

FOCUS

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

TRANSFORMING DOWNTOWN LANSING

IN THIS ISSUE

LRCC ENDORSED CANDIDATES ADVANCE TO THE NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION
STATE FUNDS ENABLE LANSING CENTER UPGRADE
LRCC ANNOUNCES OUTSTANDING FALL PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Lansing Shuffle has brought new life to the former City Market with an 11,000-square-foot facility featuring seven restaurants, two full-service bars, a large outdoor patio and shuffleboard.

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LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER

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New Hope for a New Downtown

As a Lansing native, some of my fondest memories are the times I spent with my family in downtown Lansing. I remember the vibrancy of the downtown business district. There were two theaters where we spent many hours. I remember shopping at iconic brand name businesses such as the Knapps's Department Store and Liebermann's. Jim's Tiffany was fine dining at its best.

Times changed. Suburban shopping centers took over and businesses left downtown. The region adjusted and a new downtown began to surface in the 1990's with the construction of the ballpark and the advent of minor league baseball downtown leading to new restaurants and entertainment venues.

In 2007, the Stadium District opened a multi-use facility that included apartments which demonstrated that people were willing to move downtown, which has led to more housing through the years. Between 2010-2020 the downtown business district saw significant growth.

The impact of the Covid pandemic and the slower than anticipated return to office have dramatically reduced pedestrian traffic downtown, a transition that is still being felt. Many businesses closed and others curtailed operations.

The fact that our downtown business district was overly reliant on daytime business from employees in state government and other sectors is not new news. It has, however, forced our region to come to the realization that we must transition from a Monday through Friday, 9-5 downtown to one that is built around the seven-day-a-week needs of residents. That means more housing to attract people downtown as well as more dining and entertainment options.

We have been provided an opportunity to build a cohesive plan and vision for downtown Lansing. The FY24 state budget will pump more than \$100 million into public, private partnerships to support growth, including a new city hall, redevelopment of the current city hall, multiple residential projects from New Vision Lansing, reconstruction of the vital Michigan Avenue corridor and upgrades to the Lansing Center. We have new entertainment options in the recently opened Grewal Hall 224 the MSUFCU Ovation which is currently under construction.

We are seeing more investors getting involved downtown, including the group that converted the former City Market into Lansing Shuffle, which houses five new eateries in a fun atmosphere. Rotary Park is an exciting new addition to the downtown Riverfront and Play Michigan, an all-abilities playground will open this month at Louis Adado Riverfront Park.

There are many more projects that are in the pipeline that combined are going to transform downtown Lansing over the next 3-5 years. What is most important right now is that all of us, including our elected officials, need to assume a high level of accountability in making sure those projects receive necessary approvals, remove any impediments and stay on track for completion as planned. As business and community leaders let's focus on restoring downtown Lansing as a destination for living, working, dining and so much more.●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



There are many more projects that are in the pipeline that combined are going to transform downtown Lansing over the next 3-5 years. What is most important right now is that all of us, including our elected officials, need to assume a high level of accountability in making sure those projects receive necessary approvals, remove any impediments and stay on track for completion as planned.

September 2023

9/5

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION SERIES: CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION & BELONGING

Tuesday, Sept. 5 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
MSUFCU, 311 Abbot Road, East Lansing

Join MSUFCU for a conversation about Creating a Culture of Inclusion and Belonging in any environment. Dr. Ashley Baker, Vice President of DEIB at MSUFCU, will share about what it takes from an organization to uplift and support an environment where all feel welcome, and the impact on the culture of an organization. A tour of the new building will follow the program.

Cost: The event is complimentary for LRCC members and \$25 for future LRCC members.

9/6

PINTS & POLITICS

Wednesday, Sept. 6 from 4:30 to 6 p.m.
Kelly's Downtown, 220 S Washington Square, Lansing

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Pints & Politics event is an annual gathering where business and political leaders come together to connect. The goal of Pints & Politics is to foster a stronger relationship between the business community and elected officials, as well as to provide a platform for meaningful dialogue and collaboration.

Cost: The event is complimentary for the LRCC members and \$15 for future LRCC members.

9/7

LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB

Thursday, Sept. 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, 219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing

The September Lansing Economic Club will feature a dynamic panel discussion on the future of downtown Lansing. Panelists will speak about the current issues and opportunities facing downtown Lansing and the future vision and plans for the region.

Cost: The event is complimentary for Lansing Economic Club members, \$55 for LRCC members, \$75 for future LRCC members, and a table of eight is \$425.

9/12

MEMBER MIXER

Tuesday, Sept. 12 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Cleats Bar & Grille at Hope Sports Complex, 5801 Aurelius Road, Lansing

Connect with fellow LRCC members and

business professionals during the September Member Mixer hosted at Cleat's Bar & Grille.

Cost: The event is complimentary.

9/13

ATHENA WIN GIRLS' NIGHT OUT MEET-UP SERIES

Wednesday, Sept. 13 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing

Join ATHENA WIN at the September Girls' Night Out Meet-Up for casual networking event. There will be no formal agenda so we are able to mingle and connect on a professional level as well as a personal level.

Cost: The event is complimentary.

9/19

CHAMBER 360

Tuesday, Sept. 19 from 8:30 to 10 a.m.
Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, 500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

The Chamber 360 program provides an intimate venue for you to connect with other LRCC members, provide brief remarks, meet the LRCC team and take a deeper dive into a LRCC membership. The goal of the program is to acclimate you with your investment and put together a plan of action for membership engagement and strong ROI.

Cost: The event is complimentary.

9/19

10 OVER THE NEXT TEN AWARDS

Tuesday, Sept. 19, 5:30 to 7 p.m.
The University Club of Michigan State University, 3435 Forest Road, Lansing

Join the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce at the 10 Over the Next Ten Awards to celebrate the region's top young professionals! In partnership with Lansing 5:01, this award ceremony celebrates Greater Lansing's top young professionals who are anticipated to contribute to the community significantly over the next 10 years

Cost: The event is complimentary.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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.

Thank You Renewing Members

AdvisaCare Home Health
and Hospice

Allegra Marketing Print
Mail - Okemos

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American Fifth Spirits

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GMCA - Greater Michigan
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Hope Sports Complex
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Keller Williams - Michaela
Martin

Kelley Cawthorne

Kunz, Leigh & Associates

Lansing Legal Group PLLC

McDonald's - Creyts

McDonald's - Grand River
Airport

McDonald's - Haslett

McDonald's - Larch

McDonald's Grand Ledge

Modern Woodmen
Fraternal Financial

Netvantage Marketing

Northwood University -
University College

One North Kitchen and
Bar

Redwood Delta Township

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Ritter Painting
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Shotwell Rutter Baer

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Johns

Susan Combs Coaching &
Consulting, LLC

T.L. Hart, Inc.

Townsquare Media

Village Common LLC

Windsor Charter Township

WLNS TV 6

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Chamber Milestones

First National Bank of America

40 Years

Kelley Cawthorne

15 Years

Netvantage Marketing

15 Years

McDonald's - Creyts

5 Years

McDonald's - Grand River Airport

5 Years

McDonald's - Haslett

5 Years

McDonald's - Larch

5 Years

McDonald's Grand Ledge

5 Years

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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4125 Okemos Rd., Unit 24
Okemos, MI 48864

TEAM Wireless

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www.teamwireless.com

Brookdale Meridian – Assisted Living

(517) 381-8700

www.brookdale.com/en/communities/brookdale-meridian-mi.html

5250 Marsh Rd.
Haslett, MI 48840

Rathbun Public Relations

(517) 896-4763

www.rathbunpr.com

6747 Westgate Dr.
Lansing, MI 48848

Peter Jones Agency – Farm Bureau Insurance

(517) 541-1400

6293 E. Saginaw Hwy.
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Nick Cypher Agency–Farm Bureau

(517) 541-1400

www.nickcypheragency.com

6293 E. Saginaw Hwy.
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Turf Jockeys LLC

(866) 613-4145

www.turfjockeys.com

P.O. Box 534
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Calendar of Events FROM PAGE 5

9/27

BUSINESS EDUCATION SERIES: PRACTICAL A.I. BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

Wednesday, Sept. 27 from 10 to
11:30 a.m.

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,
500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200,
Lansing

The September Business Education Series, led by Jesse Flores of SuperWeb Pros, will demystify A.I., delve into its workings, and provide real-world insights on harnessing its power for your business.

Cost: The event is complimentary for LRCC members and \$25 for future LRCC members.

9/27

ATHENA WIN EVENING OF EMPOWERMENT

Wednesday, Sept. 27 from 5:30 to
8:30 p.m.

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

Join ATHENA WIN for a night of comradery and collaboration as we celebrate the 2022 ATHENA Leadership

Award recipient, Dorothy E. Maxwell, and learn more from special keynote speaker, Heather Catlin, two-time Emmy Award anchor, WSB-TV in Atlanta. There will be a cocktail hour for mingling and a plated dinner with friends.

Cost: Tickets are \$75 for ATHENA WIN members and \$85 for future ATHENA WIN members.

9/28

EXECUTIVE WELCOME

Thursday, Sept. 28 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
The Venue by Eleven 11 Events, 5660 W.
Saginaw Hwy, Lansing

The Executive Welcome program is a gathering of new business executives in our community and an opportunity to hear from this new group of local leaders and features a networking reception, CEO introductions and Q&A.

Cost: The event is complimentary for LRCC members and \$25 for future LRCC members.

Netvantage Marketing – Standing Ground in an Everchanging Arena

By: Cionne Casanova, Kolt Communications, Inc.

Netvantage Marketing recently celebrated 15 years in the online search marketing sphere. The company was originally formed in East Lansing and eventually expanded to offices in Grand Rapids and Denver. Netvantage Marketing was founded by Managing Partners Joe Ford and Adam Henige. Ford says helping firms establish a powerful digital footprint has been a key to their success.



Ford



Henige

“The long and short of it is, we help brands get ranked higher in search engines, we specialize in it and have gotten pretty good at what we do,” said Ford.

One of the other secrets to Netvantage’s success in what some may consider a volatile market is the longevity of their small team of five. Collectively, each of them has been with the firm for over 10 years, and it’s their long history with the company that ensures the work they put out for their clients is only the best.

“When you think of small boutique consulting firms that would be us,” said Ford. “We know what we’re doing in our area and aren’t afraid to partner with other agencies to get the job done. We’ve been pretty fortunate that our client roster is so diverse whether they be big or small.”

Netvantage also makes it clear how thankful they are to still be around. With concerns of AI (artificial intelligence) automating the work they do or how people interact with searching for information, there is always a worry that the company’s work will be viable in the long run. According to Google representatives, factors such as a company’s web analytics and business models can all play a role in how the market will shift and how people will search.

“At some point, we probably will get replaced but that’s just how technology goes,” said Ford. “Companies will still need to communicate at the end of the day though, so whatever form our firm ends up taking down the line we’ll be more than ready for.”

Though the expansions into Grand Rapids and Denver have been a key part of the company’s growth, the Netvantage partners deeply appreciate how good the



We deeply appreciate what the Lansing area has done for us as a business which has been a hug part of our stability.

Lansing market has been to their firm over the years. Ford, who is a past board chair of the Lansing Regional Chamber, especially appreciates the partnership Netvantage has enjoyed and the visibility and networking opportunities the Chamber provides.

“We deeply appreciate what the Lansing area has done for us as a business which has been a huge part of our stability,” said Ford. “We’ve never been one of those companies to say here’s to five to 10 or even to 15 more years, we just want to get to tomorrow and give our best work each day.” ●



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Sparrow Health System announces departure of President/CEO James Dover

DOVER PRAISED FOR LEADERSHIP DURING COVID PANDEMIC AND PARTNERSHIP WITH U OF M HEALTH

Sparrow Health System President and CEO James Dover, who oversaw Sparrow's much-praised work during the pandemic and its agreement to become part of University of Michigan Health, are announcing Dover's departure from the system, effective Sept. 15, 2023.



Dover

Dover said the time is right for his departure now that Sparrow has assured its future by partnering with U-M Health in continuing to provide the highest quality of care to the community. In an era of uncertainty in healthcare, he said it was important to stabilize Sparrow's finances and bring an air of permanency to the health system before contemplating leaving.



"Working with this team of world-class caregivers, physicians and leadership is one of the proudest moments of my career," Dover said. "I am thrilled for its future as a part of University of Michigan Health."

After a long career in healthcare leadership, Dover joined Sparrow in June 2019. According to John Pirich, Sparrow Health System Board Chair, "Jim led the team through the pandemic, one of the most challenging times in our history, and received national recognition for innovative care. Throughout his tenure, Jim's passion around quality was one of the reasons Sparrow has achieved among the highest percentiles in the country on key patient care indicators.

"He ensured not only that the system provided the highest quality care to the Lansing community through the crisis, but that it will continue to provide that care for years to come through our new partnership with the University of Michigan Health. We are grateful for his service."

Pirich noted that Dover was instrumental in developing the partnership with U-M Health, official on April 1, 2023, with the goal of establishing Michigan's premier statewide system of care. "We are grateful to Jim for his leadership in stabilizing Sparrow's finances and bringing long-term viability to the health system through joining U-M Health."

"Jim has been an incredible partner in our efforts to build one team and will be greatly missed. His vision was instrumental to bringing our systems together and laying the foundation to bringing increased healthcare innovation to Mid-Michigan and beyond. We are grateful for Jim's leadership and are hopeful and excited for the next chapter of University of Michigan Health-Sparrow," said Marschall S. Runge, M.D., Ph.D., CEO of Michigan Medicine, Dean of the University of Michigan Medical School and Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs at the University of Michigan.

To learn more about Sparrow and University of Michigan Health, go to Sparrow.org/NewChapter. ●

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MoneyBall Pro Am Enjoys its Best Year

When Desmond Ferguson started the Moneyball Pro Am summer basketball event 18 years ago he was hoping to bring an event that would appeal to players and fans in the basketball-hungry Lansing region. Ferguson, a former Lansing Everett, college and NBA player, knew that unlike other regions that could feature pro players at their events, Lansing was going to center their event around college players. He pitched the idea to friend and MSU Coach Tom Izzo who immediately embraced the concept. Once MSU players joined the Moneyball parade, players from other colleges and universities followed. Interest has grown through the years, which Ferguson attributes in part to being able to have a consistent venue at Holt High School.

“We used to have it on weekends when people are gone doing other things,” said Ferguson. “Once we changed it to Tuesdays and Thursdays when there isn’t much else going on attendance really picked up.”

The recently concluded Moneyball Pro Am enjoyed its best year ever. In the early years, crowds were often 20 to 40 people. This year’s event regularly featured crowds between 1,500 to 2,000 people. Ferguson attributes the higher attendance this year to excitement in the region around MSU’s incoming freshman class of Coen Carr, Xavier Booker, Jeremy Fears Jr. and Gehrig Normand.

“When you have a player like Coen Carr who is a very athletic dunker, it is perfect for a summer league and the gym all-star type of feeling,” said Ferguson. “Coen brought similar excitement that Miles Bridges did a few years ago. When people come, they may be looking for the MSU players, but then they also get to see some of the other great local talent they haven’t seen for a few years.”

Basketball has played a large role in Ben Bakken’s life. At 6-10, Bakken enjoyed playing against Desmond Ferguson in college. He also coached varsity basketball and helps

ANNUAL SUMMER EVENT DRAWS RECORD CROWDS AND SUPPORTS LOCAL CHARITIES



Ferguson



Bakken

lead the Holt Junior Rams youth basketball program. Bakken is a big supporter of the Moneyball Pro Am and was instrumental in securing the Holt High School facilities as the venue.

“Desmond’s Pro Am is an unbelievable basketball event, but the magic is how the benefits extend beyond basketball, and event athletics,” said Bakken, who also serves as senior vice president and Lansing market director for Tri Star Trust Bank. “This is a free event for the fans, but the concessions are a fundraiser for a variety of community non-profit organizations, such as the Holt Education Foundation, Dimondale Arts Council, Lansing SAVE, Community Mental Health, and others. Truly, everyone wins.”

The Moneyball name comes from Ferguson’s successful Moneyball Sportswear business. Ferguson has been a big contributor to the region both from his business investments and charitable work. He feels Moneyball is contributing a community-oriented, family-friendly event that has become must-attend summer fun. As for Ferguson’s plan for next year’s Moneyball Pro Am?

“Keep it rolling, man,” said Ferguson. “Word continues to spread. We have people that travel from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois plus the state of Michigan. We want to keep that going on and have a good fan experience.” ●

Lansing Named One of the Best Cities in America

It comes as no surprise to those of us who live here, but Lansing has been named one of the Best Cities in America by worldsbestcities.com. The website cites Lansing's increasingly diverse economy, low cost of living, downtown revitalization, the splendor of the MSU campus, impressive biking infrastructure and the recently completed Red Cedar Development Project in the Frandor/U.S. 127 intersection.

"Being named as one of the top 100 best cities to live in America is a tremendous honor for Lansing. We are proud of Lansing's diversified economy, our work to revitalize downtown, and the welcoming hospitality that draws visitors from far and wide," said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. "This achievement inspires us to continue our efforts in making Lansing an exceptional place to live, work, and visit."

To read the full review, visit www.worldsbestcities.com/rankings/americas-best-cities/#lansing.



This achievement inspires us to continue our efforts in making Lansing an exceptional place to live, work, and visit.

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Courtesy Lansing Center

Lansing Center Set to Make \$5M in Improvements

SECURITY, ENERGY AND AESTHETICS LEAD THE LIST OF UPGRADES

The Lansing Center, managed by the Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority, has received a \$5 million appropriation from the state of Michigan to fund the first major round of capital improvements to the facility in more than 15 years.

“The Lansing Center is an asset to our region attracting visitors and conference-goers from all over. Our city has experienced tremendous growth since this center was built in 1987,” said Scott Keith, president and CEO of LEPFA. “It is time to reflect that growth and vibrancy by bringing a new, modern look; improved energy-efficient lighting; and innovative security upgrades to it.”

Annually, the Lansing Center hosts more than 250 events a year, bringing in over 230,000 visitors. The Lansing Center’s economic impact in the Greater Lansing region is estimated at \$75 million annually and improvements will increase the opportunities.

Slated to begin October 2023, improvements include:

- Safety and security upgrades and enhancements
- Roof and building envelope repairs
- Energy and building-efficiency as well as technology upgrades
- New building marquees, flooring and furnishings
- Restroom improvements
- Elevator upgrades
- New food service options

“These improvements will help the Lansing Center attract more and larger events, keeping Lansing competitive with other event facilities while creating a greater economic impact by continuing to attract visitors, hotels and restaurants to the region,” Keith added. ●

Chamber Events

Your Connection to Professional Development and Networking Success

From professional development to networking, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce hosts events to fit every need. A full list of events is located on the Chamber Calendar on the LRCC website.



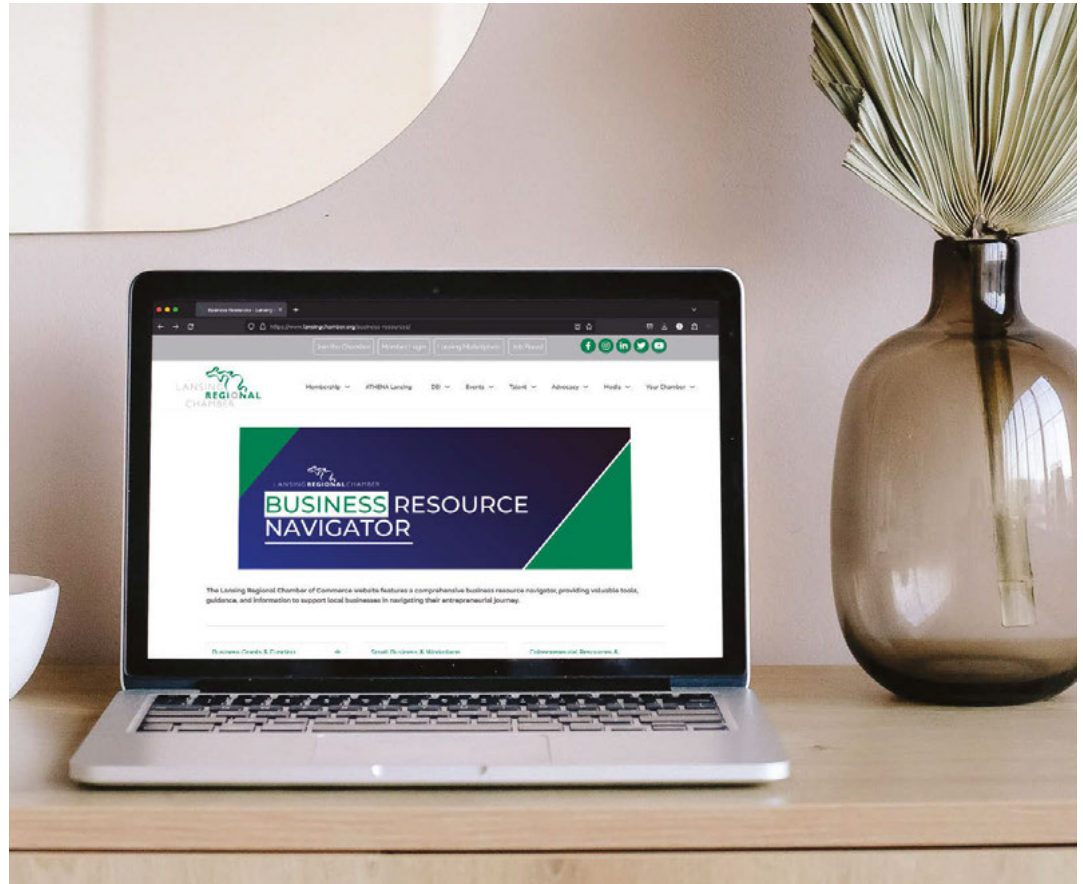
The Lansing Regional Chamber Announces New Digital Resource Hub

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) is excited to announce an expansion to its website, introducing two new pages that will redefine the way local businesses and individuals access vital resources. The incorporation of the **Business Resource Navigator** and the **Talent Resource Navigator** pages on the LRCC website is an important benefit for LRCC members. The new pages streamline information and provide easy access for employers and employees so they can continue to focus on accelerating their growth and development.

The newly introduced Business Resource Navigator page is a robust digital toolkit, designed to cater to the multifaceted needs of local businesses and their workforce. By including a wealth of valuable tools, guidance, and up-to-date information, this resource hub seeks to empower the business community in navigating challenges, making informed decisions, and ultimately thrive in the Lansing region.

Complementing this business-focused page is the dynamic Talent Resource Navigator, a page tailored to meet the evolving demands of the job market and workforce. With a comprehensive array of resources, connections, and opportunities, this page serves as a platform for individuals seeking career advancement and employers striving to acquire top-tier talent.

Envisioned as a centralized hub, these new additions to the LRCC website are poised to become the go-to destination for businesses, educators, and individuals



The newly introduced Business Resource Navigator page is a robust digital toolkit, designed to cater to the multifaceted needs of local businesses and their workforce.

alike. Housing a wealth of current and pertinent information, these pages cultivate a sense of community and nurture a conducive environment for growth and development. As the economic landscape continues to evolve,

this digital hub will serve as a steadfast companion, adapting to the changing needs of the business, talent and education sectors.

With the Business Resource Navigator and Talent Resource Navigator pages, the LRCC is working towards its dedication to help members easily access the information they need to connect, grow and thrive.

To view the Business Resource Navigator and Talent Resource Navigator at www.lansingchamber.org/business-resources and www.lansingchamber.org/resources. ●



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The ATHENA WIN Girls' Night Out committee planned a fun evening of kayaking through Dimondale Canoe & Kayak, down the Grand River through the Village of Dimondale, with a fun networking stop along the way. Thank you to all who joined, and we're already looking forward to next year's event. ATHENA WIN is proud to offer these opportunities for women leaders to connect in a fun and engaging way and build valuable relationships. To learn more, visit www.lansingchamber.org/athenawin. ●



ATHENA WIN

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SAVE THE DATE

September 27, 2023

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NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month: Uniting Through Culture and Business

Hispanic Heritage Month, spanning Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, is a time of embracing the richness of Hispanic culture and acknowledging its profound impact. The Lansing Regional Chamber's collaboration with strong partners like the Greater Lansing Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Café Caliente signifies a shared commitment to highlighting their accomplishments and fostering a more inclusive business

landscape. Together, we empower entrepreneurs and foster an environment of collective growth.

Ourspace (517) will host 517 Hispanic Heritage Weekend Sept. 22 to 24, featuring a weekend of fun, education, and entertainment, in the Downtown District of Michigan's State Capital. Visit www.ourspace517.com/517-hispanic-heritage to learn more. ●

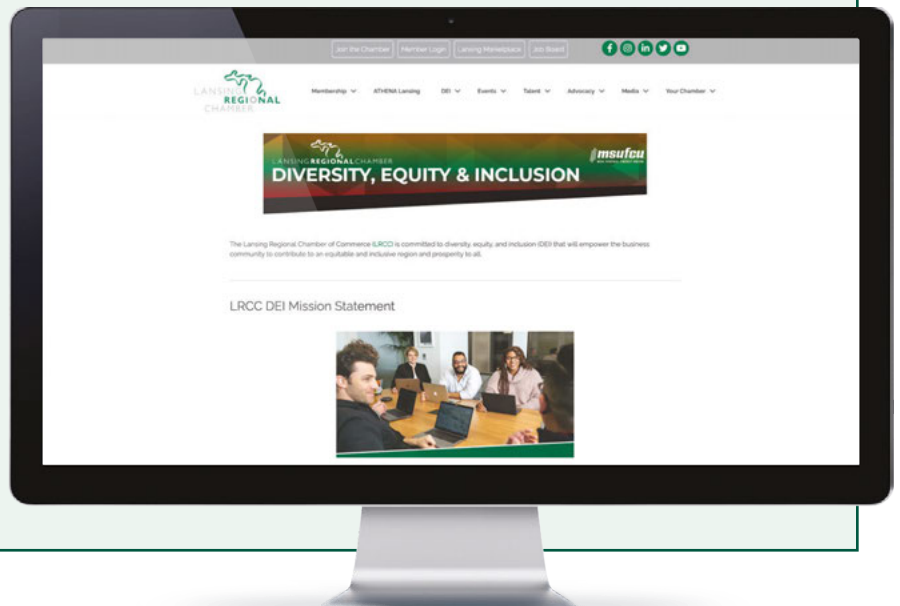
Discover Enhanced Lansing Regional Chamber DEI Page

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) is thrilled to introduce you to the newly updated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) page on our website. At the LRCC, we recognize that embracing diversity and fostering a culture of inclusion is not just a moral imperative, but also a strategic advantage for our community and businesses.

Our DEI page serves as a comprehensive resource hub where you can explore our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Here's what you can expect to find:

- Our Mission
- Points of Progress
- Upcoming Events & Programs
- News & Resources

Visit the updated LRCC DEI page at www.lansingchamber.org/dei.





Congratulations to **J & L Restoration** for celebrating their grand re-opening in Lansing! For nearly 40 years, J & L stands ready to help anytime, day or night when disaster strikes and help restore your home back to better days.



Congratulations to Paul **Lang Eye Care** for their grand opening ribbon-cutting ceremony in East Lansing! The Lang Eye Care Team offers a wide range of optometry services and eye care products, including eyeglasses and contact lenses, to help families with their eye care across Lansing.



Congratulations to **Gravity Smokehouse & BBQ** for their ribbon-cutting ceremony and for hosting the August Member Mixer. The right way to BBQ is contested all over the United States, but really, there's no contest. If you want delicious, mouth-watering barbeque like no other, come to Gravity Smokehouse & BBQ in Holt.



The Lansing Regional Chamber hosted its August Member Mixer at **Gravity Smokehouse BBQ!** It was an evening filled with networking, food, drinks and good friends. We hope to see you at our September Member Mixer on Tuesday, Sept. 12 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.



The Lansing Regional Chamber and Eaton Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce congratulated **NorthFork Estates** and **Turf Jockeys** at their ribbon-cutting ceremony for celebrating eight years in business.



The Lansing Regional Chamber team enjoyed a team outing on Aug. 9 to watching the **Lansing Lugnuts** play at Jackson Field!



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TRANSFORMING DOWNTOWN LANSING

THE SHIFT TO MORE REMOTE WORKING HAS CAUSED COMMUNITY LEADERS TO CONSIDER NEW WAYS TO BRING RESIDENTS DOWNTOWN

The shift to more remote work schedules coupled with the corresponding decline in pedestrian traffic has forced local leaders and downtown influencers to shift their vision for downtown Lansing's future. No area in the state has been impacted as dramatically as downtown Lansing, an area that has always relied on the presence of state workers to support local businesses. Though many workers are back in the office at least part-time, the shift to more remote work schedules in all sectors of the economy including state government has been taking a toll on the economic well-being of Lansing's central city area. Leaders in the region are focusing on how to transform the downtown into a stronger, more viable business district in the face of these challenges.

"We need to ask ourselves; how do we take the opportunity that has been presented to us here?" said Tim Daman, president & CEO, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. "State government workers need to be part of whatever downtown Lansing is going to look like. We have to build out additional housing and retail options, encourage more private investment and provide more entertainment



Daman

options. When you look at the urban models around the country, those are the ones that are successful."

"We have to realize the world has changed and we can't rely on those workers to be there five days a week," said Pat Gillespie, CEO, Gillespie Group. "We need to fill in the gaps with new ways of getting people downtown during the day, in the evenings and on weekends. We need to get creative and think of reasons to get people to come downtown."

Developer Ron Boji says downtown Lansing needs people who passionately believe in this city and know its roots and potential to come together to bring it back to life. He says that is exactly what's happening. Boji says the region needs to drive new ideas, but one of the most important keys to success is to keep supporting the local small businesses that already make downtown Lansing so great and so unique.



Boji

"We built our foundation in Lansing because we know how strong the community here is, and we are very proud of the tremendous assets that we have downtown:

A rendering from Studio Intrigue Architects of MSUFCU Ovation.

Courtesy of the City of Lansing

the Boji Tower, the Louie Building, the Hollister Building, and more,” said Ron Boji, CEO, BOJI Group. “We have been so productive in attracting people downtown through our wonderful partnerships who share the same love and vision for this city, and that’s how we’re going to continue to move into the future.”

Cathleen Edgerly serves as the Executive Director of Downtown Lansing, Inc. She says the organization’s focus now is centered less on the employees working 9-5, Monday through Friday, and more on building towards a 24/7 culture that caters to residents.



Edgerly

“The shift in how people work is challenging, but it has also allowed us a huge opportunity to shift priorities for Michigan’s downtown,” said Edgerly. “Having a downtown that is built for residents – those who are here 24/7 and adding in workers into that kind of downtown model is far easier than having a downtown that is built for the needs of workers and then trying to build in residents and visitors. It will take time, innovation and collaboration - but we have the ability cultivate a stronger future and vision for Downtown Lansing.”

◆ MARKET ANALYSIS IDENTIFIES OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown Lansing, Inc. commissioned LandUse USA Urban Strategies to conduct a comprehensive market analysis over the past year. The report was released in August and offers a strategy for the long-term transformation of downtown Lansing.

In the retail sector, Urban Strategies concludes there is an opportunity to lease up to 60,000 square feet of existing and new commercial space in Downtown Lansing in the next five years. The report says new retail tenants should be concentrated in the heart of downtown, primarily north and south along Washington Square, short cross streets (Allegan, Washtenaw and Kalamazoo), and South Grand Avenue.

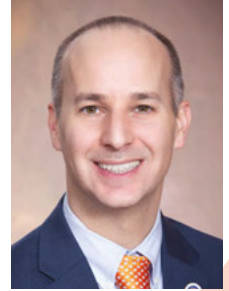
Among the retail opportunities cited in the report are: a small pharmacy; a family apparel store; merchants offering easy-to-assemble furniture, sporting goods and collectibles; a small hardware store; an entertainment venue and a convenience store, as well as hardline categories like automotive parts and supplies.

“We have focused on reducing the vacancy rate and diversifying the business mix downtown to bring more

retail, entertainment and attractions to extend the open hours of downtown,” said Edgerly.

The report also identifies a need for a diverse housing mix downtown. In 2022, Downtown Lansing Inc. established a goal of having an additional 2,000 housing units added to downtown by 2025. The market analysis clearly suggests that the area can support that goal. The report says the downtown area does need additional lofts and apartments and a broader diversity of price points.

“Of course, I would love for state workers to be back in the office more and bring more people into downtown Lansing during the day,” said Lansing Mayor Andy Schor. “But, we also need to continue investing in more housing downtown. We are finding that people want to live downtown and have walkable access to restaurants, shops, nightlife, and amenities. More people living downtown makes all of that happen.”



Schor

The drive for more new housing downtown received a significant boost with the Aug. 8 announcement of a \$215 million trio of projects. Gentilozzi Real Estate, alongside Detroit real estate developer and manager JFK Investments operating as New Vision Lansing, intend to construct three property developments at Capitol Tower on the corner of Capital Avenue and Ottawa Street, Tower on Grand on Grand Avenue and connecting to the Atrium Building and Washington Square on the corner of Michigan Avenue and Washington Square. The developments will include up to 450 residential units, parking, retail, office space, entertainment and an acre of outdoor areas and green spaces.

Mayor Schor said that these projects will change Lansing’s skyline by adding a 25-story, mixed-used tower, and it will make Lansing “the economic hub for mid-Michigan.”

“These projects will bring a new type of living to Lansing. True downtown core apartments, with styles for every taste, will offer a compelling argument to attract new residents and offer those that have lived nearby a new reason to come back downtown. We believe Lansing is ready for a new way to live and work,” said John Gentilozzi, vice president of Gentilozzi Real Estate.



Gentilozzi

Gillespie Group has been a regional leader in bringing exciting development projects to downtown Lansing. The Stadium District came online at the 500 Block of E. Michigan Avenue in 2007. The multi-use complex included condominiums which quickly filled with residents and demonstrated that downtown was a viable place to live. Gillespie followed up with other housing projects

Mr. Leslie's Cheesecakes will be opening a retail facility to complement their successful wholesale business. The store will be in the Macotta Club food incubator in the Knapps Center.

including Marketplace and Outfield Lofts at Jackson Field, both of which have been highly successful. Gillespie notes several other recent housing projects have been completed in recent years and are successfully drawing more residents downtown.



Gillespie

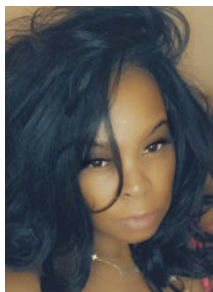
"It's conventional. It's workforce housing. It's affordable and they are all filling up," said Gillespie. "Each time one of these projects opens up and they are full it leads developers to ask 'where can I do another 100. Where can I add another 200 people to downtown!'"

◆ **GROWING A NEW GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURS**

The downtown area has become an appealing option for a new generation of entrepreneurs. In an effort to nurture start-ups, Downtown Lansing Inc. created a business incubator. Middle Village Micro Market is a year-long retail incubator program that supports 6-8 unique retailers as they receive business programming, training and marketing support while they grow their brand, build their customer base, and test the market.

"Downtown business districts are the home to small, independent businesses, especially women, ethnic and family-owned businesses," said Edgerly. "Shared spaces like Middle Village Micro Market are helping start-up, entrepreneurs and small businesses grow their businesses with reduced risk. Business models and spaces like Middle Village reduce the barriers to entry and allow local business owners to lay a solid foundation for their businesses as it grows."

Beeka Monique had a dream for 22 years to open a fashion business. She retired from her career in the medical field and invested some of her 401(K) funds to start a new venture. She wanted to locate her business in downtown Lansing. She learned about Middle Village and knew it was the perfect spot for her business. CocoBella Fashion Boutique, located at 123 S. Washington Square, is a women's fashion boutique that features upscale fashions for women. Coco Bella aims to empower, inspire and encourage women through fashion. They also encourage women to try different looks to fit changing



Beeka Monique



lifestyles. CocoBella also offers personal styling looks to fit changing lifestyles. Beeka says Downtown Lansing Inc. and Middle Village have been "phenomenal" in helping her business grow.

"They have helped me with marketing and by offering several classes that have helped with various aspects of the business," said Beeka Monique. "The storefront has allowed me to get more exposure to the public. This is where I am supposed to be."

Beeka Monique says her long-term plan is to be part of the growth for downtown and become to women's fashions what Kositchek's has been for men. She hopes her store will be passed down to generations in her family.

Downtown Lansing Inc. is also launching a food incubator on the first floor of the historic Knapp's building. The Macotta Club will offer six restaurant options and 16 different food concepts, including five food trucks and food makers, along with a full-service bar. The Macotta Club is intended as an incubator that offers operational start-up space to eateries and food-based businesses for two years.



Leslie

After developing his cheesecake recipes for over 10 years, Marcus Leslie, Sr., owner of Mr. Leslie's Cheesecakes began renting space in the Allen Neighborhood Center incubator kitchens to keep up with demands from his growing business. Most of his business is wholesale including being located in all Meijer stores. Leslie has also decided to open a bricks and mortar retail store in the Macotta Club. Leslie says that as a native of Detroit, he appreciates the opportunity to be part of the downtown business district.

"I've been in Lansing over 20 years and I am raising my family here," said Leslie. "I definitely want to be in the heart of the city. There is a lot of activity and growth downtown and strategically we want to be part of that growth so we can facilitate and be part of community growth."

◆ **BUILDING A 24/7 DOWNTOWN**

Transforming downtown Lansing to a resident-focused destination requires a renewed effort to create more entertainment and dining options. Though Covid curtailed some of the downtown's growing restaurant scene, recent trends offer reasons for encouragement. Most



Prins

notable has been the overhaul of the former Lansing City Market building. The result is Lansing Shuffle. The re-imagined, 11,000-sq-ft. facility features seven restaurants, two full-service bars, a large outdoor patio - and yes - the nostalgic game of shuffleboard. Lansing Shuffle's Director of Events, Courtney Prins, says the venue has already become popular as a community gathering place.

"We are proud to host all kinds of people from different walks of life that reflect the diverse culture of Lansing. The whole community is welcome to enjoy this special space," said Prins. "We just hosted a break dance battle with All of the Above Hip Hop. We also hosted a disability art exhibit for disability pride month. We are partnering with a wide range of community groups and giving them a unique place to gather."

Lansing Shuffle will become an even more popular destination once its signature shuffleboard courts are completed, which is expected to be sometime in October.

A WISH LIST for Downtown Lansing



FOCUS Magazine asked local leaders and downtown influencers what the number one item that would be on their "wish list" for downtown Lansing. Their responses are below.

◆ **Lansing Mayor ANDY SCHOR**

"As Mayor it's hard to say only one thing, but if I had to pick one, I'd say it would be more people. More people living downtown, more people working downtown, more people visiting downtown, more people enjoying entertainment options downtown, and more people dining and shopping at our great small businesses right here."

◆ **TIM DAMAN, President & CEO, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce**

"We have to find more balance in our partnerships with the state of Michigan. State government should not be viewed as the sole driver of growth downtown. But, there should be a closer partnership around economic development and innovation. We need to embrace being the State Capitol like they do in other states around the country. Our city and region often get overlooked when the state is investing in different innovations and technologies around the state."

◆ **PAT GILLESPIE, CEO, Gillespie Group**

"It would be nice if Michigan State became an integral part of downtown Lansing. Look at Grand Rapids and downtown Detroit and see the impact they have had there. What if MSU put 1,000 students, faculty and staff downtown every day? It could be medical, James Madison College or some other program. That would be a game-changer and facilitate a ton of growth."

◆ **RON BOJI, CEO, Boji Group**

"The top of my wish list is that we continue to see entrepreneurs, developers, and residents come together and break new ground with new ideas, and to do so with the support of the elected leaders who have the power to keep driving us toward the bright future we envision for this great city. Downtown Lansing isn't going return to what it was like right before the pandemic, and that's the good news. That's what has given us the freedom we need to imagine this city as we've never imagined it before: Michigan's downtown, a model for all our downtowns."

◆ **CATHLEEN EDGERLY, Executive Director, Downtown Lansing, Inc.**

"People. People make the place. People add activity. People will support the businesses and attract more investment. People visit the great attractions. The more people living downtown, visiting downtown adds more activity and energy at all hours of the day."



New housing is filling up almost as fast as developers can build units. City View Apartments on the site of the former Lake Trust Credit Union building downtown is one of the latest to open. Photo by Kelsey Teribery

After several decades of discussion, the downtown area will soon be home to two performing arts venues. A groundbreaking ceremony was recently held for the Ovation Music and Arts Center which will be a large-scale performing and arts venue where residents and visitors alike can enjoy and create art. The building at the corner of South Washington Square and West Lenawee Street will house a variety of performances, from concerts for national acts to independent films to networking events — and so much more. MSU Federal Credit Union is investing \$1 million in the project which will be named MSU Ovation.

“Creating vibrant communities where our members and employees work and live is vital to our mission at MSUFCU,” said April Clobes, CEO, MSUFCU. “I am thrilled to have a venue where national acts and locals can enjoy and create art in our own backyard.”



Clobes

Also entering the entertainment scene downtown is Grewal Hall 224 located at 224 S. Washington Square. The venue features two floors of entertainment space with a second-floor mezzanine that overlooks the open-concept main floor. The lower level includes hospitality spaces for clients to utilize in conjunction with their events. With a standing room capacity of 900 and over 6,000 square feet, Grewal Hall at 224 can entertain parties of up to 225 in formal banquet seating and 400 in a theater arrangement.

“MSU Ovation and Grewal Hall will both be incredible additions to our downtown. More vibrancy through

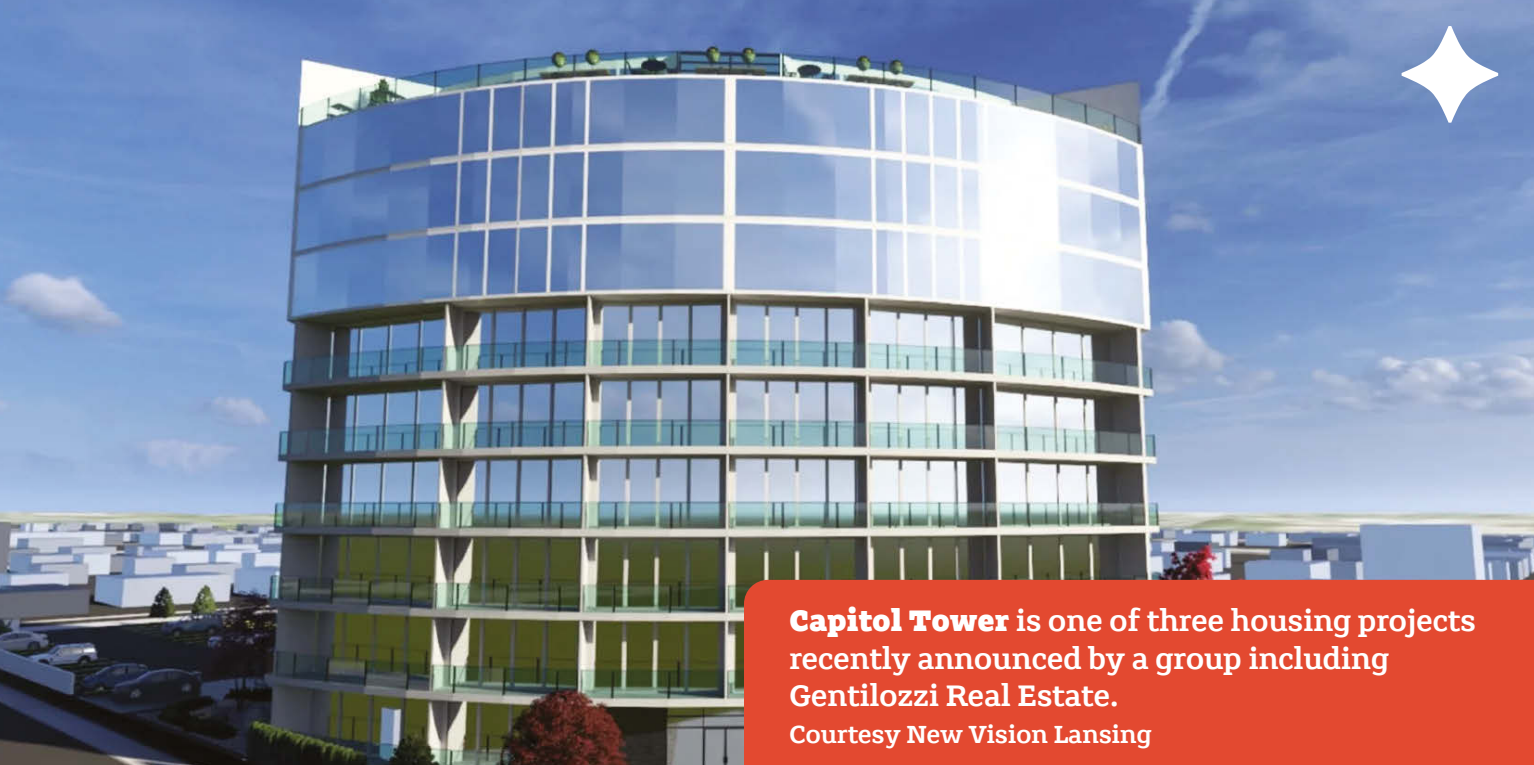
live music and performances, art and cultures, it's what can make our downtown more exciting for visitors and residents alike,” said Mayor Schor. “It also brings in more people on nights and weekends and will create more demand for dining and bars and so many other amenities that a vibrant downtown needs.”

◆ **STATE FUNDING BRINGS AN EARLY CHRISTMAS GIFT TO DOWNTOWN**

The Greater Lansing region secured a major victory in the recently approved state budget as lawmakers approved funding for critical infrastructure and community revitalization projects supported by more than a dozen local organizations including the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. Several of those projects directly impact downtown Lansing, including: \$40 million helping fund construction of a new Lansing city hall; \$5 million for renovations at the Lansing Center; \$1.7 towards the downtown riverfront; and \$1 million for ongoing state support for downtown.

“We are elated to have received funding for these projects that combined are truly game-changers for the Lansing area,” said Daman. “We owe a debt of gratitude to our local lawmakers in the Capitol Caucus who once again worked in a bipartisan fashion to fight for and win approval for their critical infrastructure projects.”

State funds have also helped clear the way for a major upgrade of Michigan Avenue between Pennsylvania Avenue and Clippert Street which is expected to begin in late 2023 and continue through 2024. The project will include road reconstruction and reconfiguration, sidewalk



Capitol Tower is one of three housing projects recently announced by a group including Gentilozzi Real Estate.
Courtesy New Vision Lansing

Housing Projects Bringing More People Downtown

Community leaders agree that a major component in transforming Downtown Lansing is addition of more housing. Downtown Lansing Inc. has a goal of 2,000 units by 2025, a number that a recent market analysis supports as achievable. The housing that has opened in recent years has been highly successful, filling up almost as fast as they are opened. More housing is on the way. Here are the housing projects that have come on line in the past few years.

MARKETPLACE APARTMENTS

Developer: Gillispie Group
Website: www.marketplacelansing.com
Completed: 2014

PROVIDENT PLACE

Developer: Gillispie Group
Website: www.mthmgt.com/listings/detail/736e9275-218e-4d4d-83eb-f445944fa399
Completed: 2017

THE VENUE

Developer: Gillispie Group
Website: www.mthmgt.com/listings/detail/d4ec238b-8038-4969-a856-25fdcbe84c3a
Completed: 2017

METRO PLACE APARTMENTS

Developer: Lawton Group
Website: www.metroplaceapartmentslansing.com
Completed: 2020

BLOCK 600 LOFTS

Developer: Gillispie Group
Website: www.block600lansing.com
Completed: 2021

TEMPLE LOFTS

Developer: Michigan Community Capital
Website: www.templeloftslansing.com
Completed: 2022

REO GATEWAY APARTMENTS

Developer: Urban Systems of Lansing; partnership between Dymaxion Development and T.A. Forsberg Inc.
Completed: 2023

CITY VIEW APARTMENTS

Developer: WestPac
Website: www.cityviewlansing.com
Completed: 2023

STADIUM NORTH LOFTS/STADIUM NORTH SENIOR LOFTS

Developer: Pivotal
Website: www.pivotal-communities.com/properties/stadium-north-lofts
Completed: 2024

CAPITAL TOWER/TOWER ON THE GRAND/ATRIUM WASHINGTON SQUARE

Developer: New Vision Lansing
Completed: 2024-25



The Louie is one of the Boji Group's signature projects in downtown Lansing.

replacement, traffic signal modernization, and upgrades to utilities such as sewer and water main work. In addition, one way bicycle tracks will be added adjacent to the sidewalk on both sides of Michigan Avenue to promote a safer environment for bicyclists. As part of the design, Michigan Avenue will be reconfigured from five lanes to four lanes, with two westbound traffic lanes, a center turn lane, and one eastbound traffic lane.

"The transformation of Michigan Avenue has been studied for years. Many different proposals have been evaluated and immense public input gathered through efforts like Imagine the Avenue. Connecting the Capitol to Campus, this important corridor needs to be more pedestrian and bike friendly and be a welcoming place for the neighbors and businesses. In addition to investments in facade improvements along the avenue, this will be another incredible step forward for Lansing," Mayor Schor stated. "I'm so thankful for our regional partners, the state of Michigan, and our federal legislators for obtaining funding to help make all of this happen."

◆ **REASONS FOR OPTIMISM**

Gillespie says that downtown will realize a significant rebound if all the projects currently in various stages of development fully come to fruition. He cites plans that have been discussed by community leaders to relocate Lansing City Hall and then re-develop the current City Hall site, remodeling the Radisson Hotel, new housing projects,

Neogen's new building and new medical buildings that Sparrow is planning near its Michigan Avenue campus.

"We don't need a lot of new announcements, we just need the projects that have been announced or in the conversation stage to come to fruition," said Gillespie. "If those projects get to the finish line, we will have made some serious progress. That bodes well for what Lansing could look like in the next 12-18 months."

Ron Boji says he feels the sky is the limit for downtown Lansing. He cites leadership from Mayor Andy Schor, local elected officials, the Capitol Caucus and congressional delegation. He says those leaders plus other community stakeholders are helping build momentum.

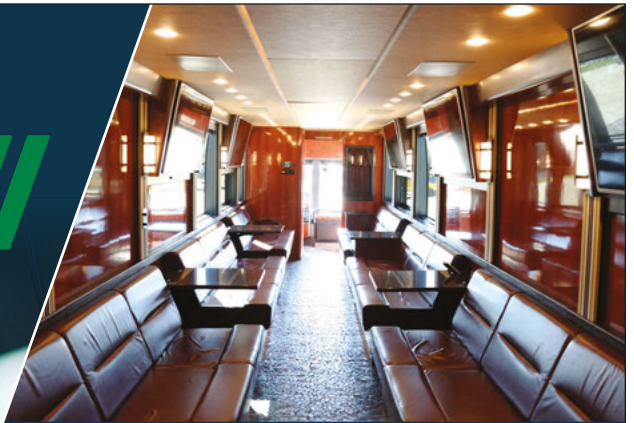
"We're transforming downtown Lansing into Michigan's downtown, a model for what all our downtowns can and should be," said Boji. "We are already seeing this momentum through new investments, new commitments, and new activity downtown."

"I've never been more optimistic," said Daman. "What we have to do now is make sure we get these projects through and get the \$100 million invested and connect it all from the Stadium District to the eastside neighborhood, to the central business district REO Town and Old Town. We need to make our districts connected, vibrant, safe and welcoming." ●

"We have to realize the world has changed and we can't rely on those workers to be there five days a week. We need to fill in the gaps with new ways of getting people downtown during the day, in the evenings and on weekends. We need to get creative and think of reasons to get people to come downtown."

Company Outings

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Ingham Intermediate School District
A Regional Educational Service Agency

Ingham ISD collaborates with local schools, parents and communities to deliver a wide range of services, including special education, career and technical education, early childhood programs and professional training. This holistic approach ensures that every student has the opportunity to receive individualized support and resources necessary to thrive academically and personally. Ingham ISD exists to lead and serve for the achievement and success of all learners. During the 2022-23 school year:

6,200

Students age 0-26 received special education services and/or supports in the service area

757

Students enrolled in 19 career and technical education programs at the Wilson Talent Center

620

Students received mental health supports in the service area



Learn more at www.inghamisd.org

LRCC Announces Dynamic Fall Programming Schedule

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) is proud to announce a very dynamic series of member programs for the fall of 2023. There is something for everyone in the diverse mix of 13 individual programs falling under the LRCC's most prominent brands, including the Lansing Economic Club, Business Education Series and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Series.

"We know that our members place a high value on the Chamber's role in providing opportunities to connect them to other leaders in the business community," said Steve Japinga, senior vice president of public affairs, LRCC. "We have also been very intentional about creating a series of programs that offer content that is very relevant and top of mind for leaders in every industry sector of our economy."

LRCC also features three stand-alone events that will recognize the accomplishments of outstanding leaders in

our region including; the Executive Welcome on Thursday, Sept. 28, Ten Over the Next Ten on Tuesday, Sept. 19 and the annual ATHENA Lansing Celebration luncheon on Wednesday, Dec. 5.

"The fall slate of LRCC events and programming provide businesses with numerous opportunities for networking, professional growth and development, policy and regulatory updates, and to celebrate our community and leaders," said Michelle Rahl, vice president of membership and marketing for the Lansing Regional Chamber. "These programs are a strong value-add for our employers as they look to grow, engage, and retain their staff members."

For more information on LRCC fall 2023 programs, visit www.lansingchamber.org. ●

BUSINESS EDUCATION SERIES

The Business Education Series provides opportunities for our members to learn from business leaders and industry experts. From tips and techniques to the latest industry trends, each seminar covers a different topic to help you succeed and save time and money.

September 27

Topic: Practical A.I. Business Solutions
Facilitator: Jesse Flores | Super Web Pros

October 25

Topic: Maximizing Productivity: Strategies for More Effective Work Days
Facilitator: Emmie Musser | Techsmith

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION SERIES

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Series is a comprehensive program

designed to provide local businesses with the tools and resources needed to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. The series includes a range of educational sessions and workshops, covering topics such as unconscious bias, cultural competency, and effective communication, with the aim of helping organizations build more inclusive and welcoming work environments.

Tuesday, Sept. 5

Topic: Creating a Culture of Inclusion and Belonging
Facilitator: Dr. Ashley Baker | MSUFCU

Tuesday, Oct. 10

Topic: Representation in the Workplace Panel
Facilitator: Lori Simon | SimonSezConsulting

LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB 2023

The Lansing Regional Chamber Economic Club luncheons feature local, national, and world-

renowned speakers who cover various business-related topics, such as leadership, innovation and industry trends. The monthly events serve as an excellent opportunity to network with more than 450 regional community, business, and education leaders.

Thursday, Sept. 7

Topic: The Revitalization of Downtown Lansing
Speakers: Cathleen Edgerly (Downtown Lansing, Inc.), Van Martin (Martin Commercial Properties), Pat Gillespie (Gillespie Group) and John Hindo (Boji Group).

Tuesday, Oct. 3

Topic: Paving the Way for Greater Student Achievement
Speaker: Jamie Vollmer, Host of The Great Conversation. Speaker. Consultant. Author of Schools Cannot Do It Alone. Former director of the Iowa Business Roundtable.

Tuesday, Nov. 7

Topic: Celebration of Regional Growth Awards

Tuesday, Dec. 12

Topic: 2024 Economic Preview
Speaker: David Bahnsen, American portfolio manager, author, and television commentator | The Bahnsen Group

ADDITIONAL EVENTS & PROGRAMMING

Thursday, Sept. 28

Executive Welcome
9 to 10:30 a.m.
The Venue (Eleven 11 Events)

Tuesday, Sept. 19

Ten Over Next Ten Awards
5:30 to 7 p.m.
University Club of MSU

Wednesday, Dec. 5

ATHENA Lansing Celebration
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Kellogg Hotel and Banquet Center

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Inetta Smith Joins Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Committee

By Hailey Kenward,
 Kolt Communications



Inetta Smith has recently joined the ranks of Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce’s (LRCC) Ambassadors. Smith is a Business Development Manager at NovaCare Rehabilitation, a marketing expert and public speaker.

A PASSION FOR NETWORKING AND CONNECTING OTHERS MOTIVATES INVOLVEMENT

Smith was inspired by the activity and proactiveness of the LRCC. She wanted to give back to the other members of the Chamber due to all of the support she has received throughout her career from members of the chamber.

“I really look forward to the business after-hours because of the networking opportunities,” said Smith. “It’s a great opportunity to not only learn about the member who is hosting the event, but also reacquaint yourself with the other incredible members.”

Smith looks forward to using her marketing and public relations expertise to assist the LRCC and its members. She plans to use her skills to educate potential members about the financial, networking and growth opportunities that come with being a member of the Chamber.

Networking is something that Smith is incredibly passionate about and she hopes to use her platform as an ambassador to create connections to the benefit of the Chamber and the greater Lansing region.

“My goal in serving on the Ambassadors committee is to attend a lot of the events,” said Smith. “I hope to attend at least two of the after-hours events each quarter as well as many of the other events such as ribbon cuttings and ceremonies.”

Smith also serves as the Chair of the Lansing Area Veterans Coalition, an organization whose sole purpose is to create and provide resources to veterans and their families. She feels an incredible draw to serving those who serve in the U.S. military. ●

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Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Endorsed Candidates In Lansing City Council Races Advance to November General Election

ALL FOUR LRC-PAC ENDORSED CANDIDATES SUPPORTED BY VOTERS



Carter



Lopez-Pehlivanoglu



Kost



Hussain

“ We are very pleased that voters in Lansing agree that the forward-thinking candidates that we endorsed have the leadership qualities they would like to see on the Lansing City Council.

All four of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) candidates in the 2023 races for Lansing City Council were supported by voters in in the August Primary Election. LRC-PAC endorsed candidates who have advanced to the November General Election include:

- Tamera Carter, At-Large
- Trini Lopez-Pehlivanoglu, At-Large
- Ryan Kost, 1st Ward
- Adam Hussain, 3rd Ward

“We are very pleased that voters in Lansing agree that the forward-thinking candidates that we endorsed have the leadership qualities they would like to see on the Lansing City Council,” said Steve Japinga, senior vice president public affairs, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. “There is much work to be done as the campaign season gets into full swing. It’s on to November!”

LRC-PAC will determine an appropriate level of support it will provide to assist each of its endorsed candidates in the upcoming campaign. The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7.

The LRC-PAC’s endorsement process includes a review of a candidate’s performance, a written questionnaire, and, in some cases, an in-person interview. Only after this process is completed and a vote of the LRC-PAC Board is taken can a candidate be endorsed and be considered for financial support.

Learn more about the LRC-PAC at www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac. ●

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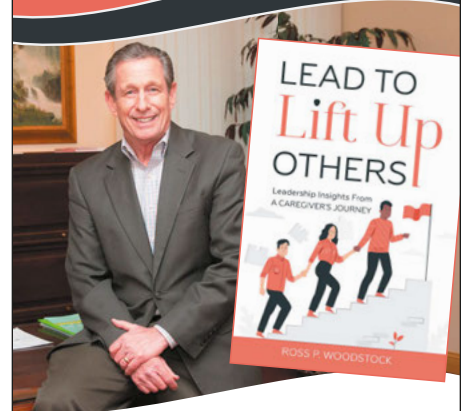
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Current State Legislation Impacting Businesses

As part of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce's (LRCC) commitment to keeping the business community informed and empowered, we are pleased to provide a fall update on the state legislation that could potentially impact businesses in our region.

Throughout this legislative session, the LRCC has been diligently monitoring several key bills that hold significance for our business community. We believe it is essential to stay abreast of these developments, as they may influence operations, opportunities, and overall business climate in the region.

The bills the LRCC is currently following are as follows:

1. **House Bill 4237**, which would grant local units of government the right to adopt, enforce, or administer an ordinance, policy, or resolution that imposes certain requirements or regulations on an employer, including the payment of a minimum wage higher than the state minimum wage, the provision of paid or unpaid leave time or other fringe benefits, regulations on work stoppages or strikes, and regulations on the information requested or excluded on an employment application or during a job interview.
2. **House Bill 4390**, which seeks to define an "independent contractor" as a worker who meets all three of the following criteria:
 - a. The individual is free from the employer's control and direction in connection with the performance of the work
 - b. The individual performs work that is outside the usual course of the employer's business.
 - c. The individual is customarily engaged in an independently established trade, occupation, or business of the same work performed by the individual for the employer.
3. **House Bill 4399**, which seeks to prohibit employers from requiring employees to agree to a non-compete clause.
4. **House Bill 4406** that would require employers to provide wage information for "similarly situated" employees within 30 days of an employee's request. "Wage information" includes salary, hourly wage, bonus pay, overtime pay, and other forms of compensation provided by the employer. Unlike laws in other states, HB 4406 would not require Michigan employers to disclose a position's wage range in job postings.
5. **House Bill 4526, House Bill 4527, and House Bill 4528**, which would move aggregate permitting from the local level to the state level.
6. **House Bill 4231** which would repeal 2011 PA 98, the Michigan Fair and Open Competition in Governmental Construction Act, a law that restricts the use of project labor agreements (PLAs) in state and local government construction contracts.
7. **Senate Bill 228**, would repeal the act preempting local regulations.
8. **Senate Bill 329**, which would establish "bad faith" policy for an insurer's failure to settle a claim when, considering all of the circumstances, the insurer could and should have done so had it acted fairly and reasonably toward its insured and with due regard for the insured's interests.
9. **Senate Bill 408**, which would revise on the procedure for collection of judgments for businesses to collect on debts. ●



Op-Ed: Regional Collaboration is Making a Difference

Six years ago, a bipartisan group representing the Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham County Boards of Commissioners as well as Michigan State University and the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce announced a landmark regional partnership: the Capital Council of Government (CAPCOG). CAPCOG's mission is to work collaboratively to support regional economic development and growth opportunities for the Greater Lansing region at the Michigan State Legislature.



Showers



Mott



Sebolt

Through the years, CAPCOG has been instrumental in crafting and executing plans for the Lansing region to secure state funding for key infrastructure projects. Among recent projects that were secured was the Coleman Road Extension, running along the Ingham/Clinton County line, which is proving to be helpful for traffic flow in the area and opening exciting new development opportunities. CAPCOG also worked to secure funding for the construction of the Heritage Hall visitor center adjacent to the Michigan Capitol Building and two-way streets in downtown Lansing.

Today, we are excited to report that CAPCOG, in conjunction with numerous other local and state stakeholders has achieved an astounding record of accomplishments that combined are taking our region to “the next level.”

The spending plan approved in the state legislature and Governor Gretchen Whitmer included more than \$200 million in funding that was proposed in the Capital Regional Improvement Support package that was developed by more than a dozen regional organizations. We owe a debt of gratitude to our local state lawmakers for their bipartisan efforts to secure funding for this crucial

package. We offer particular thanks for the outstanding leadership of State Senator Sarah Anthony, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee and State Rep. Angela Witwer, chair of the House Appropriations Committee.

Though CAPCOG represents a diverse group of communities in the region, we share the view that building a strong central city of Lansing is to the benefit of everyone in the tri-county area. The latest announcement made by Lansing Mayor Andy Schor for \$11.62 million reconstruction of the Michigan Avenue Corridor has been a top priority for CAPCOG. This corridor is key to the overall economic development strategy of the region as it connects our state's capital complex to Michigan State University.

“CAPCOG has been instrumental in crafting and executing plans for the Lansing region to secure state funding for key infrastructure projects.”

In previous decades our region has struggled to get beyond political turf struggles and partisan differences to achieve progress. CAPCOG continues to succeed in breaking down those barriers. We are made up of elected officials from both political parties and governments that represent urban, suburban and rural interests. Yet, we have managed to set all of that aside to achieve goals that a few years ago might have been unthinkable.

There is much more work to do, yet; CAPCOG's track record of the past few years clearly proves that when we set aside our differences and focus on common goals, there is no limit to what we can achieve—together! ●

Robert Showers is chair of the Clinton County Board of Commissioners. Jim Mott is chair of the Eaton County Board of Commissioners. Ryan Sebolt is chair of the Ingham County Board of Commissioners.

Chamber Events

Your Connection to Professional Development and Networking Success

From professional development to networking, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce hosts events to fit every need. A full list of events is located on the Chamber Calendar on the LRCC website.



NEW HIRES



Roragen

Foster Swift Collins & Smith PC welcomes attorney, **Kevin J. Roragen**, to the firm's Lansing Office. Roragen represents clients on commercial and real estate

litigation and transactional matters, primarily in the areas of commercial development and construction, sales, municipal land use regulation, oil and gas, tax, and other commercial and business matters.

The Greater Lansing Sports Authority (GLSA) is pleased to announce that it has named **Barbara Powers** its new sports events manager. Prior to joining GLSA, Powers worked for seven

seasons in Hockey Operations at Michigan State University. Powers will work to coordinate and manage several GLSA-created events, serve as the local organizing committee member on GLSA-secured events and manage long-term and ongoing event partnerships.



Adams

Scott Adams has joined **NAI Mid-Michigan** as a commercial real estate advisor. With over 25 years of experience in the industry, he will focus on the sale and leasing

of properties in the Lansing area. Adams is passionate about helping businesses grow and succeed and is committed to providing the highest level of service to NAI's clients.



Hunt

Hope & Teal Designs is thrilled to announce the addition of **Cheryl Hunt**, a seasoned operations specialist, to their team. With over 20 years

of experience in administration, operations, and finance, Hunt brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to their small but mighty company. Hunt will play a crucial role in supporting their promotional products, printing, and creative endeavors, as well as managing backend operations and accounting duties.

Custom Built Design & Remodeling is thrilled to announce the hiring of **Joey Cahn** for the position of content manager. Working remotely from Fresno,

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California, Cahn brings valuable writing and marketing expertise that will enrich Custom Built's content, from blogs to social media and email marketing. Cahn is driven by his passion for service, an essential quality supporting Custom Built's mission to empower families to love their homes again.



Kondratyev

Horizon Bank is pleased to announce **Dmitry Kondratyev** as vice president, senior commercial loan officer. Kondratyev will originate commercial loans, deposits and provide advice on treasury management, wealth, and private banking products.



Sermak

Dan Sermak joined **Colliers** on July 24, as a senior property manager in the Lansing office. Sermak will be responsible for the Dart account and other REMS assignments in the Lansing market. Sermak brings over 27 years of property management experience in all product types including office, retail, industrial, medical and residential.



Lloyd

Harbor Strategic Public Affairs welcomes **Eric Lloyd** as its new director of public relations. Lloyd comes to Harbor's team after spending the last five years as the chief political reporter for TV 9 & 10 News in the Traverse City media market and served as a sports reporter on Grand Rapids' WZZM news team

before that. Connect with Eric for your public relations needs at harborstrategic.com.



Murshak

Mikhail "Mike" Murshak joined the Lansing office of **Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.** in June. Murshak is a licensed patent attorney and has extensive experience in a wide range of intellectual property matters including patent, trademark strategy and acquisition, and general IP and business counseling including preparation, prosecution, and licensing.

AWARDS



Sparrow Ionia Hospital has honored two caregivers for their compassionate and dedicated approach toward patients and their team members. Surgical Services **Nurse Hally Reule, RN**, was named **DAISY Award** honoree based on a patient nomination for her considerate and understanding character during the patient's recent stay. Nominated by fellow caregivers, Sparrow Medical Group (SMG) Ionia Medical Assistant **Katelyn VanDerske, MA**, received

the **BEE Award** for transcending expectations to support caregivers whenever and wherever needed to make the entire team better.



LAFCU was recognized at the Michigan Credit Union League's annual conference with the Innovation Award for its internal cybersecurity awareness campaign. LAFCU's **Ryan Larson** was named the MCUL Young Professional of the Year and was recognized for his dedication and leadership as the credit union's government affairs representative.



Sparrow Carson Hospital is proud to recognize Maintenance Technician **Ryan Parshall** as their Caregiver of the Quarter for providing excellent support to his colleagues and his willingness to respond to the needs of

patients and caregivers. Parshall was nominated for the honor by multiple nursing leaders. One nomination noted how Parshall spent hours working on the roof during the hottest part of the summer to alleviate an air conditioning issue.

LocaliQ is honored and thrilled to share that their digital marketing platform was named Product of the Year in the 2023 Sales and Marketing Awards program, also known as The Sammys. Presented by the Business Intelligence Group, The Sammys highlight organizations and products that help solve the challenges businesses have connecting and collaborating with prospects and customers.



Several **E.W. Sparrow Hospital** caregivers were recently recognized for going above and beyond to deliver compassionate care and a special wish to a patient nearing the end of his life. While on a ventilator, the patient wrote a note to Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) nurse **Nick Stedtefeld** saying he wanted to go outdoors one last time before he died. Stedtefeld and MICU assistant manager **Erin Muller**, along with Respiratory Therapists **Jenny Fry** and **Wade Stacey**, were able to make the wish come true, arranging for the patient to go outside on the helipad atop the Sparrow Tower for 45 minutes.

CATA has received a Gold recognition in the American Public Transportation Association's Sustainability Commitment Program. In 2019, CATA formulated

a strategic plan that emphasized their core values, including a dedication to sustainable solutions as responsible stewards of the community and the planet. CATA appointed a sustainability champion and transitioned all three facilities to utilize 100 percent renewable energy sources.



Three caregivers have received **Sparrow Eaton Hospital's** highest honors for their exceptional contributions to patient care and the hospital's success. The winners of the annual Fulton Awards of Excellence were recognized during a recent ceremony. They are **Charlotte Glover**, patient specialist, who received the non-clinical service award; **Christina Koetsier**, practice manager of SMG Eaton Rapids, who received the leadership service honor and **Kate Reincke, RN**, emergency department nurse, who received the clinical service award.

Warner Norcross + Judd LLP attorneys have been selected for multiple honors by the 2023 Michigan *Super Lawyers Magazine*. From the Lansing office, **Jeffrey W. Bracken** was recognized as a Super Lawyer.

Four attorneys from the Lansing office of **Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC** have been selected to the 2023 Michigan *Super Lawyers* list while three others have been selected as "Rising Stars". Recognized as Super Lawyers were **Charles E. Barbieri, Charles A. Janssen, Scott L. Mandel** and

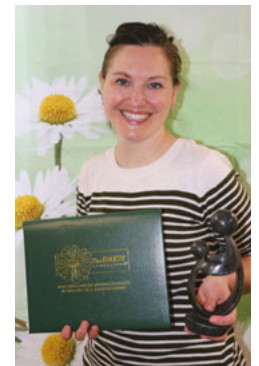
Douglas A. Mielock. Rising Stars included **Taylor A. Gast, Warren H. Krueger III** and **Brandon M.H. Schumacher**.

Nurses at **Sparrow Carson, Sparrow Eaton** and **Sparrow Ionia** hospitals have received a five-star rating for the incredible way they communicate with patients and listen to their needs. *Becker's Hospital Review*, a medical industry trade magazine, that reports on and conducts its own research on healthcare, gave the community hospital nurses five stars for nurse communication. Nurses from University of Michigan Health also received five stars. Sparrow is part of U-M Health.



Monica Thelen, RN, has been recognized with the **E.W. Sparrow Hospital** DAISY Award for her outstanding and compassionate care of a young patient nervous about having an MRI. The five-year-old boy needed to be sedated for several MRIs and Thelen, a nurse in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, went out of her way to make him feel safe and comfortable before his procedure.

A **Sparrow Hospital** nurse was honored with the DAISY Award for her compassion and willingness to take time to truly listen to her patient. Surgical Services Nurse **Jessalyn Cooper**,



RN, was named a DAISY honoree after receiving a heartfelt nomination from a patient who said Cooper took time to listen, “calmed my nerves and answered all my questions.” It was a busy surgical day, but Cooper “cared to listen to me rattle on and on.”

Sparrow Carson Hospital has recognized a surgical services nurse cited by numerous patients for the compassionate care she provides. **Lynnette Kane, RN**, was nominated by nine patients for her quality of care, compassion, and the highly effective communication she provides surgical patients. One of the nominations noted, “Lynnette definitely knows her job and how to treat patients. She was so kind and quick to get anything I needed. I didn’t have to ask her many questions, as she went over everything so thoroughly with me.”

DISTINCTIONS

Lansing Community College’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022 and qualified for a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). According to the GFOA, the certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment.



Martin

E.W. Sparrow Hospital’s chief medical officer has been named one of Crain’s Detroit Business’ 2023 Healthcare Heroes for his leadership after the Michigan State University student shootings in February. **Denny Martin, D.O.**, and the highly skilled Sparrow trauma team were

lauded for their quick response to the shootings and leading-edge efforts to save the five remaining victims. Dr. Martin was specifically cited for his honest and emotional update to the public, which included breaking down in tears after a marathon night of treating the victims.

Peckham has been Certified™ by Great Place to Work® for the ninth consecutive year. This prestigious award is based entirely on current employees’ feedback about their Peckham work experience. This year, 83% of employees said Peckham is a great place to work – compared to an average of 57% of employees at other U.S. companies.

Congratulations to the following Lansing Regional Chamber members for their recognition in the 2023 Crain’s Detroit Business Notable Leaders in Energy: **Tonya Berry**, senior vice president of transformation and engineering, **Consumers Energy**; **Heather Shawa, CFO, Lansing Board of Water & Light**; **Brian Slocum**, senior vice president and COO, **ITC Holdings**; **Rob Threlkeld**, director of global energy strategy, **General Motors**; and **Tony Tomczak**, vice president electric sales & marketing, **DTE Energy**. Notable Leaders in Energy are standout professionals developing new strategies to improve environmental sustainability, educate future leaders and create innovative products and services for utility, automotive, construction and other industries in Michigan and around the globe.

Physicians Health Plan announced it has achieved full accreditation through NCQA Health Plan Accreditation for both the Commercial HMO/POS plan as well as the Exchange HMO plan. The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving healthcare quality. NCQA Accredits and Certifies a wide

range of healthcare organizations and recognizes clinicians in key clinical areas. NCQA’s HEDIS® is the most widely used performance measurement tool in healthcare.



McLaren is working toward ensuring that no matter the reason for the visit, every patient’s experience is a positive one. One way they are working toward this goal is having Chief Experience Officer **Lynn Griffor** certified as a patient experience professional. As a certified patient experience professional, Griffor joins a group of 1,400 healthcare leaders around the globe committed to ensuring the patient experience movement continues to excel and evolve.



Jamieson

Martin Commercial Properties is pleased to share that **Thomas Jamieson** has earned the coveted SIOR (Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS®) designation as an Office Specialist. Jamieson joins an elite group of only 3,700 professionals worldwide who are regarded as the most knowledgeable and experienced brokerage practitioners.

PROMOTIONS



Evans

NAI Mid-Michigan is pleased to announce that **Megan Evans** has been promoted to the position of property manager. Evans has been a

valued member of their team for four years and has consistently demonstrated her dedication, professionalism, and leadership skills. She will be responsible for managing a portion of the portfolio of properties as well as communicating with property owners, contractors, and other stakeholders.



Rorie

LAFCU announced it has appointed **Leslie Rorie** as chief financial officer (CFO). Rorie is the first African American to hold the position in the Michigan

credit union's 87-year history. Rorie, a resident of Oak Park, joined LAFCU more than a year ago as controller. She became interim CFO in February and served in that role for four months before being appointed CFO.



Quinn

Public Policy Associates has promoted nationally-regarded public policy consultant **Daniel J. Quinn**, from education policy director to chief strategy officer in the

Lansing-based public policy research and consulting firm, which focuses on education, workforce development, criminal and juvenile justice and healthy communities.

An advisor to national, state and local policymakers, Quinn specializes in education policy, often collaborating with leaders from business, nonprofits and academic institutions.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES



McGinnity

Origami Rehabilitation announced the appointment of **John G. McGinnity, MS, PA-C**, to its esteemed Board of Directors. With over 25 years of experience,

McGinnity's distinguished career includes founding the PA Medicine Program and serving as a Professor and Director at Michigan State University's College of Osteopathic Medicine.



Murphy

Sparrow Carson Hospital is pleased to welcome **Amy Murphy**, a realtor and former nurse and teacher, to their Board of Directors for a three-year term.

Murphy leads Team Real Estate RN at Keller Williams in Lansing and has been named to the brokerage's leadership teams for finance, technology, and education.



Petersmark

Debbie Petersmark, vice president and general manager for Gray Television's **WILX-TV**, Lansing, was elected Chair of the Michigan Association of Broadcasters Board of Directors

during the organization's Annual Business Meeting on Aug. 9 at the Shinola Hotel in Detroit.

The Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) announced its 2023/2024 Executive Committee, including **Lansing Community College** Trustee **Robert Proctor** as chair. Proctor is the treasurer of the Lansing Community College Board of Trustees and an attorney, arbitrator and mediator.

COMPANY NEWS



Parks

Congratulations to **Brittany Parks Process Consulting** on their partnership with the Training Trio. This collaboration is a fantastic opportunity

to leverage the collective knowledge and experience of **Lisa Fisher**, owner of **Lisa Fisher Associates**, and **Tracy Hazel**, owner of **Advanced Training and Consulting**, creating a powerful synergy in the training industry. Together, the training trio is poised to deliver exceptional training certifications that will positively impact organizations employees and drive their success. Going PRO talent fund eligible..



Gillespie Group president **Pat Gillespie** was joined by Izzo Family Medical Center partners **Tom and Lupe Izzo**; **Kirk Ray**, President and CEO of **McLaren Greater Lansing**, part of Grand Blanc-

based McLaren Health Care; **Seth Ciabotti**, CEO of MSU Health Care; and **Dr. Robert Fitzgerald** interim president of Corewell Health Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, at an official ribbon cutting for the new \$25 million Izzo Family Medical Center development located in the University Health Park. *Photo credit: @517Visuals.*

In an effort to further strengthen efforts to foster diversity, equity and inclusion, **Warner Norcross + Judd LLP** has signed on as a Mansfield™ participant for 2023-24. The goal of Mansfield is to increase inclusivity and diversity in law firm leadership by broadening who is considered for influential leadership committees, roles and opportunities. The program works with law firms to track and evaluate appointments, elections, promotions and other critical activities that impact the pipeline of diverse candidates



Ingham Intermediate School District has officially cut the ribbon and opened the brand-new North Star School on its campus in Mason. This project will serve students with special needs by combining the programs formerly known as Secondary Learning Center and Evergreen into the North Star School. The North Star School project was made possible through a Headlee Restoration Millage which was passed by voters on March 10, 2020.

Soccer Kickers is now offering a new fundamental development Soccer Kickers program for Level 1 and Level 2. For children already experienced, there is also a new competitive program (Academy).

On top of these new programs, there are also private lessons offered. Soccer Kickers accepts children from 2-12 years old. Classes are taught by a former professional soccer player and other coaches. Learn more at www.soccerkickers.com.



High Caliber Karting & Entertainment's popular car show, the Meridian Motorfest, returned to the local entertainment facility the Sunday of Labor Day weekend. General registration, class registrations, sponsorships, and more helped raise donations for Lansing non-profit **Ele's Place**. As a part of the marketing campaign Being High Caliber in the Community, High Caliber took time to focus on another Lansing-based business, non-profit, or event and shared the spotlight with them, and for August and September. High Caliber focused on Ele's Place.



LAFCU hosted a fun and interactive event at Jackson Field after a recent Lansing Lugnuts game to kick off its new youth savings program, 'Laff-e & Friends.' LAFCU's mascot, Laff-e the Cow, now has friends Patty the Chicken, Pig E. the Pig, Bucky the Horse, and Rascal the Rat, to help teach kids

in Michigan all about savings and financial education. In celebration of the Michigan credit union's new initiative, any new account opened for up to age 11 between now and Aug. 12 will be automatically entered into a drawing for a chance at \$200.

Custom Built Design & Remodeling is excited to announce an exceptional career opportunity for the role of Project Development Advisor. This person will utilize their sales expertise to play a crucial role in cultivating prospects, turning them into qualified sales opportunities, and managing projects from concept to completion. Join their dynamic team, where your passion for guiding clients through their remodeling journey will make a lasting impact on their dream projects.

As high school athletes return to the field, **Sparrow** is reopening its Saturday Sports Injury Clinic for convenient treatment of those bumps and bruises and more serious issues that come with sports. The experienced Sparrow Medical Group (SMG) Orthopedics and Sports Medicine team of providers and athletic trainers staff the clinic, is opened Saturdays from 8-11 a.m. and will remain open every Saturday through May (excluding major holiday weekends). ●

SHARE YOUR COMPANY NEWS

LRCC members can send a press release and photo about new hires, promotions, company recognitions or awards to info@lansingchamber.org and we will share it in our popular Members on the Move section.

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