

Wilson, Sales inducted into JA Hall of Fame

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Two local community leaders will be inducted into Junior Achievement’s Hall of Fame on March 18. Rick Wilson, former president and CEO of Bowling Green Bank and Trust Co. (now Truist), was selected for the 2025 Laureate Award. This award recognizes individuals within the southcentral Kentucky business community who epitomize five key standards of excellence: entrepreneurial spirit and achievement, exceptional role model for youth, economic impact on area; business leadership and commitment to the goals of Junior Achievement, according to information in a news release.

Dr. Martha Sales, dean of students and vice president of Student Experience at Western Kentucky University, was awarded the organization’s first ever Trailblazer Award. This new award was created to honor a mid-level professional who has achieved excellence in their career, shown a commitment to their community and demonstrated leadership in the business community.

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According to the news release, Wilson has been involved on several boards, including the board for the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce Volunteer of the Year, and has earned a WKU Distinguished Service Medal. He has been an avid supporter of Junior Achievement of South Central Kentucky for many years.

Sales, who has 20 years of grant writing experience, has been awarded \$20 million for students' success. She also teaches and facilitates courses and trains students and her colleagues in her various areas of expertise and has served in many capacities throughout the campus, community and nationwide. She has been a longstanding supporter of Junior Achievement of South Central Kentucky J.A. Girls program in Warren County, where she mentors and empowers young women in the community to be the best versions of themselves.

Wilson and Sales join 36 community leaders, including Cal Turner Sr., Dollar General Corporation; Everett Moore, Fruit of the Loom; Ervin Houcens, Houchens Food Store; Earl Davis, Citizens Bank of Russellville; David Garvin, Ironwood Farms; J. Murray Hill Sr., Bowling Green Business University; Doug Lester, Trans Financial Inc.; Robert Rodes, Citizens National Bank; Fred Higgins, Minit Mart Food Stores Inc.; Larry Gerald, Gerald Printing; Deborah Williams, First American National Bank; Jim Smith, Wendy's of Bowling Green; Charles Hardcastle, BG Consolidated; Sandy Jones, Quality Personnel; Lowell M. Guthrie, Trace Die Cast Inc.; Cornelius A. Martin, Martin Management Group; C. Mike Harris, Logan Aluminum; Jimmie P. Gipson, Houchens Industries; Robert Kirby, Hilliard Lyons; Leon Page, Franklin Bank & Trust Company; Don Vitale, Manchester Capital LLC; John C. Desmarais, Commonwealth Health Corp.; Joe B. Natcher Jr., Southern Foods; John B. Holland, Fruit of the Loom; Charles M. Moore Jr., Charles M. Moore Insurance; Jim Johnson, Jim Johnson Nissan Hyundai; G. Michael Murphy, Scott & Murphy Inc.; Gary Broady, Franklin Bank & Trust Company; Daniel J. Davis, Rafferty's Inc.; Dave Chandler, Chandler Real Estate; Lester Key, Key Oil Company; Connie Smith, Med Center Health; John Kelly, Kelly Autism Program; Gary Ransdell, WKU; and Johnny Webb, Operation PRIDE.

The event, sponsored by Truist, will take place from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at Western Kentucky University's Harbaugh Club.

Event attendance is open to the public and all sponsorships and tickets must be purchased in advance. Limited seating is available.



I am originally from Owensboro and graduated from Owensboro High School. In 1994, I received a degree in print journalism from Murray State University. I have lived in Bowling Green and have worked at the paper since I graduated.

(<mailto:annmarie.dotson@bgdailynews.com>) More by Ann Marie
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