park Center, 260.481.2700

Mental Health America Of NE Indiana, 260.422.6441

Uniquely You Counseling & Wellness Center, 260.387.7445

Oaktree Guidance, 260.570.4515



Thank you for reading!