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# FOCUS

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

**OCTOBER 2023**

## MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

**50 YEARS OF IMPACT  
AND PARTNERSHIPS**



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Leadership Circle investors are proven business and community leaders. We value their commitment and applaud their efforts to strengthen our region with their leadership and appreciate the important role they play in advancing our organization.

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[Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce](https://www.youtube.com/LansingRegionalChamber)

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LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER

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## Our Commitment to Developing Talent

One of the most important initiatives to which the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) has been committed in recent years is taking a leadership position to help our region build a more robust pipeline for talent attraction and retention. Talent has consistently emerged as the number one concern in numerous surveys of our members.

Over the years, LRCC has developed several important talent programs. The seeds for one of our most successful initiatives were planted a decade ago on a drive three of us took to a conference in Kalamazoo. We launched into a conversation about potentially starting a Leadership Lansing program to help develop and equip the next generation of community leaders in the region. By the end of the day, we enthusiastically agreed that we needed to develop this concept.

Over that next year, we studied similar programs that had been successful in several other communities around Michigan. We developed a strategy for our own program which would combine speakers, panel discussions, field trips and a leadership development component. By 2015, we were ready to launch our first Leadership Lansing cohort.

We had no idea how much interest there would be in this new program. We determined that if we could get 15-20 people in the first year, we would go ahead with our plan which called for seven workshops over an eight-month period. Imagine how delighted we were to have 35 outstanding leaders sign-up for that first year! Clearly there was an interest and a need that we were able to meet.

In October, Leadership Lansing will begin its ninth year with a record cohort of 51 participants. 295 leaders in a diverse number of industry sectors have completed the program in the first eight years. We have been focused on improving the program every year. It's very rewarding each year during the Chamber's Annual Dinner when we ask everyone in the room who is in or has completed Leadership Lansing to stand up and be recognized. It is quite a sight to see and to realize how many of those leaders are connected to each other, the Chamber and towards building a better region.

LRCC has several other talent initiatives that are also making a significant impact in the region. In September, LRCC and Lansing 5:01 recognized ten outstanding young professionals during the 17th Annual 10 Over the Next Ten Awards celebration. One thing that we know for certain is that because of our work in both Leadership Lansing and 10 Over Ten, our region has an abundance of talented leaders who will guide our community for years to come.

We are also very proud of how we have been able to grow the ATHENA brand through the annual ATHENA Lansing Celebration, ATHENA PowerLink and the ATHENA WIN professional growth and development programs.

LRCC has further strengthened its commitment to talent development by recently hiring Sarah Bakken to the new position of talent development manager. Having a dedicated person providing leadership support to all these programs will solidify our efforts, on behalf of our members and businesses, to attract and retain the talent needed to support growth, investment and prosperity in the Lansing region. ●



**TIM DAMAN**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
LANSING REGIONAL  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



**One thing that we know for certain is that because of our work in both Leadership Lansing and 10 Over Ten, our region has an abundance of talented leaders who will guide our community for years to come.**

## October 2023

10/3

### LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB

**Tuesday, Oct. 3, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**  
**Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center,**  
**219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing**

The October Lansing Economic Club will focus on paving the pathway for greater student achievement and feature Jamie Vollmer. Vollmer is a former attorney and business executive turned public school advocate. He previously served as president of the Great Midwestern Ice Cream Company and participated in the Iowa Business and Education Roundtable for five years before switching careers.

**Cost:** Tickets are offered at no cost for Lansing Economic Club members, \$55 for LRCC members and \$75 for future LRCC members. A table of eight is \$425.

10/5

### LANSING REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK

**Thursday, Oct. 5, from 8 to 10 a.m.**  
**James B. Henry Center for Executive Development, 3535 Forest Road, Lansing**

Michigan State University Extension and the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce are pleased to announce the first annual Lansing Regional Economic and Fiscal Outlook. The outlook will provide a view of the next year's economic outlook on income and employment for the region along with the revenue outlook for local governments.

**Cost:** Tickets are offered at no cost.

10/10

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION SERIES: EMBRACING A DIALOGUE ABOUT GENDER EQUITY & INTERSECTIONALITY

**Tuesday, Oct. 10, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.**  
**Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,**  
**500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing**

The October Diversity, Equity and Inclusion series will be led by Lori Simon, MPA, CDM, CTA, president and principal consultant, SimonSezConsulting, LLC, and focus on embracing a dialogue about gender equity and intersectionality. In the drive for gender equity, organizations must acknowledge the need for fully inclusive gender equity that recognizes the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other dimensions of identity. Efforts to improve women representation in the leadership roles must include women from all backgrounds and experiences. When intersectionality considerations are incorporated into gender

equity strategies, organizations can reap tangible, proven benefits including better talent recruitment and retention, stronger DEI outcomes, and improved organizational performance.

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

10/10

### MEMBER MIXER

**Tuesday, Oct. 10, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.**  
**Capital Region International Airport, 4100 Capital City Boulevard, Lansing**

The Capital Region International Airport and Eaton RESA are co-hosting a member mixer to show the importance of business and education partnerships as they launch the Aviation Careers Institute.

**Cost:** Tickets are offered at no cost.

10/24

### ATHENA WIN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT SERIES: YOUR PRESENCE IS YOUR POWER

**Tuesday, Oct. 24, from 9 to 9:30 a.m.**  
**Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,**  
**500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing**

Join Gina Lisenby, founder of Revelation Road, to explore why it can be challenging to regulate our emotional responses when faced with stress and challenges, the 5 Areas of Personal Agency that enhance our resilience, indicators of a limited versus expansive mindset and personal patterns, 3 practices that help you get unstuck, stay present, and take action and how to build a resilience plan to stay confident and grounded.

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

10/25

### BUSINESS EDUCATION SERIES: MAXIMIZING PRODUCTIVITY – STRATEGIES FOR MORE EFFECTIVE WORK

**Wednesday, Oct. 25, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.**  
**Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,**  
**500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing**

Productivity is a habit and it's something you can become better at every day by choosing the methods and tricks that work for you. In the October Business Education Series program, Emmie Musser, Future of Work Strategist with TechSmith, is going to discuss some tried-and-true strategies for more productive and effective workdays.

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

## Thank You Renewing Members

American Senior Benefits/Schnepp Retirement  
 Black Wall Street of Lansing  
 Cornerstone Legal PLLC  
 HG Pontiac Inc.  
 JEM Cleaning LLC  
 Life Christian Church  
 Little Dreamers Daycare Center  
 Something Fabulous  
 T-Mobile For Business  
 Alec Garza State Farm  
 Capital Area Health Alliance  
 Lansing Promise Foundation  
 M&M Moving of Lansing  
 Pure Options  
 Cedar River Insurance Agency  
 Communities In Schools Michigan (CIS Michigan)  
 Johnson Sign Company  
 Braman Services  
 Delhi Stratford Apartments

MetroNet  
 Brady's Home and Garden  
 McDonald's - W. Saginaw Hwy.  
 Greg Coyne  
 Outdoor Expressions  
 Landscaping LLC  
 Staples  
 Burger King - 505 E. Saginaw St  
 Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc.  
 Lisa Fisher Associates  
 MBH Trucking, LLC  
 SecurAlarm Systems Inc  
 Baryames Cleaners  
 Hiring Solutions  
 Public Sector Consultants  
 Riverfront Business Center  
 Spicer Group, Inc. - Lansing Area  
 Consumers Concrete Corporation  
 Haddads Agency - Farm Bureau Insurance  
 Willows at East Lansing

Buckingham Strategic Wealth - Grand Ledge  
 The Meridian Company  
 Integrated Strategies Incorporated  
 Warner Norcross + Judd LLP  
 Triton Industries Inc.  
 Campbell Inc. Press Repair  
 DC Engineering, PC  
 Lansing Glass Co.  
 Jon Anthony Florist dba Ha-Jon, Inc.  
 McKinney & Associates  
 Hobbs + Black Architects, Inc.  
 The Plant Professionals, Inc.  
 Dickinson Wright PLLC  
 Dean Transportation, Inc.  
 Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.  
 Michigan Automobile Dealers Association  
 Michigan State University (MSU)

## Chamber Milestones

**Dean Transportation, Inc.**  
45 Years

**Lansing Glass Co.**  
25 Years

**Consumers Concrete Corporation**  
10 Years

**Haddads Agency - Farm Bureau Insurance**  
10 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!*

**Willows at East Lansing**  
10 Years

**Brady's Home and Garden**  
5 Years

**McDonald's - W. Saginaw Hwy.**  
5 Years

## BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES

**Delta Township - Eaton County**

Wednesday, Oct. 4,  
9 to 10 a.m.

Great Lakes Christian College  
6211 W. Willow Highway,  
Lansing

**Lansing - Delhi Township**

Wednesday, Oct. 11,  
9 to 10 a.m.

Consumers Credit Union  
6935 S. Cedar Street, Lansing

**East Lansing - Meridian Township**

Wednesday, Oct. 18  
9 to 10 a.m.

Delta Dental of Michigan,  
4100 Okemos Road, Okemos

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](http://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.**

# Welcome New Members

### Wellness Re-invented

(517) 225-2454

[www.wellnessre-invented.com](http://www.wellnessre-invented.com)

1103 Trowbridge Rd.

East Lansing, MI 48823

### Two Men And A Truck Moving & Storage

(517) 394-7210

[www.twomenlansingmi.com](http://www.twomenlansingmi.com)

1200 Keystone Ave.

Lansing, MI 48911

### ValuPayments

(517) 410-9673

[www.valupayments.com](http://www.valupayments.com)

### JARS Cannabis

(616) 240-4752

[www.jarscannabis.com](http://www.jarscannabis.com)

6450 S. Cedar Street

Lansing, MI 48911

### Residence Inn by Marriott

(517) 886-5030

[www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/lanwe-residence-inn-lansing-west](http://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/lanwe-residence-inn-lansing-west)

922 Delta Commerce Drive

Lansing, MI 48917

### Divine Spine Chiropractic Wellness

(517) 487-2225

[www.divinespineswellness.com](http://www.divinespineswellness.com)

2016 Groesbeck Ave.

Lansing, MI 48912

### Stunio

(810) 300-5246

325 E Grand River Ave., Ste. 355

East Lansing, MI 48823

### MiMutual Mortgage

(616) 802-8389

[www.chriddennison.com](http://www.chriddennison.com)

4595 Broadmoor Ave SE Ste 100

Grand Rapids, MI 49512

### Benefits Translated

(517) 939-1981

[www.cedarrivereast.com](http://www.cedarrivereast.com)

2141 Commons Parkway

Okemos, MI 48864

## 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.



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# WKAR: Help through the Radio Reading Service for 50 years

By: Cionne Casanova, Kolt Communications, Inc.

**W**KAR Public Media provides a wide variety of services to the community thanks to its ties with Michigan State University Broadcasting. Among these services is WKAR's Radio Reading Service, which helps provide 24/7 free reading services to individuals who can't gain access to traditional reading materials due to visual or physical impairments. Brad Walker, head of operations for WKAR's Radio Reading Service, said the original move to start the service was to meet a need it saw in the community.



Walker

"50 years ago, we knew there was a need for information to be delivered to those who were blind or visually impaired," said Walker. "Back in October of 1973, WKAR's Dick Estell created the program Radio Talking Book, which would then become Radio Reading Service because it evolved so much beyond just books over the years."

The program loans out a special portable radio to qualified listeners at no cost to the user. The service content includes reading of three Michigan and two national newspapers, as well as local, state, national, and international news and features. It also includes weather forecasts and alerts, best-selling novels, grocery and department store ads, and various community events among other materials.

"The reception for the program has been great," said Walker. "Once people learn about it, they tend to express a sense of happiness that a service like this exists in such a prominent way. We are always catering to the people listening and helping them get their information in any way we can."

This free service is supported by gracious individual donors as well as local organizations looking to help their community. With 50 years to the service's name, it has done exceedingly well in providing the visually impaired with support materials to access the news.

"There are so many factors that go into keeping a program afloat, and I'm happy that I can say I'm one of the lucky ones with how much a service like ours has been supported for the last 50 years," said Walker. "From our incredible volunteers to our gracious listeners, we are so excited for how the next 50 years of WKAR's Radio Reading Service will benefit the community."



The Radio Reading Service receives a lot of community support. Over 50 volunteers who read materials either live or through recording help make this service come to life. More volunteers willing to commit one hour per week are needed. For those interested, WKAR asks you visit their site at [www.wkar.org/radio-reading-service](http://www.wkar.org/radio-reading-service) or email Brad Walker at [bradw@wkar.org](mailto:bradw@wkar.org) for more information. ●

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 Tel. 517.482.3333



**MessageMakers**



# Disability in the Workplace: An Opportunity Not a Barrier

By: Elizabeth Crumb, Vice President of Organizational Employment, Peckham

**A**s we approach National Disability Employment Awareness Month, I am continually reminded and astounded by the ways in which technology has shaped access and employment. If someone had told me 20 years ago that one day, I would be able to power and operate a wheelchair with a watch, I would have dismissed them as some futuristic science fiction lover with an impressive imagination. But, here we are in 2023, and that assistive technology is not something that only exists but is something that I and others use in our daily lives. Assistive technology includes a wide catalog of devices, equipment, and applications that individuals with disabilities use to achieve greater independence in their home, community, and work.



Crumb

At Peckham, a non-profit vocational rehabilitation agency that hires individuals with disabilities and other barriers to employment, we utilize technological advancements daily. With assistive technology becoming more mainstream, we have found creative solutions already built into the applications we employ every day - such as Live Captions in MS Teams, and accessibility tools in Microsoft to make documents and emails compatible with screen reading software.

As an organization, we prioritize listening to those we serve and empower each individual to be the expert on accessibility. We also have an employee group dedicated and passionate about accessibility solutions, education and resources. We lean to those individuals experiencing a barrier to teach us what they need to enable success and inform us on areas of improvement. This practice of “fitting the job to the person, and not the person to the job” has inspired many creative solutions and possibilities in work.

While technology has its place, employers need not overwhelm themselves with technological solutions

for greater accessibility. Sometimes it is a very small difference that can render something inaccessible. Look around your environment - is that trashcan by the bathroom door potentially blocking someone that uses a wheelchair or scooter from operating a door? Could the potted plant with trailing vines be a potential trip hazard for someone that is blind or has low vision? These seemingly innocuous items can make or break whether your environment is open, inclusive, and accessible.

While technological advancements have been astounding, it's important to note that individual autonomy must be respected. There are a lot of individual factors that determine if a piece of technology is the right piece of technology for a person. When talking about disability, accommodations, or technology, be mindful of someone else's lived experience. Disability is a highly individualized experience; talk to the person that has the disability – they are the experts on what they need, what works, and what will not.



As we celebrate the value that workers with disabilities bring to our workforce, I encourage employers to be curious enough to ask questions, humble enough to listen to what each individual needs to be successful in work, and open enough to see a disability as an opportunity and not a barrier. ●

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# Navigating Upcoming Tax Changes

By: Jen Danko, CPA, Principal, Maner Costerisan

**T**hree upcoming tax law and regulatory changes could significantly impact financial planning decisions for executives, business owners, and other high net worth individuals. It's important to be aware of and strategically plan for these changes with qualified financial advisors and tax professionals to evaluate plans and manage wealth effectively.



Danko

## INHERITED IRA WITHDRAWAL RULES

The Secure Act 2.0 introduced significant modifications for those who inherit individual retirement accounts (IRAs).

Previously, beneficiaries could stretch required minimum distributions (RMDs) out over their lifetime, allowing for tax-deferred growth. Now, most non-spousal beneficiaries who inherit an IRA after 2019 must withdraw the entire account balance within 10 years of the account owner's death. This change could result in a significant tax liability for those inheriting IRA assets.

For beneficiaries who recently inherited an IRA, the IRS waived penalties for those who did not take an annual distribution from the account between 2020 and 2023. However, RMDs must begin on all inherited IRAs starting in 2024, with the entire account still needing to be liquidated by the tenth anniversary of the original account holder's death.

High-income individuals should reevaluate their estate planning strategies with a tax advisor to adapt to the new rules and regulations. They may want to consider converting traditional IRAs to Roth IRAs to offset higher taxes for beneficiaries. Reviewing beneficiary designations and estate plan documents is crucial to align taxpayer goals with these new rules.

For those who have inherited a retirement account since 2020, consulting a tax professional is recommended to determine if an annual distribution is necessary.

## CATCH-UP CONTRIBUTIONS TO ROTH 401(K)S

The Secure Act 2.0 introduces a new requirement for high-income earners who make catch-up contributions to their 401(k) plans starting in 2026. Previously, employees aged 50 and older could contribute an extra \$7,500 to their retirement account, allowing their maximum contribution to be \$30,000. Starting in 2026, those with a wage greater

than \$145,000 will be required to make their catch-up contribution to a Roth 401(k) rather than a traditional 401(k).

This change will result in taxpayers not receiving a wage deduction for the excess contribution.

Businesses should review their employer-sponsored retirement plans to determine if they currently offer a Roth 401(k) option and work with plan administrations to implement this feature. Understanding the tax implications and incorporating this change into future financial plans is crucial.

## SUNSETTING OF THE GIFT TAX EXCLUSION

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 increased the gift and estate tax lifetime exclusion, allowing individuals to give away a significant amount during their lifetime or at their passing estate tax-free. The current exclusion amount is \$12.92 million per person (\$25.84 million for a married couple), but this increase is not permanent and will expire on Dec. 31, 2025.

Starting Jan. 1, 2026, the lifetime exclusion will significantly decrease, making a review of your net worth statement and current estate plan document essential for all.

High-worth individuals should proactively plan for this change by considering strategies to minimize future estate and income tax exposure, such as gifting strategies, trusts, or estate planning tools. Properly planned gifts can save heirs 40% in estate tax. Taxpayers with significant wealth should consult their tax advisor to discuss potential estate tax exposure and ways to mitigate future tax liabilities.

High net worth individuals must remain vigilant in tracking tax legislation changes, as they can significantly impact their financial plans. Whether understanding new rules, such as those in The Secure Act 2.0, or the importance of expiring laws, such as the lifetime exemption limits within the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, taxpayers must proactively navigate the ever-evolving tax landscape and protect their wealth for future generations. Seeking guidance from qualified financial advisors and tax professionals is essential for creating a tailored plan that aligns with individual financial goals and circumstances. ●

*Jen Danko joined Maner Costerisan in January 2023 as a principal to lead the firm's growing high net worth tax planning practice. Danko is driven to help her clients achieve their personal and wealth transfer goals while minimizing tax consequences by creating synergies between their tax and investment advisors.*



# Lansing Region’s Top Young Professionals Recognized at 10 Over the Next Ten Awards

The 17th annual 10 Over the Next Ten Awards were held on Tuesday, Sept. 19 at the University Club of MSU in East Lansing. This event recognizes Greater Lansing’s top 10 young professionals who are expected to contribute significantly to our community over the next ten years. The 10 Over the Next Ten Awards were sponsored by Independent Bank. The University Club of MSU served as the event venue sponsor. The 10 Over the Next Ten Awards were co-hosted by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) and Lansing 5:01. Michigan Premier Events served as the event management partner.

## The 2023 10 Over the Next Ten Award recipients include:



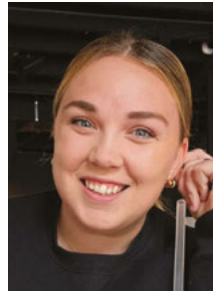
Anderson

**Paul Anderson’s** professional journey showcases diverse roles and significant accomplishments. Founding Stay Rooted Lansing, he led its transition to a non-profit, promoting community development and initiating green spaces. At Moneyball Sportswear, he excelled in e-commerce, enhancing customer engagement and relations. As a Fatherhood Coalition Advisor, he organized events and engaged communities. Paul has also left an impact through community service, memberships, and achievements, including working as a promotions committee member for Downtown Lansing Inc. As City of Lansing Leisure Services Advisory Board President since April 2019, he strategically advises on Parks and Recreation initiatives, optimizes community resources, and raises funds for community centers.



Austin

**Mikey Austin** is a musician/artist, business owner, organizer, culture curator and an equity and leadership consultant for the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. He is founder and director of OurSpace (517), which produces Lansing’s largest cultural celebration in the 517—Juneteenth weekend in Reo Town. In the past three years, Juneteenth celebrations have generated over \$100,000 in revenue for Black and Brown businesses in Lansing. OurSpace (517) also supports other organizations by providing event planning, marketing and advertising, video production, fundraising support and consultation. Mikey and his OurSpace (517) team were recipients of the 2023 Lansing Built to Last award.



Barna

**Lisa Barna** spent a decade working in economic and community development before deciding to take the plunge and open Black Dog Coffee in her hometown of Eaton Rapids. Black Dog has been one of the most rewarding and challenging things she has ever done. She feels the joy of running a profitable business that has become a gathering place and meeting the need of people in

the community. Every month, Black Dog introduces a new, unique seasonal menu, which allows them to stay on top of food and drink trends. She has plans for build-outs and developments of their building for every year until 2029. Lisa and her husband Andrew have experienced the joy of hosting seven foreign exchange students in their home. After hosting the exchange students and learning they could not have children of their own, the couple have fostered 16 children. Lisa is very active in the community, including supporting the Eaton Rapids Farmers Market and is an active member of Rotary and the Eaton Rapids Chamber of Commerce.



Feldpausch

**Kirsten Feldpausch** is special gifts manager for the Greater Lansing Food Bank. Kirsten moved to Lansing shortly prior to the Covid Pandemic and it was during that time she witnessed the character of the region. She stood alongside volunteers in the early morning hours on countless Saturdays helping to load the trunks of hundreds of neighbors’ cars with groceries they might not otherwise

be able to afford. She worked diligently to secure partners and funding for new programming to better ensure the equitable access of the GLFB services across Mid-Michigan and worked collaboratively across the organization to successfully complete a capital campaign which greatly expanded the food bank’s capacity. Kirsten has become very involved in the community including being a member of the 2022-23 Leadership Lansing cohort, the local Association of Fundraising Professionals chapter and is also a certified tourism ambassador for the greater Lansing area.

**Andrew Gauthier** is founder and co-owner of Groovy Donuts in Williamston and East Lansing. A graduate of MSU, Andrew has a successful background as a Wall Street investment banker that has served him well as he has led Groovy Donuts in becoming an award-winning



Gauthier

donut shop. In spring 2016, Groovy Donuts earned its first Top 5 ranking in Lansing City Pulse's "Top of the Town" competition and has earned a Top 3 spot in the Best Doughnuts category every year since. In June 2017, he was named "Rising Micro Entrepreneur" at the Entrepreneur Institute of Mid-Michigan's Annual Luncheon. Groovy Donuts is deeply connected to the community including delivering free donuts to teachers in East Lansing and Williamston Schools during Teacher Appreciation Week and weekly donations to Child and Family Charities, Saturday Morning Breakfast Outreach, Punks with Lunch and many others.



Hadley

**Amanda Hadley** serves as a financial advisor for Full Circle Financial Planning in Lansing. She works primarily with women entrepreneurs, divorcees, working and single moms, and widows. Working together with other strong women in the community, Amanda feels the best part of her job is helping clients to feel educated and empowered in their decisions. She is a licensed Fiduciary with a Series 65 license, having passed an exam that required several hundred hours of study, most of which she completed while taking care of her new baby and working full time. Amanda is continually involved in activities associated with the organizations that she is a part of, including events taking place in Old Town Lansing, Impression 5, and the efforts and community commitments made by TWIGS (To Work in Grateful Service). In June, she organized and co-hosted the family-centered "Touch a Truck Family Fun Fest" event in Old Town.



Hundt

**Ryan Hundt** serves as chief executive officer of Michigan Works! Association. In that role, he leads a statewide association of workforce development boards and agencies that serves thousands of job seekers and employers annually. He has a proven record of delivering innovative and impactful programs and initiatives that foster talent attraction and retention, and growth in Michigan. He is very active on boards both locally and statewide including the Michigan Economic Developers Association; Michigan Adult, Community & Alternative Education Association; State of Michigan Apprenticeship Advisory Board Member; Michigan Workforce, Training and Education Collaborative Board Member; and the Michigan College Access Network Educated Workforce Advisory Board Member.



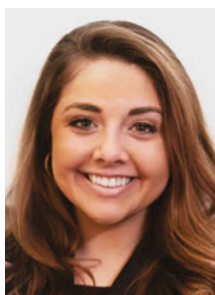
Johnson

**Myles Johnson** is a Lansing native who has always had a passion for politics and making an impact in the community. After graduating from Lansing Sexton High School and receiving a degree in advertising from Bowling Green, he returned home and decided to run for Ingham County Commissioner. He won his election with a 75 percent majority. In his first year as commissioner, he has implemented targeted infrastructure improvement initiatives, including securing funding and resources for road maintenance, public transportation, and utility services, to address the pressing infrastructure gaps in District 5, South Lansing.



Le

**Samantha Le** brings over 11 years of sales and marketing experience, specializing in real estate, to her role as associate, retail advisor at Martin Commercial Properties. Raised in Lansing, Samantha has a familiarity with and understanding of the local and regional market. She returned home from Chicago in early 2020 to be more involved in her community. Samantha is eager to take all that she has learned in a larger market and translate it here in Mid-Michigan. This will further her personal goal of fostering economic development in Lansing, making Mid-Michigan a thriving region for new business. She is very active in the community, including serving as a board member of the Capital City Film Festival and a table captain for the Ele's Place Healing Hearts Breakfast.



Rhine

**Jacqueline Rhine** serves as a sales and leasing consultant for Feldman Chevrolet of Lansing. She has thrived working in male-dominated industries her entire career. "Jac" as she is known to her friends has worked her way up in the automotive industry since 2016 to entering sales in 2018. She is a four-time certified top performer as a General Motors Mark of Excellence Winner. In 2022, she generated over \$600,000 in sales and earned the top salesperson in her building and in the top eight in the entire dealership for 2022. Community is essential to Jac. She joined a BNI group which made a profound impact on her life and showed her how strong the Lansing area's business network is. She appreciates being able to be involved in community groups including HBA, BNI Networkers of Okemos, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce and Lansing Women's Forum, all of which have helped her build business connections and more importantly, relationships and friendships. ●

## New Report: Billions Lost Due to Lack of Childcare

A new report, released last month by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation in collaboration with the Grand Rapids Chamber, Michigan Chamber, and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, highlights the staggering economic impact of Michigan's childcare crisis, which reaches nearly \$3 billion annually. This report sheds light on the urgent need for comprehensive solutions to address this challenge, and it underscores the significant consequences it has on the state's economy.

In response to this critical issue, the Lansing Regional Chamber has taken an active role as part of the statewide childcare coalition dedicated to exploring effective solutions. Regionally, the Chamber is supporting the initiatives of Capital Area Michigan Works!, the United Way of Southeast Michigan, and LEAP, who were awarded the Regional Child Care Coalition Planning grant from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. This grant aims to strategically strengthen the regional childcare system, further emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts.

The economic toll can be categorized into two main areas: direct labor costs and direct tax revenue losses. Annually,



Annually, employee turnover costs employers a staggering \$1.04 billion, while employee absences result in an additional cost of \$1.26 billion for employers.

employee turnover costs employers a staggering \$1.04 billion, while employee absences result in an additional cost of \$1.26 billion for employers. The high rate of employee turnover further contributes to a loss of \$460 million in state tax revenue. Moreover, due to employee absenteeism, the state sustains an annual loss of \$116 million, culminating in a total economic loss of \$2.88 billion, as outlined in the report.

The data presented in this report underscores the pressing need for concerted efforts and innovative solutions to address Michigan's childcare challenge comprehensively. To read the full report visit [lansingchamber.org/business-resources](https://lansingchamber.org/business-resources) and click on the Child Care Resources tab.

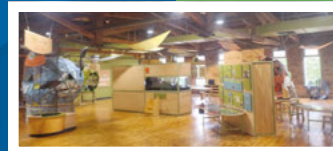
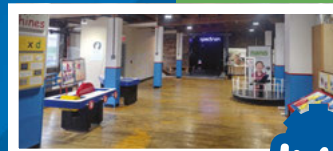
For additional information on childcare, please contact LRCC talent development manager Sarah Bakken at [sbakken@lansingchamber.org](mailto:sbakken@lansingchamber.org).

## Creating a warm & welcoming atmosphere for children to learn

After dealing with dark, aging and expensive to replace lighting, Impression 5 Science Center upgraded to long-lasting, energy-efficient LEDs. They saw immediate savings on their utility bill which helps fund other activities in the Center. With the help of BWL's Hometown Energy Savers program, Impression 5 was able to recoup 30% of the project costs in rebates and will save more than \$4,000 on their annual lighting bill.

**"We're always looking for ways to be more efficient, green, and friendly to the environment."**

– Micaela Balzer, Director of Innovation and Learning



- ▶ Incentive: \$2,287
- ▶ Project Cost (est): \$7,600
- ▶ kWh savings: 30,525
- ▶ Annual electric savings (est avg): \$4,000+



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# Building the Talent Pipeline Needed to Support Regional Growth

By: Sarah Bakken, Talent Development Manager, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce.

**W**hen you think of what a vibrant region looks like, you simply need to look around the Greater Lansing region for the answer. The signs of growth are evident in the billions of dollars of investments that are creating exciting new developments, jobs, and a more desirable community in which to live and work.



Bakken

While the prospect for continued growth is promising, there is one major concern that could undermine our success. It is a concern that we at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) have heard from our members and other community leaders; how do we attract and retain needed talent to fill the jobs of today and meet our needs for tomorrow?

In recent years, LRCC has made talent its number one policy priority, and we want to share with you many of the initiatives that we feel are addressing our community's need to fill the talent pipeline.

LRCC has been very focused on elevating the ATHENA Leadership brand to support the growth of women leaders in the region. Most recently, we announced a new partnership with ATHENA Women's Interest Network (WIN) under which LRCC will provide management support and program services. This support will allow ATHENA WIN to be impactful in executing strategies and expanding its reach. We are also quite proud of the growth of the ATHENA *PowerLink* program which annually provides an emerging woman leader a year of consulting services to support the long-term success of her business.

Entering its ninth year, Leadership Lansing (LL) has a mission of helping develop and equip the next generation of community leaders. 295 outstanding leaders in the region have completed the program, many of whom continue to connect with other LL alums in the interest of building a better region.

Greater Lansing is fortunate to have an abundance of young talent making its mark in business, education, government and community services. LRCC and Lansing 5:01 have partnered in recent years to recognize many of these outstanding young professionals in the 10 Over the Next Ten Awards.

Perhaps the most important component connected


to talent is building a community that is welcoming to all people. In 2022, LRCC launched a major initiative to support this effort. The mission has been to actively work to make diversity, equity and inclusion a priority for the business community by developing tools and opportunities that promote diverse and inclusive business practices in the Greater Lansing region.


To better assist local business with talent-related issues, LRCC has added two pages to its website. The Talent and Business Resource Navigator pages are a robust digital toolkit designed to cater to the multifaceted needs of local businesses and their workforce. The Talent and Business Resource Navigator pages are available at [lansingchamber.org](https://lansingchamber.org).

These programs combined with many other community initiatives will help create a more robust talent pipeline which will provide the foundation we need to sustain long-term regional growth and prosperity. ●

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Credit: Rod Sandford

## Play Michigan! All-Inclusive Playground Opens in Downtown Lansing

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION COMPLETES \$3.2 MILLION PARK UNIQUE TO THE REGION

**T**he Community Foundation has announced the grand opening of Play Michigan!, the region's first universally-accessible playground, on Sept. 16, 2023.

Play Michigan! is designed to meet the needs of children with physical, sensory, and developmental disabilities. The playground features wheelchair-accessible play equipment, specialty swings and ramps, sensory play areas, and other inclusive features, ensuring that children of all abilities can play side by side. The 10,000-square-foot playground is part of a 66,000-square-foot park, located at 500 W. Grand Avenue on the downtown Lansing riverfront. The park also includes a picnic deck, pavilion, and dedicated barrier-free parking. In addition, a wide boardwalk and dock allow every child to experience the waterfront. Feedback from the Autism community prompted the Foundation to add safety features to help prevent children from running to the water.

"As parents of children with disabilities, it can be so disheartening and such a struggle to find access to places and events that others attend without issue," said parents Julia and Marlon Olivas. "We are so excited and grateful for such a beautiful, sensory-friendly playground that is so well thought out to consider the needs of all community members and be accommodating and inclusive to everyone regardless

of ability, so kids like ours can have fun and enjoy themselves without barriers."

This innovative playground-park, designed to promote inclusivity and the well-being of children of all abilities, has become a reality thanks to generous of sponsors and gifts from community supporters, all matched dollar-for-dollar by the Community Foundation. Major funders include AF Group, CASE Credit Union, University of Michigan Health, Mary Free Bed, Peckham, John and Jewel Bos, Eileen and Jerry Phaner, and Linda and Joel Zylstra. Linda Zylstra initiated the concept as part of the Community Foundation's vision for developing the downtown Lansing riverfront.

"After overcoming pandemic-related delays and permitting challenges, we are delighted to unveil Play Michigan! to the public," said Laurie Strauss Baumer, president & CEO of the Community Foundation. "The original estimate of \$1.6 million doubled over time to \$3.2 million, but the Foundation was wholly committed to this project so that every child, regardless of ability, has the opportunity to play in an inclusive environment. While the Foundation led the project and contributed most of the cost, we couldn't have done it without our sponsors, donors, and partners – the City of Lansing, Wieland, Viridis Architects, Sinclair Recreation, and Disability Network." ●



MICHIGAN PREMIER EVENTS

**MID-MICHIGAN DIVERSITY BUSINESS SUMMIT**

CONNECT. EMPOWER. ELEVATE

Presented by:  PNC BANK

Tuesday, October 17th  
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center

Leaders will share invaluable and innovative insights & growth opportunities for local, small, medium businesses, entrepreneurs and corporations.

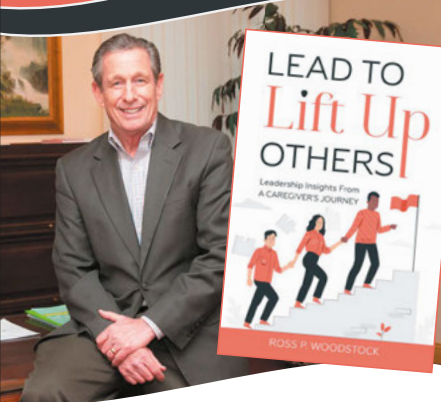
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- Start-ups
- Entrepreneurs
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- Government Leaders
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A Leadership Book with a **TWIST**



**Author: Ross Woodstock**  
Executive Coach and Leadership Consultant  
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## Best of Lansing Festival: The Ultimate Celebration of Fun and Community

A brand-new festival came to Michigan's capital city, featuring the best of the best.

The Best of Lansing was the ultimate celebration of fun, community, and so much more. The event took place at Jackson Field in Downtown Lansing in July. The celebration featured artists and creatives to retail shops and restaurants, the influencers, changemakers, and creators that make our community so unique.



"We wanted to highlight all of the movers and shakers, creators and business owners, restaurants and artists who make this community great," said Chris Sell, Lansing 5:01 and one of the event organizers. "Truly a celebration of many of the best parts of the Lansing region."

Best of Lansing featured 10 local restaurants that were sampling products to folks who bought tasting tickets and wanted to experience some of the best food in our community. Hosting the event at Jackson Field – home of the Lansing Lugnuts within Lansing's bustling stadium district – provided a venue to showcase the businesses and artists, as well as a concert featuring STARFARM, the local legendary cover band.

"We also activated Jackson Field in a unique way, installing large inflatables throughout the outfield, providing activities for families and kids," said Sell. "Capping the evening with a free fireworks show over the stadium – a rare opportunity on a non-baseball game date – was the perfect way to end the night."

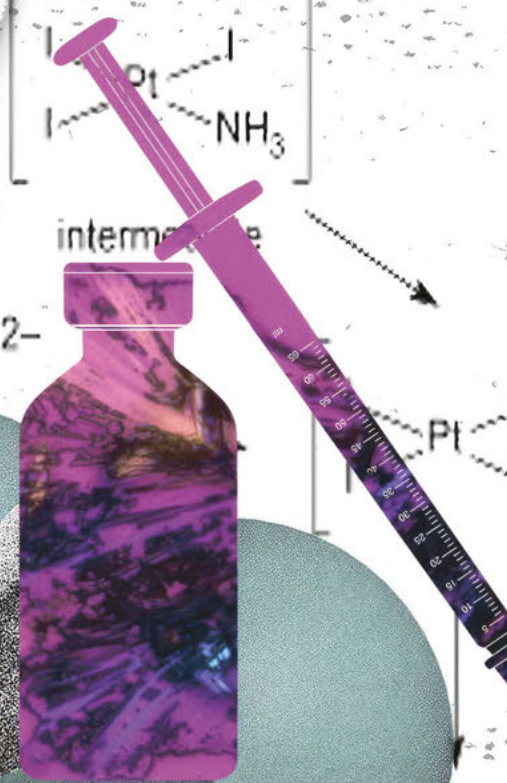
Best of Lansing welcomed approximately 3,500 people to the event, which Sell said was the biggest one-day event ever hosted in the community.

"The Best of Lansing drew plenty of attendees from the Lansing region, but it also welcomed folks from other parts of the state and the Midwest," said Sell. "We sold out of tasting tickets online prior to the event even starting that evening, which speaks to the interest from our community."

Sell said given the success of the event organizers hope to make Best of Lansing an annual event. ●

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

50 YEARS OF IMPACT AND PARTNERSHIPS



**THE MSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION** is celebrating 50 years of support for Michigan State University (MSU) and its growing leadership role in supporting an increasingly robust economic development ecosystem throughout the MSU and Greater Lansing communities as well as the entire state of Michigan.

Through the past five decades, the MSU Research Foundation has worked hand-in-hand with Michigan State University to support innovative research, technology commercialization, the arts and economic development. The Research Foundation was formed in 1973 as an independent foundation chartered to promote, encourage, and aid scientific investigation and research at the university; assist with patent matters and perform trust functions for the university's fundraising organization.

Since 1973, The MSU Research Foundation has become a national leader in support for entrepreneurship and facilitating economic development through modern commercialization practices, venture creation activity and innovation partnerships at Michigan State University and across the state of Michigan.

#### THE ORIGINS: MORE STABLE SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

During the late 1960's and early 1970's, leaders in education across the country began to understand that financial support from state governments would not be enough to sustain higher education for the long-term. Michigan State University President Dr. Clifton Wharton, Jr. was among those leaders and in early 1973, the Michigan State University Foundation was established to "...bring into being a strong, viable instrument to help serve the University and we were incorporated in early 1973."

Among the needs at Michigan State University in the early days of the Foundation was for a new library and a performing arts center. The Wharton Center for Performing Arts has since become a world class performing arts center and it was funded as a result of the Advancement Program spearheaded by Michigan State, with help from the newly created MSU Foundation.

"That was the original purpose of the Foundation, to provide value added services to enhance the University's advancement programs," said David Washburn, executive director, MSU Research Foundation.

One of the Foundation's services to the university was to help with technology commercialization. A team led by Barnett Rosenberg discovered and developed Cisplatin, which was approved by the FDA in 1979, resulting in one of the most prolific and impactful cancer therapeutics on the market, saving countless lives and enabling the establishment of an unrestricted endowment.

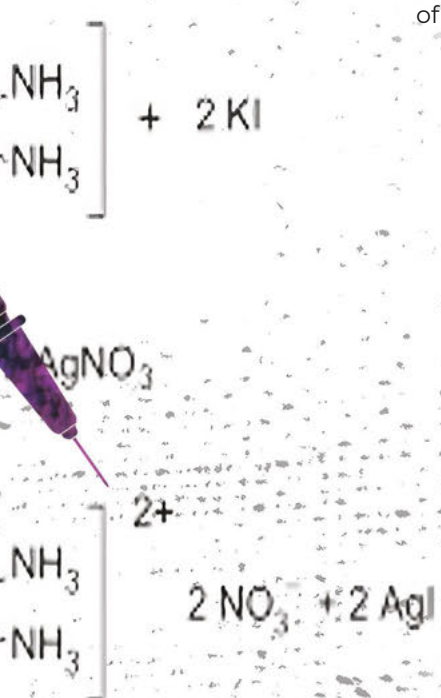
"Cisplatin and Carboplatin had a dramatic impact," said Washburn. "In addition to millions of lives saved, it generated millions of dollars in royalties over a 24-year period. That was what gave us the resources we have today to support MSU with annual grants as well as to operate all of our programs."



**Wharton**



**Washburn**



# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## 50 YEARS OF IMPACT AND PARTNERSHIPS

After the Bayh-Dole Act passed in 1980, MSU turned to supporting the transfer of technologies from the university to the marketplace with support from the Foundation. The Foundation launched its first startup company with its 1982 investment in the Lansing-based food safety company Neogen Corporation, which eventually became a public company with over 1,800 employees worldwide.

Over the past decade the Foundation established several entities designed to support the startup community. In 2012, Spartan Innovations was established as a wholly owned subsidiary focused on venture creation activities. Three years later, Red Cedar Ventures was established as a venture fund, providing early-stage financing to MSU startup companies. In 2019, the Foundation was awarded management of the Michigan Rise Pre-Seed III Fund, a \$15.3 million Pre-Seed venture fund from the State of Michigan.

“We made a decision as a Board, together with the University, that leaning into entrepreneurial activity and startups was an important thing that the Foundation should be assisting both the community and the University with,” said Randolph Cowen, MSU Research Foundation board chair and retired CIO of Goldman Sachs. “We started a committee that was focused on developing the entrepreneurial sub-system around the University. Those milestones were important in expanding our land grant philosophy and impact expanding the funds and resources we had available to build that startup ecosystem.”



Cowen

### SUPPORT FOR MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Research Foundation’s mission is to serve Michigan State University. The Foundation invested the royalties from the Cisplatin discovery to support and encourage research at Michigan State University. The portfolio has grown to half a billion dollars in restricted and unrestricted funds. Through this portfolio, the Foundation provides over \$10 million each year to MSU.

“This allows us to support research and innovation at MSU through investments of

resources and expertise while continuing to ensure support for tomorrow’s generation of MSU innovators,” said Dr. Melissa Woo, Ph.D., executive vice president for administration at MSU and president of the MSU Research Foundation. “Those dollars are vital not only for supporting MSU research, but for maintaining a strong university overall. Foundation funding helps MSU recruit and retain faculty, support the arts and humanities, and advance entrepreneurship and innovation.”



Woo

Dr. Woo says the Research Foundation benefits the university in many ways, including grants to faculty researchers, resources to recruit and retain faculty, support for students, and funds to build new facilities and acquire equipment in support of research.

“The Foundation supports the overall costs associated with commercializing intellectual property. Through the Foundation’s subsidiaries, Spartan Innovations, Red Cedar Ventures, Michigan Rise and research park, our investments help MSU achieve its economic development goals outlined in the MSU 2030 Strategic Plan,” said Dr. Woo.

### FACILITATING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The MSU Research Foundation has developed a comprehensive network of programs that provide crucial support to organizations at all stages of development in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Spartan Innovations provides business development services to commercialize intellectual property best commercialized via a new startup company. Spartan Innovations partners with regional economic development agencies and SmartZones across the state and runs six accelerator programs and associated services across locations in East Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Detroit to bring new technologies to market.

Red Cedar Ventures fund has invested more than \$10 million in over 125 companies in the ecosystem and has partnered with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to establish the



**SINCE 1973, THE MSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION HAS BECOME A NATIONAL LEADER IN SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FACILITATING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MODERN COMMERCIALIZATION PRACTICES, VENTURE CREATION ACTIVITY AND INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY AND ACROSS THE STATE OF MICHIGAN.**

## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF IMPACT: THE LEGACY OF CISPLATIN AND THE MSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION

The Michigan State University Research Foundation recently celebrated its 50th anniversary, a testament to five decades of groundbreaking research and innovation. Established to provide a stable funding source for Michigan State University, the foundation's journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, driven by the royalties from a life-saving cancer therapeutic, Cisplatin, developed by Dr. Barnett Rosenberg and his research team.

In its early years, from 1973 to 1979, the Research Foundation concentrated on fundraising, research support, and asset management. However, its trajectory shifted dramatically once the anti-cancer invention was approved by the FDA and licensed.

To commemorate this occasion, attendees at the anniversary celebration were treated to a presentation by Dr. Carolyn Johnston, a distinguished historian commissioned to chronicle the history of Cisplatin's development. Johnston, renowned for her expertise in history, particularly nineteenth-century France embarked on an undertaking to capture the oral history of those involved in the discovery and development of Cisplatin and its counterpart, Carboplatin.

During her presentation, Johnston delved into the serendipitous nature of Cisplatin's discovery, highlighting the challenges faced during its commercialization. She also explored the birth of platinum chemistry, Dr. Rosenberg's unwavering dedication to the cause, the simultaneous discovery of Carboplatin, the inception of Bristol Meyer's drug distribution, and concluded with valuable insights into the moral and political implications gleaned from Rosenberg's journey.

The History of Cisplatin/Carboplatin project signifies a broader historical endeavor, bridging the realms of cancer research, metals chemistry, and technology transfer within university settings. This initiative ensures that the journey of Cisplatin continues to inspire and inform future generations of researchers and innovators.



**Distinguished historian Dr. Carolyn Johnston shared the history of Cisplatin's development during the MSU Research Foundation's 50th Anniversary Celebration.**

Michigan Rise Pre-Seed Fund III, a \$25 million fund that invests in early-stage technology ventures across the State of Michigan. These programs have resulted in over \$1 billion in co-investment from outside venture partners and created over 1,100 new jobs in the state.

A prime example of the breadth of support the Foundation provides for startups can be seen in the emergence of Great Lakes Crystal Technologies (GLCT). The East Lansing-based company, founded in 2019, produces ultra-high quality diamond materials which are required for building advanced electronics and quantum technologies for a broad range of commercial and national security applications. Their quantum diamond materials enable GPS-free navigation sensors, and their electronic grade diamond materials enable the ultimate performance in power electronics for next generation drone and space applications.

GLCT Co-Founder, President & CEO, Keith Evans, Ph.D., says the firm would not be where it is today without the Foundation's assistance. Spartan Innovations hired Evans as an Entrepreneur in Residence (EIR) and advised him on things including legal counsel and attractively priced incorporation packages. They also provided GLCT with their initial Pre-Seed round of funding through Red Cedar Ventures, which



**Evans**

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## 50 YEARS OF IMPACT AND PARTNERSHIPS

enabled GLCT to set up an office – an important part for winning federal grant support. Later, Red Cedar Ventures and Michigan Rise participated in a very significant way in GLCT’s second and third round of financing which enabled GLCT to set up their R&D laboratory at the Van Camp Incubator and to set up their Prototype Manufacturing Plant in the Alliance Building, both properties owned by the Foundation.

“We have a growing footprint in Michigan, and it has all been enabled by MSU Research Foundation and support from others,” said Dr. Evans.

Dr. Evans says the deep support provided by the MSU Research Foundation goes well beyond the financing. They brought in consultants and introduced the GLCT team to key people. They also give regular seminars.

“They helped us understand all the state and local vehicles for support,” said Dr. Evans. “Some would bring in funds straight into the company and some would bring in funds through third parties. They continue to be a great supporter with regular calls and introductions to all sorts of potential investors and business partners.”

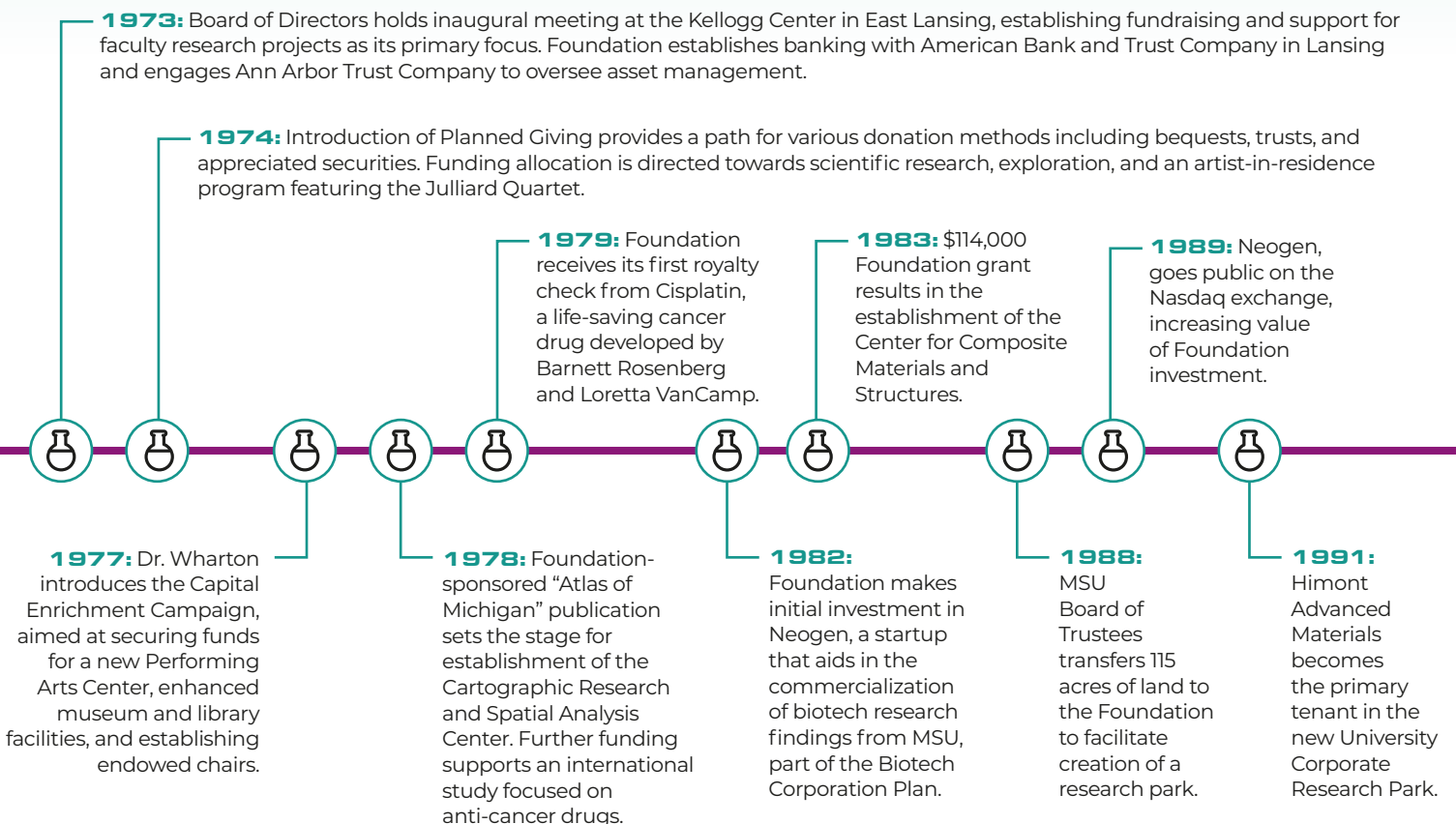
The Research Foundation’s venture team is geared towards providing support to startups at all stages of their development. Spartan Innovations works with faculty and students with an idea by providing programming and consulting services as well as smaller amounts of funding. Once a startup has demonstrated it is ready to advance to the next level, Red Cedar Ventures can potentially invest larger amounts of funding. Michigan Rise provides additional funding options using funds from both the Foundation and MEDC.

“Every piece of it seems to feed into the other piece,” said Cowen. “We now have many more angel funds we can tap into. We give them ideas. They give us ideas. It really has grown into a supportive ecosystem that spreads across those three entities.”

### FOUNDATION REAL ESTATE SPURS GROWTH

The Foundation owns and manages real estate holdings in and around the Michigan State University campus that provide spaces for their startup companies and corporation innovations partners at Michigan State University. In the late 1980s, the Research Foundation was charged with building

## MSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION OVER THE YEARS



out a research park. In 1988, the university deeded the Foundation 110 acres south of the University Club near Dunkel Road and U.S. 127, which is now known as the University Health Park.

In March 2022, McLaren Greater Lansing (MGL) opened its new \$600 million hospital facility within the University Health Park. The project includes a 240-bed hospital, a multi-specialty outpatient care center and a Karmanos Cancer Institute in partnership with MSU Health Care. The comprehensive health care facility provides new, state-of-the-art facilities to better serve patients, educate students and bring together more than 1,000 physicians, researchers, educators and other members



of academic and medical teams. McLaren Health Care Vice President Daniel Medrano, who headed up the hospital project said the Research Foundation was both a facilitator and a linchpin for MGL.

“In addition to securing the land, they also helped us develop the project including the development of adjacent roadways and infrastructure,” said Medrano. “They were invaluable in helping us work with the City of Lansing regarding utilities and other infrastructure issues.”

Medrano said the business venture between McLaren, McLaren Greater Lansing and Michigan State will impact

**1992:** Foundation contributes \$5 million to MSU, leading to the establishment of the National Center for Food Safety and Toxicology. Additional grants support faculty awards, global travel, equipment, startup ventures, and the 1992 Presidential Debate.

**2005:** Michigan Biotechnology Institute (MBI) merges with the Foundation, adding specialization in accelerating development of bio-based technologies.

**2012:** Spartan Innovations is established as a wholly owned subsidiary focused on technology transfer activities.

**2015:** Foundation is awarded management of the Michigan Rise Pre-Seed III Fund, a \$15.3 million Pre-Seed venture fund from the State of Michigan, supplemented by \$2 million from the Foundation's Impact Investment program.

**2020:** University Corporate Research Park is rebranded as the University Health Park.

**1996:** University Corporate Research Park expands with 30,000-square-foot Innovation Tech Center. Notable tenants include Entre Computers, Omnilink Communications Corporation, and Diverse Computer Marketers.

**2014:** Red Cedar Ventures is established as an early-stage venture fund, providing financing to MSU intellectual property-based companies. The RCV Pre-Seed Fund is created to invest approximately \$700K annually as initial funding for newly launched startups.

**2022:** TechSmith Corporation celebrates the grand opening of its headquarters facility at MSU Spartan Village, and McLaren commemorates the grand opening of its McLaren Greater Lansing hospital in the University Health Park.

**2023:** Foundation celebrates the grand opening of The Bridge startup incubator facility on the fourth floor of the Doug Meijer Medical Building in Grand Rapids.

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## 50 YEARS OF IMPACT AND PARTNERSHIPS

the health of the community. He cites the creation of Spartan Imaging in the new Izzo Family Imaging Center on campus, which Medrano says is the largest imaging center in the region with the latest imaging technology.

Going forward, Medrano says the relationship between McLaren and MSU Health Sciences will allow the university to recruit higher quality candidates.

“It will provide them an environment where they can do their residency program in a modern, efficient hospital with all the normal specialty care that a community hospital should have,” said Medrano. “The quality of the students at MSU will be enhanced by the ability to have modern facilities and modern technology available to them.”



**Medrano**

When TechSmith opened its new corporate headquarters on the campus of Michigan State University in September of 2022, it marked a return to where the company began its journey 30 years ago. The 63,000 square-foot, two-story office building is located on approximately five acres of land at the corner of South Crescent and Harrison Road, in East Lansing.

The TechSmith building sits on property that is owned by MSU and leased to the MSU Research Foundation. The MSU Research Foundation developed and owns the building. TechSmith relies heavily on MSU students for its talent and the proximity to MSU was ideal.

TechSmith CEO Wendy Hamilton says that many large universities have leveraged tech parks and public/private partnerships to fuel innovation as well as regional economic growth in general. She also notes that many tech firms right now are reconsidering their real estate strategy and interested in satellite offices in locations that are low-cost for commercial real estate while providing high value to the business.

“The value in this case is talent,” said Hamilton. “Unemployment remains low and the fight for talent is high. Tech firms who are located near the campus have better opportunities to recruit as well as better opportunities for innovative collaboration with all of MSU’s staff and faculty.”



**Hamilton**

### FUTURE VISION

MSU is the second largest research institution in Michigan. Washburn says MSU has a great number of



Stephen Plumbly/Tandem Studios

**In 2022, TechSmith opened its new corporate headquarters on land by the Research Foundation at MSU Spartan Village.**

opportunities in many scientific areas. The Research Foundation will continue to support MSU by helping realize the value of research and partnerships and helping to bring new technologies and new innovations into the world. The Research Foundation has come alongside MSU Health Sciences in the Grand Rapids market and is starting to do the same in the Detroit area, particularly in support of MSU’s relationship with Henry Ford Health System.

“I think we will also continue to build out a robust innovation ecosystem in the Greater Lansing area,” said Washburn. “We’ll see more and more startups and partnerships with existing companies and hospitals that want to come and work with the university.”

“When I see where we have come from since 2011, when we had this idea that entrepreneurial activity was something we wanted to lean into, we have made huge progress,” said Cowen. “We support dozens of companies and we’ve invested millions of dollars. We finished our first Red Cedar Opportunity Fund and opened a second one. We continue to support a lot of startup activity and branched out around the state.”

Cowen says he sees the Foundation continuing to grow and support more companies, more jobs and growth in the Lansing area and around the University. He hopes that will have a positive effect on MSU faculty.

“Compared to other universities, Michigan State still does not get as much value from its own research dollars in terms of the number of startups as a Stanford or M.I.T. would,” said Cowen. “I am not trying to say we’ll become those two universities, but I would like us to see where



**Great Lakes Crystal Technologies owes much of its success to support from the MSU Research Foundation. GLCT produces ultra-high quality diamond materials which are required for building advanced electronics and quantum technologies for a broad range of commercial and national security applications.**



more faculty naturally think this is something they would like to do and know where they can go to get assistance.”

“I think we’ll be doing more of the same, but with a higher velocity and more intentional about recruiting companies and faculty and students and research partnerships,” said Washburn.

As universities across the country continue to be vital engines of economic opportunity to drive

commercialization, create new businesses and jobs, the Michigan State University Research Foundation is uniquely positioned to serve as a powerful engine for economic growth in Mid-Michigan, throughout the state and across the country. ●

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**SenseSational Learning Group** celebrated its 1-year anniversary with a ribbon cutting! Sheila Hartley, the founder of SenseSational Learning Group, started the company to create inclusive and play-based learning environments for all children. SenseSational partners with teachers, parents, and business leaders to help create learning environments to support young children in an inclusive and diverse world.



Congratulations to **Buff City Soap** in Okemos for their ribbon-cutting ceremony and for joining the Lansing Regional Chamber. Buff City Soap is on a mission to create handmade products that are free of harsh ingredients and full of nourishing plant-based goodness.



**Lansing Central United Methodist Church** celebrated the 100th anniversary of their Temple House building. Built in 1922 the Temple House was created to be a community center located in the center of Lansing. Designed by Elijah Myers, designer of the Capitol building, the Temple House it has meeting spaces that can hold over 200 people, a basketball court located upstairs, and an original bowling alley built in the 1920s.



Congratulations to **Capital Prime** on their ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating their 10-year anniversary! Capital Prime is an award-winning steakhouse and seafood restaurant in Lansing. Their dishes are prepared with the finest Michigan ingredients and handpicked daily by their trained chefs.



Congratulations to **Stunio** for the launch of their new app during their ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Lansing Center. This newly designed app bridges the gap between colleges and communities and provides homeowners and small businesses with reliable help from college students.



Thank you to **Cleats Bar and Grille** for hosting our September Member Mixer! With a capacity of over 500+ on their outdoor patio, and with sunny skies after the rain, guests were able to network and meet other members and business professionals throughout the beautiful patio setting.

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W007955

# Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Announces Endorsements in East Lansing City Council Races

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) has announced its endorsements in the 2023 races for East Lansing City Council. Endorsed candidates include:

- Kerry Ebersole Singh
- Noel Garcia, Jr.
- Mark Meadows

"East Lansing has faced its fair share of challenges, which have prompted growth and opportunities for unity within city hall and the community," said Steve Japinga, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. "Electing city council members who are dedicated to fostering teamwork, establishing stability in city governance, and steering the city towards a positive trajectory is of utmost importance. Equally significant is the city officials' embrace of a cooperative approach to problem-solving, harnessing the potential of public/private partnerships for the betterment of our community."

The 2023 General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7. Endorsed candidates background:

**Kerry Ebersole Singh** is currently the executive vice president and chief talent solutions and engagement officer for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. She lists stabilizing city government as a top priority. Kerry's vision for East Lansing City Council includes implementing best practices, working collaboratively with MSU, the East Lansing schools, and the city. Kerry is committed to driving regional collaboration, spurring smart economic development growth, retaining talent, and strengthening our arts, culture, and public spaces.

**Noel Garcia, Jr.** spent 25 years in law enforcement including a variety of roles with the Lansing Police Department. Garcia is currently an instructor at the Ingham Intermediate School District Wilson Talent Center in the law enforcement program. He was appointed to the East Lansing City Council in January 2023. He believes public safety and leadership are leading priorities for East Lansing. He plans to focus on bringing stability to the city's workforce.

**Mark Meadows** has enjoyed a long career in public service including serving as mayor of East Lansing and

The Lansing Regional Chamber-PAC  
Endorsed Candidates for  
2023 East Lansing City Council

KERRY EBERSOLE SINGH      NOEL GARCIA, JR.      MARK MEADOWS

Paid for by the LRC-PAC | 500 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 200 | Lansing, MI 48922

a member of the East Lansing City Council. He also served as a state representative and assistant attorney general. He intends to focus on rebuilding the city's workforce. His other priorities include diversifying the housing stock, strengthening the city's finances and improving the local economy.

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 here: [www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac](http://www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac). ●

## ATHENA WIN



In September, ATHENA WIN hosted its Girls' Night Out Meet-Up event at the Lansing Shuffle! It was a great afternoon of socializing and networking with the ATHENA WIN Board and members. Join ATHENA WIN for their next Girls' Night Out events on Nov. 9 and on Dec. 13!

# Lansing City Council Fall Agenda & Upcoming Key Projects

The Lansing Regional Chamber, along with our regional partners, sent a letter to the Lansing City Council about the upcoming fall agenda and the incredible opportunities that lie ahead. With the recent state budget approval of millions of dollars secured for our region, it's imperative to highlight the overall efforts to advocate for these dollars in the context of our broader regional aspirations with the main focus on the city of Lansing.

## KEY PROJECTS ON THE AGENDA

- Redevelopment of City Hall Campus
- New Vision Lansing housing developments
- Revitalizing the historic Moores Park Pool & the Lansing River Trail

To read the full letter, please visit [lansingchamber.org](http://lansingchamber.org).



Courtesy: Krieger Klatt Architects

## LANSING CITY HALL MOVE ANNOUNCED

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor and Ron Boji of The Boji Group made an exciting announcement regarding moving Lansing City Hall to the former Masonic Temple Building,

which is located on Capitol Avenue in downtown Lansing. This move is part of the \$40 million state appropriation that was secured in the recent budget as part of the Capital Region Improvement Support Package (CRISP) that was led by the LRCC and our regional partners. ●

## LRCC Pints & Politics Night!

The LRCC Pints & Politics night at Kelly's Downtown was a tremendous success, uniting elected officials, staff, and influential business leaders for an evening of impactful discussions and community engagement. This event exemplified the LRCC's commitment to forging meaningful connections with our governmental officials. ●



### Thanks to our sponsors for their essential role in making this event happen:

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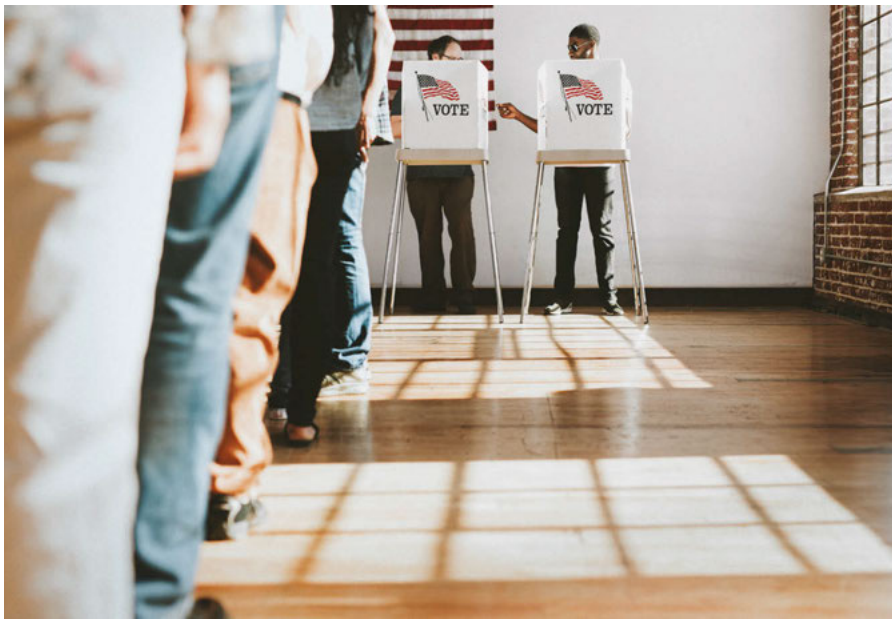


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## What's on the November 7 Ballot?

**O**n Tuesday, Nov. 7, voters will find a variety of candidates and issues on their ballots, including local candidates as well as important questions and measures specific to their respective counties. To check out where to vote and what's on your ballot, please visit [mvic.sos.state.mi.us/PublicBallot/Index](https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/PublicBallot/Index).

### CLINTON COUNTY

- Eaton County RESA (Eagle, Riley, Watertown and Westphalia Townships)
- Recall Election Eagle Township Supervisor (Eagle Township)

### EATON COUNTY

- Eaton County RESA – Special Education Millage
- Bellevue Community Schools Operating Renewal Millage

### INGHAM COUNTY

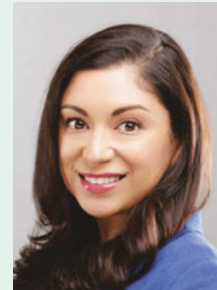
- City of East Lansing – Proposal to change commencement date of City Council Member Terms of Office
- City of East Lansing – Proposal to amend charter to change the City Council composition to seven members
- City of East Lansing – Ranked Choice Voting
- City of Lansing – Proposal for a general revision of Lansing City Charter
- City of Leslie – Proposal to amend Charter to include additional Non-Discrimination & Civil Rights protections
- City of Leslie – Proposal to amend Charter to move elections to even-numbered years
- City of Leslie – Proposal to amend Charter to remove 30-day requirement to fill City Council vacancy
- City of Leslie – Proposal to amend Charter to require city attorney draft all ordinances and amendments to ordinances
- Eaton County RESA – Special Education Millage ●



Carter



Kost



Lopez-Pehlivanoglu



Hussain

## LRC-PAC Endorsed Candidates for Lansing City Council

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) has announced its endorsements in the 2023 races for Lansing City Council. Endorsed candidates include:

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

You can learn more about the LRC-PAC, the endorsement process, and the endorsed candidates in the LRC-PAC Q2 Newsletter available at [lansingchamber.org](https://lansingchamber.org). ●



## NEW HIRES

### Custom Built Design & Remodeling

is pleased to announce the hiring of **Krista Warner** for the position of administrative assistant. Hailing from St. Clair Shores, MI, Krista aims to use her strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and friendly demeanor to positively impact families and the Lansing community during the renovation process. Custom Built is excited to see her contribute to the efficiency, success, and stellar customer service of the organization.

### The Michigan State University

**Museum** is delighted to announce the appointment of **Dr. Ethan Watrall** as curator of archaeology.

Dr. Watrall's expertise as an anthropological archaeologist coupled with his scholarly focus on the use of digital methods and computational approaches in archaeology and heritage will significantly enhance the Museum's strategic priorities



Mojkaz

### Union Bank

has announced the addition of **Heidi Mojkaz**, mortgage banker, NMLS# 933490. In her new role, Heidi will work with current and prospective

customers to gain a clear understanding of their lending needs to find the right, personalized solutions every time.



Zoss

### Downtown Lansing Inc.

welcomes **Ms. Shakayla Zoss** to the team. Shakayla recently moved back to our Great Lakes state from Arkansas and

is serving in the role of marketing

and brand specialist, helping promote the downtown district as whole, and business and downtown programs or events.



LaPere

### Delta Township

is happy to announce the selection of **Erin LaPere** as its new deputy township manager. Erin was born and raised in southeast

Michigan and graduated from Eastern Michigan University with a Bachelor of Science in English Language, graduating cum laude.



Boomer

### Delta Township

welcomes **Laura Boomer** as its new deputy clerk. Laura grew up in the Irish Hills area of Michigan and graduated from Eastern Michigan

University with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. She spent the last four and half years as the Eaton Rapids City Clerk.

## AWARDS

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) has named **LCC's Diane Roose** as the recipient of the 2023 Central Region William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award. With just two years of service at LCC, Diane is already garnering national attention as the Medical Assistant Program's lead faculty member. Roose's regional-level award marks her as a finalist for the national honor, which will be presented in October in Las Vegas. She joined LCC in 2021 and immediately took the lead in updating and streamlining the college's Medical Assistant Program to meet changing accreditation and industry standards.

**Sparrow Wound Care Services** Clinton has received national recognition for its exceptional success in keeping patients satisfied with their care. Sparrow Wound Care Services Clinton is a recipient of RestorixHealth's Patient Satisfaction Award, meeting or exceeding satisfaction benchmarks over a set period of time.

**Maner Costerisan** has been recognized as one of the top and fastest-growing U.S.-based accounting firms by INSIDE Public Accounting (IPA). The Michigan-based public accounting and business advisory firm was also named an IPA Best of the Best Firm for 2023. Maner was selected as one of the top 50 Best of the Best Firms by IPA based on its performance in management, growth, and strategic vision. The firm was also listed as an IPA 200 Fastest-Growing Firm.



**LAFCU** continues to improve the lives of Michigan residents by providing opportunities to reflect on current financial behaviors and establish ways to build financial security. The Michigan-based credit union recently awarded \$10,000 to the four winners of its 2023 Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest. The essays discussed current financial situations and how, if chosen, the funds would be used to pay down debt and work toward financial stability. The two other 2023 Pathway to Financial Transformation Essay Contest winners, Caliyah Roberson of Grand Rapids and Alexys Jordal of DeWitt were each awarded \$2,500 after LAFCU selected their one-page essays from nearly 100 submissions statewide.





**Sparrow Ionia Hospital's Kathleen (Kathy) Raby** has received a DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award for demonstrating compassionate care and actively engaging in the development of herself and others throughout her nursing career. Hospital leaders and caregivers held a surprise ceremony to reveal the honor to Raby, an RN at Sparrow Ionia's IV Specialty Infusion Center.

### DISTINCTIONS

**Loomis, Ewert, Parsley, Davis and Gotting, P.C.** is pleased to announce that *The Best Lawyers in America*® has recognized the following Loomis attorneys as Best Lawyers in their practice areas for 2024: **Michael G. Oliva, Paula K. Manis, James F. Anderton V, Jeffrey S. Theuer, Michael H. Rhodes** and **James R. Neal**. In addition, *The Best Lawyers in America*® has also recognized **James R. Neal** and **Paula K. Manis** as Lawyer of the Year for 2024.



Anderson

**Matthew D. Anderson, MS, MBA,** and his firm **Leadership Coaching for Results,** have been recognized by Manage HR as 2022's Top Executive Coaching

Company. This recognition is due to the correlation of behavioral changes leading to measurable results, with positive financial impacts averaging over \$100,000 per client since 2021.



The **Greater Lansing Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) Program** had the honor of awarding the 60,000th CTA designation in the world, via their international accreditation firm, the Certified Tourism Ambassador Network. **Melissa Zemer,** of Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities

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Authority was the lucky recipient of this honor.

Fourteen attorneys from **Foster Swift's** Lansing office were selected by their peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2024, including; **Charles E. Barbieri, Scott A. Chernich, Anna K. Gibson, Brian G. Goodenough, Matt G. Hrebec, Charles A. Janssen, Scott L. Mandel, Thomas R. Meagher, Douglas A. Mielock, Kevin J. Roragen, David R. Russell, Michael D. Sanders, Deanna Swisher** and **Brent A. Titus**. In addition, the following attorneys received additional Best Lawyers honors; **Charles A. Janssen, Scott L. Mandel, Douglas A. Mielock, Brent A. Titus** and **Jaquelyn Dupler**.

**Peckham, Inc.** has been certified as a gold-level Veteran-Friendly Employer and designated as an official Michigan Veteran Connector company by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. MVAA recognizes organizations based on their commitment to recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining veteran talent. This is the second time Peckham has been recognized at the gold-level.



For the sixth year, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) has named **Lansing Community College** a Gold-

Level Veteran-Friendly School. Gold-Level status is the highest status an educational institution can earn based on its commitment to providing on-campus, veteran-centered services. This ranking recognizes higher education institutions for their dedication to veterans, active-duty military personnel, and their dependents using the G.I. Bill and other educational benefits.

#### **Warner Norcross + Judd LLP**

attorneys have been selected for multiple honors by *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2024. Selected as Best Lawyers from the Lansing office

were **Jeffrey W. Bracken, James G. Cavanagh** and **Troy M. Cumings**. **Jeffrey W. Bracken** was also named Environmental Litigation Lawyer of the Year.



Fifty-five percent of **LCC's** current employees weren't yet born when **Rich Allen** arrived on campus in February 1973 for his first day of work. He had been hired as a student programmer in the Information Technology Department, responsible for writing specialized programs to assist Human Resources and Payroll. Within two months, Allen had proven himself, and he was hired as a full-time programmer. It was a quick start for the man who would become the first employee in college history to reach 50 years of service. LCC honored his milestone at the August 2023 annual service awards, and in celebrating his decades of work, had a chance to look at how the college's information technology has evolved over the years.

**Fraser Trebilcock** is proud to announce that 10 attorneys from Fraser Trebilcock have been selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® 2024 in Lansing. Those selected include: **Michael S. Ashton, Douglas J. Austin, Michael F. Cavanaugh, Sean P. Gallagher, Jennifer Utter Heston, Mark E. Kellogg, Thaddeus E. Morgan, Michael H. Perry, Gary C. Rogers** and **Marlaine C. Teahan**.

#### **BOARDS OF DIRECTORS/ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Matthew D. Anderson, MS, MBA,** has been appointed to serve on the

Michigan Institute for Contemporary Art (MICA) Board of Directors. As a long-time featured artist in the MICA Gallery and their traveling exhibits, Anderson will act as a representative for active and working artists.



Campbell

**Dave Campbell,** sales executive at **BRD Printing** has been elected president of Yawn Patrol Toastmasters for the 2023 – 2024 program year. Yawn Patrol

has a 70-year tradition of helping businesspeople gain confidence in leadership and communications skills. Yawn patrol meets the first, third and fifth Tuesday of the month at Origami Institute and hybrid on ZOOM. Guests and new members are welcome. Visit [www.lansingyawnpatrol.com](http://www.lansingyawnpatrol.com) for more information.

#### **COMPANY NEWS**

**Custom Built Design & Remodeling** is excited to announce the expansion of Custom Built with the opening of their new office location in Boyne City, Michigan. As of May, residents in the Boyne City area can now conveniently access their expert remodeling and design services closer to home. While their main office remains in Lansing, this new location allows them to better serve the Boyne City community with exceptional home remodeling solutions.

More affordable housing units are planned for downtown Lansing thanks to tax credits that support a \$22.5 million project spearheaded by the **Lansing Housing Commission (LHC)**. The tax credits are earmarked for LHC's \$22.5 million Riverview 220 project. The property is situated on the south side of East Kalamazoo Street between South Grand Avenue and Cherry Street.

The **Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau (GLCVB)** is excited to share that the organization is rebranding as **Choose Lansing™**. Choose Lansing™ is a non-profit, Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) that seeks to positively impact the community's quality of life by developing the tri-county area of Ingham, Clinton, and Eaton counties as a visitor destination. This was the mission of the GLCVB, and it remains its mission moving forward. Only the name and logo are changing. The Greater Lansing Sports Authority, a sub-division of the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, also underwent a rebranding process and has been renamed the Lansing Sports Commission™.

**Mahabir Wellness** is adding a new healthy natural skin care service named the Smooth as Dolphin Skin. It includes firming black snail mucai resulting in supported lifted skin.

**LCC** is proud to unveil 32 ChargePoint charging ports at the downtown campus. All employees and students are eligible to charge their electric vehicle for free for up to four hours every day. Although the service is free, employees and students must register their electric vehicle and receive a ChargePoint connection code. Codes will update each year in July and a new form will need to be submitted. Community members can use the chargers by paying \$1.98 per hour for a maximum of four hours. Beginning at four hours and one minute, the public will be charged \$10 per hour for parking plus \$1.98 per hour for charging.

**Sparrow** Forensic Pathology Services has released its Q2 report on drug-related deaths in the seven counties in which Sparrow serves as Medical Examiner. The report shows a mix of increases and decreases in drug-related deaths in local

counties from March 31 to June 30, 2023, compared with the past two quarters. The report provides detail on each drug death and the type of drug involved. The report, and other Forensic Pathology findings, can be found at [Sparrow.org/OMEReports](https://Sparrow.org/OMEReports). When you get to the page, click on "2023 Q2 Drug Report." ●



**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](mailto:info@lansingchamber.org) and we will share it in our popular Members on the Move section.

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