

FOCUS

THE MONTHLY BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE
LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MAY 2022



BRINGING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES TO THE FOREFRONT

IN THIS ISSUE

IMPRESSION 5 SCIENCE CENTER TURNS 50
INFRASTRUCTURE LEGISLATION TO HELP TRANSFORM REGION
REDISTRICTING SETS UP CONGRESSIONAL/LEGISLATIVE BATTLES

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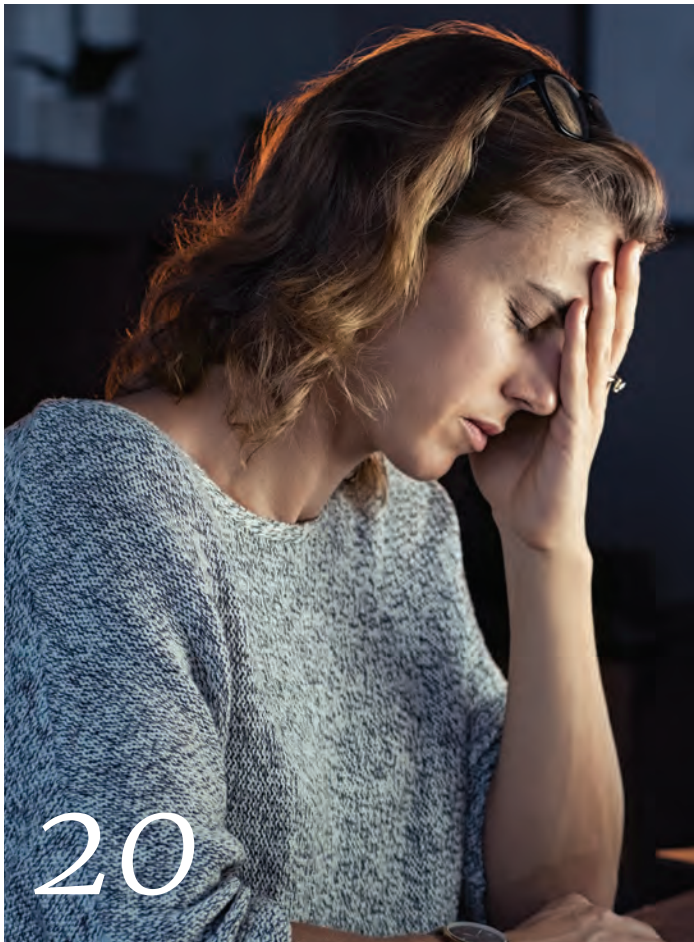
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COVID-19 Redefines the Future of Work

Over the last decade, discussions regarding mental health have moved to the forefront more than in the past, when stigma surrounding the subject impeded open and honest conversations.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the spotlight has shined even brighter on mental health, as more people have had to cope with insurmountable stress, emotional turmoil, and mental health challenges. This month's FOCUS cover story highlights the depth of the growing mental health pandemic in this country. We are fighting the battle in the Greater Lansing region as individuals, organizations, and healthcare systems struggle to meet the increasing need for treatment.

Our experience at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce has been similar to what many organizations have struggled with over the past couple of years. Much of our work as a team involves highly collaborative activities that require a great deal of strategic thinking, which is often more challenging in a remote environment. As our team seeks to find the right balance for each individual and our organization, we have settled on a hybrid schedule that consists of being in the office three days a week and working remotely two days.

Our team members would agree that our transition to "life after COVID" has been a work in progress. Towards the end of the summer in 2020, our team was mentally and physically exhausted and recognized the need to make some adjustments. In the final four months of 2020, we took 12 mental health days as a team. Having that extra bit of rest meant higher productivity levels, which offset the days we were away from the office.

COVID has changed the dynamic in so many ways. As the FOCUS cover story points out, many people are returning to a workplace with staff shortages, causing those left behind to do more work. Many job candidates are insisting on the opportunity to work at least part of the time remotely.

I like what Amazon founder Jeff Bezos says about shifting the conversation from work-life balance to work-life harmony. It is also critically important that all of us make sure that we focus on self-care. If we aren't taking care of ourselves, we will not be able to sustain our excellence and be there at the level teams need us to be.

There have been positives to come out of COVID. Many of us have grown as individuals. Organizations have met the challenges and flourished as a result. We need to take the positives from the past couple of years and apply them to the future of work in ways that help all of us as individuals and organizations thrive and prosper. ●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



There have been positives to come out of COVID. Many of us have grown as individuals. Organizations have met the challenges and flourished as a result. We need to take the positives from the past couple of years and apply them to the future of work in ways that help all of us as individuals and organizations thrive and prosper.

May 2022

5/6

LRCC BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE WITH CONGRESSMAN PETER MEIJER & CONGRESSWOMAN ELISSA SLOTKIN

Friday, May 6 from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Crowne Plaza Lansing West | 925 S. Creyts Road, Lansing

Presented by Friedland Industries, the upcoming Business Roundtable with Congressman Peter Meijer (MI-03) and Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin (MI-08) will be an excellent opportunity to hear about Meijer and Slotkin's bipartisan efforts to address several complex issues impacting the business community.

Cost: Tickets are \$35 for LRCC members and \$50 for future members.

5/10

MAY MEMBER MIXER

Tuesday, May 10 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Impression Five Science Center | 200 Museum Drive, Lansing

Co-hosted with the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, the May Member Mixer will celebrate our region's tourism and hospitality industry, and Impression 5's 50th anniversary. Thank you to the MAYOTTEgroup Architects for their generous sponsorship!

Cost: The event is offered at no cost.

5/17

BUSINESS EDUCATION SERIES: BUILDING AN EMPOWERED ORGANIZATION

Thursday, May 12 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce | 500 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 200; Lansing

The May Business Education Series will feature Ross Woodstock, career coach/consultant with Kolt Communications. Ross will discuss building an empowered organization, the benefits of empowering team members and the potential pitfalls of empowerment.

Cost: Tickets are offered at no cost for LRCC members and \$25 for future members.

5/17

MAY LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB: ENERGY OUTLOOK

Tuesday, May 17 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center | 219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing

Sponsored by Enbridge Energy, Dr. Dean Foreman, chief economist at American Petroleum Institute, will discuss the current outlook for U.S. and global oil and natural gas markets at the May Lansing Economic Club. Dr. Foreman, who is known for his extensive knowledge of energy markets and ability to use advanced analytics to assess market risks, will discuss the factors influencing market conditions before and after Russia's unprovoked war on

Ukraine, including macroeconomic expectations and the impact of price inflation, supply chain disruptions, and workforce issues.

Cost: Tickets are offered at no cost for Lansing Economic Club members, \$55 LRCC members and \$75 for future members.

5/25

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION SERIES: FOSTERING A CULTURE OF BELONGING IN THE WORKPLACE

Wednesday, May 25 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce | 500 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 200; Lansing

Creating and executing an effective DEI strategy is more than a trend. The intentional work will force you to move beyond good intentions. The most successful organizations understand why DEI is the key to building strong teams, serving consumers, creating an effective workforce and generating innovation. Yet, just having good intentions about DEI is not enough to foster a culture of belonging. Powered by AT&T and MSUFCU, Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU's chief marketing officer and chief diversity officer, will share her firsthand experiences with DEI and how to build a sense of belonging in the workplace. Attendees will leave inspired to confidently take steps forward to foster a culture of belonging in their workplaces.

Cost: Tickets are \$75.

Virtual Business Roundtables

Virtual roundtables allow community and government leaders an opportunity to share what is going on in the community and determine ways to advise the tri-county region.

Delta Township - Eaton County

Wednesday, May 4 from 9 to 10 a.m.

Lansing - Delhi Township

Wednesday, May 11 from 9 to 10 a.m.

East Lansing - Meridian Township

Wednesday, May 18 from 9 to 10 a.m.

The LRCC hosts numerous events monthly, from Member Mixers to Lansing Economic Club programs. The events and programming provide valuable content and information and give members unique opportunities to connect and network.

The LRCC encourages members to check their email, follow LRCC social media channels, and visit the [LRCC website](#) for the most updated information on upcoming educational offerings and networking opportunities.

Registration is available on the LRCC website.

Thank You Renewing Members

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Chamber Milestones

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50 Years

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35 Years

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10 Years

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We'd like to offer a special salute to these great organizations who reached milestone anniversaries as Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce members this month. Thank you for your continued support throughout the years!

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Info Hub

LRCC members have unparalleled access to company and staff profiles on the LRCC website. To access and update this information at any point, visit lansingchamber.org and enter your username and password. If you have not yet signed into the site, please follow the simple password reset instructions.

Call (517) 487-6340 with any questions.

Impression 5 Science Center Celebrates 50 Years in Operation: Exploration, Learning and Community

By: Grace Sobeck,
Kolt Communications, Inc.



Founded in 1972, Impression 5 Science Center is celebrating its 50th birthday in April. Impression 5's founder, Marilynne Eichinger, named Impression 5 to honor her goal of facilitating the exploration of arts and science through the five senses. This hands-on center was one of the first in the country. Executive director, Erik Larson, shares his origin story with Impression 5 and explores its present impact on the Lansing community.

"I started volunteering at the science center when I was 14, and it was because my mother was a volunteer in the early '70s when Impression 5 was just getting started," said Larson. "Since I was born, she was taking me to Impression 5 and I grew up there. I loved the place."

Today, the goals of Impression 5 remain the same: to help young students create an identity within STEM education through the process of exploring their five senses.

"That means, instead of the didactic learning approach we've all had in formal schooling, Impression 5 is founded on the idea that the learner or child is creating their pathway of understanding, every moment," said Larson.

When looking at a science center about to turn 50, you start to wonder about its staying power. What makes Impression 5 so successful?

"The relevance to community needs is always important," said Larson.

Impression 5 has always been founded on community — its role in Lansing contributes to its amazing culture.

"I think places like Impression 5, the zoo, public parks, art galleries - all the things that are a part of the cultural fabric of a community, play a huge part in how people feel about their home," said Larson. "When you talk to somebody about why they live somewhere, they tend to tell you about the things they love to do. Places like Impression 5 play a really important role in how people feel about our community. When we have top-notch cultural assets, people feel better about Lansing."

Erik names community support as the reason I5 is still around.

"We are entirely successful because of the community's continued support; whether you're a member or you're visiting the science center, or you work for a corporation that gives funding to I5, you are part of the reason we get to turn 50," said Larson.

Impression 5 takes pride in building many of its exhibits in-house. They have a professional and talented exhibit team that develops the experiences from the ideation phase through to installation.

Currently, Impression 5 is hosting a traveling exhibition called Wild Kratts, which explores animal habitats worldwide. Families can visit the science center and try swinging through trees like a spider monkey or practicing the stealth of a jaguar, thanks to the Creature Power component of the exhibit.





Their newest exhibit, called SMASH, tells the story of the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams on the Michigan State University campus. Part of the exhibit allows you to pump energy into a system, which propels a steel marble, ending in an epic collision.

You hear laughter, excitement, and discovery from the giant-sized Lite Brite. Each unique display is thoughtfully executed and intentional on how it engages with the visitor and interacts with their identities. People of all ages, young and old, gather to experience this wonder at Impression 5, thanks to the myriad of exhibits that cater to different age groups. There is something for everyone.

Five-year-old Madeline told about her experience with blowing bubbles, big and small. She also learned about motion and energy in the SMASH exhibit when she shot a steel marble at a pile of particles to simulate her very own rare isotope creation. Madeline loved wandering around the toy shop, picking out an item to take home.

Impression 5 officially celebrated 50 years on April 20 and will continue its celebration throughout 2022. For more information on the center and visiting hours, please visit [impression5.org](https://www.impression5.org). ●

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McLaren Greater Lansing Foundation Brings Healing Power of Art to Patients, Caregivers

FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH LANSING ART GALLERY AND EDUCATION CENTER TO BRIGHTEN NEW HOSPITAL WITH WORKS FROM MICHIGAN ARTISTS

The McLaren Greater Lansing Foundation is partnering with the **Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center** to create a hospital environment that plays an active role in the patient's healing process by installing art pieces from Michigan artists in McLaren Greater Lansing's new health care campus, which opened March 6.

Over the last few decades, a growing body of studies and anecdotal evidence suggesting the capabilities of art as a tool in assisting the healing path has driven the incorporation of artwork into medical settings. However, the healing role of art is not a modern concept. As early as 1859, Florence Nightingale wrote, "The effect in the sickness of beautiful objects, variety of objects, and especially brilliancy of color is hardly appreciated."

"Art inspires people and when people are seeking medical treatment. Not only do they need the area's most trusted providers, but they also need inspiration," said Lynn Griffor, vice president, McLaren Greater Lansing Foundation. "This is a perfect opportunity for two local organizations that have two different missions to work together to uplift people."

For the new health care campus, the foundation collaborated with the Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center to choose three separate pieces by Michigan artists.

Over the last year, the Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center assisted the foundation with curating and installing art for the new hospital, which includes:

"Art inspires people and when people are seeking medical treatment. Not only do they need the area's most trusted providers, but they also need inspiration."



Courtesy McLaren Foundation

Artist Mark Chatterley with his sculpture, "Flyers."

- "Flyers," a ceramic sculpture installed in the hospital courtyard. The piece was created by Mark Chatterley, Williamston resident and Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center member.
- "Peace," a powder-coated steel and glass sculpture installed in the lobby under the main staircase. The piece was created by Kelly O'Neill, Brighton resident and Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center member.
- "Sunset Over the Big Lake," an acrylic on canvas installed in the cafeteria. The piece was created by Empire resident Mark Mehaffey, a member of the Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center.

In addition to art pieces curated by the Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center, the foundation independently selected and installed eight additional art pieces.

In most cases, visiting a hospital isn't a joyful experience. It means you or a loved one needs care, which can be quite stressful. Art can be an important part of the healing process. When considering art in our new hospital, we wanted to provide a sense of calm to promote healing for both patients and their family," said Kirk Ray, president and CEO, McLaren Greater Lansing. "I am so thankful to all of the local artists we partnered with and am excited for patients, visitors and employees to see the art featured throughout the hospital, outpatient care center and Karmanos Cancer Institute." ●

Working from Anywhere: DBI's New Normal

By: Celine Kerik, Kolt Communications, Inc.

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically changed the work environment. Employees across the nation have been given opportunities that would have once been unimaginable, such as working from home or creating a hybrid schedule. People's needs are changing and many employers are willing to adapt to create a healthier workplace.



Courtesy DBI

customers get the most out of their workforce and make their real estate more efficient.

"Over the last two years, there has been a lot of stress and the number one thing people are looking for now is understanding the organizational culture of the workplace," said Jim Davis, marketing director at DBI. "Different

workgroups are more inclined to work remotely. There are also the people who work well in a collaborative work environment. People are looking for how the company adapts and is flexible with the workspace.

DBI, a Lansing-based leader in the office and furniture supply industry, has incorporated flexibility into its office during these unprecedented times. Their main priorities are to keep their employees safe, healthy, and to understand their concerns and needs. They are also advising their clients on these new norms. Helping their

At DBI, some employees choose to be in the office for five days a week, and others are only there for two days. To provide the staff with the ability to perform their best, DBI has introduced enhanced cleaning protocols, and an office setup that allows for social distancing.

Those interested in staying completely remote have opened new doors for the company, as they can hire the best of employees from different areas of mid-Michigan. DBI has various people working for them from Saginaw, Flint, Jackson, and Grand Rapids.

"For some things like technology, we can certainly have people who do not live around here," said Davis. "I think the one evident thing is how resilient we were and how quickly we adapted. Companies figured out that there were people that could work remotely and get things done right."

With many choosing to stay home or have a hybrid schedule, some wonder how office supplies and furniture stores will remain relevant. However, Davis says that items are needed more than ever. Stand-up desks, leather chairs and couches, and updated technology are only some of the most sought-after products.

"Remote work became the way that people managed a new normal. For us, we're helping our clients deal with it and we're helping the clients get back to work," said Davis. "As our clients have employees return to work, we will continue to advise how to make the collaborative spaces more efficient and appealing and create environments that provide connections and adapt to the new levels of occupancy." ●

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First Nigerian Restaurant Brings African Cuisine to Downtown Lansing

By: Elizabeth Yassick, Kolt Communications, Inc.

May marks the third month Tatse, an American-Nigerian restaurant, has been open in its new location in downtown Lansing. Tatse owner, Taiwo Adeleye, first came to the states from Nigeria to pursue dancing, where he noticed a lack of authentic African cuisine. This inspired him to create the first Nigerian restaurant in Lansing.

"There are no African restaurants in Lansing and the only one in Michigan is in Farmington Hills, said Adeleye. "I've worked at other restaurants and wondered what it would be like to bring African food to the African community here and any other interested community. This inspired me to create Tatse."

Adeleye created the Tatse menu by fusing traditional Nigerian dishes with American dishes to bring authentic African meals that still had some familiar flavors. Growing up, his grandmas taught him how to cook and he used recipes he learned from them as inspiration for Tatse. Living in America, he discovered what Americans typically enjoy eating and used these foods in his recipes.

"I decided to infuse American ways of cooking into my recipes," said Adeleye. "I'm a creative person, so to come up with a recipe, I just kept doing it and doing it until I got it right. No creation is wrong. You just must work at it to get it better."



Taiwo Adeleye,
Tatse's owner

Tatse is in downtown Lansing, attached to Alobosa, an African bar. A downtown location was important for Adeleye because in Nigeria, downtown is where you want to be. "It's always busy and that's where things are happening," he said. Adeleye hopes to replicate this sense of community through his restaurant, primarily the weekly AfroBeat nights. Each Friday, people come to the restaurant to drink, dance and mingle. AfroBeat night draws in a diverse community of people, which fits perfectly with the Tatse mantra – "African for all."

"We want to create something that will bring people around to also make them feel good about themselves. I want to be of use to my community," said Adeleye. "We're still growing, but the first couple of months have been great."

For newcomers who would like to eat at the restaurant, Adeleye recommends the chicken or veggie bowl, and everyone needs to try the jollof rice. Visit Tatse at 221 S. Washington Square in downtown Lansing or order online at tatserestaurants.com. ●

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Local Business/Real Estate Developer Joel Ferguson's Success Story Entered Into Library of Congress

The nation's largest African American video oral history archival institution traveled to Lansing in March to conduct a five-hour interview with Joel Ferguson of Ferguson Development. Joel and his long list of accomplishments are extremely impressive. Still, not many people know the full story of how he played several key roles and influenced many business and political decisions along the way, ultimately resulting in positive change for future generations. As one of Michigan's most successful African American entrepreneurs, Joel has paved the path for so many others and is still very passionate about helping people in any way that he can.

"HistoryMakers is committed to preserving and making widely accessible the untold personal stories of well-known and unsung African Americans. HistoryMakers enlightens, entertains, and educates the public, helping to refashion a more inclusive record of American history," said Julieanna L. Richardson, founder and CEO of HistoryMakers.

Businessman and developer, Joel Ferguson was born in 1938 to Josephine and Rollin Ferguson of Lansing, Michigan. He quickly became a business trailblazer as he was elected to the Lansing City Council in 1967, and was the youngest and first African American elected. Ferguson's real estate development properties now house the majority of Lansing residents, and he has four multi-million-dollar developments being built throughout Michigan. Ferguson was recently celebrated at a star-studded gala held at Michigan State University (MSU) Stadium. His friends, family, and peers shared inspiring stories of him as they honored his work as the longest-serving MSU Board of Trustees member.

Joel Ferguson shared his thoughts about the interview, "I'm just happy they found my story interesting enough that they wanted to include it in history archives. I grew

up in a neighborhood where we all had one thing in common: nothing. We all had nothing, and that's why it's so important that I never forget where I came from. I hope to continue giving back and inspiring others for as long as I can – being able to help others is why I do what I do."



Since its inception, HistoryMakers, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit headquartered in Chicago, has grown to become the nation's largest African American video oral history archive. With education as its mission, this one-of-a-kind collection is housed permanently at the Library of Congress. It provides an unprecedented and irreplaceable physical and online record of African American lives, accomplishments, and contributions through unique first-person testimony.

To date, **the HistoryMakers Digital Archive** is available to 160 colleges, universities (Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, MSU, Howard, Spelman, Morehouse, Ohio State, University of Oregon, etc.), K-12 schools, and public libraries (Chicago, New York, Cleveland, Houston, Los Angeles, etc.) for educational use by faculty, students, and patrons. The HistoryMakers Digital Archive will explain who we are as Americans, where we have come from, and where we are going as a nation now and well into the future.

For more information, visit www.thehistorymakers.org.

Lansing Area Businesses Honored as 2022 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch



High Caliber Karting & Entertainment

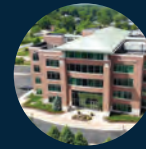
Seven Lansing area businesses have been honored with the prestigious 2022 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch Award, presented by Michigan Celebrates Small Business. The companies were honored at an awards ceremony at the Breslin Center on May 3. Congratulations to these outstanding businesses:

- **DRM International Learning Center** — Michigan SBDC Best Small Business
- **Great Lakes Crystal Technologies** — SmartZone Best Small Business
- **High Caliber Karting & Entertainment** — 2022 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch
- **Inerve Marketing** — 2022 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch
- **Konnech** — 2022 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch
- **KTM Industries, Inc.** — Michigan 50 Distinguished Alumni Award-Strategically Focused
- **Napier Industries** — PTAC Best Small Business ●

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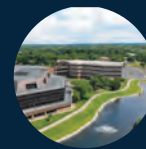
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The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce was pleased to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony for **Lansing Mobile Detail**, a mobile car wash and detailing company. Founded by three Lansing School District graduates, Lansing Mobile Detail brings a luxury service to their clients while also providing 1% of its sales back to the community. Book them today at lansingmobiledetail.com.



On March 24, the Lansing Regional Chamber welcomed **LIV Cannabis** to the Lansing region. LIV Cannabis recently opened its new store at 6283 S Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Lansing. LIV Cannabis will also open the first consumption lounge in the area and be one of the first in the state.



It was all smiles and sunshine for the April Member Mixer held at **The Hidden Gen Event Venue**, located at 4230 Charlar Drive, Holt. Owned and operated by the husband-and-wife team of Carmen and Ernest Tisdale, this medium-sized events venue is a one-stop-shop for corporate and personal events of all types. They offer indoor and outdoor seating, catering, bar services, decorations, private parking and more! Call (517) 699-5595 for more information.



Buddy's Pizza just opened their second Lansing region store, located at 2010 W. Grand River Ave. in Okemos, near the Meridian Mall. Buddy's Pizza generously donated all opening day sales to Haven House, and all charity preview donations went to Child and Family Charities.

Independent Citizen's Redrawn Political Boundary Lines Set Up Legislative & Congressional Election Battles for 2022

The Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission has adopted a plan to redraw political boundaries for Michigan's state legislative and congressional districts. The new maps were drawn as part of the reapportionment process conducted every ten years following the U.S. Census.

In November 2018, Michigan voters amended the Constitution with Proposal 18-2 or the "Voters Not Politicians" ballot proposal, a constitutional amendment to "establish a commission of citizens with exclusive authority to adopt district boundaries for the Michigan Senate, Michigan House of Representatives and U.S. Congress, every 10 years." Now, the Michigan Constitution empowers an independent commission of citizens to draw district lines for the Michigan Legislature and Michigan's members of Congress for the 2022 election and beyond. The constitutional amendment establishes a commission of 13 registered voters randomly selected through an application process. Of the 13 commissioners, four affiliates with the Democratic Party, four affiliates with the Republican Party, and five do not affiliate with either major political party. The newly created political maps can be viewed at [Final Maps \(michigan.gov\)](https://michigan.gov/finalmaps).

In local congressional races, U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin, D-Holly, has said she would leave her home and take up

residence in a new district anchored by Lansing. Rep. Congressman John Moolenaar, R-Midland, is expected to run in a newly created central Michigan district.

In the state senate, Lansing and East Lansing have been split into two separate senate districts. State Rep. Sarah Anthony is among the candidates running for the seat covering Lansing and westward. Former Democratic member of the Michigan House of Representatives, Sam Singh is among the candidates seeking the state senate seat covering East Lansing and eastward.

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) is actively involved in reviewing candidate questionnaires and conducting candidate interviews for candidates running in these new districts.

"If ever there was a year our members would want to support the LRC-PAC, this would be the year," said Steve Japinga, senior vice president, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. "We will be working very hard to make sure the community is aware of all the changes in their political districts, and identify and support the best candidates who share our vision for the region." ●

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Applauds State Adoption of \$4.7 Billion Infrastructure Package

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) applauds and congratulates Governor Gretchen Whitmer and state lawmakers on the passage of legislation that will see Michigan invest more than \$4.7 billion in infrastructure improvements, such as drinking water upgrades, internet access, and road, bridge, and dam repairs. An estimated \$4 billion comes from federal funds, including COVID-19 recovery funds and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

"The infrastructure legislation will result in transformational investments throughout the Greater Lansing region and the state of Michigan," said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. "The infrastructure funding will impact many of the Lansing Regional Chamber's highest policy priorities in economic

development, job creation, infrastructure, and housing. Governor Whitmer and all our lawmakers in the Capitol Caucus are to be commended for their bipartisan cooperation in making this legislation a reality."

Among local projects that will receive funding is Capital Region Airport Authority, which will receive \$2 million to upgrade utility and roadway infrastructure to accommodate anticipated growth associated with ongoing development projects. Transportation statewide is getting a \$645 million investment to improve bridges, roads, and public transportation. The LRCC will be working with its regional partners to fully assess the infrastructure legislation's total impact in the Greater Lansing region. ●

Love Lansing

MEET LIKE A LOCAL

The GLCVB's role is to market the Capital Region as a travel destination and our vision is to inspire visitors and residents alike to love Lansing as much as we do. We understand what makes this community great. Work with us to host your next meeting or event and together we can grow the local economy while showcasing our hometown pride. Contact us today!



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Sparrow Receives Largest Donation in Its History to Expand Precision Medicine Program

James and Judith Herbert of Lansing have made a \$5 million donation, the largest in Sparrow's history, to establish an endowment to advance genomics and precision medicine at the Sparrow Herbert-Herman Cancer Center.

The donation to the Sparrow Foundation is earmarked to create the Genomics Endowment for Diagnosis and Treatment of Cancer and provides for a new Director of Cancer Genomics at Sparrow to oversee and grow the program. Growth of the genomics program at the Sparrow Herbert-Herman Cancer Center will profoundly impact people from across mid-Michigan for decades to come.

The Herberts are cancer survivors themselves and were among the lead donors to Sparrow's campaign to build a new cancer center in 2014. The Herbert-Herman Cancer Center opened in 2017.

"Cancer genomics is the future," said James Herman, M.D., longtime Sparrow oncologist and cancer center leader. "Genomics play an increasing role in diagnosis and treatment. This incredible gift to the Herbert-Herman Cancer Center by the Herbert family will ensure that patients continue to have the best cancer care close to home and receive leading-edge care equivalent to anywhere in the nation."

The Herberts made the first of 101 individual gifts to Sparrow in 1995. Their commitment to cancer care began in 2008-2009 with creating an outdoor terrace for cancer patients and their families.

James Herbert is the founder of NEOGEN and has been a national leader in food and animal safety research. He and his wife have long promoted the value of genomics and precision medicine, which involves using a patient's genomic information to personalize care. In cancer patients, it means analyzing the specific makeup to guide care, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

Sparrow is mid-Michigan's leader in precision medicine and was recently selected to participate in a landmark clinical trial using precision medicine techniques on breast cancer patients. The clinical trial also includes such institutions as the Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic.

The Herberts want others to share in their dedication and lend their support to exceptional local cancer care through



the endowment. They say they are indebted to Sparrow for their care over the years and for keeping leading-edge medicine and highly skilled physicians close to home so mid-Michigan residents don't have to travel out of town for exceptional treatment.

The Sparrow Foundation fosters and creates strong community partnerships that help Sparrow uphold that commitment. The foundation has begun a comprehensive campaign, "For every story, there's Sparrow," to support the \$800 million capital improvement plan announced last year, with projects spanning the region. ●



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DLI Leaders Host “State of Downtown” Event

RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES ENCOURAGED TO REIMAGINE NEW WAY FORWARD

Downtown Lansing, Inc. (DLI) recently presented bold calls for action at its “State of Downtown” event at the Knapp’s Center.

During the event, community leaders, property owners, small businesses and residents gathered to share their ideas and concerns surrounding downtown Lansing’s recovery. DLI also shared information on the vision, development and planning efforts needed for downtown Lansing’s future.

“March marks exactly two years since the COVID-19 pandemic shuttered the world around us,” said Cathleen Edgerly, executive director of DLI. “During those 24 months, the downtown Lansing environment has drastically changed, with the number of daytime workers dramatically reduced, office leases being canceled left and right, and small businesses struggling. But with great challenges come great opportunities. We now have a golden opportunity to rebound beyond our previous position as we plan, reimagine, and rebuild our downtown community from the ground up.”

Edgerly and the DLI Board of Directors outlined the following calls to action and announcements during the address:

- **DLI’s Strategic Action Goals:** Working together, we can support a stronger downtown which includes addressing vacancy rates downtown, adding vital small business support funding programs and support, creating more shared spaces for entrepreneurs, and prioritizing improvements to community spaces.
- **COVID-19 Impact:** Overview of the devastating long-term impacts that COVID and state office closures continue to have on the downtown district and Lansing’s local economy.
- **Funding Support:** Lansing city leadership asked state policymakers to act urgently and approve DLI’s \$5

million funding request for programming to support local businesses.

- **Comprehensive Market Analysis and Priority Planning Process:** DLI has been awarded funding to lead a research-based planning effort for the downtown central business district. LandUse USA, CIB Planning and SmithGroup, have been selected as the team of experts to lead this process.
- **Stakeholder Call to Action:** DLI invited all groups and individuals who are interested in helping lead downtown Lansing’s recovery efforts to join DLI’s stakeholder group.

“Success — a reinvented downtown that offers more of a 24/7 experience will take innovative thinking and doing and relentless and meticulous follow-through to bring the community’s vision to life,” said Edgerly. “It’s time for action. It’s time for all those who care about the future of our downtown — and of our city as a whole — to come together and do the work needed to create the downtown experience that we all know that we deserve.”

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor said a strong downtown is essential to the future of the entire Lansing region.

“Lansing continues to grow, and a vibrant, exciting downtown is part of our plan to emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever,” said Schor. “From retail, dining, and entertainment options to more housing, we are working to make downtown Lansing an incredible place to live, work, and play. Residents and visitors alike need to see a strong, thriving downtown. The City of Lansing and Downtown Lansing, Inc. will continue to push for both public and private investments to keep our economy strong.”

Ashlee Willis, DLI board president, concurred, saying, “Collaboration is power. It will take leaders, businesses, and the community working together to create and keep a strong downtown for all of us.” ●



**BRINGING
MENTAL
HEALTH
CHALLENGES
TO THE
FOREFRONT**



Tina Mitroshtchenko/Pexels

One of the most prevalent themes of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the alarming growth in mental health challenges faced in the workplace. Remote work has resulted in worker isolation and loss of connectedness and has been a significant driver of emotional and mental health issues. Health care workers, who have remained at the bedside, have also faced significantly ill patients and dealt with families not being able to visit. An increase in death and dying issues has led to a rise in stress, anxiety, burnout, and depression.

Lyra Health's *2022 State of Workforce Mental Health* reports that employees' mental health is low. Thirty-one percent of employees surveyed reported their mental health had declined in the past year, increasing 24 percent over pre-pandemic levels. Eighty-four percent of workers said they experienced at least one mental health challenge in the past year. The World Health Association reported that anxiety and depression had increased 25 percent. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), four in 10 adults have reported symptoms of anxiety and depressive disorders, up from one in 10 adults before the pandemic. Sleep disorders and substance abuse issues have increased among adults. Fifty-one percent of adults say they have had worry or stress-related problems since the pandemic and those challenges have damaged their overall health.

"Since the pandemic and quarantine, a sense of loneliness, anxiety, fear of the unknown, and isolation have increased anxiety and depression," said Linda Peterson, M.D., chief medical officer at McLaren Greater Lansing (MGL). "This has led to increased self-medication with alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. It is a vicious cycle that has led to increased suicide rates across the country."

Ingham County Health Officer Linda Vail said that before COVID, public health officials were working on the opioid epidemic. Just when it seemed that some inroads were being made in the battle, COVID sent things in the other direction.

"We had really been working on that and numbers were plateauing, and then they started shooting back up again," said Vail. "We are seeing many people struggle with getting into and staying in recovery, likely due to the loss of connections that have been disrupted during the pandemic."

Vail said the longer-term impact of mental health challenges will include figuring out how to adjust to the shift to virtual communications, which affects how we conduct meetings, conferences, and daily work.

"The pandemic thrust us into this use of technology far beyond what we have ever done before – pushing us into a new social shift in terms of how society is organized," said Vail.

BRINGING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES TO THE FOREFRONT



Vail

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. It comes at a time when employers are ramping up their strategies and support systems to battle the mental health epidemic.

“There are many more people talking about mental health on the news and social media and around the water cooler. People are talking more openly,” said Leslie E. Auld, LMSW, ACSW, director, Therapy Today Counseling & Consulting, LLC. “There is also an increased willingness to reach out for help. We are noticing a lot more requests for therapy.”

BUSINESS RAMPS UP MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Employers recognize their responsibility to provide support systems for team members suffering from mental health challenges. Many are adding staff and dedicating training to assist supervisors in identifying and communicating with struggling employees. Experts also point to the importance of creating a culture of acceptance and helping employees develop specific coping strategies and build more resilience.

Employee well-being has always been a priority at Delta Dental of Michigan, so they had a solid foundation on which to build. Delta Dental conducted an engagement survey that allowed employees to voice where they needed support to address employee concerns in a meaningful way. The feedback enabled them to create a four-pillar approach to employee well-being: body, mind, wealth, and purpose.



Charboneau

“Purpose and wealth are key for employees to have a sense of stability and motivation and combat burnout,” said Lori Charboneau, director, Total Rewards, Delta Dental of Michigan. “We encourage the use of our employee recognition program, which enables managers and team members to provide each other with timely and meaningful recognition during these challenging times.”

In addition to recognition for a job well-done, Delta Dental has provided resources for its team members to engage in financial planning since 85 percent said they were not ready for retirement and wanted to learn more about preparing for it. The company has also encouraged team members to engage in regular fitness activities to support their well-being.

“A healthy body is connected to a healthy mind, so we encourage our staff to engage in physical activity through virtual workout sessions with our fitness and wellness



specialist and regular wellness webinars,” said Charboneau.

Delta Dental embraced a rich, multifaceted approach to mind. First, they give their employees peace of mind through timely video communications from leadership to keep employees abreast of changes throughout the pandemic. Further support for employees can be found in their Inclusion, Diversity and Equity through Advocacy (IDEA) team. This team of employees launched a popular series of monthly lunchtime conversations to ensure all employees feel heard and supported.

Delta Dental's Think, Teach, Thrive series offers professional development to employees and allows them to step away from work for lunch and learn programs, book clubs, and TED X-style presentations by colleagues. This programming helps team members stretch their brains and build a sense of connection even when not physically inhabiting the same space.

Lansing-based NEOGEN has responded to the increase in mental health needs on several fronts. The company has modified its mental health benefits, added a telehealth service to its online portal, and added mental health as a benefit in its telehealth plan. The company has also ramped up its education efforts. NEOGEN's Chief Human Resources Officer Julie Mann said the company has also shifted how it talks about wellness and related issues.

“As an organization, we used to talk about work-life balance,” said Mann. “Now we talk about life-work balance. Though it sounds like a subtle shift in words, it is a big difference in how we lead people.”

NEOGEN has also been working with leaders to stress the importance of making sure they are regularly connecting with all team members, especially those working in remote or hybrid environments. Those contacts are critical to helping people overcome feelings of isolation and the loss of connectedness.

Mental Health Awareness

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

How can you recognize when a colleague or friend is struggling with mental health challenges and how do you approach them to help? FOCUS Magazine spoke with Leslie Auld, LMSW, ACSW, director, Therapy Today Counseling & Consulting, LLC.



FOCUS: What signs should employers be looking for that could suggest an employee is experiencing mental health challenges?

Auld: Noticeable changes in behavior, attendance, and changes in performance, along with expressing sadness, excessive guilt, or worry, can be signs that something could be going on with them. When you notice a person who is normally interested and engaged and suddenly, seems they are not, that would be an excellent time to check. Also, note symptoms like tearfulness, talking about sleep problems and difficulty concentrating. Excessive worry and guilt or increased irritability are signs that a person might be suffering emotional distress.

FOCUS: How should employers handle discussions involving emotional well-being and mental health?

Auld: Find a way to approach the person gently and be non-judgmental. Express concern by simply asking if they are okay. Be open and willing to listen in a gentle, interested, validating way. You can create a feeling of safety by normalizing mental health ups and downs and letting them know you understand this is a natural part of life. By reaching out to them, you can be that bridge for them to get some help. Employers should have some referrals ready should employees express a desire to get professional help.

FOCUS: What can employers do to help remove the stigma often associated with mental health?

Auld: The biggest thing is to talk about it in a supportive and healthy way that communicates that mental health is something we all need to pay attention to. Many health insurance companies have good webinars on improving your mental and emotional well-being that an employer can encourage employees to watch or create time for them to watch. Employers can bring in speakers to provide information on mental health topics, coping with stress or resilience. Having an employee assistance program is a relatively low-cost option for employers to facilitate employees engaging with a therapist.

FOCUS: Often, employees are reluctant to speak up and admit the challenges they face. What is your advice for people struggling with that?

Auld: Stigma around mental health problems and treatment is decreasing with so much media attention, but for those who struggle with this, the option of telehealth psychotherapy could provide the additional sense of privacy a person may need. Sessions are provided in the privacy of your home on your computer, where you can see and talk to a therapist over a video call. There are many mental well-being apps you can get on your phone and that could be a way to get started looking into ways of improving your well-being.

One good option is to seek out a telehealth appointment that no one other than the person you are speaking would have to know – that can open the door for them. The therapist will help them feel more comfortable once they are together.

BRINGING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES TO THE FOREFRONT

“Frequency is an important element of support because we have to stay engaged with and connected to our people,” said Mann. “People leadership is more important than ever right now and, when it comes to interaction, frequency is the new currency.”



Mann

Mann said that, as more people head to the office and the pandemic continues to ease, organizations need to ease back into engagement activities that bring people together. NEOGEN recently offered a chance for employees in Lansing to participate in an NCAA basketball tournament pool which drew rave reviews from the participants.

“Any engagement activity right now feels so good,” said Mann. “We must get back to doing those things because the impact of even small activities goes a long way and helps all of us.”

HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS OVERWHELMED

The COVID pandemic hit hospitals particularly hard as emergency rooms and general beds were quickly filled and healthcare workers were continually overwhelmed. At the same time, COVID was stretching the healthcare system to the max and beyond. The mental health pandemic created a double dose of pandemic-related illnesses.

At Sparrow Hospital in Lansing, the number of patients visiting the emergency room with depressive and anxiety symptoms, PTSD, substance use disorders, suicidal ideations, and suicide attempts has quadrupled since the pandemic began. Statewide, hospital beds for inpatient psychiatric treatment are backlogged.



Baker

“This is absolutely mind-boggling to administrators, the community, and society-at-large that the burden has become of this magnitude,” said Dr. John A. Baker, medical director, Sparrow Behavioral Health.

Dr. Baker said the mental health system is also stressed by the lack of needed counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists to treat the booming demand for services.

“We have so many retiring and we are barely keeping up with replacements,” said Dr. Baker. “It is getting harder and harder for people to get treatment, particularly for those at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale.”

Dr. Peterson, a psychiatrist, notes the lack of mental health

providers in the Lansing area as a particularly challenging problem. The tri-county region is currently short 13 psychiatrists. The use of telepsychiatry is helping by allowing providers from outside the region to provide assistance, but the need exceeds the available resources.



Peterson

“It is still not enough,” said Dr. Peterson. “We are really lacking resources to deal with problems in real-time. Outpatient waitlists are very long.”

Dr. Peterson said patients checking into the MGL emergency department for psychiatric conditions will be seen and evaluated. MGL does have telepsychiatry in its ER and also its community mental health partners.

Once a patient is on the medical-surgical floors at the hospital, there is a “consultation-liaison psychiatric service,” which includes a psychiatrist and two nurse practitioners. MGL also has an inpatient geriatric unit for patients 65 and older. All these services focus on the mental health of their patients, but only while in the acute care setting.

“We are seeing a lot of anxiety, fear, hopelessness, and helplessness, leading to suicide attempts — all the signs and symptoms you tend to see with major depressive disorders,” said Dr. Peterson.

The mental health pandemic has caused healthcare officials to shift their thinking about how they can more effectively meet the demand for behavioral health services. Dr. Baker said Sparrow has developed units in the hospital where patients being treated for mental health issues can be integrated into areas also servicing patients with other medical conditions.

“Now hospitals are thinking out-of-the-box and developing units they haven’t had before to address that increasing burden,” said Dr. Baker.

EDUCATORS MEETING THE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE

The challenges of shifting to the virtual environment placed enormous stress on the education system for students, teachers, and staff. Michigan State University’s (MSU) WorkLife Office supports the university’s 13,000 employees by connecting and navigating multiple roles throughout the workplace, career, and life transitions. Like national trends, MSU has seen a dramatic uptick in mental health challenges throughout the system.

“We’re seeing an increase, unfortunately, in child abuse or family violence resource requests and we have had more requests for support and referrals in the past two years than we did in the previous three years,” said Jamie Hutchison,



Nappy/Pexels

HOW SUPERVISORS AND COLLEAGUES CAN CREATE A SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Watch for signs of burnout in yourself and others.
- Show sincere interest in the needs, hopes and dreams of others.
- Demonstrate a willingness to help others and refer them to resources.
- Show compassion for people experiencing loss or other personal issues.
- Work burnout is a serious problem and comes at greater risk during times of intense stress and pressure.
- Many people are stressed, putting in more work hours than ever before.
- Many are finding it difficult to separate work and home life.

Managers who are skilled at empathetic leadership can recognize signs of overwork in others before burnout becomes an issue that results in disengagement or turnover. This might mean taking a few extra minutes each week to check in with team members and gauge how they're handling their current workload and helping them to recover from overwork.

SIGNS OF BURNOUT:

- High blood pressure
- Headaches
- Inability to focus
- Irritability
- Job dissatisfaction
- Lack of sleep or reduced sleep quality

- Lack of social interaction
- Lower productivity
- Anxiety
- Lack of hobbies
- Missed work deadlines and/or targets
- Persistent tiredness in the mornings
- Physical illness
- Procrastination at work and home
- Repeated lateness for work
- Resentfulness
- Social withdrawal from friends and/or family
- Anger or aggressive behavior
- Apathy
- Fatigue and/or chronic exhaustion
- Denial of problems at work or at home
- Feeling pressured or out of control
- Increased alcohol/drug/caffeine consumption
- Avoidance of decision making
- Change in appetite or diet
- General neglect of personal needs

Do you notice these things in your employees or colleagues? If so, ask them how they are doing. Listen and reflect, provide the appropriate resources, invite a speaker to discuss well-being topics and resources, and regularly give reminders on resources like counseling, an employee assistance program, or other well-being resources at work and in the community.

Source: Michigan State University WorkLife Office.
Home | MSU WorkLife Office

BRINGING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES TO THE FOREFRONT



Hutchison

deputy director of the MSU WorkLife Office. “We see approximately a five-times increase in requests for divorce and custody resources. We are also seeing a huge increase in requests for counseling referrals for adults and people’s children. If there were cracks in relationships before the pandemic, the added stress of the past couple of years is turning those cracks into canyons.”

The Lansing School District has had a long-standing emphasis on trauma-informed practices and professional development. Throughout the pandemic, the district has continued to emphasize multi-tiered, multidimensional support systems to promote skill development and equitable access to mental health services.

“We have expanded our community partnerships to enable students throughout our district access to licensed mental health clinicians either within their school of attendance or remotely,” said Jennifer West, LMSW, director, office of school culture, Lansing



West

School District. “We have mental health therapists working as district employees and we also provide referrals for outpatient counseling services through established partnerships that are offered at no cost to families.”

Last year, the Lansing Schools District launched its employee self-care and wellness initiative, which featured several activities, including book studies, holiday walk challenges, virtual yoga, and cross-fit training. This initiative is still in place. The district currently has two staff support groups running free of charge to participating staff.

In East Lansing Public Schools, Superintendent Dori Leyko said they have experienced increased mental health needs for support from both students and staff levels. East Lansing added social workers in each school building to help support rising cases of anxiety, stress, and mental health concerns, including self-harm. East Lansing also hired a District Wellness Leader, who has a degree and license in social work.



Leyko

“We recognized the need to have someone spending 100 percent of their time on wellness this year,” said Leyko. “She has organized opportunities for staff to participate in mindfulness sessions via Zoom before or after school. She regularly sends out communications that offer tips on things teachers can do for themselves and students in the classroom. She also organized a hygiene drive to help support students and families’ needs beyond academics.”

East Lansing Public Schools have also been working with community partners to get students support outside of the schools where they can access professionals who can help with higher-level mental health needs. Staff members have also indicated a desire for more support, which the district has been working to meet.

“The staff was telling us one thing that would help them was to have some more time, so we eliminated after-school staff meetings during the winter months,” said Leyko. “Teachers wanted time to collaborate, work and time for family and time for self, so this was a way we could support that need.”

Leyko said the district is working with Canines for Change, a program created by Lansing Schools psychologist Dr. Nikki Brown.

Research suggests that the presence of a trained dog lowers children’s stress, fosters a positive attitude toward learning, and smooths interactions between students and other children. The program will put a facility dog in each school building that can serve all students and staff. The puppies are expected to go to their handlers’ homes this summer and should be in the school buildings in the fall.

BREAKING THE STIGMA

The workplace is one of the most important environments to consider in discussing mental health and illness, yet it is often the last place we expect to hear about it. Employees may be afraid of discussing their challenges with co-workers and bosses. The stigma of mental illness often keeps them silent. Roughly 85 percent of employees’ mental health conditions are undiagnosed or untreated. Hutchison said it is essential for employers to talk about available resources for

COVID-19 has started organizations down the path of culture change. Although employers have begun to invest more, employees have also increased their expectations. The future of workplace mental health demands culture change — with more vulnerability, compassion, and sustainable ways of working. It’s a new era that requires new thinking and creative approaches in business, healthcare, and education.

employees and consider having presentations, training, and webinars at work.

“Talking about well-being and mental health and understanding that our physical and mental health are really connected is important,” said Hutchison. “Having people come in and give presentations or provide materials can help because employees can seek help without talking to their supervisor.”

Dr. Peterson said that people need to remember that the brain is an organ just like the heart, kidney, liver, or skin. She said we need to start talking more about the function of the brain, and when the brain is not functioning well, we must figure out why.

“Sometimes depression can be due to medical conditions,” said Dr. Peterson. “As psychiatrists, we are always looking for the ‘why’ behind these situations, and we always evaluate patients medically before we start thinking about the psychiatric.”

NAVIGATING THE PATH FORWARD

There is hope that the pandemic is in its waning days, which could ease many of the mental health challenges that have become so prevalent; however, experts say that may not be the case. MSU’s Hutchison said that while people are returning to work, they are returning to work with a lot more stress. The challenging labor market has left employees back on the job covering for staff shortages by having to do more with less. Those employees who are caregivers have had extra stress during this time due to a lack of caregiving resources and the lack of vaccines available for younger children. Hutchison does see encouraging signs at MSU with several students and faculty being in-person again, and the number of in-person and hybrid events is increasing.

“That feeling of camaraderie is coming back, even though it is a bit cautious,” said Hutchison. “There is a good feeling that we can meet with the team in the same room or attend an event where we weren’t doing that before. It is important to consider offering hybrid programming so those who do not feel safe or are at high-risk can still attend.”

Hutchison also stressed the importance of employers’ willingness to provide more flexible working options as their employees return. Among the many pandemic-induced challenges that employees face is the reduced number of options for childcare as many providers have gone out of business. Offering flexible hours and hybrid options is essential for employers to retain top talent.

“We’ll have to be more flexible,” said Vail. “We are going to have to have plans that allow hybrid schedules. That is going to be challenging in some organizations.”

Sparrow’s Dr. Baker said people can do themselves a world of good by taking care of the basics of good

nutrition, getting seven to eight hours of sleep, and finding something they enjoy that gives them some exercise three to four times a week.

“We as humans need to stay busy when we are awake and when we are fatigued, we need to rest,” said Dr. Baker. “Stay busy or rest, but don’t dwell on the negative.”

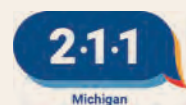
In addition, Auld suggests you see your doctor for check-ups, socialize regularly, spend time outdoors, reduce or stop alcohol and drug use, and take time for yourself to do things you enjoy and find meaningful. Healthy social contact is crucial to emotional well-being, and eliminating all physical and verbal abuse from your relationships is key. Auld said taking a mental health day periodically is a good practice.

“Ultimately, the most important relationship you have is with yourself, so spend time being a good friend to yourself,” said Auld. “Journaling, meditating, doing yoga, or hiking in nature can help strengthen your relationship with yourself. Seeing a therapist can be a beneficial practice to improve your well-being and your relationship with yourself. If you are suffering, know you are not alone and don’t wait to reach out for help.”

Leyko said that teachers and staff in the East Lansing Public Schools have been coping to the best of their ability. She senses many people want to get through the end of this school year and catch a rest this summer, hoping that once fall starts, the outlook will be better.

“I think there is a sense that we will be back to much more normal conditions in the fall,” said Leyko. “That is giving people some hope.”

COVID has started organizations down the path of culture change. Although employers have begun to invest more, employees have also increased their expectations. The future of workplace mental health demands culture change — with more vulnerability, compassion, and sustainable ways of working. It’s a new era that requires new thinking and creative approaches in business, healthcare, and education. ●



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NEW HIRES



Four highly skilled and experienced orthopedic and sports medicine surgeons have joined the **Sparrow Medical Group** Orthopedics and Sports Medicine team. **Douglas Dietzel, D.O.**, is a fellowship-trained and board-certified sports medicine orthopedic surgeon who has worked extensively with elite athletes at the professional and collegiate levels. **Andrew Schorfhaar, D.O.**, is a fellowship-trained and board-certified sports medicine orthopedic surgeon with over 21 years of experience working with elite athletes and the community. **Michael Shingles, D.O.**, is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon and is fellowship-trained in sports medicine, arthroscopic, and reconstructive surgery. Finally, **C. Luke Wilcox, D.O.**, is a sports medicine fellowship-trained and board-certified orthopedic surgeon with over 10 years locally of extensive sports medicine experience.



Fowler

Public Policy Associates, Inc. (PPA) announced that **Rob Fowler**, former CEO of the Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM), will become the next CEO of the company. He will succeed current CEO **Sam Singh**, effective July 1. Mr. Fowler has more than 35 years of experience in the public policy arena as an association leader and board member of

policy-related organizations. Under Fowler's leadership, SBAM has grown to 30,000 members across all 83 counties. Singh has been PPA's CEO since 2019 and is a candidate for the Michigan Senate. He will transition to a role as senior consultant at PPA when Fowler becomes CEO. If elected, Singh will take office in January 2023.



Timmerman

to LEAP, Mitch worked at Auto-Owners Insurance in the Audit and Inspection Services Department and as a commercial lines underwriter for the West Michigan branch. Mitch has always dreamt of working in economic development since graduating college at Michigan State University (MSU) and is very excited to get to work with the amazing staff at LEAP.



Vilca

She will be joining the marketing & communications team, bringing extensive marketing experience working in various industries ranging from a financial institution to e-commerce.

LEAP has also recently brought **Juliette Givhan** onto the team in the role of equity and entrepreneurial communications and program specialist. Juliette



Givhan

most recently spent her time freelancing—balancing copy editing and writing, content creation, and social media management—but is excited to now work in economic development.



Gates

Meanwhile, **Kambriana Gates** has joined **LEAP** as an economic development specialist in the Business Development Department. She enjoys working with communities with data gathering and determining potential development uses for vacant parcels. Kambriana earned a B.S. from Grand Valley State University in global studies & social impact with a minor in African/African-American studies and an M.A. in urban planning from MSU.



Gould

The **Michigan Certified Development Corporation (MCDC)** is pleased to announce the addition of **Coty Gould** as loan officer. Coty will cover central Michigan while working out of the Midland office. His responsibilities include marketing the SBA 504 Loan Program while working with lenders, small business owners, and other referral sources to secure SBA 504 financing. He will work with MCDC underwriters to review eligibility to obtain financing.

Meet **Amina Shamatanga, 517 Living's** new intern from Zambia! Amina moved to East Lansing with



Shamatanga

her three-year-old daughter in December and is truly living each day to the fullest as a full-time MSU student, part-time campus employee, mother, and

now community advocate for 517 Living. She is currently assisting with developing a Greater Lansing directory of locally owned businesses, which can be found at 517directory.com.

AWARDS

The Diversity Committee of **Mason Public Schools** successfully hosted the Mason Moves Forward event on Saturday, March 12, to engage with the Mason community. Events like this provide a safe space to have important conversations. The event



was held at Mason High School and included guest speakers, **Joshua Langford**, former MSU basketball player, and **Dr. Karlin Tichenor**, diversity consultant for Mason Public Schools. Additionally, winners of the district multimedia contest "What Diversity Means to Me," were **Delaney Hamers** – Alaiedon Elementary; **Mason Ellis** – Steele Elementary; Ms. Haudek's classroom – Alaiedon Elementary; **Gailee Maynard** – Mason Middle School; **Elizabeth Leibrand** – Mason High School; **Lily Ware** – Mason High School; **Kelsea Barcelow** –

Mason High School; and **Sulia Yang** – Mason High School.



Coot

Colin Koot, a **Mason High School** student, has been named a Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Farm Bureau Insurance Scholar-

Athlete. Colin is a member of the boys' varsity basketball, baseball, and tennis teams. Additionally, he participates in Youth in Government, National Honor Society, and FFA. Colin is the second student in Mason Public Schools' history to receive this award. According to the MHSAA, to be considered for this award, students must be carrying at least a 3.5 grade-point average and have previously won a letter in a varsity

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sport for their districts. Candidates must also be actively involved in school and community activities and produce an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics.

Edge Partnerships, a marketing communications agency, recently won gold and bronze at the American Advertising (ADDY) Awards - Lansing. The recognized projects include the Barry Eaton District Health Department Anti-Vaping campaign (Gold), Future Proud Michigan Education Launch logo (Bronze), and County Roads Association Michigan Highway Conference Program (Bronze).



Michael Markey, M.D., a Sparrow Hospital physician and chief medical examiner for five counties in Michigan, is one of 17 individuals, four partner organizations, and one hospital to receive a 2022 Donation Champion Award from Gift of Life Michigan, recognizing his extraordinary efforts to help fulfill the wishes of donor families. Dr. Markey, who leads the Forensic Pathology Department at Sparrow, serves as the chief medical examiner for Eaton, Ingham, Ionia, Isabella, and Shiawassee counties. He was nominated for the award for implementing best practices that ensure Gift of Life staff is notified as soon as possible to ensure donations can occur.

Sparrow, its Carson City and Clinton community hospitals, and Sparrow Specialty Hospital have also been honored with numerous awards from a national organization that tracks top scores for patient

satisfaction. The hospitals received the honors from Professional Research Consultants, Inc. The PRC Excellence in Healthcare Awards are nationally recognized honors presented to organizations and individuals who have achieved excellence in patient satisfaction scores in the previous year. Overall, **Sparrow Health System** received five awards. For the fourth consecutive year, Mary Free Bed at Sparrow received special distinction as the Top Performer in "Overall Quality of Care" for inpatient rehabilitation units. Five-star awards were awarded to **Sparrow Specialty Hospital** for "Overall Quality of Care" and **Sparrow Clinton Hospital's** Outpatient Surgery Services for "Overall Hospital Rating." Four-star awards were awarded to **Sparrow Carson Hospital's** Emergency Department for "Overall Quality of Care" and Sparrow Carson Inpatient Services for "Overall Hospital Rating."

Sparrow Carson, Eaton, and Ionia hospitals have been recognized by a national organization for outstanding performance and quality, reflecting their leading-edge medicine and highly skilled physicians and caregivers. Sparrow Carson received the 2021 Quality Top Quartile Award from The Chartis Center of Rural Health and the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health. Sparrow Eaton and Ionia received the 2021 Outcomes Top Quartile Award.

Eleven students from the **Eaton RESA Career Preparation Center** competed in the regional SkillsUSA competition and earned the honor of advancing to the state event. SkillsUSA is a national career and technical student organization (CTSO) that provides opportunities for students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled occupations. Eaton RESA Career Preparation Center was represented at the regional competitions by students from automotive technology, heavy

diesel repair, welding, and digital media programs.

Needham Solutions, LLC has been awarded the 2021 Global Excellence Award by LUXlife. Needham Solutions was honored as the Most Innovative Marketing Agency-USA. Needham Solutions, LLC is a full-service marketing, design, and promotions company that aids solo, micro, and small businesses with all their marketing and creative needs, along with promotional products and printing services.



LAFCU has been recognized by Credit Union National Association, a national credit union trade association, for three programs that won five awards — including Best of Show, Best of Category, and an Excellence Award — in the association's annual marketing competition. The LAFCU programs and awards earned are Act with Love & Equality Art Initiative, Diamond Best of Show, the contest's highest honor, Best of Category and Diamond Award; Internal communications campaign for the credit union's DEI program., Excellence in Marketing & Business Development Award; and Listen & Learn Program, Diamond Award.

DISTINCTIONS

Sparrow caregivers are healthcare heroes and now their work during the pandemic has been recognized on the floor of the U.S. Congress. **Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin**, who represents the Lansing area, recently submitted remarks into the Congressional Record to acknowledge the heroic work of Sparrow caregivers, along with the Department of Defense medical team that spent a month at Sparrow Hospital.



A Sparrow Ionia Hospital physician, who helped uncover a severe bacterial infection in a patient, has been honored with the Sparrow Speak-Up! Award for speaking up on behalf of patient and caregiver safety. **Adriss Faraj, M.D.**, a hospitalist at Sparrow Ionia, was lauded for pushing for answers and taking extraordinary steps to assist a male patient in his 50s admitted to the hospital for cellulitis, a serious bacterial skin infection. The man complained of worsening pain, but testing wasn't conclusive beyond the infection. Dr. Faraj reached out to colleagues to review the patient's scans, which revealed the bacterial infection called Fournier's Gangrene. The infection is a medical emergency that's extremely aggressive and can be fatal if untreated or missed. The patient underwent surgery and recovered.

Lansing Community College's Chief Diversity Officer **Tonya Bailey** has been appointed to the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE). NADOHE serves as the preeminent voice for diversity officers in higher education, with the vision of leading higher education toward inclusive excellence through institutional transformation. NADOHE board positions are elected and serve for two years. Lansing Community College

congratulates Dr. Bailey on this prestigious accomplishment.



Moon

Origami Rehabilitation would like to recognize occupational therapist **Stephanie Moon** for recently publishing an article, "Sleep: A How-to Guide," in *Brain Health Magazine*. Stephanie's other recent accomplishments include being awarded a Going Pro Grant and serving as a representative on Grand Valley State University's Occupational Therapy Research committee for a study on Persistent Post-Concussion Symptoms/Syndrome.



Patterson-Le

Origami Rehabilitation would also like to congratulate occupational therapist **Mackenzie Patterson-Le** on her recent publication, "Avoiding Caregiver Stress & Burnout," in *Brain Health Magazine*. Mackenzie was also recently selected as the recipient of a Going Pro Grant.



Janus

Jason R. Janus, president of **Janus Insurance Agency, Inc.** has completed the requirements to obtain the Registered Cyber Liability Specialist® (RCLS) professional certification. The NRCLS® designation is awarded by The National Registry of Cyber Liability Specialists® to qualified individuals who have completed the educational requirements and agree to the RCLS Code of Ethics.

For the ninth year, **Warner Norcross + Judd LLP** has been recognized as a national leader in client service among law firms. The recent BTI Client Service A-Team survey, conducted by BTI Consulting Group, evaluates individual law firm performance through the eyes of the client. Law firms are judged on 17 activities, including dealing with complexity, providing practical solutions, fielding the absolute best team and delivering value. Corporate counsel looks for firms that offer the deepest understanding of their business, anticipate clients' needs, and provide superior client service.



Burzych

Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes, PLC is pleased to announce that firm president and attorney **Mark Burzych**, has been named to the 2022 class of "Legal Eagles" by *Franchise Times* magazine, a national industry publication for franchisors and multi-unit franchisees. Mr. Burzych was recognized for his professional expertise in the representation of franchisors. Having worked in the industry for decades, he has represented scores of franchisors ranging from startups to top-ranked franchise brands throughout the nation. This is the fourth consecutive year Mark has been recognized as a Legal Eagle.

LEAP, the Residential College for Arts and Humanities Center for Poetry at **MSU**, and the Lansing Poetry Club are proud to announce the appointment of **Masaki Takahashi** as the third regional Lansing Poet Laureate. As Poet Laureate, Masaki will engage the tri-county region in the literary arts. His work will include promoting poetry as an art form, expanding access to the literary arts, connecting the community to

poetry, and showcasing poetry as a literary voice that contributes to a greater sense of place to support the attraction of global talent and business.

Plante Moran has been named to *Fortune* magazine's list of "100 Best Companies to Work For" for the 24th consecutive year. The firm ranked No. 30 on the list. One of the nation's largest certified public accounting and business advisory firms, Plante Moran is known for its people-first environment. The firm prioritizes work-life balance, mental health, and diversity, equity and inclusion – a formula that has been especially important in attracting and retaining top talent in the current job market.

PROMOTIONS



Accardo



Barnas



Nemecek



Padgett

First National Bank of Michigan (FNBM) announces promotions of **Greg Accardo**, **Patty Barnas**, **Jennifer Nemecek**, and **Shaunna Padgett** to senior vice presidents. Accardo joined FNBM as the Holland market president in 2016. Greg has more than 30 years of experience and leadership within the banking industry. Barnas joined FNBM as market president in Lansing in 2017. Patty has 40 years of banking experience, specializing

in the healthcare and nonprofit sectors. Nemecek joined FNBM in 2015 with over 27 years of industry experience. Padgett, FNBM's strategic and operating manager, has been with the bank since 2010.



Rossi



Cox



Torres

Union Bank has announced the recent promotions of **Peter Rossi** as officer, information technology administrator; **Kimberly Cox** as vice president, loan operations manager; and **Janet Torres** as senior vice president, retail & deposit operations director. Peter joined Union Bank in August 2021 with five years of overall information technology experience in the financial industry. Joining the bank in December 2019, Kimberly has over 37 years of management experience in the financial industry with a direct focus and expertise in loan operations. Janet — an experienced professional with a successful career in banking, recruiting and talent management, project management, and change leadership in the Greater Grand Rapids area — joined the bank in September 2021 with over 19 years of diverse experience in the financial industry.

Denny Martin, D.O., has been named interim president of **E.W. Sparrow Hospital**, effective April 4. Dr. Martin has served with distinction as chief medical officer of E.W. Sparrow Hospital since



Martin

April 2020, just after the pandemic's start. Sparrow and the community have greatly benefited from his compassion, professionalism, and inclusive manner. A practicing OB/GYN, Dr. Martin previously served as executive medical director of Physician Performance for the Health System and is a physician graduate of MSU.



Baumer

The **Capital Region Community Foundation** Board of Trustees has named **Laurie Strauss Baumer** its new president and CEO as of June 1. Baumer has served as executive vice president since 2015 and succeeds **Dennis Fliehman**, who is retiring after almost 20 years of service. During her tenure, Baumer has served as chief of staff and operations, worked closely with philanthropists and nonprofits, and led strategic projects such as developing downtown Lansing's riverfront. She was responsible for creating Rotary Park and the upcoming Play Michigan, a universally accessible playground for children of all abilities.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UPDATES

Sparrow's community hospitals benefit from the guidance of numerous new board members. Sparrow Carson Hospital has welcomed **Michael Racine, M.D.**, emergency medicine physician and medical chief of staff at Sparrow Carson Hospital, and **Renee Sopel**, former principal, Ithaca Upper Elementary School. Joining the

Sparrow Clinton Hospital Board of Directors are **Mark Weismiller, M.D.**, Sparrow Medical Group general surgeon and **Sparrow Clinton Hospital** Medical chief of staff; **Matthew Wilcox, D.O.**, cardiology specialist, Sparrow TCI. New members of the **Sparrow Eaton Hospital** Board are: **Maria Davis, Ph.D.**, provost, professor of biology, Olivet College; **Joseph Garcia**, deputy general counsel, state of Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services; **Colette Scrimger**, MSW, health officer, Barry-Eaton District Health Department. At **Sparrow Ionia Hospital**, new members include: **Virgil Biggs, CPA**, owner, Biggs, Dickinson & Roberts Wealth Management Services, LLC; **John Milewski, II**, director of technology, Ionia County Intermediate School District, and **Brett Reich, D.O.**, Emergency Medicine medical director at Sparrow Eaton and Sparrow Ionia and Sparrow Ionia Hospital medical chief of staff. **Sparrow Specialty Hospital's** board has added: **Rebecca Behar-Cook, CEO**, Capitol Fundraising Associates; **Dion'trae Hayes**, township supervisor and chief administrative officer, Lansing Township, and **Martha Jakubiak, RN**, retired neurosurgical registered nurse.

Governor Gretchen Whitmer recently announced the appointments of mid-Michigan leaders to the **Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC)**, the State of Michigan's lead agency promoting volunteerism and community service. Appointees include **Robert T. Kolt**, a Democrat from Haslett, who was reappointed to a fourth three-year term and serves as chair of the MCSC. Kolt is president and CEO of Kolt Communications, an Okemos public relations and advertising firm and serves as a professor in public relations at MSU. **Heidi E. Magyar**, a Republican from Laingsburg, was reappointed to the MCSC and serves as vice chair.



Kolt



Kimble



Tucker

Magyar is the director of corporate giving with General Motors. **William J. Kimble**, an Independent from DeWitt, is the president and group leader of C2AE, an architecture and engineering firm. **Eric Schneidewind**, an Independent from Lansing, previously served as an attorney at Varnum LLP and served as the former volunteer national and Michigan president of AARP. **Jo-Ellyn H. Tucker**, a Democrat in East Lansing, currently serves on the board.

PEOPLE NEWS

Larry Carter, president of **Great Lakes Christian College (GLCC)**, announced his retirement to begin on June 1. President Carter will complete 23 years as president, having served as an instructor of Christian ministries for two years before his appointment. Larry received a B.S. in biblical studies from Cincinnati Bible College. He then received a master's degree in Christian ministries from Huntington College, graduating



Magyar



Schneidewind



Carter

Suma Cum Laude. President Carter is leaving a lasting legacy upon the institution and students. Throughout his presidency, he has led in the accreditation of the school with the Higher Learning Commission and has brought the college to a very stable position financially and academically. The students see him as a mentor and guide. His open-door policy has been a tool to assist students through their goals, joys, disappointments, and problems. He has counseled students and staff in reaching their potential toward fulfilling the mission of GLCC, which is to train students to be servant-leaders in the church and world.



Rochester

Kobe Rochester, a second-year student in the criminal justice program at the **Wilson Talent Center (WTC)**, noticed the police officers at Sexton High School during his sophomore year. He was curious about their job and role at his school and in his community. This was also the year COVID-19 struck, and he was unable to attend a visit to the WTC to learn more about the criminal justice program. However, he decided to take a chance and enroll anyway, and he is so glad that he did. He's in the process of being promoted to sergeant with the Lansing Police Department's Explorer Post 911, a program for students ages 14 to 21. He has applied to advance as a cadet with the East Lansing Police Department and will begin taking classes in the fall at Lansing Community College before entering the police academy. In addition, Rochester recently participated in SkillsUSA.



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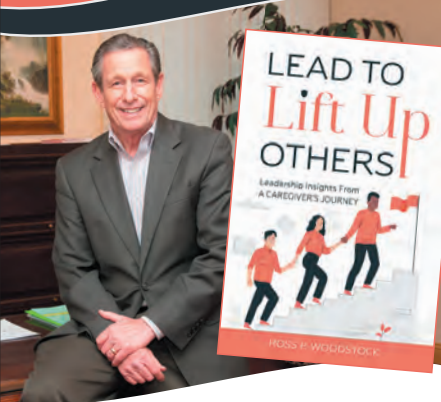
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This national student leadership organization allows students to compete against students from around the region, state, and nation, testing the skills they have learned in their career and technical education programs. He placed first in the region, which earned him a spot in the state competition.

COMPANY NEWS

Martin Commercial Properties, a leading privately-owned real estate services and development company, facilitated the sale of a single-story building at 321 E. Grand River Ave. in the heart of downtown East Lansing. Located in a high-profile corridor across from Michigan State University, the property will be the fourth Michigan location for Coratti's Pizzeria, transforming the former Collegeville Textbook Company into a venue specializing in Neapolitan-style pizza and craft beer. Martin's Associate, retail advisor **Carson Patten**, represented the seller in the transaction.

Mercantile Bank in Alma, Michigan, solidified its move to a new location by selling its previous building at 311 Woodworth Ave. The community-focused bank won't be going far, with operations moving to a facility directly across the street. **Martin Commercial Properties**, a leading privately-owned real estate services and development company, represented Mercantile Bank in the sale of their former branch bank. The purchaser of the two-story glass and brick building is ATD Engineering & Machine of Au Gres, Michigan, via the holding company Minor Investments, LLC. Martin's senior associate and office advisor **Thomas Jamieson** represented Mercantile in the sale of their property.

A historic property designed by a beloved Lansing architect is welcoming the next generation of business owners to Lansing's north side. Known for years as the

home of Farhat and Story Attorneys at Law, the 1890s showpiece at 1003 N. Washington Ave. recently became the new home of **Michigan Creative**, a growing advertising agency previously based in REO Town. **Martin Commercial Properties**, a leading privately owned real estate services and development company, facilitated the sale of the Kaplan House for Farhat and Story, a 70-year-old law firm whose principals recently retired. Martin's senior vice president and office advisor **Eric F. Rosekrans, CCIM, CPM**, represented Farhat and Story in the sale of their property.

Lansing Community College's (LCC) annual recognition of Equal Pay Day took place virtually on Wednesday, April 6. U.S. Senator **Debbie Stabenow** provided a special video address, Michigan Community College Association President **Brandy Johnson** presented remarks, and LCC Trustee **Angela Mathews** offered opening comments. Additionally, a speaker panel talked about their experiences and thoughts on closing the pay gap. Speakers included Washtenaw Community College's **Dr. Kimberly Hurns**, chief operating officer for the Executive Office of Governor Whitmer, **Tricia Foster**, LCC Trustee **Samantha Vaive**, and Warner Norcross + Judd's **Monique Field-Foster**. Equal Pay Day marks the symbolic day when the average woman must work to earn what men earned in the previous year.

Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes and **Jackson National Life Insurance Company (Jackson®)** were proud to partner to help better prepare students to be fiscally responsible and effective community members as part of National Financial Literacy Month in April, which Jackson sponsored. Jackson is not only a local supporter of Junior Achievement of Mid-Michigan but has also provided leadership nationally. Jackson's

support of financial literacy month culminated in the company's title sponsorship of the JA Bowling for Financial Literacy event at City Limits on 2120 E. Saginaw St. in East Lansing on Saturday, April 23.



LCC's Office of Diversity and Inclusion has partnered with the college's Office of Police and Public Safety to create the anti-racism campaign, "We're Better Than That." Designed as a comprehensive campaign to combat institutional bias and racism, "We're Better Than That" will provide LCC employees, students, and law enforcement professionals with approaches to difficult conversations to stop hate speech and racism in our community.

Twenty-three entrepreneurs from across the Lansing region celebrated the end of a two-month journey of business growth with

the fifth program of One and All, an inclusive entrepreneurship initiative created in 2020 by the **Lansing Economic Area Partnership** and funded by the **Michigan Economic Development Corporation** and the **Consumers Energy Foundation**.

The **Wilson Talent Center**, in partnership with the Capital Area College Access Network, hosted a college and career planning event called "Back to My Future" for Wilson Talent Center graduates from the classes of 2020 and 2021. Graduates met with a variety of vendors to assist them with post-graduation activities, including college and career counseling, financial aid assistance, resume reviews, community college registration, military and apprenticeship opportunities, and employment.

After canceling the 2020 Run for the House due to COVID and hosting a virtual and open-course option in 2021, the 2022 **Ronald McDonald House of Mid-Michigan Run** for the House was held in person. The event's title sponsor, **MSU Federal Credit Union** hosted the 5K and kids races on Sunday, March 20, in East Lansing, Michigan. The Virtual 10K, 5K, and kids race open-course

options were also available virtually from Friday, March 18 to Sunday, March 20. Runners attending the in-person event raced on the trails at MSUFCU's Headquarters on West Road in East Lansing, a picturesque campus with ample open space and a safe race route.



How do you move an entire hospital? That question was on people's minds as **McLaren Greater Lansing** was days away from its historic move on March 6 from the Greenlawn Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue campuses to the all-new health care campus at 2900 Collins Road in Lansing. The new campus, now open, includes a 240-bed acute care hospital, trauma level III stroke center and emergency department, Karmanos Cancer Institute, outpatient care



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center, and Health and Wellness Pavilion. While finishing touches happened on the building itself, clinicians and staff started to train at the new facility in January, including tours, day in the life training scenarios, and mock patient moves to get familiar with the new space and processes for move day. McLaren Greater Lansing hired Health Care Relocations, which specializes in the coordinated planning and physical relocation of hospitals and other healthcare facilities, for the move. On Sunday, March 6, at 6 a.m., the emergency department opened at the new location while the Greenlawn Avenue emergency department closed. At 7 a.m., McLaren Greater Lansing met with hospital and moving staff to kick-off move day. The first patients were then transferred to the new hospital, with all patients safely transferred in approximately six hours. Some 112 patients were moved in the process with the use of 14 ambulances provided by Medstar and three buses donated by Dean Transportation.



Junior Achievement of Mid-Michigan and Jackson National Life Insurance Company teamed up to have Jackson® executives teach third-grade Lansing School District students how to earn, save, donate and spend money utilizing Junior Achievement programming on March 21. The effort was part of Jackson's sponsorship of Financial Literacy Month and its commitment

to preparing Lansing students for the future. The event took place at Cumberland Elementary, Lansing. Financial literacy programs continued in classrooms throughout April.

Kasch Properties, Ltd. leased a well-located, well-maintained, and well-appointed modern flex space in East Lansing to Certus Medical this January, marking the entry of a vital service to the Greater Lansing area. Headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, Certus Medical distributes orthopedic implants and other surgical equipment. Its largest brand is DJO Surgical, a maker of hip, knee, and shoulder replacements. The lease capitalizes on the property's versatility at 345 W. Lake Lansing Road. Martin Commercial Properties, a leading privately-owned real estate services and development company, represented Kasch Properties in the facility's lease. Martin's senior associate and office advisor Thomas Jamieson facilitated the transaction.

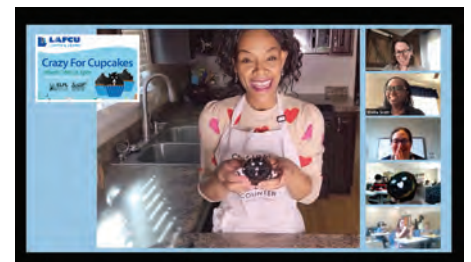


LAFCU is now accepting entries for an essay contest that will award up to \$7,500 in grants to those working to build a better financial life for themselves. The LAFCU Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest provides up to \$2,500 each to three entrants. The funds will be applied to the winners' outstanding debts. Winners will be selected based on their one-page essay about how they are trying to create a financial roadmap. Entrants are asked what actions have influenced their financial decisions, their progress during the past year, and how the grant could help meet

their financial goals. Entrants must live, work, worship, or attend school in Michigan but are not required to be a member of LAFCU. Information is at www.lafcu.com/ptft, where entries can be uploaded.



LAFCU offered free document shredding to the public at the credit union's Shred Day on Saturday, April 23, to reduce identity theft. A mobile shredding truck was at LAFCU's headquarters/West Lansing Branch, 106 N. Marketplace Blvd., for on-site, secure destruction of personal documents. The paper was recycled. Each person was able to drop off up to four bankers' boxes of materials to be shredded.



For National Reading Month, **LAFCU** took its March 16 Listen & Learn Program into two elementary school classrooms. The featured attraction was cupcakes. Partners for LAFCU Listen & Learn Crazy for Cupcakes were East Lansing Public Library, Red Cedar Elementary School, East Lansing, and Sweet Encounter Bakery, Lansing. Via Zoom, youth services librarian Gillian Streeter read the book, "If You Give a Cat a Cupcake," written by Laura Numeroff and illustrated by Felicia Bond, to third- and fourth-grade students.

Sweet Encounter Bakery delivered cupcakes before the event, and bakery owner Nikki Thompson Frazier led students through a lesson via Zoom on how to decorate the cupcakes with cat faces inspired by the featured book. The bakery specializes in gluten- and peanut-free desserts.

The **Greater Lansing Sports**

Authority was proud the region played host to the 2022 USA Judo Youth National Championships on March 19 and March 20. Nearly 600 of the top young judo athletes in the world competed, bringing additional coaches, officials, and spectators to fill hotels, restaurants, shops, and more. The two-day competition saw athletes vie for gold in 17 men's and women's categories at the Lansing Center.

Child and Family Charities

officially launched its 2022 capital campaign, "Be the Light," to build a comprehensive, centralized campus on the former McLaren Greater Lansing property. The campaign will raise funds to transform a portion of the former hospital site on the city's southside into a continuum-of-care hub to best meet the needs of today's modern families. The \$7 million project received a major boost from longtime corporate partner Jackson National Life Insurance Company (Jackson®) and its associates, who donated \$940,000 to underwrite the cost of The Jackson House, a dedicated home for youth who lack safe, stable housing.

The **Peckham Community**

Partnership Foundation kicked off its bi-annual series with a special learning event featuring two speakers who focused on social impact, racial equity, and reform topics. Opal Lee, a retired teacher, counselor, and social impact leader, and activist **Philonise Floyd**, brother of George Floyd, spoke at the event on Friday, May 6. Lee shared her experience about the journey to Congress on making

Juneteenth (an annual holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in America) a national celebration. Lee walked thousands of miles advocating for the day to be recognized as a federal holiday. Floyd shared an up-close and personal interview about how his life was impacted and catapulted onto a global scale after his brother, George Floyd, was killed by Minneapolis police officers in the summer of 2020. George's death brought the country to a racial reckoning about police brutality and racial injustices against African Americans.

Peckham commemorated 45 years of its ongoing mission to provide opportunities for greater self-sufficiency and independence for individuals with disabilities and other barriers to employment. The business community attended its 45th Annual Meeting to celebrate the organization's achievements, community partners and workers of the year on May 4. Peckham's journey began in 1976 with just a few service contracts. Since then, Peckham has grown to 13 locations, operates five successful business lines across three states, and is home to an award-winning workplace culture. Since opening, Peckham has served more than 125,000 individuals with disabilities and helped nearly 25,000 move into community employment.

The **City of Lansing** and the **Arts Council of Greater Lansing** announced the \$75,000 Arts Impact Project to Eastside organizations, including Allen Neighborhood Center, Prospect Place Neighborhood, Beverly Place Apartments, Ingham County Land Bank, and Hunter Park. This year's artist is **Ivan Iler**, who sculpted the first Arts Impact Project, "Portrait of a Dreamer," located on Michigan Avenue at Museum Drive. For this year's project, a large community group — consisting of representatives from Allen Neighborhood Center, Prospect

Place Neighborhood, Beverly Place Apartments, Ingham County Land Bank, and Hunter Park — chose Ivan to develop a sculpture that reflects the growing community in Lansing neighborhoods.

Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists (ORS)

opened its 12th physical therapy clinic located in the new Red Cedar Development project just across Michigan Avenue near the Sparrow testing site in Lansing, Michigan. The 2,500-square-foot facility will be caring for patients with outpatient physical therapy, athletic injuries, and other musculoskeletal conditions. The other ORS clinics are located in West Lansing/Grand Ledge, Okemos, Holt, four clinics in the Jackson area, Napoleon, Jonesville, and Ann Arbor. Physical therapy patient treatments began on May 16 at the ORS Red Cedar location, located at 3108 E. Michigan Ave. Treatments will be scheduled for Monday through Friday, with the clinic hours still to be determined. The new facility director will be Paige Ellsworth (PT, DPT, ATC) and she and her staff will be serving the community with physical therapy outpatient treatments for all age groups, and will also specialize in PT treatments for the many athletes, cheerleaders, dancers and gymnasts.

Impression 5 has been a leader in providing children opportunities to make meaningful connections to science through hands-on exploration. To kick off a year of birthday festivities, Impression 5 hosted an event on April 20 to bring together local business leaders and celebrate the science center's rich past, exciting present, and vibrant future. This event also initiated the Future 50 Campaign, a capital campaign with the goal of raising \$5 million. This campaign is a significant and strategic effort to prepare and sustain Impression 5 well into the next 50 years so it can continue to be a leading resource in STEM education for children, families, and schools. ●

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