



## NEWS RELEASE

### Contacts:

Kalista Johnston - 260.357.5544 or [graceisland@verizon.net](mailto:graceisland@verizon.net)

Galen Eberhart - 260.927.1180 or [geberhart@theallianceonline.com](mailto:geberhart@theallianceonline.com)

## **Grace Island Specialty Foods Recognized** *Indiana Artisan selects Garrett, Indiana, Company*

**Garrett, Ind. (Jan.26, 2009)** --- Kalista Johnston, founder and owner of Grace Island Specialty Foods located at 808 West King Street in Garrett, Indiana, has been accepted by the Indiana Artisan program. Only 84 applications out of more than 400 were accepted. Grace Island had to pass a jury review to receive the recognition from the State of Indiana.

Johnston's company won recognition for Grace Island Baked Cheese Crisps. The Cheese Crisps are a gluten-free cracker, meaning they are free of grains that may cause allergic reactions, and are suitable for people with Celiac disease and for post-bariatric surgery patients. Grace Island started producing this specialty product in March 2008 with help from family members.

Johnston came up with the idea for Grace Island Specialty Foods and its signature Cheese Crisps eight years ago. With help from the University of Nebraska, Purdue University, the Purdue County Extensions, a Lilly Foundation grant-writing contest for the business plan, SCORE, Northeast Indiana Innovation Center, IPFW Graphic Arts Department, and various others, she launched her business in early 2008. The business has grown so fast that Johnston is already in year three of her business plan.

The Indiana Artisan ([www.in.gov/indianaartisan](http://www.in.gov/indianaartisan)) a program supporting and promoting Hoosier artisans and handmade products, is a joint venture of the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, the Indiana Office of Tourism Development, the Indiana Arts Commission and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture.

### **About Grace Island Specialty Foods**

Grace Island owner Kalista Johnston started producing Baked Cheese Crisps in response to a market need for a high-quality, gluten-free snack product. Virtually no product of its type exists in the marketplace, and it fills a real need for thousands of individuals on restricted diets. More information on the products can be found at [www.graceislandfoods.com](http://www.graceislandfoods.com).

### **About DCEDP**

Established in 2006, the DeKalb County Economic Development Partnership (DCEDP) operates a full-time, county-wide local economic development organization. The mission of DeKalb County Economic Development Partnership, Inc. is to improve the quality of life for the citizens of DeKalb County through enhanced employment opportunities resulting from the responsible growth of business and industry. Staff is available to assist with base employer attraction and retention/expansion projects. More information about the Partnership is at [www.dekalbcountyedp.org](http://www.dekalbcountyedp.org).