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FOCUS

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

NOVEMBER 2023

18TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF REGIONAL GROWTH

**ORGANIZATIONS LEADING
GREATER LANSING'S**

Transformation



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LANSING **REGIONAL** CHAMBER
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Courtesy MSUFCU

on the cover

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Celebrating Regional Growth is a Big Deal

One of the most rewarding programs that I have had the privilege to be associated with during my tenure at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce is the annual Celebration of Regional Growth Awards (CORG). When we first started the program in 2006, some people wondered if the region would have enough exciting projects for CORG to continue as an annual event. Now in its 18th year, the program and our region are stronger than ever. In fact, the 85 CORG recipients have combined to invest more than \$3 billion into Greater Lansing. That is definitely worth celebrating!

This year's honorees reflect the diverse nature of our growing regional economy. Our region is widely recognized as a leader in advance manufacturing as reflected by the decision by **ATESTEO**, a German company that is a leader in the production of EV drivetrains, to locate its North American headquarters in East Lansing. **The Shyft Group**, located in Charlotte, has launched a \$16 million expansion and upgrade of its local facilities to accommodate for production of their Blue Arc Commercial EVs. The investments by ATESTEO and Shyft Group in conjunction with General Motors/Ultium's \$3 billion investment in an EV Battery Plant in Delta Township are helping forge Lansing's identity as a global leader in emerging EV technologies.

It was back in 1982 when **Neogen** was formed here in Lansing. Neogen has grown into a global powerhouse in the food safety, animal safety and genomics arenas. Despite its success, Neogen has never forgotten its roots in Lansing. We are proud to recognize Neogen with a CORG award for its latest investment in our region, a \$70 million expansion of their food safety operation near downtown Lansing.

Lansing's Old Town neighborhood has long hoped for the redevelopment of the Temple Building which has finally been accomplished thanks to the leadership of another CORG honoree, **Michigan Community Capital (MCC)**, which worked with multiple stakeholders to coordinate a \$10 million investment which dramatically transformed the building into Temple Lofts, a beautiful five story mixed use building.

Much as MCC has dramatically upgraded a neighborhood, so too has our other CORG honoree **MSUFUCU** which has helped changed the face of downtown East Lansing with a \$43 million investment. The amazing building that is home to a branch office and seven floors of multi-use space that will become a community asset.

A big part of the mission of a Chamber of Commerce is to celebrate growth in its region, which is why we have an important showcase like the Celebration of Regional Growth. We should all take pride in the growth that is occurring in our region in advanced manufacturing, financial services and insurance, technology, higher education, transportation, healthcare and more. This growth has created a thriving and vibrant region of which we should all be proud. It's important that we take time every year to recognize and celebrate the investments so many leading businesses continue to make in our region.

Finally, a special thank you to our longtime CORG sponsors PNC Bank and Loomis Law Firm. I applaud their commitment to our region and thank them for making the CORG Awards a great community celebration. ●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Now in its 18th year, the program and our region are stronger than ever. In fact, the 85 CORG recipients have combined to invest more than \$3 billion into Greater Lansing. That is definitely worth celebrating!

November 2023

11/2

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION SERIES: FINDING YOUR WHY

Thursday, Nov. 2 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Location: Lansing Regional Chamber, 500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

The November Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Series will be led by Elaine Hardy, director of diversity, equity and inclusion for the City of East Lansing, and will explore why senior leadership, CEOs and executives need to have a clearly defined personal commitment to DEI, and why if they do not, it would be impossible to embed equity in their organizations. The engaging session will focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, and explain how these principles support the sustainability of your organization's commitment. It will highlight the allocation of resources to essential aspects of the organization and serve as a clear example for all members to follow.

Cost: The event is offered at no cost for LRCC members and \$25 for future LRCC members.

11/7

2023 CELEBRATION OF REGIONAL GROWTH AWARDS

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

As part of the Lansing Economic Club speaker series, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce will honor five organizations for their investments that are reshaping and transforming our region during the 18th annual Celebration of Regional Growth (CORG) Awards. This year we are pleased to recognize MSUFCU for the commercial office development of its Downtown East Lansing branch, Michigan Community Capital for the redevelopment of the Temple Building in Old Town ATESTEO for the investment in its North American headquarters in East Lansing, Shyft Group for their \$16 million expansion and facilities improvements for the production of commercial electric vehicles and Neogen for its \$70 million expansion in the new food safety facility in Downtown Lansing.

Cost: Tickets are \$60 for LRCC members and \$90 for future LRCC members.

11/8

LEAVE A LEGACY: FINANCIAL STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING

Wednesday, Nov. 8 from 1 to 2 p.m.
Lansing Regional Chamber, 500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

During the event, hear from business professionals and business owners on the importance of putting together a succession plan and the free resources and support available to help. This panel event will cover various types of succession plans and financial strategies to support your business goals, including employer ownership, an opportunity to sell your business to your workers and leave your legacy in Lansing.

Cost: This event is offered at no cost.

11/8

MSU BROAD ART MUSEUM TOUR

Wednesday, Nov. 8 from 3:30 to 5 p.m.
MSU Broad Art Museum, 547 E Circle Drive, East Lansing

Join us for a unique opportunity to meet Steven Bridges, Interim Director & Senior Curator and Michelle Word, Director of Education as they share what's new and exciting at the museum. This Tour will focus on two exhibits including the Resistance Training: Arts, Sports, and Civil Rights Exhibition Walkthrough and The Center for Object Research and Engagement (The CORE).

Cost: This event is offered at no cost to LRCC members only.

11/9

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH ATHENA WIN

Thursday, Nov. 9 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
The University Club of Michigan State University, 3435 Forest Road, Lansing

During the event, there will be time for mingling and networking while you enjoy wine tasting and tasty appetizers. Executive Chef John Findley will provide a demonstration of a Holiday favorite appetizer and you will take home the recipe to make and serve to your holiday guests. Enjoy a delicious dessert and watch the Fashion Show with ATHENA members modeling Holiday wear from White House Black Market. They will be showcasing holiday looks from daytime fun to nighttime glamour. Attendees will receive a discount coupon from WHBM and door prizes will be given throughout the evening.

Cost: Tickets are \$50 for ATHENA WIN members and \$60 for future ATHENA WIN members.

11/14

NOVEMBER MEMBER MIXER

Tuesday, Nov. 14 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Boji Tower, 124 W Allegan Street, Lansing

Join us at the November Member Mixer in Boji Tower, Lansing's tallest and most historic building. We will have appetizers, music, an open bar, and refreshments. We will also have some downtown Lansing giveaways to encourage folks to shop locally downtown for the upcoming holidays.

Cost: The event is offered at no cost.

VIRTUAL BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES

Delta Township – Eaton County
 Wednesday, Nov. 1 from 9 to 10 a.m.

Lansing – Delhi Township
 Wednesday, Nov. 8 from 9 to 10 a.m.

East Lansing – Meridian Township
 Wednesday, Nov. 15 from 9 to 10 a.m.

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Empowering Tomorrow's Workforce: Manufacturing Day Offers Students a Glimpse into Exciting Career Paths

By: Cindy Kangas, Executive Director, Capital Area Manufacturing Council

On October 6, members of the Capital Area Manufacturing Council extended their hospitality to hundreds of students from Ingham, Eaton, Clinton, Livingston, Shiawassee and Ionia counties. These presentations were a vital component of a nationwide initiative aimed at reshaping the public perception of manufacturing. Activities included tours, interactive workshops, employee Q&A sessions, technology showcases, and mentorship sessions focusing on career pathways.

This year, however, the climate of manufacturing is different. We gathered during a time when the automotive industry is experiencing strikes, and tiered suppliers are making difficult decisions about layoffs. This undoubtedly creates unprecedented challenges to the ecosystem that we cherish. Many of our students were scheduled to visit these facilities.

It was truly heartening to witness several other area manufacturers open their facilities to accommodate as many as six extra tours, all in an effort to ensure that Manufacturing Week remains a beacon of hope where all interested students can consider these careers. We hope this spirit of unity and resilience becomes the narrative going forward.

When we think of manufacturing in Michigan, let's remember to include aerospace and defense; steel and metal fabrication; plastics and wood manufacturing; pharmaceuticals; biotechnology; medical devices; and so much more.



Kangas

Regardless of the industry or sector, one common thread binds all members of our community - a steadfast commitment to nurturing the talent pipeline.

As we celebrate Manufacturing Week, we do so with an acknowledgment of the unique challenges we face. But we also have a sense of purpose. Let's continue to work together in building a brighter future for Michigan and its manufacturing industry. ●



New Ingham County Health Director, Dr. Adenike Shoyinka, Unveils Departmental Goals and Achievements

By: Hailey Kenward, Kolt Communications

Dr. Adenike Shoyinka is the newest health director and public health officer of the Ingham County Health Department. She took over after the retirement of Linda Vail in February of 2023.



Shoyinka

Dr. Shoyinka brings years of experience to this position, having joined the Ingham County Health Department in 2019 as medical director after spending time in clinical practice. She is board-certified in internal medicine, preventive medicine and infectious diseases.

"I am truly honored to serve in this position and work alongside my colleagues, community partners and local government members," said Dr. Shoyinka. "I could not have a better set of leaders, at every level of the organization, by my side to protect, preserve, improve and advocate for the community we serve."

Dr. Shoyinka faces daily battles against public health threats both known and unknown. Some of the threats include future pandemics, mental health issues, community violence, communicable diseases and substance use disorders.

Since the height of the pandemic, the Ingham County Health Department has been reviewing its processes and resources for responding to public health crises/emergencies.

"I am proud of the progress we have made towards reviewing our processes, but there is still a lot of work to do," said Dr. Shoyinka. "We are making strides alongside our community partners, who supported us through the pandemic, to go back to the drawing board and ensure preparedness for the benefit of all those in Ingham County and throughout Michigan. Our goal is to try to continue to improve access to public health services, particularly in populations that data show are more impacted by public health emergencies. We are also working rebuild and increase trust amongst our community members, which was eroded by the Covid-19 pandemic."

The Ingham County Health Department has recently made a great advancement in addressing the battle against substance use disorders. The installation of Narcan vending machines throughout Lansing

has been a huge win for the Ingham County Health Department.

"These vending machines work to combat the Opioid Crisis through harm reduction," said Dr. Shoyinka. "They include Narcan, alcohol wipes, condoms, fentanyl test strips, first aid kits, CPR mouth shields and many more items for free. We want to reduce the harm of substance use disorder and meet each individual where they are at. Providing resources to try to keep an individual alive, maybe the next day they will be in a space for recovery."

Dr. Shoyinka suggests that community members who have friends and family members with Opioid Use Disorder or who may potentially encounter someone having an Opioid overdose, carry Narcan and use the resources provided by the Ingham County Health Department. ●

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Lansing’s First Latino Business Expo a Success

By: Jocelyn Bellhorn, Kolt Communications, Inc.

The Latino Business Association coordinated the first Latino Business Expo in Lansing on October 7, 2023.

They gathered Latino businesses from around Michigan with the goal of promoting relationships with each other. There were 60 vendors participating in the event, which consisted of cultural performances, music, face painting and a bounce house. This successful day of Hispanic culture was sponsored by the Cafecito Caliente Group, led by Executive Director Sien Paul Benavides.



Benavides

Benavides collaborated with his group of five people as an expo team to reach out to Latino businesses in Michigan, which doubled participation in the event. Included in the 60 vendors were insurance agents, handmade items, Carpet Studio in Okemos, barber shops, construction, MSU Federal Credit Union, mortgage companies, a law firm from Detroit, a few restaurants and many others. Most vendors were from Greater Lansing, and a few traveled from Detroit and the Grand Rapids community.

Association needed a place to gather to encourage business owners to meet and collaborate. It is important to see others who are in the same field.”

Benavides was born and raised in Lansing. Throughout his life, he participated in a variety of community work. He has always been proud of his Hispanic culture and knew that many Latino businesses shared that pride. Benavides envisioned a community of all Latino businesses coming together to support each other as a family: The Latino Business Association.

The idea of coordinating an expo came from a breakfast meeting with other Latino business members. The expo was designed to highlight all Latino participants. Several members of the expo team were bilingual, thus giving the opportunity to reach out to other demographics.

With positive feedback from familiar faces, Lansing’s first Latino Business Expo was a success. The Latino Business Association plans to continue celebrating their bonds with more events later this year, including a business community mixer and a group Christmas party. The association is ready to strengthen their relationships further and promote each other’s businesses. ●

“The beauty of the Latino Business Expo was that this was possible,” said Benavides. “The Latino Business

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Supporting Veterans and Veteran-Owned Businesses in Greater Lansing

Rise Up Heating & Cooling

As we approach Veterans Day on Saturday, Nov. 11, we should reflect on the sacrifice and dedication of our servicemen and women. In the Lansing region, the spirit of patriotism and gratitude is thriving, and one of the ways we can show our support is by recognizing and patronizing veteran-owned businesses.

A veteran's journey from military service to entrepreneurship is a testament to their resilience and leadership. Local veteran and business owner Jim Bennett of Rise Up Heating & Cooling, shares his perspective saying, "Being a veteran has instilled discipline and determination, which have been invaluable in building a successful business. I am proud to contribute to the local economy while continuing to serve my community."

In addition to supporting veteran-owned businesses, we can make a positive impact on the lives of our deployed service members through initiatives like the "Cup of Joe for a Joe" program. When you buy a Cup of Joe for a Joe, your purchase is matched to a waiting service member overseas. They receive your message and a voucher, which they can redeem at their nearest on-base Green Beans Coffee café for a hot cup of coffee. This program not only provides simple comfort but also connects service members with a taste of home and the heartfelt support from back home.

Locally, InvestVets is making a significant impact by connecting employers with veteran and military



talent. This community-based organization offers a unique approach to job placement, reducing the high expectations and stress that are often associated with traditional job fairs. Comprised of stakeholders from private and public organizations and agencies, InvestVets, has built a network of more than 500 employers throughout Michigan. They play a pivotal role in helping veterans transition smoothly into civilian careers while facilitating opportunities for businesses to benefit from the unique skills and experiences that veterans bring to the workplace.

This Veterans Day and beyond, let's remember to show our appreciation for the veterans who have given so much for our freedom and community. ●



Leadership Lansing 2023-24 Cohort Largest in Program History

A record 51 leaders have enrolled in the 2023-24 Leadership Lansing program, which kicks off on October 17. Now in its ninth year, Leadership Lansing is a program sponsored by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) and is designed to develop and equip the next generation of community leaders. The eight-month program runs each year from October to May. In the first eight years of Leadership Lansing, 295 outstanding leaders from around the region have completed the program.

"We are very gratified with the record enrollment for this year's Leadership Lansing program," said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. "I think the high level of interest reflects the consistent quality of the program and how much previous participants feel they have benefitted from the experience. We think this is going to be another great year."

Leadership Lansing exposes its participants to important leadership and community issues through a combination of guest speakers, panel discussion, field trips and individual leadership training. Participants in this year's program and the organizations they represent include:

- **Jessica McGregor**, AF Group
- **Shanon Sebrell**, AF Group
- **Quinn Mahoney**, Alzheimer's Association
- **Deanna Sparks**, Board of Water & Light
- **Kade Preston**, Capital Steel & Wire
- **Erica Phillipich**, College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University
- **Dominique Devereaux**, Communities In Schools of Michigan
- **Monica Michael**, Dart Bank
- **Taylor Williams**, Dean Transportation
- **Renee Roth**, Dewpoint
- **Shakayla Zoss**, Downtown Lansing Inc.
- **Kim Thalison**, Eaton Regional Education Service Agency
- **Vlad Lebedintsev**, Eaton RESA
- **Craig Kane**, Farm Bureau Insurance of MI
- **Joel Hofman**, Granger Waste Services
- **Ariel Backus**, Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau
- **Tara Thyen**, Independent Bank
- **Sara Parkinson**, Ingham Intermediate School District
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- **Sasha Michalek**, McLaren Greater Lansing
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- **Molly Mellema**, SET SEG
- **Claire Redmer**, Small Talk Children's Advocacy Center
- **Sarah Keller**, TechSmith Corp
- **Dan Hocker**, The Christman Company
- **Maria Churchill**, The Davies Project
- **Hanna VonAchen**, Triterra
- **Megan Moody**, University Club of MSU
- **Shannon Miller**, Volunteers of America Michigan
- **Andrew Walton**, Yeo & Yeo CPAs & Advisors
- **Brooks McIntosh**, Clark Construction Company ●

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.



Learning the Tools of the Trade: Lansing's First Construction Science Expo

By: Cionne Casanova, Kolt Communications, Inc

The Michigan Aggregates Association and the Impression 5 Science Center recently held Lansing's very first Construction Science Expo that gave young students the opportunity to use spider canes, excavators, jackhammers and more to explore future career opportunities in fields such as engineering, surveying, carpentry, and welding.

"We thought it went really well, we tried to identify hands on projects with the folks that participated to garner some interest for the careers associated with that," said Price Dobernick, business manager, Plumbers and Pipefitters Union Local 333. "The feedback we got was positive and we would absolutely come back if the opportunity was there."

Plumbers and Pipefitters has an apprenticeship program called the United Association Apprenticeship that is always looking for new recruits. Organizers of the expo hoped the event would serve as a catalyst to spark some new interest in the program. The apprenticeship program provides occupational training in the Plumbing, Pipefitting, and HVAC service field that combines on-the-job experience with supplemental classroom instruction. Similar to a full-ride scholarship, the program provides over 9,000 on-the-job hours and 1,000 classroom hours over 5 years and provides the applicants with paid work as well as a Journeymen to receive multiple weld certifications and specialized skills.

"We always believe in earning while you learn. When you start with us you go into no student debt and the cost of the classes are covered," said Dobernick, who chairs the apprenticeship program. "This very first Construction Science Expo that Lansing held gave those students options besides the traditional college space."

The event was a success with over 300 students from the Lansing School District attending. Students were brought into the Impression 5 Science Center and through demonstrations students experienced various aspects of the skilled trades and many other parts of the industry.



Larson



Dobernick



"One of our goals has always been to provide youth a safe space to engage in STEM education but also push youth to think about pathways forward," said Erik Larson, executive director, Impression 5. "If they are interested in a certain content area and are thinking about what they want to do with that in the future giving them the tools and exposure to see those pathways is invaluable. Each road has different steps, and we want to be a guiding hand in how to help them accomplish those goals."

The expo not only gave students the opportunity to meet with people who work in these fields, but also provided a glimpse into what it's like to be in those industries in a meaningful way. ●



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Julie Pingston Honored with 2023 ATHENA Leadership Award

JUSTINE BELL NAMED 2024 ATHENA POWERLINK RECIPIENT

Julie Pingston, president & CEO of Choose Lansing (formerly the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau), has been named the recipient of the 2023 ATHENA Leadership Award by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC). Pingston will formally receive her award at the annual ATHENA Lansing Celebration on Wednesday, Dec. 6.

"Julie Pingston has been a relentless advocate for the Greater Lansing region for more than 31 years and is a most deserving recipient of the ATHENA Leadership Award," said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. "Julie's work as the region's number one ambassador for tourism has not only been felt throughout our community but has also been recognized on state and national levels. She has served in leadership positions on the boards of numerous non-profit organization and is most generous in her support and mentoring of other women leaders in the community."

"I am honored and humbled to be named this year's Lansing ATHENA Leadership Award recipient," said Pingston. "I have always been awed and inspired by the trailblazing women and men who have been bestowed this recognition in the past. To be included in their company is beyond anything I could have expected. I am truly blessed to get to do what I love every day for this community."

Julie Pingston has served her organization for 31 years and leads the Choose Lansing team toward the mission of positively impacting our community's quality of life by developing the region as a visitor destination. The region typically welcomes over 5.3 million visitors annually generating over \$682 million to the local economy. Choose Lansing promotes to meeting and sport event planners as well as to all types of travelers seeking to experience the diverse opportunities our community offers.

LRCC also announced that Justine Bell, owner of BeneGuides, has been named the 2024 ATHENA



Pingston



Bell



Cumberbatch

PowerLink Recipient. ATHENA *PowerLink* (APL) is a national mentoring program that connects chosen women business owners with a skilled advisory panel. The specified panel of advisors will donate an estimated \$25,000 value of business consultation services to help the business achieve the next level of success. As the 2024 APL recipient, Justine will have the opportunity to work with an advisory panel that is specifically tailored to meet her business goals.

Bell has a constant need to feel like she is making the world around her a better place to live. She discovered her niche in the health insurance field, where people seemed to have a lot of questions and even more anxiety. She found that if she could help people understand their choices and feel comfortable and safe in the choices that they were making, she would head home each day feeling happy and fulfilled.

"We are so thankful and humbled to be receiving the ATHENA *PowerLink* Award, and to have the opportunity to spend a year surrounded by the knowledge and support that comes with it," said Bell. "Thank you so much to the ATHENA *PowerLink* governing body for choosing BeneGuides."

Also being recognized at the ATHENA Lansing Celebration is Lorin Cumberbatch of Skin Studio 211 who was the 2023 ATHENA *PowerLink* recipient.

The ATHENA Lansing Celebration on Wednesday, Dec. 6, will be held from 11:30 to 1:30 at the MSU Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. Registration can be completed at lansingchamber.org. ●



Explore the Business and Talent Resource Navigators at lansingchamber.org for valuable resources to support your business and help you to connect, grow and thrive!

18TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF REGIONAL GROWTH

**ORGANIZATIONS LEADING GREATER LANSING'S
TRANSFORMATION THROUGH INVESTMENT**

FIVE

organizations honored as recipients at the 18th annual Celebration of Regional Growth (CORG) Awards are making their mark in helping transform the region's increasingly diversified economy. This year's CORG honorees have combined to invest more than \$120 million which has not only created new jobs but also revitalized neighborhoods and helped further strengthen the region's leadership role in growing industry sectors including e-mobility, vehicle electrification, life sciences and research and development.

Companies being honored at this year's CORG Awards include **ATESTEO North America, Neogen, Michigan Community Capital, Michigan State University Federal Credit Union** and **The Shyft Group**. The CORG honorees will be formally recognized at the Celebration of Regional Growth Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, Nov. 7 at the MSU Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center.

The CORG Awards is an annual event presented by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC).



The CORG program serves to recognize and celebrate the significant investments made by organizations that have contributed to the growth and vibrancy of the Greater Lansing region. Since 2006, more than 85 companies have been recognized and have combined to contribute more than \$3 billion to the regional economy.

"The investments made by this year's CORG honorees are not only significant in how they are helping transform the region today, but also in how they position our region for the future," said Tim Daman, president & CEO, LRCC. "The commitments to our region of these organizations are also certain to help leverage additional investments and continued growth in Greater Lansing for which we should all be thankful."



ATESTEO NORTH AMERICA: STRENGTHENING MICHIGAN'S LEADERSHIP IN E-MOBILITY AND ELECTRIFICATION

ATESTEO, a global provider of testing services for EV drivetrains and components, is establishing its North American headquarters in East Lansing. ATESTEO North America is a member of ATESTEO Group, a Germany-based testing services provider for automotive drivetrains. The company began serving the e-mobility industry in 2008 and provides testing services for hybrid and fully electrified auto drivetrains and components.

ATESTEO's North American headquarters in East Lansing, will install test benches to test drivetrain systems and components. The North American Headquarters in East Lansing allows the company to penetrate a major hub for automotive manufacturing and innovation. The expansion into the U.S complements ATESTEO's existing facilities across Germany and China and will allow them to offer over 200 test benches on three continents.

"The decision to enter the U.S. actually follows a business model that ATESTEO has used successfully for over 35 years in Germany and China, where our testing sites are

located close to technical universities and vocational schools," said Roy M. Schulde, president, ATESTEO North America. "This talent pool allows us to find students to help run our test benches since our tests are run on a 24/7 operation. Many of these students then join ATESTEO after graduation. In fact, I can give 2 excellent examples of how well this has worked for ATESTEO. Both



Schulde

our current and former CEO started working at ATESTEO as students running test benches!"

“
The investments made by this year's CORG honorees are not only significant in how they are helping transform the region today, but also in how they position our region for the future.
”

The project is expected to generate a total capital investment of \$27.8 million and create up to 46 well-paying jobs with the support of a \$400,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant from the Michigan Strategic Fund. Michigan was chosen for the project over competing sites in Ohio and South Carolina.

ATESTEO's new drivetrain testing and accredited calibration facility is dedicated to supporting eMobility applications, which will increase the availability of resources needed to test and validate the latest electrification technologies. The ATESTEO move to East Lansing is also expected boost Michigan's efforts to position



itself as the global leader in the future of mobility and vehicle electrification. In addition, the project will bring immediate high-wage jobs, primarily engineering and technical positions, to the region and could lead to future investment in the state.

“Michigan is known as the “Automotive Capital of the World” and has the highest concentration of automotive OEMs and Tier 1 suppliers in USA,” said Schulde. “It has been and will remain the center of future mobility development.”

MICHIGAN COMMUNITY CAPITAL: TEMPLE LOFTS BOLSTERS OLD TOWN

After nearly a decade of sitting vacant and blighted, the Temple building in Lansing’s Old Town has new life, now known as Temple Lofts.

This project redeveloped a key block in Lansing’s vibrant Old Town District. The property was purchased by Michigan Community Capital (MCC), a 501 (c) 3 non-profit, in February 2019. This rehabilitation was true to the rich history of the building while bringing new life to the space. The stunning arched window openings were highlighted, and the original stained-glass windows were repurposed into art throughout the building. The project represents a nearly \$10M investment in a historic church which may be the site of the first church to be built in Lansing.

“The project converted the two-story church into a five-story mixed use building featuring offices, retail space

and 31 apartments offering a range of rents,” said Eric Hanna, president & CEO, Michigan Community Capital. “It has nine offices, four of which are for-rent individually, and all residential units are full continuously. We are currently searching for the right retail tenant.”



Hanna

Hanna said a combination of factors that attracted MCC to the Old Town Project including a strong and well-organized commercial association and some of Lansing’s best local dining and shopping. Three other development teams unsuccessfully attempted to develop the Temple building in the past.

“Our mission is to tackle some of the toughest projects in the state in downtowns, nodes, and corridors in order to remove obstacles for private development,” said Hanna. “With this building being vacant and fading into disrepair and with it being an iconic and historic asset, it was a great candidate for our ‘at scale’ lean-in type projects. We also wanted to support Old Town by locating our offices here and to make deeper commitments to the neighborhood. We now have modest additional land holdings in the area and have future additional investments planned.”

Hanna said the project could not have been accomplished without both public and private capital and expertise. Partners include the City of Lansing, MEDC, IFF, and many enterprise level bank

investors. Execution partners include Kincaid Building Group, Integrated Architecture, Triterra Environmental, and a host of talented local trade contractors.

“Our intention is to continue this work beyond temple with a goal of adding an additional 100 units of housing within a 2-block distance from the Temple for a total of 130 new households added to the neighborhood in 10 years,” said Hanna. Already two additional nearby corners have been listed for sale in a sign that private developers and landowners see potential in the neighborhood.

MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION: EAST LANSING BRANCH ACTIVATING CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY

MSU Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU) is receiving the CORG recognition for the recently completed building, 311 Abbot, which was a \$43 million investment in the East Lansing community. The seven-story building is 87,000 square feet and houses the East Lansing Branch. It will have dedicated space for MSUFCU’s small business, wealth management and home loan solutions.

“Our goal is for the building to be a center for activity by welcoming tenants and working with community groups to host a wide variety of events,” said April Clobes, president & CEO, MSUFCU. “We will use the building to enhance the community feel and build upon the already vibrant and dynamic energy of downtown East Lansing.”



Clobes

311 Abbot was designed with a focus on sustainability, collaboration, and technology.

Clobes says the building will foster an environment where innovation thrives and ideas flourish. Its modern architecture, efficient energy systems, and thoughtful amenities reflect our commitment to creating a positive work environment. The full-service branch features an integrated design that offers sit-down



desks rather than a traditional teller line. The desks are staffed by employees who are universally trained to handle a wide variety of transactions.

“311 Abbot demonstrates our commitment to Michigan State University and the City of East Lansing,” said Clobes. “This iconic structure will serve as more than just a physical space; it will symbolize the embodiment of our core values, our aspirations, and our vision for years to come. With the building only steps

from campus, all current and future Spartans will see MSUFCU as synonymous with their alma mater.”

Each floor was thoughtfully designed as a multi-use space. The second-floor community room can accommodate up to 499 guests and has been used for a variety of community events. The third floor will be home to the Conquer Finance and Insurance Accelerator, a collaboration between MSUFCU, the MSU Research Foundation and the Eli Broad College of Business. Conquer Finance and Insurance Accelerator will attract a national audience of fintechs and insurtechs to the East Lansing region. Also on the third floor, Coworkerie, a co-working and co-study space, has been set up to promote the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the community of East Lansing and the greater Lansing region.

“311 Abbot will be a hub of activity, welcoming our employees, community members, students, and alumni,” said Clobes. “Our hope is the building will add to the hard work the East Lansing City Council and surrounding community has done to make the downtown area a vibrant and diverse urban setting.”

NEOGEN CORPORATION: \$70 MILLION EXPANSION MARKS CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO GREATER LANSING

Neogen is expanding its food safety business on E. Shiawassee Street in Downtown Lansing, with the construction of a three-story, dedicated manufacturing building. In addition to the new building, Neogen will invest in new manufacturing equipment and laboratory equipment for the test and release of products.



This 175,000-square-foot facility will be the future manufacturing space of Neogen's Petrifilm indicator testing product, which the company acquired during its merger with the former 3M Food Safety business. This investment, which will be north of \$100 million in total, will create between 60-100 new jobs, raising the number of Neogen employees in Lansing to 750 at maximum. These highly skilled positions will range from automation technicians and operators to process engineers, chemists, quality engineers, quality technicians, as well as supervisors and managers.

Neogen broke ground on the project in July of 2022, and construction remains ongoing. They expect the completion of the exterior building construction in December 2023, with validation and other progress continuing throughout the 2024 calendar year.

"I would be remiss to discuss the scope of this project without thanking all of our collaborators," said John Adent, Neogen's President and Chief Executive Officer. "This project will only be made possible through the collaboration of the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), Lansing Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Lansing Mayor's Office, Lansing City Council, Michigan Strategic Funds, Mayotte,



Adent



Mann

Christman, HED, and Triterra. On behalf of the entire Neogen team, thank you."

Neogen has a long history of growth within their attractive end markets, and, prior to the announcement and successful completion of their plans to combine existing operations with the former 3M Food Safety business, the company is looking at ways to continue upon these growth trends.

In addition, the new jobs created through the expansion will also help Neogen to grow as an organization, through internal talent development.

"We are very focused on cultivating and developing talent within our organization," said Julie Mann, Neogen's Chief Human Resources Officer. "These new roles include highly skilled positions and leadership roles, which offer opportunities for career development and advancement within Neogen. We are excited to welcome new talent and fresh minds to the company and learn and grow together."

THE SHYFT GROUP: CHARLOTTE EXPANSION TO BUILD ALL-ELECTRIC COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

The Shyft Group is being honored for its decision to invest in and expand the company's facilities in Charlotte, Mich., which will enable production of commercial electric vehicles for its Blue Arc™ EV Solutions brand, launched last year.

"We are immensely proud of our recent \$16-million investment in Charlotte, Michigan. This facility – part of a seven-building campus that is home to several



Shyft Group brands – is a testament to our commitment to innovation and sustainability,” said Jon Douyard, chief financial officer of The Shyft Group. “It will enable us to produce our Blue Arc line of all-electric walk-in vans in the Class 3-5 segment, further solidifying our position as North America's leader in specialty vehicles. Our coast-to-coast production network, combined with our Work-Driven Design™ approach, will be further bolstered by this facility.”

With the expansion, upgrades to facilities, and installation of new equipment, Shyft will have the capacity to produce up to 3,000 EVs per year in Charlotte.

“Charlotte, and the wider Lansing region, has been home to The Shyft Group for nearly 50 years,” said Douyard. “Our decision to invest further in Charlotte leverages the region's strengths, including its existing infrastructure, strategic proximity to Lansing and skilled workforce. This region has consistently supported our speed to market and scalability goals, especially in the Class 3-5 EV segment. It's not just about business; it's about our long-standing relationship with the community.”

Douyard called the facility a step forward in the company's mission to lead the commercial vehicle transition to electric. He said The Shyft Group is setting new industry benchmarks for quality and market readiness with the production of the Class 3 All-Electric Walk-In Van. The Blue Arc EV project, which includes

a commercial-grade, purpose-built EV chassis and a fully reimagined all-electric delivery walk-in van, is a testament to that commitment.

“The Shyft Group has always been forward-looking, and our history of investments in quality and innovation speaks for itself,” said Douyard. “As we continue to focus on advancing clean commercial transportation and responding to market needs, the potential for future investments remains robust. We are excited about the opportunities ahead and remain committed to leading the charge in the specialty vehicles sector.”



Douyard

Douyard said The Shyft Group's expansion would not have been possible without the co-investment and business incentives from the city of Charlotte, the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). ●



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Empowering Women in Business: The Impact of ATHENA PowerLink

The ATHENA *PowerLink* program, run through the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, is changing the game, providing invaluable support and mentorship to local female entrepreneurs looking to take their businesses to the next level.



Valentine

Before entering the ATHENA *PowerLink* program, Kathy Valentine, owner of The Plant Professionals, like so many others, grappled with missed opportunities and a lack of understanding of how to gain exposure and make professional connections. She recounts the story of how she was working tirelessly in her business yet felt unsure about how to delegate effectively and collaborate with others to unlock opportunities in her niche market.

The turning point came when Valentine became the recipient of the first ATHENA *PowerLink* award in the Lansing region in 2006. The program annually awards a selected woman business owner with a skilled advisory panel. The local advisory panel, comprised of mentors best suited to the recipients' needs, will provide free business consultation services for one year, which is a value of over \$25,000. In this case, the program was a game-changer, creating a powerful shift in Valentine's perspective.

She had the privilege of working with an illustrious panel of experts, including the late Kelly Rossman-McKinney, Toni Talbot, Cindy Whittum, Rachelle Neal, Susan Schuster, Paul Jacob, Shawn Grady, and Terry Warren. This diverse panel brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table.

This transformative experience, facilitated by the ATHENA *PowerLink* program, also led to a greater focus on finding and nurturing talent. Valentine's knowledge and confidence in running the business improved and the award exposure expanded their client base and made them more visible in the business community.

As a result, the business began to grow more intentionally, maintain a balance between projects, build a more robust management and support team and found stability, which was essential to tackle the challenges posed by the pandemic.

As Valentine's journey unfolded, she realized the impact of the ATHENA *PowerLink* program extended beyond her own



ATHENA *PowerLink*®

Valentine urges local women entrepreneurs to explore the program's requirements, work toward eligibility if necessary, and seize the opportunity to participate. The exposure, connections, and invaluable advice provided by the ATHENA *PowerLink* program's panel of experts can make a significant difference in their business journey.


You can read more about The Plant Professionals, which is celebrating their 45th anniversary next year, at www.theplantprofessionals.com. ●


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Congratulations to **JARS Cannabis** on their ribbon-cutting celebrating their new location at 6450 Cedar St., Lansing. This new facility allows JARS Cannabis to offer a wide range of high-quality products at affordable prices and build authentic relationships with their customers and communities.



Congratulations to **Triterra** on their ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating their brand-new office space at 1375 S. Washington Avenue, Suite 100, Lansing! Triterra was also celebrating a remarkable milestone of 15 years of success, growth and innovation.



Congratulations to **Sycamore Creek Church** for the grand opening of their brand-new arts hub unlike anything Lansing has seen before. The 100-200 seat stage is available for community theater groups and artists of all kinds.



Congratulations to **The Good Feet Store** on their ribbon-cutting ceremony. The Good Feet Store will help guide you to the right arch support for your lifestyle and activities.



Congratulations to **AC Hotel Lansing, Hyatt House Lansing and Toscana** on their ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating their grand opening. Within walking distance of Michigan State University, both hotels put guests close to excellent restaurants, vibrant shopping, the scenic 20-acre Lansing River Trail and more.



Congratulations to **Michigan First Credit Union** on their ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating their new location inside the Okemos Meijer at 2055 W Grand River Ave, Okemos. This Michigan First Credit Union's 29th location in Michigan.



The **Capital Region International Airport (CRIA)** and **Eaton RESA** co-hosted the October Member Mixer to showcase the importance of partnerships between business and education. During the event, Eaton RESA provided a tour of their Aviation Careers Institute's newly updated facility at the airport. Eaton RESA, in partnership with the CRIA, offers high school juniors and seniors in local school districts the unique opportunity to learn about careers in aviation, take part in classroom lessons, and utilize flight simulators to learn the basics of flight, plane management and ground school.



Congratulations to **LaFontaine Buick GMC of Lansing** for their grand opening located at 5901 S Pennsylvania Ave. The celebration was attended by many friends and colleagues. With a vast variety of both new and pre-owned vehicles available, drivers can easily find what they need.

NEW HIRES

Custom Built Design & Remodeling is delighted to announce the hiring of **Matthew Metry** for the position of videographer. Matthew features his exceptional videography skills and a keen eye for storytelling - crucial in bringing Custom Built's brand to life through captivating visuals.



Varlesi

Lansing Junk Removal would like to welcome **Joe Varlesi** to the team. Joe will serve as their sales and marketing specialist.

McLaren Greater Lansing would like to welcome **Sameerah Sharif**, nurse midwife, to the Okemos and

North Lansing McLaren Medical Group practices. Sameerah will offer support and care during pregnancy, labor and birth to women in the greater Lansing region.



Botoroaga

Brianna Botoroaga, graphic design intern, has joined **Tandem Studios** for the 2023-2024 academic year. Brianna is currently pursuing a BFA in Graphic Design at Michigan State University, graduating in May of 2024. Welcome to #teamtandem, Brianna!

AWARDS

Maner Costerisan, a full-service accounting and business

consulting firm, has been ranked No. 13 among the top mid-sized firms to work for in the United States by *Accounting Today*, the leading trade publication for the accounting industry. This is the eighth consecutive year the Michigan-based firm has been recognized with the 'Best Firms to Work For' distinction.



Margaret Dimond, the newly named regional president of **University of Michigan Health**, has been honored with a distinguished alumni award from Michigan

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State University's College of Social Science. Dimond, whose regional duties include overseeing both **Sparrow** and University of Michigan Health-West in Grand Rapids, was recognized for her proven track record of success and achieving the highest level of professional accomplishment.

Peckham has been named as one of Michigan's Best and Brightest in Wellness, a program that recognizes companies that promote employee wellbeing, worksite health and wellness. Winning companies are evaluated on best practices, along with health and wellness benchmarking standards in the industry.



McLaren Greater Lansing nurse **Zachary Ly** was honored with the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. The award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the exceptional care nurses provide every day.



The **McLaren Greater Lansing Foundation** is pleased to award the Janet M. Wendorf Outstanding Caregiver award to one of their best and most trusted clinical

RN leaders, **Terri Roth**. Terri is a passionate advocate for her patients and always puts them at the center of her daily work.

The Michigan Rise Pre-Seed Fund III was presented the Community Impact award at the Michigan Venture Capital Association (MVCA), Annual Awards Dinner at The Fillmore in Detroit, MI. The event recognizes the leaders in Michigan's entrepreneurial and investment community and celebrates their achievements. The Pre-Seed Fund III is administered by the **Michigan State University Research Foundation** through Michigan Rise, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Foundation.



Sparrow Ionia Hospital has honored one of their medical assistants with the BEE Award for her support of the team and willingness to help others. Nominated by fellow caregivers, **Casey Smith**, medical assistant at Sparrow Medical Group Saranac, received the BEE Award for her positive attitude and compassionate care towards patients.



Sparrow Clinton Hospital is pleased to announce that Lead

Phlebotomist **Mary Gardner** has received the BEE Award for her patience, professionalism, and continuously going above and beyond. The BEE Award recognizes excellence among non-clinical support caregivers who contribute to Sparrow Clinton's quality, compassionate care.

DISTINCTIONS



Maner Costerisan has been recognized as one of Southeast Michigan's Best Places

to Work. Best Companies Group, in partnership with Crain's Detroit Business, created the 'Best Places to Work in Southeast Michigan' list to recognize the top 100 companies throughout Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, Ingham, Livingston, Lapeer, Genesee, St. Clair, Monroe, Lenawee and Jackson counties.

Sparrow has been named by Forbes magazine as one of America's Best Employers, one of only a handful of Michigan hospitals to make the popular list. Forbes partnered with market research firm Statista to survey 70,000 anonymous workers at companies (minimum of 500 employees) in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.



Ashton

Fraser Trebilcock attorney **Michael S. Ashton** has been named the *Best Lawyers in America*® 2024 Utility Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Lansing.

This is a high distinction, as only one attorney in each practice area in each community is identified as "Lawyer of the Year."

Sparrow Carson and Ionia

hospitals have received a five-star rating for the experience they provide patients. Becker's Hospital Review, a medical industry trade magazine that reports on, as well as conducts, its own research on healthcare, gave the Community Hospitals the top rating based on survey questions to patients. Sparrow wound care services in Lansing and Carson City have received national awards for meeting or exceeding patient satisfaction scores. Sparrow Wound Care and Hyperbaric Services Lansing and Sparrow Wound Care Services Carson are the recipients of RestorixHealth's Patient Satisfaction Award.

PROMOTIONS

Piper & Gold (P&G), an award-winning and people-centric PR agency, has appointed **Lisa Assenmacher** as the agency's

first-ever COO. This strategic change comes after Piper & Gold announced **Cassie Cotton** as its new president this July, changing its structure to a dual leadership model with CEO and founder Kate Snyder remaining in her role.

Martin Waymire announced that **Bridgette Bauer** has been promoted to public affairs manager. Bauer has been with Martin Waymire for more than two years after starting as a student practitioner in 2021.



Kerr

Horizon Bank is pleased to announce the promotion of **Tammy Kerr** to senior vice president, director of treasury management. Kerr joined

Horizon Bank in 2016, and has played a pivotal role in leading their Michigan and Northwest Indiana treasury management teams.

COMPANY NEWS

The Karmanos Cancer Institute (KCI) at **McLaren Greater Lansing** cut the ribbon on a brand-new food pantry specifically for oncology patients receiving care at the cancer center. The McLaren Greater Lansing Foundation funded the start-up costs for building the pantry and the Greater Lansing Food Bank has partnered to prepare the boxes and provide training and support.

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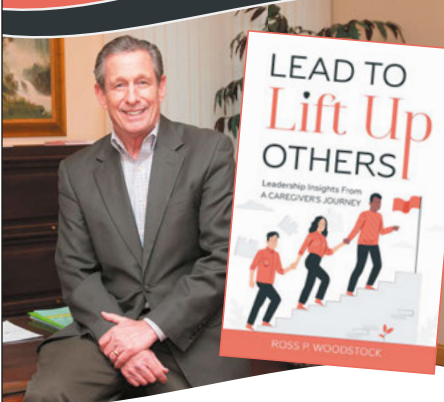
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Origami Rehabilitation hosted its annual An Evening of Reflections event in August at MSU Federal Credit Union's Headquarters. This inspiring event gave attendees the opportunity to hear stories of resilience, courage, and recovery firsthand. This year's theme was safety, trust, and support, and featured six storytellers sharing their journeys.

Custom Built Design & Remodeling partnered with the Hospice of Lansing & Stoneleigh Residence, the only non-profit hospice facility in the Lansing area. Along with renovating their facilities, Custom Built was the Title Sponsor for the Golf "Fore" Hospice Fundraiser, with all proceeds providing charitable funds to underserved and uninsured members of our community seeking quality end-of-life care. To learn more about Custom Built and HLS's partnership, visit hospiceoflansing.org/building-on-our-promise and learn more about the "Building on our Promise" campaign.



McLaren Greater Lansing is excited to offer a unique opportunity for nursing students to take their education to the next level in a hands-on clinical setting. The McLaren Greater Lansing Nursing Internship Program is a paid internship designed for

undergraduate students interested in gaining firsthand professional development while working along experienced nursing professionals. To apply, visit careers.mclaren.org/jobs/nurse-intern-14100.

The **University of Olivet** has announced that the Lansing School District (LSD) students will now be automatically admitted to the university through Olivet Direct!, a new program that makes admissions process faster and easier for qualified students.

Michigan Community Capital (MCC) is pleased to announce their award of \$65 million in New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) allocation from the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) in September. For the third annual funding round in a row, MCC has been awarded the highest allocation amount available which is reflective of MCC's track record for deploying New Markets Tax Credits into impactful and transformative projects in rural and urban communities throughout Michigan.

Sparrow and **U-M Health** are bringing specialized anesthesia services to the area, such as those used for cardiac interventions, and working to expand Sparrow's anesthesia team. Having more anesthesiologists allows more operating rooms to be open and more procedures to be scheduled.

The **MSU Research Foundation** has announced it is adding a new program to its Conquer accelerator. The program, called Conquer Finance and Insurance Accelerator, is a collaboration between the MSU Research Foundation, Michigan State University Federal Credit Union and the Eli Broad College of Business Insurance and Risk Management Program. In addition to training financial and technology startups, the goal of the program

is to make East Lansing and the state of Michigan a hub for talented entrepreneurs.

Physicians Health Plan (PHP)

announced its Medicare Advantage plan, University of Michigan Health Advantage (HMO-POS), is expanding its service area to include Calhoun, Jackson, and Kalamazoo counties for plan year 2024. In addition, Medicare beneficiaries in these counties can also shop for PHP's new PHP Medicare Advantage PPO plan, which is available throughout PHP Medicare's 17-county service area.

The Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Collaboration, Learning, and Engagement (CIRCLE)

officially launched in October, with a celebration at the MSU Museum. This innovative center aims to foster interdisciplinary collaboration across teaching, scholarship, and

engagement, providing valuable training, support, facilitation, and evaluation services.



Origami Rehabilitation hosted its Unfolding Potential Breakfast at the Kellogg Center in September. It was an inspirational morning where hearts were touched, connections were made, and Origami's mission of creating opportunities and transforming lives was furthered

in an extraordinary way. All funds raised went towards helping those Origami has the honor of serving to maximize their recovery and restore their health, ability, and independence. ●

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