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FOCUS

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

DECEMBER 2023



Julie Pingston

2023 ATHENA LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

Building Bridges & Bringing People Together

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Lansing 5:01

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Print and Mailing Services

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JOIN THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

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.

Stay Connected. **Stay Social.**

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LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER
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The Continued Growth of ATHENA's Lansing Legacy

Lansing enjoys the honor of being home to the birth of the ATHENA Leadership award. Founded 41 years ago by a determined Martha Mertz and what was originally a small band of enthusiastic supporters, ATHENA has grown into a global brand that recognizes and celebrates the very best leaders in communities around the world.

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce has been the proud home of ATHENA in our region for four decades. It is an honor every year to celebrate great leaders who have been recognized as ATHENA recipients. This year, it is a privilege to recognize Julie Pingston, president & CEO of Choose Lansing, as our deserving honoree. Julie is our region's leading tourism advocate, an enthusiastic and dedicated community servant and a mentor to many other women leaders. Congratulations to Julie on this great honor.

We are also excited to recognize Justine Bell of BeneGuides as the recipient of the 2024 ATHENA PowerLink (APL) award. Justine will have the honor of working with a hand-selected panel of outstanding business leaders who will mentor her over the next year and help her devise strategies to take her business to new levels. The growth of APL has been particularly rewarding to the PowerLink Governing Body and the Chamber who have nurtured this program over the years.

It is also rewarding to be part of a community that insists on constantly growing the ATHENA brand. The latest effort has been the unveiling of the ATHENA Lansing Hall of Fame. Located in the Lansing Center, the Hall of Fame will recognize all the ATHENA Lansing recipients from Mary Lee Davis in 1982 to Julie Pingston in 2023. This impressive exhibit, which publicly opens on December 5, will help us better celebrate the ATHENA story to the world.

I would also like to recognize the committee members who have worked hard to make the ATHENA Hall of Fame a reality, including Pat Hanes, Julie Pingston, Sarah Jennings, Sheri Jones, Martha Mertz, Jane Mitchell and Tiffany Dowling. Many thanks to the Hall of Fame sponsor, Maner Costerisan, a company that has been a strong backer of ATHENA since the very beginning, particularly through the work in the early days of Maner's Lamont Lator, who was a part of the original group in supporting Martha Mertz and her efforts.

We are also proud of our role in supporting the ATHENA WIN program. Earlier this year, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce and ATHENA WIN launched a new partnership under which the Chamber assumed responsibility for much of the administrative work involved with the organization. We also added Sarah Bakken to our team as the first Talent Development Manager to support ATHENA and all our talent initiatives.

We should all be proud of how the Lansing region has advanced the ATHENA brand on so many levels. Of course, being the community we are, we will not be resting on our success. I am certain we will push ATHENA forward in new and exciting ways in 2024 and beyond.

Finally, as we close out 2023 in the next few weeks, let me offer you the very best for the holiday season and a prosperous year in 2024. Our region is primed for success! ●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



We should all be proud of how the Lansing region has advanced the ATHENA brand on so many levels. Of course, being the community we are, we will not be resting on our success. I am certain we will push ATHENA forward in new and exciting ways in 2024 and beyond.

November 2023

12/6

ATHENA LANSING CELEBRATION
Wednesday, Dec. 6, from 11:30 a.m.
to 1:30 p.m.
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center,
219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce will recognize this year's ATHENA Leadership Award recipient, Julie Pingston, CDME, CMP, CTA, president and CEO of Choose Lansing, during the ATHENA Lansing Celebration on Wednesday, Dec. 6! We will also recognize the 2024 ATHENA PowerLink recipient, Justine Bell, owner of BeneGuides. Be a part of this inspirational event, where we'll honor the local women leaders who are championing progress in the Greater Lansing region.

Cost: Tickets are \$60 for LRCC members, \$95 for future LRCC members and a table of eight is \$450.

12/12

LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB
Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center,
219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing

David L. Bahnsen, Managing Partner, and Chief Investment Officer of The Bahnsen Group, will explore the 2024 economic landscape during the December

Economic Club on Tuesday, Dec. 12. Drawing upon his extensive experience and deep knowledge of financial markets, Bahnsen will offer valuable insights into the potential trends, challenges, and opportunities that lie ahead, providing attendees with a strategic perspective to navigate the evolving economic landscape. Gain a forward-looking perspective from a prominent figure in the financial industry.

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.

12/12

MEMBER MIXER

Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Ellison Brewery Co - REO Town Lansing,
1314 S. Washington Avenue, Lansing

Join us for the Holiday Member Mixer hosted by our friends at Ellison Brewery + Spirits in Reo Town! Raise a glass and toast to the hard work of our businesses and our successes as a region. Enjoy the final opportunity in 2023 to connect, grow, and thrive with your Lansing Regional Chamber friends.

Cost: The event is offered at no cost.

12/13

CHAMBER 360

Wednesday, Dec. 13 from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Lansing Regional Chamber, 500 E. Michigan
Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

As a current member or a business considering joining the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC), it is critically important that you understand and utilize the tools, resources and relationships available to you through your membership investment. The Chamber 360 program provides an intimate venue for you to connect with other members, provide brief remarks, meet the LRCC team and take a deeper dive into a LRCC membership. The goal of the program is to acclimate you with your investment and put together a plan of action for membership engagement and strong ROI.

Cost: The event is offered at no cost.

VIRTUAL BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES

Delta Township - Eaton County

Wednesday, Dec. 6 from 9 to 10 a.m. via Zoom

Lansing - Delhi Township

Wednesday, Dec. 13 from 9 to 10 a.m. via Zoom

East Lansing - Meridian Township

Wednesday, Dec. 20 from 9 to 10 a.m. via Zoom

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 Boji Group
 C2AE
 Canada Dry Bottling Co. of Lansing
 Capital Prime Steaks & Seafood
 The Center for Physical Rehabilitation
 City of Lansing
 Coolidge Place Townhomes
 Cottage Gardens
 CSL Plasma Services
 David Chapman Agency, Inc.
 Disability Network Capital Area
 Downtown Lansing, Inc.
 Edge Insurance Group
 Edge Partnerships
 Ellison Brewery & Spirits
 Forster Woods Adult Day Center
 Great Lakes Christian Homes

Hope & Teal Designs
 JEM Cleaning LLC
 JMH MGT LLC
 Josh's Frogs LLC
 Junior Achievement of Mid-Michigan
 Kellie's Consignments
 Kendall Electric
 Kentwood Office Furniture
 KTM Industries, Inc.
 Lansing Community College
 Lezotte Miller Public Relations, Inc.
 Maloney Carpet Company
 Petra Flowers
 Quality Air
 Serra Auto Campus
 SINICA-US
 Tatse Restaurant
 The Joyful Juniper Co. (Junie Box)
 Volunteers of America (Michigan)

Chamber Milestones

Wolverine Water Treatment Systems/ Michigan Soft Water
 10 Years

Cask & Company
 5 Years

Michigan Women Forward
 5 Years

Therapy Today Counseling and Consulting LLC
 5 Years

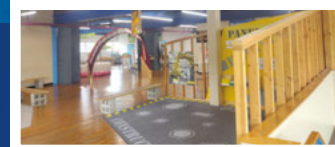
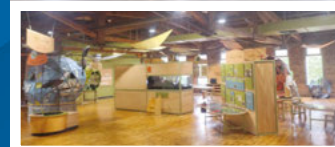
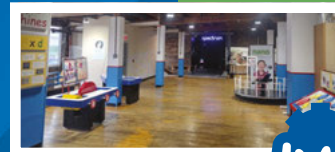
We'd like to offer a special salute to these great organizations who reached milestone anniversaries as Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce members this month. Thank you for your continued support throughout the years!

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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Welcome New Members

180 Degrees Consulting (Michigan State Consulting Organization)

www.180dc.org

560 Ivy Court
Apartment 235
East Lansing, MI 48832

Abundance Cafe

www.abundancecafeandyoga.com

Butzel Long

www.butzel.com

2410 Woodlake Drive Suite 420
Okemos, MI 48864

Camfil

www.camfil.com/en-us

4110 S. 9th Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Dialed Auto Works

5181 Old Plank Road
Onondaga, MI 49264

Grainger Industrial Supply

www.grainger.com

5617 Enterprise Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911

Joe's on Jolly

www.joesonjolly.com

2360 Jolly Rd.
Okemos, MI 48864

Lansing Area Aids Network

www.laanonline.org

913 W Holmes Rd #115
Lansing, MI 48910

LOGIC 3 Multimedia

www.logic3multimedia.com

4601 W. Saginaw Hwy., Ste E
Lansing, MI 48917

McGraw Multimedia

www.mcgrawmultimedia.com

221 Bessemaur Dr.
East Lansing, MI 48823

MCM Communities

www.mcmcommunities.com

801 Packard Hwy.
Charlotte, MI 48813

N8tyN8's Marketplace

www.N80z.com

315 W. Allegan St., Ste A
Lansing, MI 48933 - 1523

North Mich Hospitality Management

www.marriott.com/lanel

2841 Hannah Blvd
East Lansing, MI 48823

Playing Picasso

www.playingpicasso.com

300 N. Clippert St., Suite 15A
Lansing, MI 48912

Project Executive, LLC

Lansing, MI 48910

Render Studios

www.RenderStudios.com

921 N. Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48906-5137

Rise Up Heating and Cooling

www.riseupheating.com

3000 W Michigan Ave
Lansing, MI 48917

Shafer Redi Mix

www.shaferbros.com

29150 C Drive North
Albion, MI 49224

State Farm - Trinesha Goebel

www.sfinsures.com

708 S. Cedar Street
Mason, MI 48854

The Podium Group

www.thepodiumgroup.com

1502 Belvedere Ave.
Okemos, MI 48864

The Samani Bag LLC

www.samanibags.com

5814 Barren Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911

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www.tpacworldwide.org

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W007955



Battle for the Houses: A Friendly Rivalry for Good at Ronald McDonald House Charities

By: Cionne Casanova, Kolt Communications, Inc

Today, X Duckett is a happy and healthy two-year-old who is busy keeping up with his older siblings. However, two years ago, life took a dramatic turn for Todd Duckett, CEO of Duckett Enterprises and former Michigan State University and NFL running back, and his wife Sara when their youngest son X was born with severe congenital heart complications. This required two open heart surgeries at U of M in his first year of life. During the longer hospital stays, Todd and Sara stayed at the Ronald McDonald House close to their son. The Ducketts, who have been longtime volunteers at Ronald McDonald House Charities Mid-Michigan in Lansing (RMHC Mid-Michigan), are extremely grateful to have had RMHC as a support network during their time of need.

“RMHC Mid-Michigan operates an 8-bedroom House in downtown Lansing across the street from Sparrow Health System. It’s a home away from home for families that have hospitalized children. Everything you have in your home, you’ll find at our Ronald McDonald House,” said Carrolyn Hurst, Executive Director of RMHC Mid-Michigan. “We offer private guest rooms and bathrooms, on-site laundry, full kitchen, hot homemade meals and more.”

The House alleviates some of the stress that comes with having a hospitalized child. Families do not have to worry about where they will stay, how to get to and from the hospital, where to get snacks and meals or the

associated costs of these basic needs. Ronald McDonald House Charities Mid-Michigan has served 150-250 families annually for over 23 years.

After X’s successful surgeries, the Ducketts wanted to give back in a new way to support Ronald McDonald House Charities. In partnership with RMHC Mid-Michigan in Lansing and RMHC Ann Arbor, Todd and Sara helped create the “Battle for the Houses” fundraiser.

“The fundraiser came from an idea we had to help the Ronald McDonald Houses in Lansing and Ann Arbor centered around a friendly rivalry during the MSU vs. U of M football game week,” said Duckett. The fundraiser encouraged individuals, corporate partners and service groups to help their respective Ronald McDonald House compete to raise the most funds and volunteer hours by the end of the MSU v. U of M football game on October 21, 2023.

As the fundraiser was in full swing the response was met with huge support. Meijer joined as presenting sponsor, Duckett Brothers Distributing, DIRECTV, Sparrow Health System, Tyson Foods, Fuel’d, Sweet Encounter Bakery, MSU Federal Credit Union, State of Fitness, Pro Fireworks, Martin Brower, North Peak Brewing, Coca-Cola, Dr. Pepper and BRD Printing all joined as corporate sponsors. Between both the Lansing and Ann Arbor chapters the fundraiser collectively raised over \$100,000. Prevailing as

the first annual Battle for the Houses champion, RMHC Mid-Michigan surpassed RMHC Ann Arbor by raising over \$54,000 and 485 volunteer hours between September 22 and October 21, 2023. RMHC Mid-Michigan brought home the Battle for the House's miniature Paul Bunyan trophy which will reside at their House until it's up for grabs in 2024.

"Rivalry aside, every family served by both Houses are the true winners, every dollar and hour of volunteering ensures that both Houses' doors remain open for families," said Hurst.

The Duckett Family and Duckett Brothers Distributing celebrated 25 years of business in the Lansing area and they continue to give back to the community where they live and work. This year's Battle for the Houses fundraiser is just the beginning of what they wish to accomplish down the road.

"The Ronald McDonald Houses in Lansing and Ann Arbor are great organizations and our family wanted to keep giving back. The Battle for the Houses goal was to raise funds and get people more involved in a fun way and we did just that," said Todd Duckett. "It makes a legacy not just for my family or the Ronald McDonald House Charities family but for any family that comes to these organizations for help." ●

2023 BATTLE FOR THE HOUSES
IMPACT REPORT

Thank you for your partnership!

Sara and Todd Duckett proposed this friendly competition between RMHC Mid-Michigan and RMHC Ann Arbor. Both communities came together for the kids raising \$100,000 after a round-up donation from DIRECTV and inspiring 1,066 volunteer hours between the two Houses. We are overwhelmingly humbled and thankful for all of our sponsors, volunteers, donors and fans who helped RMHC Mid-Michigan win this year's Battle for the Houses raising \$54,362 to care for families that we support.

RMHC Mid-Michigan funds from the 2023 Battle for the Houses will provide funding to cover ONE of the following costs:

- 724 night nights** for our families at the suggested donation of \$75/night (299 nights at the ACTUAL \$182/night cost of lodging).
- 100% of utilities** annually at RMHMM (including electricity, gas, water, phones).
- 543 family dinners.**
- 217 hospitality cart restocks.**

Three (3) email blasts were sent to RMHC Mid-Michigan's database reaching 3,186:
Open rate averaged 32.8% - 80%
Click rate averaged 21.1% - 80%

Social Media:
The Battle for the Houses campaign on RMHC Mid-Michigan's social media channels reached 103,787 people with 9,341 reactions, resulting in an impressive 9% engagement rate!

Click below for RMHC Mid-Michigan social pages:
[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [Twitter](#)

In 2022:

- 161 adult family members** were able to stay close to their hospitalized child.
- 23 siblings** were able to help their brother/sister get better faster by staying together as a family.
- 2,834 bednights** were provided to our guest families.
- 19 days** was the average length of stay.
- 534 loads of laundry** were done to prepare rooms for incoming families, with six loads per guest room.
- 2,834 hot homemade meals** were served to families staying at our House.
- Over 8,000 families** had access to comfort items on our hospitality carts in the mid-Michigan region.

Media & More Links

- [WILX News 10](#)
- [Michigan Business Network](#)
- [WITL FM](#)
- [WILX YouTube](#)
- [Yahoo! Finance](#)
- [Game Day/Press Conference Social Video](#)

"We cannot thank you enough for your generosity - your support will help keep families close to the care their sick children need, providing comfort, support and resources for families just steps from the hospital!"

Executive Director, Ronald McDonald House Charities Mid-Michigan — CAROLYN HURST

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES MID-MICHIGAN 221 SOUTH HOLMES ST., LANSING, MI 48912 www.RMHMM.org

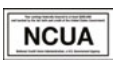
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Elderly Instruments Named America's Top Small Business by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER, LOCAL LEADERS CELEBRATE THE PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITION



Elderly Instruments

Elderly Instruments has been recognized as America's Top Small Business at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Summit in October. This prestigious recognition highlights Elderly Instruments' outstanding contribution to the world of music and their unwavering commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion within the music industry.

In 1972, Stan Werbin and Sharon McInturff had a vision to create a space where the joy of music would be accessible to everyone. Their dream materialized as Elderly Instruments, a store where music lovers from all walks of life could come together, play, and purchase affordable, quality-fretted instruments and accessories. Over the past fifty-one years, Elderly Instruments has evolved into more than just a store; it has become a haven for instrument enthusiasts, offering everything from brand-new guitars to vintage mandolins and more.

Last year, the torch was passed to Lillian Werbin, Stan Werbin's daughter. Under Lillian's leadership, Elderly Instruments continues to thrive with the same dedication and passion as her father. With nearly 40 full-time employees and a firm place in the heart of Lansing's community, the store has proven its resilience through generational transitions.

"The rest of the country is finding out what we already know - Elderly Instruments is one of the best," said Lansing Mayor Andy Schor. "I am thrilled that this Lansing small business is being recognized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. After 51 years in Lansing, Elderly Instruments continues to be a leader in our community and an excellent example of a small business making a big difference in the City of Lansing."

Their commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond music. As company president, Lillian has actively championed diversity and inclusion in the music scene. The business supports national and local initiatives that uplift the voices of LGBTQ+ individuals and people of color within the bluegrass genre. Their unwavering commitment to musicians of all backgrounds has cemented their reputation as a Lansing mainstay and a beacon of musical diversity and inclusion.



"The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce is immensely proud to see Elderly Instruments take home this honor at U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Summit," said Tim Daman, President & CEO of the LRCC. "Elderly Instruments embodies the spirit of our vibrant and diverse community. Their dedication to making music accessible to everyone and their commitment to diversity and inclusion in the music industry is truly remarkable." ●

MEETING TO REMEMBER? LANSING'S MY CHOICE

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THINKING GLOBALLY

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Endorsed Candidates in Lansing & East Lansing Notch Election Night Victories



Carter



Lopez-Pehlivanoglu



Kost



Hussain

All four of the candidates endorsed by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) 2023 races for Lansing City Council were elected to office on Tuesday, November 7.

Those candidates include:

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



Ebersole Singh



Meadows

on matters that voters have clearly identified as top priorities, such as public safety, infrastructure, jobs, and housing."

"Voters in Lansing have made their voices heard by electing these individuals to the City Council, at a time when our city faces both significant challenges and opportunity," remarked Steve Japinga, senior vice president of public affairs at the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. "There's a lot of important work ahead of us, and it's crucial that we remain focused on working together to advance initiatives that will revitalize and rebuild our city. We eagerly anticipate collaborating with the Mayor and Lansing City Council



LRC-PAC also endorsed Kerry Ebersole Singh and Mark Meadows who were elected to the East Lansing City Council on in November. The LRC-PAC emphasized the vital importance of electing city council members willing to work with a spirit of collaboration and to seek innovative solutions to the challenges facing the city.

"Both Kerry and Mark's leadership skills will be an asset to East Lansing, and we look forward to working with them and the entire city council in the months ahead," said Japinga. ●



MICHIGAN PREMIER EVENTS

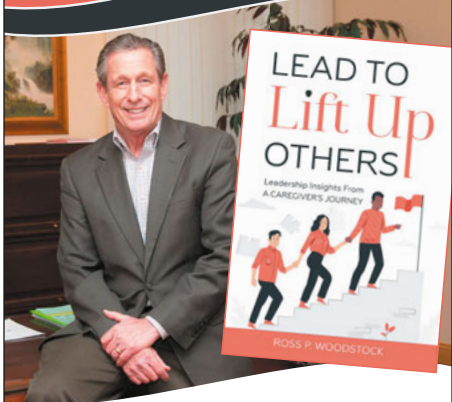
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A Leadership Book with a **TWIST**



Author: Ross Woodstock
Executive Coach and Leadership Consultant

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The Next Phase: US-127/I-496 Construction Projects Update

The next phase of the US-127/I-496 construction project between I-96 and I-496 is on the horizon. The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with our partners from the Capital Council of Governments (CAPCOG), has played a pivotal role in championing numerous critical road infrastructure initiatives within our region over the years. In this upcoming phase, our concerted efforts focused on advocating for the expansion of lanes within this section of the construction.

This phase promises to bring about several significant improvements, including enhancing safety measures, revitalizing aging infrastructure, expanding the number of lanes, and optimizing traffic flow in what has been a notorious bottleneck in our region. Our advocacy efforts have yielded positive results, thanks to the support and commitment of the Governor and our state elected officials.

The Chamber along with Choose Lansing will be holding webinar updates with MDOT in 2024. ●



Construction Activity Key Focus Areas:
 2024: Northbound
 2023-2025: Rebuilding

Saving the Family Cottage



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Meet the New East Lansing City Council

The East Lansing City Council is the group that makes laws and policies for the city. It has five members elected by East Lansing residents, and they serve for four years. The Council picks the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem. They also choose the City Manager, who runs the city day-to-day, and the City Attorney.



City of East Lansing

The East Lansing City Council, l-r: Erik Altmann; Dana Watson; Mark Meadows; Kerry Ebersole Singh, Mayor Pro Tem; and George Brookover, Mayor.

With the Nov. 7th election over, the city installs the new council members the following week after the election. There were three candidates who won the three spots in the 2023 election cycle: Kerry Ebersole Singh (LRC-PAC Endorsed Candidate), Mark Meadows (LRC-PAC Endorsed Candidate), and Erik Altmann.

At the Nov. 14th city council meeting, the council chose new leadership to lead the city, which includes new mayor and new mayor pro-tem. The LRCC is excited to work with the new leaders in East Lansing to continue to focus on helping our small businesses grow and thrive. ●

Julie Pingston

2023 ATHENA LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

Building Bridges & Bringing People Together

From the very early stages of her career Julie Pingston has been in positions where she found herself building bridges and bringing people together. Those characteristics have become the cornerstone for how she leads and collaborates with others. For the past three decades, Pingston has used her leadership skills to help build Greater Lansing's thriving tourism industry. Today, as president & CEO of Choose Lansing (formerly the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau), Pingston leads her team toward the mission of positively impacting our community's quality of life by developing the region as a tourism destination.

In recognition of her leadership and advocacy in serving her community and her outstanding record of community service and commitment to mentoring emerging women leaders, Julie Pingston, CDME, CMP, CTA has been named the recipient of the 2023 ATHENA Leadership Award by the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC).

"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 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."

"Julie is like a precious gemstone," said Cindy Bowen, General Manager, Crowne Plaza Lansing West. "She is a multi-faceted leader who is innovative, inclusive, intentional, and caring; just to name a few. She is highly



Julie with Cathy Blatnik from Mid-Michigan Autism Association promoting sensory inclusivity.

valued by her colleagues and everyone she connects with in the community. It is truly an honor to work with her. I can't think of anyone more deserving to be named the ATHENA Leadership Award recipient."

Julie has enjoyed numerous successes over the years in her various leadership roles with Choose Lansing. She had also had to deal with her share of adversity, as well. Most notably, Julie was named to her current role as president & CEO in late February of 2020. Her first official day at the helm was March 11, 2020, right at the start of the Covid shutdown.

"My first acts in the first two weeks were basically shutting down everything we did," said Pingston.

Pingston refused to allow the Covid forced setback to derail the organization. She says the pandemic allowed them to think differently about how they did things.



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. 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.

The Lansing region’s number one tourism ambassador, rappelling the Boji Tower for their Foundation’s Over the Edge Event in 2011.

“We could change things and work in different ways because the pandemic allowed that,” said Pingston. “In many ways it was the worst of times, but in many ways, it led to great leadership opportunities and organizational change.”

It has been a long road to full recovery for local tourism, but the industry has bounced back. The region typically welcomes over 5.3 million visitors annually generating over \$682 million for the local economy. Julie’s work in advancing the tourism industry has been lauded by the many stakeholders with whom she has interacted over the years, especially those with whom she works most closely.

“I’ve had the privilege of working with Julie for over 20 years, so I’ve had a front row seat to the three decades of effort Julie has put in as a champion for greater Lansing,” said Tracy Padot, CTA, Vice President Marketing Communications, Choose Lansing. “She implemented the region’s Certified Tourism Ambassador program back in 2010 – which was the first program of its kind in Michigan. She is a passionate advocate spearheading the charge to establish Lansing as the most sensory inclusive and welcoming destination to all who visit. Those efforts have helped garner national attention for the region. Not only does she lead the way as the CEO for Choose Lansing, she has

also spent countless hours volunteering her time and expertise both locally and at the national level. It’s thrilling to see her tireless dedication to the region be rewarded with such a prestigious honor like the ATHENA award.”

Julie is recognized as an innovative leader. She implemented Choose Lansing’s Certified Tourism Ambassador program in 2010, which was the first program in Michigan. She had been investigating the program for



Julie’s two children and their significant others: Jordan Meaza, Allison Pingston, Jacob Pingston, Haylee Lupinetti.

JULIE PINGSTON: 2023 ATHENA LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

about a year before deciding it was right for Lansing. What triggered her final decision to push for the CTA program was an incident when she was standing in line at a retail establishment and overheard a clerk telling a family of tourists that there wasn't much to do in Lansing and suggested they go to Frankenmuth. Julie intervened and helped the family plan out some fun activities in Lansing.

"I called and engaged us into the CTA program the next day," said Pingston. "Today we have the highest number of CTAs that we have ever had. It helps educate our frontline hospitality workers and anybody who connects with visitors. It helps us provide information and be that ambassador for the region."

Julie has also been recognized nationally for her leadership in developing sensory inclusive programming and autism education training. She has given presentations about that at Destinations International and other national conferences. Julie worked with the Mid-Michigan Autism Association to help develop sensory inclusive programs at all local tourism attractions. Choose Lansing cumulated all of the different programs and promoted it through their website and extensive advertising and marketing efforts. The first big test of the program was when the Wharton Center presented a sensory inclusive performance of Disney's The Lion King.

"To see families come from several states, knowing that they had never been able to experience a performance together as a family like that was quite a catalyst for all of us involved to try and do as much as possible for other families traveling with neurodiversities," said Pingston. "Now we have sensory tool kits in all of our locations, and we have trained over 1,000 people in the community to best welcome guests on the autism spectrum and with other neurodiversities."

Choose Lansing just hosted the first tourism accessibility summit for the region in October, which focused on how to make all tourism-related facilities in the region more accessible to those with any kind of needs.

Julie Pingston has an outstanding record when it comes to community leadership. She often rises to leadership positions on the boards on which she serves. Julie serves as president of the Potter Park Zoological Society, Board Member of the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, member of Potter Park Zoo Board, treasurer of the Michigan Association of CVBs, board member of the Holt Education Foundation, past president of the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, past president of the Event Service Professionals



25th Anniversary of Be A Tourist in Your Own Town with 25-year volunteers Steve and Lyn Colby and John and Barbara Rossi in 2019.

Association, past president of the Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan, past chair of LEAP's Placemaking Committee and past president of the Rotary Club of Lansing as well as the Rotary Club of Lansing Foundation. She is also a deacon at Holt First Presbyterian Church.

"If I am part of an organization I just want to be involved and give and share as much as I can that way we can all be better," said Pingston.

Julie has been an advocate, cheerleader, and mentor of women. Those who know her have seen Julie work with women in the rotary club to bring out the best in them, to teach without sounding like a teacher, to encourage without sounding patronizing and help women to take the initiative where they might otherwise be unwilling to take a chance and ultimately succeeding.

Julie Pingston has been widely recognized for her leadership through the years. Julie was Michigan Meetings and Events Magazine's Hall of Fame Inductee/Supplier of the Year (2008), MSAE's Diamond Award Winner (2009), MMPI's Mentor of the Year (2011), ESPA's Member of the Year (2004), ESPA's President's Award Recipient (2009), ESPA's Executive Excellence Award Recipient (2013), the Arts Council of Greater Lansing's Ted Sondag Individual Leadership Award Recipient (2016), South Lansing Business Alliance Alfreda Schmidt Lifetime Achievement Award (2018), Governor's Award for Innovative Tourism Collaboration for Sensory Friendly Lansing (2019).

“Julie Pingston is such a perfect fit for this award. She not only works diligently to broaden her own knowledge but also continually strives to uplift those around her,” said Laria Draves, CMP, Executive Director, Michigan Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus. “As a 31-year veteran of Choose Lansing, Julie was named CEO in 2020 when leading an organization that has had its fair share of challenges. She not only led Choose Lansing but also served on several state and national boards and committees as the industry emerged from some very tough times. Julie encourages her staff with professional development opportunities. She elevates the Greater Lansing community with her leadership, especially in the areas of autism and accessibility for all. Julie is highly

respected by her travel industry peers and her body of work serves as a notable example for the ATHENA Award and its future recipients.”

Faith and family play a large role in Julie’s life. She credits her parents and grandparents for many of the foundational values that have served her well in life. Julie and her husband, Steve, have been married 30 years. They have two children; Allison is a physician’s assistant in Virginia and Jacob works as an electrician in the Chicago area. A little-known fact about Julie is that one of the ways that she tries to get herself away from life’s daily challenges is to engage in adult tap dancing classes at Karyn’s Dance Place.



ATHENA PowerLink Recipient Justine Bell: Her Transformative Leadership in Health Insurance Advocacy

By: Hailey Kenward, Kolt Communications, Inc.

Justine Bell, the owner of BeneGuides, has been named the recipient of the 2024 ATHENA PowerLink (APL) award. APL is a business mentoring program that recognizes women entrepreneurs and business owners.

BeneGuides is a company dedicated to matching people with the perfect health insurance plan for them.

Bell has spent her career dedicated to helping people and animals and spent a large part of her career working at animal shelters. Though she loved that work, Bell realized after having her first child she needed to find a career that would better support her family.

To help afford childcare, she began working in the business insurance realm, but didn’t truly feel as if her desire to help others was being fulfilled. Many business owners were already happy with their current coverage, but Justine noticed that they had a lot of questions about health insurance. Always curious to learn new things, she went to work making connections, finding mentors, and learning everything she could about the health insurance space.

“One of our goals is to make sure that people feel safe and comfortable when making health insurance decisions,” said Bell. “We try to help clients save as much money as possible while feeling like they are matched to a plan that fits their current needs.”

BeneGuides staff is made up entirely of moms, making each employee a great listener and uniquely capable of making every customer feel supported throughout the insurance matching process.

“It feels so wild and incredibly humbling to receive this award,” said Bell. “It was a wonderful experience because not only did they interview me, but they also interviewed my amazing team, which gave them the opportunity to shine during the panelist interviews.”

Awardees of APL work with an advisory panel of consultants from regional businesses who will work with her to achieve business goals.

“I could talk about health insurance all day long, and I do,” said Bell. “But I need help in learning and excelling in the other aspects of business, like figuring out pay, filing business taxes, how to market, and how to decorate your office to make it as welcoming as possible. We want to become generally a better and more well-rounded business and that is what my plan is for this award.”

For more information about BeneGuides, visit www.beneguides.com. ●

Justine Bell ATHENA PowerLink Advisory Panel

Many thanks to the following business leaders who have agreed to serve as Justine Bell’s APL Advisory panel in 2024.

- Renee Dwyer, Associate Broker, Keller Williams
- Stephanie Murray, Owner/Designer, Stephanie Murray Brand
- Torree Breen, Shareholder, Willingham Cote
- Jessica Fleet, CPA, CHFP, Senior Manager, Maner Costerisan
- Angelique DuPhene, Integrator/COO, Inverve Marketing,
- Alissa Parks HRM, Consultant, HRM Services

JULIE PINGSTON: 2023 ATHENA LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

"I love the way it allows me to separate myself from the business side and just have fun dancing," said Pingston.

Life doesn't always take us down the path that we had intended to travel. For Julie Pingston, her journey was headed towards a career in international relations. She studied Political Science and Spanish and graduated cum laude from Alma College. She accepted a job in the U.S. Commerce Department in Washington D.C. where she ended up getting placed in the Travel and Tourism Administration. When she decided to move back to Michigan, she considered two potential paths, the governmental path or to stay in tourism. She decided on a job with the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors

Bureau. Those with whom she has connected over the past three decades would agree that she chose wisely, and the region is better off as a result.

"I am passionate about it because we get the privilege and the opportunity as an organization to create experiences for people and help them build memories," said Pingston. "We are an economic driver for the community. We create jobs for the community and hopefully bring new thoughts and new discoveries for our visitors. When I look out my window on Michigan Avenue and see hundreds of convention goers or people attending a Lugnuts game you know that is making an impact on the community." ●



A Little Help Goes a Long Way: Skin Studio 211

By: Cionne Casanova, Kolt Communications, Inc.

Lorin Cumberbatch, owner and founder of Skin Studio 211, started her skin care business a few years ago with the goal of providing facials, waxes, and at home skin care retail products to her customers. In the beginning, Skin Studio 211 launched as Cumberbatch saw a need in the Lansing community and wanted to be an industry leader in the area.

"Originally this wasn't in my vision board, I saw a need in my community and thought this would be a nice side venture to explore and then almost out of no where it took off," said Cumberbatch.

Despite some bumps along the way Skin Studio 211 started to take off, having branches in both West and East Lansing. With that success Lorin Cumberbatch and her business became an ATHENA *PowerLink* recipient in 2022. The ATHENA *PowerLink* Program (APL) is a national mentoring program that not only helps female recipients of the award connect with lawyers, bankers, accountants, insurance agents and the like but also gives guidance to those businesses on strategic goals as well as management skills. With this new board to give her guidance, Cumberbatch's business soared even more.

"I take this business and skin care very seriously especially being a female and black-owned brand. I think the ATHENA *PowerLink* Program has been nothing but amazing, I went from two figures a year in retail/product sales to five figures a month in product sales with their help. It's crazy to me how much they helped; the advisors didn't do it for me but told me how I need to implement my ideas to be the best they could be."

Lorin's APL advisory board has many accomplished people that helped her in a range of areas. Including helping with business plans and goals, assisting with industry knowledge, reviewing contracts and laws, how to run daily operations at multiple locations, how to do better paid marketing and how to manage scale and knowledge of retail.

Despite the APL Program only lasting a year for its recipients, Cumberbatch is confident that she now has the tools and the momentum to keep reaching new heights. "My goal is to keep growing, I want Skin Studio 211 all over Lansing and beyond. The APL Program has helped me see my potential and it's only going to be up from here." ●

Lorin Cumberbatch ATHENA *PowerLink* Advisory Panel

Lorin Cumberbatch has had a wonderful year working with her expert advisory panel. Many thanks to these outstanding business leaders for so generously giving their time to help Lorin grow her business.

- Lauren Palmer, owner of Curvaceous Lingerie (Retail Support)
- Adrian Joseph, CEO and founder of Goodfellas Bagel Deli (Multiple Location Support)
- Adil Daudi, Attorney and Partner at Daudi and Kroll (Legal Support)
- Angelique DuPhene, Creative Director and Service Manager at Inverve Marketing (Marketing Support)
- Melissa Terry, owner of Lotus Beauty Longe (Like Industry Expertise)
- Liz Winowiecki, Owner of Hair United (Like Industry Expertise)

Inaugural Mid-Michigan Diversity Business Summit Draws Over 300 Participants

Michigan Premier Events proudly hosted the first annual Mid-Michigan Diversity Business Summit event presented by PNC Bank at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center on Tuesday, October 17th. The eventful day hosted 300+ attendees and featured a series of panel discussions featuring dynamic leaders and business owners who have shown commitment to promoting practices that advance diversity and inclusion in the workplace and in leadership. Addressing the growing need for a more inclusive business landscape, the Mid-Michigan Diversity Business Summit offered a platform for individuals and entities to connect, power and elevate. The summit served as a catalyst for inclusive community growth, opportunities and strong partnerships.

"It was great to see individuals across the state of Michigan attend this first inaugural event," said Ashlee R. Willis, CTA, Founder & CEO of Michigan Premier Events.

The Mid-Michigan Diversity Business Summit also included a Business Exhibitor Networking Reception, giving attendees an opportunity to network with organizations in Mid-Michigan to make strong connections and partnerships. Attendees were treated to a wealth of knowledge of insights and innovative ideas from the panel discussions. Panel topics included:

Developing & Supporting A Diverse Workforce

- Lori Simon, MPA, CDM, CTA, | President & Principal Consultant SimonSezConsulting, LLC (Moderator)
- Aileen Bovan | Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity Officer, Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Tedi R. Parsons CCC, CEC, CPC, | President & CEO, 2b Inclusive LLC
- Carrie Rosingana | Chief Executive Officer | Capital Area Michigan Works!
- Jo Sinha | President & Chief Executive Officer, Peckham

From Sports to Business

- Dr. Ashley Baker | VP of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, MSUFCU (Moderator)
- Lauren Aitch-Guerrant | Co-Owner & Managing Partner, Human Base Apparel
- Desmond Ferguson | Founder & CEO, Moneyball Sportswear
- Todd J. Duckett | The ReignMaker & Duckett Enterprises

Small Business Panel

- Marcus Leslie | Owner & Cheesecake Specialist, Mr. Leslie Cheesecakes



Pure Enchantment Photography



Paradiso Photography

- Lilian Werbin | President / Co-Owner, Elderly Instruments
- Justin Caine | Co-Founder & Visionary, Good Fruit Video
- Lorin Cumberbatch | CEO/Owner Lansing Region, Skin Studio 211

Inclusive Communities for Economic Growth

- Bryan K. Kieler, DBA, | Senior Vice President, Market Manager, Community Development Banking, PNC Bank. (Moderator)
- Tony Willis | Chief Equity Officer, Lansing Economic Area Partnership
- LeTasha Peebles, EDFP | Entrepreneurial Technology Program Manager, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)
- Thaddeus Hammond | Deputy District Director, Michigan District Office, U.S. Small Business Administration

Michigan Premier Events is looking forward to hosting the 2nd Annual Mid-Michigan Diversity Business Summit in 2024. For more information, please visit www.MichiganPremierEvents.com. ●



Congratulations to **LaFontaine Buick GMC** of Lansing for the grand opening of their new dealership located at 5901 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. Many friends, colleagues and community leaders were in attendance. With a vast variety of both new and pre-owned vehicles available, buyers can easily find what they need. The LaFontaine family has been selling cars for over 40 years and take pride in being family-owned and bringing "The Family Deal" to communities throughout Michigan.



Tripp's Collision hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for their new location in East Lansing. Tripp's Collision is a proud family business established in 1988. Over the years, it has become one of the leading auto body shops in Lansing that provides safe and exceptional repairs to customers' vehicles. The team is committed to building a secure community with their family, friends, and loyal customers.



Congratulations to **Wellness Re-Invented** for their ribbon-cutting ceremony at their Old Town office location with Uncovered Beauty Studio. Wellness Re-Invented's mission is to revolutionize the way people approach their health by offering custom-curated vitamin infusions and injections for optimal well-being. They believe in providing a natural alternative that promotes optimal health and empowers individuals from all walks of life.



XP League of East Lansing celebrated the grand opening of their Meridian Mall location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony! XP League offers a professional-level gaming experience for children and teenagers aged 7-17. Competitive gaming has grown considerably over the past two decades and has been proven to help improve coordination, problem-solving, and multitasking abilities for all age groups.

Leadership Lansing Cohort Meets with Local Elected Officials



November was government day at Leadership Lansing (LL) and members of this year's cohort had the chance to hear from local elected officials as to what is involved in guiding the government that is closest to the people. Four elected officials talked about what influenced their decision to run for office, what their responsibilities entail, some of the challenges they face, and how they work collaboratively with one another. Elected officials serving on the panel included: Robert Showers, Clinton County Board of Commissioners; Monica Schafer, Ingham County Board of Commissioners; Jeffrey Brown, Lansing City Council and Jacob Toomey, Eaton County Board of Commissioners. The panel discussion was moderated by Steve Japinga, senior vice president public affairs, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Earlier in the day, the LL cohort had the opportunity to tour the state capitol including the state's new Visitor Center at Heritage Hall. Tim Daman, president & CEO of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce shared his thoughts on leadership and highlighted some important initiatives that are helping propel the region forward.

The Leadership Lansing cohort also enjoyed a team building training that provided an overview of the Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team™. Those five behaviors are trust, healthy conflict, commitment, accountability and focus on collective results. ●

CHAMBER IN ACTION



Congratulations to **Lansing Junk Removal** for celebrating its 15th anniversary! The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, along with friends and family, attended the ribbon-cutting celebration on Lake Lansing Road. Lansing Junk Removal is a fully licensed, bonded, and insured company that helps get rid of unwanted items, giving them a new life while supporting local charities.



Recipients and Sponsors at 18th annual CORG Awards, l-r: Tim Daman, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce; J.V. Anderton, Loomis Law; Roy Schulde, ATESTEO; Jessica Tramontana, Consumers Energy; Colin Hindman, The Shyft Group; Julie Mann, Neogen; Eric Hanna, Michigan Community Capital; April Clobes, MSUFCU and Tim Salsibury, PNC Bank.

18th Annual Celebration of Regional Growth Awards Recognizes Five Organizations

Five organizations were honored at the 18th annual Celebration of Regional Growth Awards (CORG) for their investments in the region. The CORG awards were held on November 7 at the MSU Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. The five organizations that were recognized included:

- **ATESTEO**, for their substantial investment in its North American headquarters located in East Lansing.
- **Michigan Community Capital**, for the redevelopment of the Temple Building in Old Town.
- **MSUFCU**, for the commercial office development of their Downtown East Lansing branch.
- **Neogen**, for their \$70 million expansion in the new food safety facility in Downtown Lansing.
- **Shyft Group**, for their \$16 million expansion and facilities enhancements in support of commercial electric vehicle production.

Over the past 18 years, CORG recipients have collectively contributed over \$3 billion to economic development and business growth, resulting in the creation and retention of thousands of jobs. ●



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ATHENA WIN: The Power of Community and Connection

By: Leslie Batchelor, ATHENA WIN Board Chair, Director of Health and Equity and Community Partnerships, Sparrow Health System

As leaders, business owners and supporters of the Lansing region, the end of the year is a natural time for reflection. A time to celebrate successes, acknowledge challenges, and to seek opportunities to grow and improve. As business leaders, business owners and supporters of the Lansing region, taking time to reflect means taking time to recognize the power of community and connection.

ATHENA Women's Interest Network (WIN) has enjoyed a tremendously successful year of growth and opportunity. We've gained new members from a diverse range of organizations. We've added new events and seen record attendance. And we've elevated our professional development offerings with valuable in-person learning opportunities. We have been intentional in our programming. Whether it's our Girls Night Out, Professional Growth and Development series, or annual Evening of Empowerment – morning or evening, small gathering to large event, formal agenda or informal structure – we have something for everyone.

In our time of reflection, we know that this success would not have been possible without our connection



Batchelor

to the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce and the community we've built with our members, board of directors, sponsors and committee volunteers. We are deeply grateful to the Chamber for recognizing the value of a strong, local women's leadership organization and providing the support to make our engine run. We know that the time and talents of our board and committee volunteers along with the participation of an engaged membership creates the powerful community we call ATHENA. Truly, we are stronger together than we could ever be alone.

As 2023 comes to a close and we embark upon a new year ahead, we encourage you to get to know ATHENA WIN. Join us as a member organization, event participant, sponsor, or committee member – so that you too can experience the power of community and connection.

For more information, visit lansingchamber.org/athenawin. ●



During ATHENA WIN's November Professional Growth & Development program, Gina Lisenby, founder of Revelation Road, emphasized building a resilience plan to stay grounded and confident in yourself. She also emphasized the importance of resourcefulness, mindset, and connection in driving continuous change, promoting equity, and fostering innovation. Although we may face unknown or uncertain circumstances that are beyond our control, we always have the power to control our reactions towards them. Your journey is unique and valuable. In the words of Gina Lisenby, "Everyone is on a journey, and every journey matters."

NEW HIRES



Nobis

Matt Nobis, CPA, has been named regional vice president of finance for **University of Michigan Health**, acting as regional president Margaret

Dimond's key financial adviser in guiding the regional system that includes Sparrow and University of Michigan Health-West. Nobis has served as director of finance/controller of Sparrow Health System since April 2020 and in that capacity created a forecast model for partnership discussions with U-M Health.

Sparrow Medical Group Charlotte Orthopedics is pleased to welcome highly skilled orthopedic surgeon



Cuddeback

Arjuna Cuddeback, D.O., to its practice. Dr. Cuddeback is accepting new patients. Dr. Cuddeback provides general orthopedic care including the treatment of

joint pain, fractures, and tendon and ligament injuries. Specializing in lower extremity trauma and foot and ankle reconstruction, he performs hip and knee replacements, knee, shoulder and ankle arthroscopy, and treats carpal tunnel and trigger fingers.

The **Arts Council of Greater Lansing** is pleased to introduce you to their membership support coordinator and AmeriCorps member, **Anissa Ben Jaballah**. They feel fortunate to have Anissa as part of their team and are grateful to CEDAM'S AmeriCorps program for



Ben Jaballah

helping them find her. In her role, Anissa will be building relationships with their membership and the arts and cultural community in Greater Lansing.

AWARDS

Since 2022, **LAFCU** has donated \$7K as part of its Teacher's Grant Program that recognizes teachers' unmatched dedication and unwavering commitment to their students and the financial strain they often endure while using out of pocket money to purchase materials required to help their students succeed and thrive in the classroom. Eight teachers were awarded a total of \$4,000, including: **Jasmine Kraft** of Saginaw, North Saginaw



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Charter Academy; **Khloe Kremer** of Ionia, Freedom Acres; **Abigail Tanner** of Jackson, Northwest High School; **Alison Bowen** of Grand Ledge, Grand Ledge High School; **RaeLynne Kinsora** of Grand Ledge, Delta Center Elementary; **Erin Fredericks** of Grand Ledge, Beagle Middle School; **Terra Tomlinson** of Laingsburg, Laingsburg Middle School; and **Amy Austin** of Rochester, Rochester Community School.



E.W. Sparrow Hospital President **Denny Martin, D.O.**, was honored as one of Crain's Detroit Business' 2023 Healthcare Heroes for his leadership after the Michigan State University student shootings in February. Dr. Martin and the highly skilled Sparrow Trauma team were lauded for their quick response to the shootings and leading-edge efforts to save the five remaining victims. In announcing the award, Crain's had specifically cited Dr. Martin for his honest and emotional update to the public, which included breaking down in tears after a marathon night of treating the victims.



Ingham ISD's Chief Communications Officer, **Micki O'Neil**, was presented with the 2023 Gerri Allen Outstanding School

Communicator Award. This award recognizes a practicing school communicator for outstanding leadership in school public relations and communications. Tom Gould, president of the Michigan School Public Relations Association, presented Micki with this well-deserved honor.



Megan Dowell of Do-Well Remodel and **Knowing Your Home**, recently won the 517 Magazine Entrepreneurial Spirit award. This award encapsulates the hard work that her team have been doing for almost 10 years. It signifies and recognizes that they are, not only trying, but also doing, and doing well. Megan is incredibly grateful to win this award and have her hard work acknowledged.

PROMOTIONS



Dailey

Moonsail North has promoted **Alexi Dailey** to senior marketing strategist. Her emails have been described as "Christmas in my inbox" by clients. Her ability to flow between big-picture, data-driven strategy to remembering the most detailed punctuation preference of each client is unparalleled. She can project manage, graphic design, write in different styles, edit with eagle eyes, analyze data, optimize SEO,

take beautiful photos, and make every team member and client feel welcomed and appreciated.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS/ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Hanna

Sparrow Clinton Hospital is pleased to welcome **Timothy Hanna**, a retired insurance executive, to the Board of Directors for a three-year term. Board members help oversee Sparrow Clinton, work closely with senior leadership, and bring broad experiences from various fields.

DISTINCTIONS



Recent renovations at Capital City Apartments in Lansing have earned national recognition for the **Lansing Housing Commission (LHC)**. The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) selected the LHC project for its Award of Merit, the organization's highest honor, in the project design category. LHC was one of eight public housing projects recognized nationally by NAHRO during its annual conference earlier this month.

Willye Bryan, Lansing, has been recognized as a 2023 Global Goals – Local Leader by the **Greater Lansing Chapter of the United Nations Association (UNA)** at the U.N. Day Celebration, Oct. 22. Bryan founded the Justice League of Greater Lansing Michigan in 2021 to address



the racial wealth gap. The non-profit organization created a faith-based reparations model. It builds relationships with white houses of worship and employs education to link the hundreds of years of systemic, structural racism with the need for increasing wealth equity for African Americans.

COMPANY NEWS

Child and Family Charities

continued its unwavering support to the community by donating a home to Endeavor Ministries to expand its program to women. The 112-year-old nonprofit organization donated the former Kevin J. Moody house which will become Endeavor Ministries' Angie House. The grand opening of Angie's House took place October 25 at the newly renovated space, celebrating the collaboration between the organizations and shared dedication to individuals and family. Endeavor Ministries will use the renovated space to extend their support for women on their journey to recovery.

Ronald Penfield, LMSW, is now taking clients at **GPS Guide to Personal Solutions**. Ron is a well-respected therapist in the Lansing community and works within multiple therapy modalities such as psychoanalysis, cognitive behavioral therapy, family systems, and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), which is utilized to treat trauma.

Physicians Health Plan announced it has received approval from the Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) to

expand its service area for individual and small group plans. Individuals who live in Huron, Montcalm, and Sanilac counties can enroll in Physicians Health Plan individual plans. Individual plans are also available in Bay, Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Ionia, Isabella, Livingston, Saginaw, Shiawassee, Tuscola, and Washtenaw counties.



Game day for college football fans is an exciting day. Visitors wearing green and white pile into the Michigan State University (MSU) Stadium ready to cheer on their team. There is a lot that goes into the day from ticket sales to concessions. For **McLaren Greater Lansing's** emergency department, it's handling the first aid stations. McLaren staff delivers first aid in three different rooms throughout the stadium, each staffed with a registered nurse and an emergency technician. They also have an additional emergency technician who acts as the main communication point with an incident command center.

The Lansing Regional SmartZone recently hosted the 15th anniversary celebration for the **Technology Innovation Center (TIC)**, which has nurtured ground-breaking ideas and success-driven entrepreneurs in the Greater Lansing region since its opening in 2008. The event, which recognized the visionary leaders and committed partners who have helped the TIC over the past 15 years, included the first public showing of the LRSZ video commemorating this milestone.

A baby eager to enter the world was born in the parking garage

of **E.W. Sparrow Hospital** with help from a team of highly skilled Emergency Department caregivers. **Dr. Moody** was initially joined by Resident **Nathaniel Gerdes, D.O.**, registered nurse **Jessica Carpenter** and Sparrow EMT **Amanda Wonsey**. **Desiree Albano, D.O.**, an OB-GYN resident, assisted after the precious little girl was safely delivered in the family's Suburban and weighed 5 pounds, 6 ounces. The birth occurred Monday, Oct. 30.



In the spirit of Veterans Day, **PFCU Credit Union** is proud to announce a commitment of over \$11,000 to the restoration and enhancement of the City of Perry Veteran's Memorial Park. The park was destroyed by the tornado that hit the city in early August. The tornado demolished the pavilion, the seven flagpoles and flags honoring our country and six armed-service branches. ●

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Merry Christmas



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