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Public Affairs Intern

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Labor & Business Unite to
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Commission Slate

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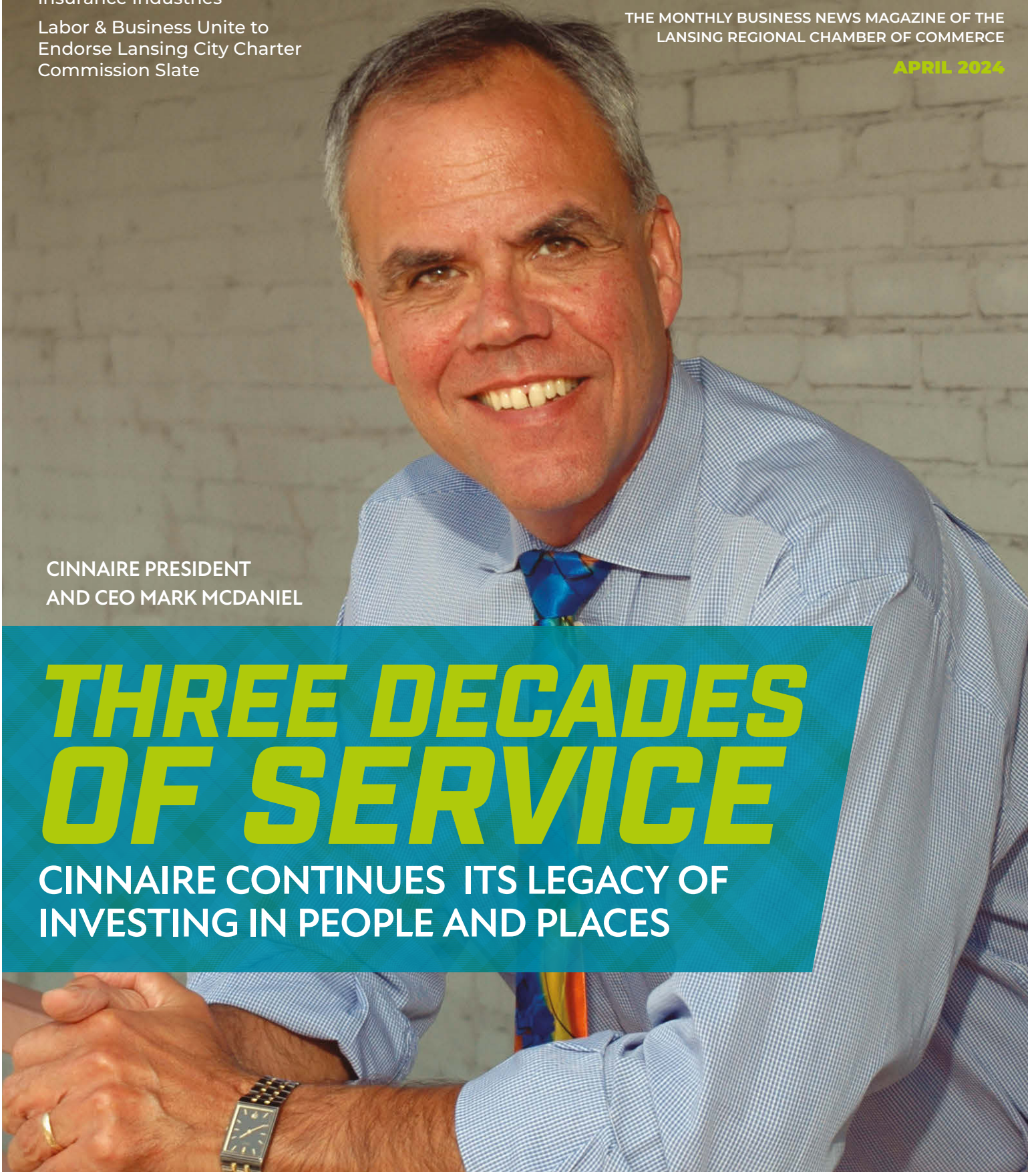
THE MONTHLY BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE
LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

APRIL 2024

CINNAIRE PRESIDENT
AND CEO MARK MCDANIEL

THREE DECADES OF SERVICE

CINNAIRE CONTINUES ITS LEGACY OF
INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND PLACES



Advice for what matters most, when you need it most

Congratulations to the **Ammon Pence Group** for being named to the **Forbes “Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams” 2024 list**, published on January 9, 2024. Rankings based on data as of March 31, 2023.



Ammon Pence Group

Merrill Lynch Wealth Management

2501 Coolidge Road

Suite 500

East Lansing, MI 48823

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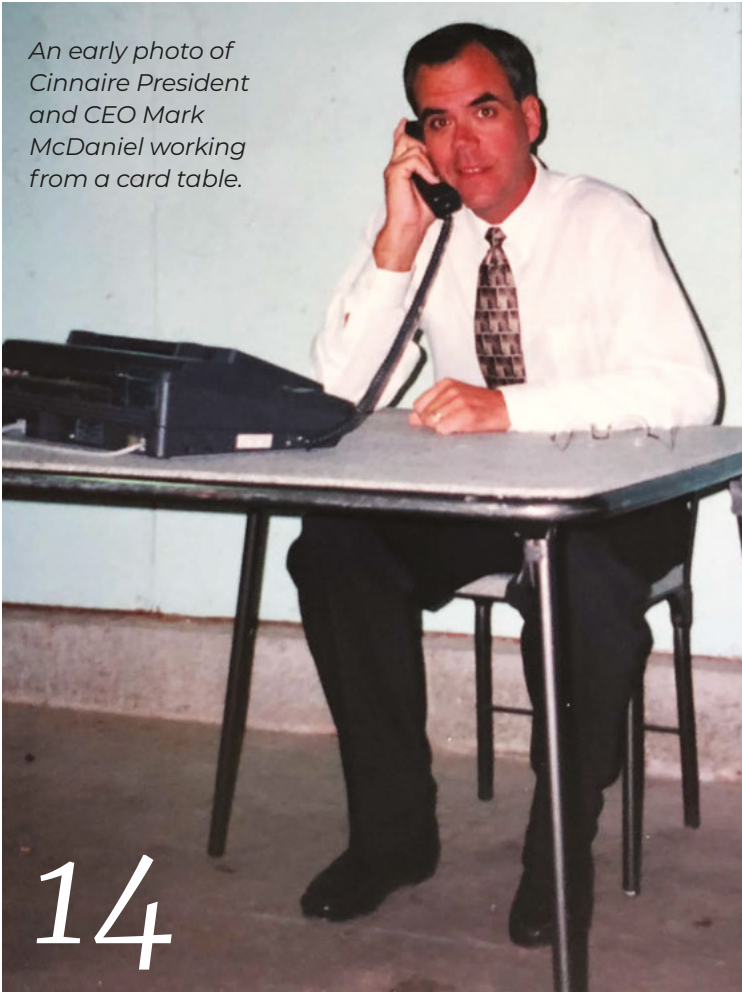
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2024 Board of Directors

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Courtesy Cinnaire



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Leadership Circle investors are proven business and community leaders. We value their commitment to strengthen our region through their leadership and appreciate the important role they play in advancing the Lansing Regional Chamber's mission.

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

Lansing Regional Chamber Promotes Professional Growth For All

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) recognizes the value of celebrating our local successes while continuing to move forward. This month, I'd like to point you toward two efforts that honor where we've been while planning for what's to come.

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner, on April 25, will be held at the Lansing Center in downtown Lansing for the first time in 12 years. The new location is a testament to the energy and transformational development opportunities in our central business district.

The Annual Dinner will bring together hundreds of business and community leaders as we recognize small businesses, entrepreneurs, and organizations positively impacting the Lansing region. Here's a sneak peek at some of our honorees:

- Small Business Recipient – InVerve Marketing
- Community Service Recipient – Phil & Barb Tripp, Tripp's Auto Collision
- Diversity Star (presented in partnership with LEAP) – Cinnaire
- Legacy Award – Lansing State Journal, 70 years as Lansing Regional Chamber member

To join us for the dinner, register at lansingchamber.org.

Meanwhile, the Chamber team and board of directors are in the process of refreshing our five-year Strategic Plan. In collaboration with Merri Jo Bales of StratAlign 20/20 and Bernadette Johnson from Inspired Action Motivates, we are revisiting our mission, vision and key strategies with a specific focus on the Business Value component.

The current plan represents the LRCC's Regional Leadership, Policy Influence, Business Value, and Excellent Operations.

We are reviewing where our Business Value has been implemented successfully and where adjustments might be made. We'll be especially mindful of state and national trends, and what challenges and opportunities might impact our region's businesses.

Data collection has included a member survey on satisfaction and value perceptions, interview with LRCC board leadership, LRCC team and community business leaders.

We recently held a Community Café discussion session to deepen our understanding of how we engage and represent the business community. My thanks to all who have contributed input so far.

The LRCC has served the Lansing region for 123 years. We look forward to continuing this journey together and achieving even greater milestones for the Chamber, our business community and region.

Thank you for your support of the LRCC! ●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



We'll be especially mindful of state and national trends, and what challenges and opportunities might impact our region's businesses."

Thank You Renewing Members

American Cancer Society	Lansing Junk Removal
Candlewood Suites Lansing	MAYOTTEgroup Architects
Capital Area Housing Partnership (CAHP)	McLaren Greater Lansing
Capital Area MICHIGAN WORKS!	Meijer Inc.
Capital City Market	Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists, P.C.
Capital Insurance Services Corp.	PADNOS
Chase Bank	Preuss Pets
Cin-Lan, Inc.	Resch Strategies
Columbia Sussex Corp	RetroDuck.com, Inc.
Conquest Fitness	Sapura
Convergence Networks (Formerly ASK)	Shaklee
Curvaceous Lingerie	Shinberg LTB Agency - A Division of Acrisure
Doggy Daycare and Spa	Spectrum Consulting Group
Enerco Corporation	Tandem Studios
Flooring America - Carpet Studio	Thomas M. Cooley Law School
The Graduate East Lansing	Value Engineering, LLC
Great Lakes State Agency	Village Green of Lansing Apartments
H Business Development & Consulting	
H&R Electrical Contractors	
The Hidden Gem Event Venue	
Horizon Bank	
JEM Cleaning LLC	
Krimson, LLC	

Welcome New Members

Ammon Pence Group

(517) 324-4628
fa.mi.com/michigan/east-lansing/ammonpence
 2501 Coolidge Road, Suite 500
 East Lansing, MI 48823

Axios HR

(616) 949-2525
axioshr.com
 528 4th St NW
 Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Beck's Pest Control

(810) 744-6520
beckspest.com
 512 S. McKinley Road
 Flushing, MI 48433

Beirut Kitchen

BKLansing.com
 325 Riverfront Drive
 Lansing, MI 48912

By Dawn's Early Light Home Care Services Inc.

(517) 803-8970
bydawnsearlylighthomecare.com
 5075 Willoughby Road
 Holt, MI 48842

ElectroCycle

(248) 991-4749
Electro-Cycle.com
 23953 Research Drive
 Farmington Hills, MI 48335

Fenner Conservancy

(517) 483-4224
mynaturecenter.org
 2020 E. Mount Hope Ave.
 Lansing, MI 48910

Freedom Builders

(517) 525-2623
eosworldwide.com/mike-maddox

House of Dank Recreational Cannabis Lansing

(833) 746-7463
shophod.com
 2905 N. East Street
 Lansing, MI 48906

Hylant

(800) 249-5268
hylant.com
 220 Park Street, Suite 102
 Birmingham, MI 48009

Michigan Audubon

(248) 770-4174
michiganaudubon.org
 2310 Science Parkway,
 Suite 200
 Okemos, MI 48864

Rite Aid

riteaid.com
 P.O. Box 3165
 Harrisburg, PA 17105

Ross Woodstock Coaching and Consulting, LLC

(517) 706-0001
rosswoodstockcoaching.com
 2104 Jolly Road, Suite 200
 Okemos, MI 48864

Chamber Milestones

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!

Douglas Steel Fabricating Corporation

35 Years

ASAP Printing

30 Years

Martin Waymire

20 Years

Origami Rehabilitation

20 Years

Cron Management, LLC

15 Years

Gillespie Company, LLC

15 Years

Acuitas

10 Years

Meridian Charter Township

10 Years

Morse Moving & Storage

5 Years

Vlahakis Cole Law Firm

5 Years

Gallagher, Flintoff & Klein, PLC

5 Years

April 2024

4/4

ATHENA WIN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT SERIES: AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP - EMBRACING YOUR UNIQUE STYLE

Thursday, April 4, from 8 to 9:30 a.m.
Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,
500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200

In this engaging session, career coach, Chelsea Jay, will explore the key characteristics of authentic leaders, emphasizing the importance of self-awareness, transparency, and leveraging individual strengths.

Cost: This event is offered at no cost for ATHENA WIN members and \$25 for future ATEHNA WIN members.

4/5

FIRST FRIDAY PUBLIC AFFAIRS CALL UPDATE ZOOM

Friday, April 5, from 11 to 11:30 a.m.

Join us every First Friday of the month for an insightful briefing on policy and political developments impacting the business community. Hosted by LRCC Public Affairs Senior Vice President, Steve Japinga, these monthly calls are designed to keep our members informed and engaged.

Cost: This event is offered at no cost.

4/9

APRIL MEMBER MIXER

Tuesday, April 9, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
J & L Restoration and Cleaning Inc.,
7636 Northport Drive, Lansing

Join us for an evening of networking and connection during the April Member Mixer hosted at J&L Restoration. This event offers the perfect opportunity to create valuable connections, exchange ideas, and explore potential collaborations in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

Cost: This event is offered at no cost.

4/17

MSU TOUR- BEHIND THE SCENES AT WKAR

Wednesday, April 17, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.
WKAR TV and Radio Studios, 404 Wilson

Road, East Lansing

Visit the WKAR TV and radio studios for a special behind-the-scenes look at mid-Michigan's own NPR and PBS member station! See where Emmy-award-winning original content is filmed and get a glimpse into the future of television's technology. Explore the radio studios that produce entertaining arts and culture programming and nationally recognized radio journalism. Learn why community lives at WKAR!

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

4/24

BUSINESS EDUCATION SERIES: OPTIMIZING OPERATIONS – THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Wednesday, April 24, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

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

The March Business Education Series led by Brittany Parks, founder and principal Consultant, Brittany Parks Process Consulting, is designed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and tools to harness the transformative power of standard operating procedures in their organizations.

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

LRCC BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES

Delta Township – Eaton County

Wednesday, April 3, from 9 to 10 a.m.

Crowne Plaza Lansing, 925 S. Creyts Road, Lansing

Lansing – Delhi Township

Wednesday, April 10, from 9 to 10 a.m.

The Hidden Gem Event Venue, 4230 Charlar Drive, Holt

East Lansing – Meridian Township

Wednesday, April 17, from 9 to 10 a.m.

Robert Half International,
 2900 West Road, Suite 202, East Lansing

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

Call (517) 487-6340 with any questions.

Retaining Talent and Fostering Diversity: Effective Strategies for Workplace Success

By Dr. Tonya C. Bailey

In today's business landscape, fostering a diverse workforce where employees feel included and like they belong isn't just about recruitment, it's about retaining talent. Retaining a diverse workforce builds a culture of care and belonging, which contributes to the success of an organization.

Retaining a diverse workforce is not only crucial but also a competitive advantage in today's global marketplace. A diverse workforce brings together individuals from various backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, and this diversity fosters innovation, creativity, and a wider range of perspectives. When employees feel valued, respected, and included, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to the success of the organization. By promoting diversity and inclusion, companies can tap into a wealth of different skill sets, talents, and ideas that can drive growth, enhance problem-solving, and enable effective decision-making. Moreover, retaining a diverse workforce is also more reflective of the diverse customer base that companies serve, ultimately leading to improved customer satisfaction and increased market opportunities. Embracing and retaining diverse talent is not only the right thing to do but also a strategic move that can positively impact an organization's bottom line.

To achieve this, organizations need to implement retention strategies that meet the needs of their employees. Here are five retention strategies an organization can consider when working to create a thriving workplace.

Offering Competitive Compensation Packages

Competitive compensation plays a significant role in attracting and retaining talented individuals. Regularly review salary structures to ensure they align with industry standards while considering factors such as experience, skills, and performance metrics. Additionally, consider offering benefits packages that cater to employees' diverse needs.

Provide Opportunities for Growth

Employees value organizations that invest in their professional development. Offer training programs, mentorship initiatives, or tuition reimbursement plans that allow employees to enhance their skills or pursue



Christina MorilloPexels

higher education while contributing to their career advancement within the company.

Promote Work-Life Balance

In today's fast-paced world where burnout is prevalent, promoting work-life balance is essential for employee retention. Encourage flexible working arrangements such as remote work options or flexible hours whenever possible without compromising productivity or team collaboration.

Recognize Employee Contributions

Recognizing employee contributions goes beyond monetary rewards; it fosters loyalty among your workforce too! Implement an employee recognition program that acknowledges outstanding performance, innovative ideas, or going above and beyond expectations. This can include public recognition, rewards, or even career advancement opportunities.

Regularly Seek Employee Feedback

Creating a feedback loop is crucial for understanding employee needs and concerns. Conduct regular surveys or one-on-one meetings to gather feedback on their experience within the organization. Actively address any issues raised to demonstrate your commitment to improving the work environment.

Implementing retention strategies is key to fostering a diverse workforce and organizational success. By offering competitive compensation packages, seeking employee feedback and celebrating employee achievements, organizations can foster a culture of care and belonging that creates an environment where employees feel valued and empowered. By prioritizing retention, organizations can retain top talent and foster an inclusive workplace where diversity thrives, leading to innovation, increased productivity and organizational success. ●

A space shuttle is shown launching, angled upwards against a dark blue sky with white clouds at the bottom. The shuttle is white with orange external tank and boosters. Bright orange and white flames from the engines are visible at the bottom left.

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A circular image featuring a smiling woman with dark curly hair, wearing a red blazer and a name tag. She is holding a clipboard and a pen. The background is a collage of green-tinted images including a cityscape, a person in a hard hat, and a globe.

MEETING TO REMEMBER?
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Michigan Premier Events: Empowering Women Through Leadership and Support

By Ashlee Willis, Founder and CEO, Michigan Premier Events & Board Member, ATHENA Women’s Interest Network

At Michigan Premier Events, we believe in the power of women to lead, inspire, and innovate. As a business owner, I am committed to creating opportunities that empower women in our community and beyond. Whether it's through our event managing services or our involvement in organizations like ATHENA Women’s Interest Network (WIN), we strive to uplift and support women at every opportunity.



Willis

female leaders and fostering a culture of inclusivity and support.

At Michigan Premier Events, we are proud to support women in our industry, providing them with the tools and resources they need to thrive. From networking events to internship opportunities, we are committed to fostering a community where women can learn, grow, and succeed together. By championing initiatives like mentorship programs, we are paving the way for the next generation of female leaders in the event management space.

As we celebrated Women’s History Month in March, we reflected on the strides women have made in business and beyond, and remember, together we can create a future where every woman has the opportunity to reach her full potential.

Live Authentically, Learn Constantly, Build Relationships, Foster Collaboration, Act Courageously, Advocate Fiercely, Give Back and Celebrate. ●

ATHENA WIN holds a special place in our hearts because it embodies the values of empowerment, collaboration, and advocacy that we hold dear. Serving on the ATHENA WIN Board is not just an honor; it's a responsibility to champion the advancement of women in business and leadership roles. Through our involvement with ATHENA WIN, we have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of connecting with like-minded

Thank You to Our New & Renewing Members

ATHENA Women’s Interest Network is excited to welcome new members and would like to thank our renewing members for their continued support!

Corporate:

- Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.
- Pinnacle Dermatology
- First National Bank of Michigan
- LAFCU
- McLaren Greater Lansing
- Granger Waste Services

Individual:

- Samantha Le
- Kristine Kuhnert
- Courtney Burgess
- Kim Harless
- Courtney Millbrook

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You want your employees to get the care they need – and so do we. At Blue Cross, we work hard to provide the best coverage in Michigan. With more plan options, more efficient, higher quality care, and access to no-cost programs such as Coordinated Care Core, a Blue Cross plan adds up to smarter care and better coverage for you and your employees, so you can attract the best talent, and keep it too.

Visit bcbsm.com/employers to see what a Blue Cross plan can do for your business.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Study Shows Naturalization Trends in Key States, Urges Quick Citizenship Applications for 2024 Vote

New research from the American Immigration Council focusing on naturalization rates and those likely eligible to naturalize in the country, highlighted several key states including Michigan. Analyzing data from 2022, here are the key takeaways:

- 7.4 million immigrants across the country are likely eligible to naturalize, including 122,700 immigrants from Michigan
- Over 43 percent of immigrants likely eligible to naturalize speak Spanish, followed by Chinese (4 percent), Tagalog/Filipino (2.4 percent), and Hindi (2.2 percent)
- In Michigan, the top three languages spoken by those likely eligible to naturalize include Spanish (23.3%), Arabic (6.7%), and Telugu (4.5%).
- In eight states – FL, TX, AZ, GA, PA, NV, NC, and WI – the number of immigrants likely eligible to naturalize is larger than the margin of victory in the 2020 election.

- Immigrants who naturalize increase their individual earnings by 8.9 percent, on average, and earn the right to vote – giving a voice in how their \$579 billion in taxes are spent.



To apply for naturalization, a lawful permanent resident must submit an application to U.S.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). USCIS will then schedule an interview with the applicant and decide the application, and they may also ask for more evidence. If the application is approved, the applicant will then take an oath to become a U.S. citizen.

Currently, USCIS is taking between 6 and 10 months to adjudicate most naturalization applications. Accordingly, lawful permanent residents who wish to become naturalized U.S. citizens before the November 2024 election should promptly file their applications. ●

The advertisement is split into two main sections. On the left, a chef with a mustache, wearing a black shirt and apron, stands in front of a brick oven with a pizza cooking inside. The text 'SADDLE BACK BBQ' is overlaid in white on the bottom left. On the right, a dark green background contains the text 'dream BIG and Grow Your Business' in white and green. Below this is a green button with 'Learn More' in white. At the bottom right is the MSU Federal Credit Union logo, which includes three vertical bars and the text 'msufcu' and 'MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION'.

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CEO | Visionary

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Automotive and Insurance Industries Highlight Leadership Lansing March Program

Two of Greater Lansing’s largest and most impactful industries were the focus of the March program for the 2023-24 Leadership Lansing cohort.

The regional economy was built and sustained for more than 100 years by General Motors (GM) and its supplier network. The Leadership Lansing cohort enjoyed an opportunity to tour GMs Lansing Grand River Assembly and body plants near downtown Lansing. Participants witnessed first-hand the advanced technology that is utilized to manufacture the Chevrolet Camaro and Cadillac CT4 and CT5. The group also learned more about how the transition to Electric Vehicles is impacting the present and future of manufacturing in the region.

The afternoon portion of the program shifted to Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan where the Leadership Lansing cohort was treated to a tour of the recently renovated Farm Bureau headquarters. Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan CEO, Don Simon, and Vice President of Claims, Roger Graff, also shared their thoughts on leadership with the group.

Every year, Leadership Lansing participants spend several months preparing group projects highlighting assets that make Greater Lansing special. Two of the groups made their presentation in March highlighting Old Town and Lansing Shuffle. ●

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THREE DECADES OF SERVICE

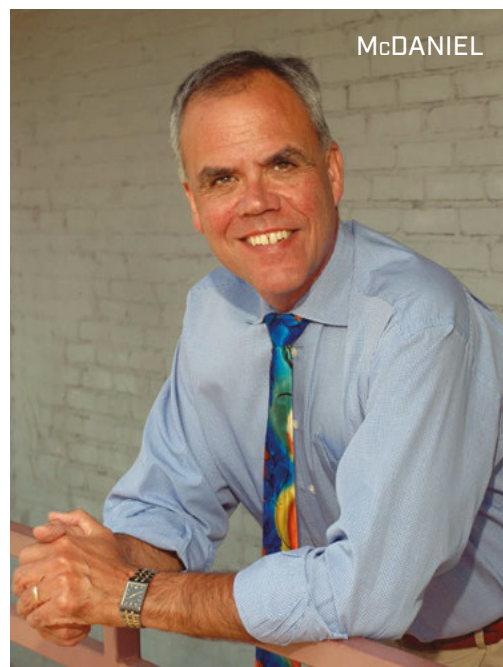
CINNAIRE CONTINUES ITS LEGACY OF INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND PLACES

Communities have some basic, fundamental needs to survive and thrive. Affordable housing. Well-paying jobs. Healthcare, childcare, education.

Mark McDaniel, president and chief executive officer for Lansing, Michigan-based Cinnaire, recognizes that those basics are not always readily available to underserved communities. Yet, providing those needs takes more than good intentions. It takes financial investments and collaboration with local government, businesses, and other community partners.

Cinnaire is a community development financial organization that makes high-impact investments and loans to developers and nonprofits, focusing specifically on economically and racially marginalized communities that too often get passed over for capital.

Cinnaire has a presence in nine states: Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. Whether rural or urban, the societal problems in the communities Cinnaire serves commonly stem from poverty and unreliable housing options, McDaniel said.



“We believe that one of the things that is key to helping change that is affordable housing as a cornerstone of stability,” McDaniel said. “Once you have that stability, of something that’s safe and decent and you can afford, there are other opportunities that become open for you to pursue, like education and jobs.”

McDaniel has been the face of Cinnaire since its launch in 1993 as

a tax credit fund called the Michigan Capital Fund for Housing. The entity rebranded in 2015 as Cinnaire — a name loosely derived from Celtic to mean lead (cinn) with care (aire) – as it expanded its geographic reach and diversified its services. Cinnaire has grown to offer permanent debt financing, construction lending, technical assistance, predevelopment lending, real estate development, youth leadership training, and title services.

Though Cinnaire Title is a for-profit entity, the rest of Cinnaire’s services fall under its 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation.

Cinnaire celebrated its 30-year milestone in 2023 with service projects and events to gather partners, investors, board members, and retirees, culminating in an all-staff summit last November. McDaniel said it was the first time all the staff had gathered in one place since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

GROWTH AND IMPACT

McDaniel said Cinnaire has experienced significant growth in recent years, even as the pandemic changed how people work. At the beginning of 2019, Cinnaire had 71 employees. As of March 2024, Cinnaire’s headcount is 160, he said.

“We’ve had a really good ability to see things coming. And although we couldn’t foresee a pandemic, we went through economic recessions before, so we just dusted off that operating plan,” he said.

When Cinnaire needed to tighten its budget, it offered attractive separation deals to nonessential staff rather than laying off employees.

“Investors loved it, and because of that, they supported us with investing through that period of time,” McDaniel said.

He said that Cinnaire’s investors tend to be socially



motivated to make a difference in underserved communities and are encouraged by Cinnaire’s innovative use of financial tools like the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and the New Markets Tax Credit.

Cinnaire has succeeded in transforming neighborhoods where other organizations have failed by being upfront and transparent with potential investors, McDaniel said.

“When you look at our track record, we’ve got \$7 billion in investment loans that we’ve done over 30 years,” he said. “All of those loans and equity investments, we’ve never had a foreclosure. Ever. So just saying that, that usually is enough.”

Cinnaire estimates its investments and loans over the last three decades have resulted in more than \$10 billion in community impact.

HELPING HAND

McDaniel said he’s also been able to get community partners engaged by telling anecdotes about the people served by Cinnaire’s projects.

For instance, he tells the story of Harold, who was living under a freeway overpass in southwest Detroit. Previously a General Motors engineer and family man, Harold’s mental health and substance abuse problems made it difficult for him to find help or housing.

“This was an early one where I realized that what we were doing was on the right track,” McDaniel recalled.

Cinnaire teamed up with a community health organization to build a supportive housing development in Detroit for people who came through the community mental health system. Harold was well-known to community aid workers in the neighborhood and was offered a unit in the new development eligible for a Section 8 housing voucher.

“He was in the right frame of mind at the time that he said, ‘Yeah, I’ll do that,’” McDaniel said.

With stable housing, Harold was able to access healthcare, gain sobriety, and better treat his mental health. Within a couple of years, the housing management company hired him to do maintenance in the building, and he was able to reconnect with his family.

“That story will never leave me,” said McDaniel, explaining that he was especially touched by how proud Harold was to rebuild his life.

HOUSING SHORTAGES

McDaniel said a lack of affordable housing has reached crisis levels both locally and nationally.

“It’s everywhere. The people who are hurt the most are the poorest of the poor, but the other group that’s being impacted is the workforce. They can’t afford to buy a house, they can’t afford to rent,” he said.

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority recently estimated the state is short about 190,000 units, resulting in higher prices for existing housing.

McDaniel said there’s no “magic bullet” to remedy the housing crisis. Stakeholders likely need to address a combination of issues such as zoning, density, taxes, lender policies, and an anti-affordable housing sentiment in many local neighborhoods, he said.

“It’s frustrating when you have cities saying, ‘Well, I don’t want those people here,’” McDaniel said. “Well, those people are already here, and they’re homeless or they’re in living situations that are terrible.”

People without stable housing are more likely to put a strain on hospital emergency rooms and the criminal justice system, he said.

“Think about the cost of that to the city budget every year,” McDaniel said. “Where if you can get somebody in a permanent place to live with support systems, you don’t have as many of those problems anymore. That’s a proven national model.”

ALLEN PLACE

Cinnaire’s work is ever-present in the Lansing region. Notable among Cinnaire’s projects is Allen Place on East Kalamazoo Street in Lansing. Completed in 2022, the \$11 million development provides 21 mixed-income housing units, along with commercial space, integrative services, and community programming.

The nonprofit Allen Neighborhood Center had the option to purchase the 1932-built complex after other commercial tenants moved out, so it brought on Cinnaire Solutions to codevelop a mixed-used concept. The renovation was financed with \$7 million in loans from Cinnaire Lending and New Markets Tax Credits.

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AND LOANS OVER
THE LAST THREE
DECADES HAVE
RESULTED IN MORE
THAN **\$10 BILLION**
IN COMMUNITY
IMPACT.

Allen Place continues to have its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-friendly farmers market, but also now has a community health clinic, a culinary incubator program, commercial kitchen space, and offices for local nonprofits.

McDaniel said Cinnaire’s investment in a community is more than just financial.

“We realized pretty quickly we’re now a neighbor as a partner in this partnership,” he said. “If we’re going to protect that investment, we needed to take the money we were earning and put it back into those neighborhoods doing non-housing types of things that strengthen the community.”

It’s a holistic approach that makes a neighborhood appealing to the people who live there and also to the greater region.

“The vast majority of them are places now where people really want to live all these years later,” McDaniel said.

WALNUT PARK AND THE ABIGAIL

McDaniel also counts among Cinnaire’s local successes the repurposing of the iconic Michigan School for the Blind into affordable housing for families and seniors, despite some community pushback and the threat of foreclosure.

The original school dated back to 1880 and counted singer Stevie Wonder among its former students. Though it had a National Register of Historic Places designation, the school’s 1996 closure coincided with increased crime and poverty in the neighborhood.

Cinnaire committed to redeveloping the landmark Lansing site. Working with the Ingham County Land Bank, Cinnaire resolved outstanding loans, then teamed with TWG Development to fund and revitalize the 20-acre campus.

The former school auditorium was replaced with the 64-unit Walnut Park Apartments, and an administrative building and high school became a 60-unit senior housing project called The Abigail.

The combined development cost for both projects was \$26.5 million and Cinnaire’s total Low-Income Housing Tax Credit equity was \$22.4 million. Cinnaire also provided a \$370,000 predevelopment loan, a \$2.3 million permanent loan, and title work.



THE ABIGAIL INCLUDES 60 UNITS FOR SENIORS. COURTESY/CINNAIRE

Cinnaire celebrated its 30th anniversary of investing in people and places in 2023. In addition, we'd like to recognize businesses and organizations celebrating milestone anniversaries this year and thank them for their contributions to the Greater Lansing region.

- ◆ Harbor Strategic Public Affairs, 5 years
- ◆ Resch Strategies, 15 years
- ◆ Jungle Jane, 30 years
- ◆ Publicom, 45 years
- ◆ Pluene Service Company, 50 years
- ◆ Great Lakes Christian College, 75 years

Despite early resistance to the project at Lansing City Council meetings, McDaniel said the community has since come to support the adaptation since it's attractive and energy efficient while retaining some of the property's historic architecture.

THE FUTURE

Cinnaire's many years of service in the investment industry mean it can take on ambitious initiatives, such as the February 2024 closing of a \$55 million equitable access fund to support affordable housing development by emerging developers in the Midwest.

Called the Ubuntu Fund, Cinnaire secured investments from JPMorgan Chase, PNC Bank, KeyBank, and Fifth Third Bank.

The fund is designed to help under-invested, minority-led real estate development firms facing systemic barriers to traditional equity sources. Their projects will provide affordable housing in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois neighborhoods.

McDaniel said he's found life purpose in nonprofit work, as he helps people secure affordable housing and his staff, partners, and investors feel valued. Earlier in his career, he worked in for-profit housing development.

"I realized I wanted to do something that was a lot more impactful and was focused not on building boxes. 'How

many boxes I can build and how much money I can make?'" he said, noting that Cinnaire has shifted his priorities. "It's been really great, but it's changed me. I'm not even anything like the person I was before."

Three decades in, McDaniel is looking down the road toward retirement. He expects to pass the CEO post to an as-yet undetermined successor within about three years, then stay on as a part-time advisor for another two years.

"I still can be sometimes a couple of steps ahead of everybody else, and I just think big all the time. And so, you know, it's not like I want to retire, but having this transition out over the next few years is probably just about right for me," McDaniel said.

In the meantime, McDaniel is excited to further Cinnaire initiatives like the Catalyst Fund, which is helping developers finance the renovation of vacant homes and land into affordable housing in communities including Wilmington, Delaware, and Detroit, Michigan.

It's sometimes an uphill battle to fill the housing gap, he said.

"There's just not enough resources, not enough good policy that can really make the kind of impact we need," said McDaniel. "But you've got to do something. You can't just sit and watch, and that's what we're trying to do." ●

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Get to Know Hannah Kilbride: LRCC's New Public Affairs Intern

In January 2024, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) welcomed an outstanding new addition to its team, Hannah Kilbride. As an intern in the public affairs department, Kilbride assists with marketing and public policy projects and initiatives. The LRCC understands the importance of nurturing talent to support our members and the region's growth. *FOCUS Magazine* sat down with Kilbride to learn more about her and her role at the LRCC.



Kilbride

Can you tell us about your educational background or experiences that have prepared you for this internship?

I'm majoring in marketing and public policy at Michigan State, and within my majors I've gained experience that ties in well with this internship! I've taken an American public policy class that was focused on government processes and taught me about the advocacy process. I've also gained marketing experience through my business courses, specifically with social media and design.

As a member of our public affairs team, what specific projects or aspects of the role are you most excited to be working on during your internship?

I am excited to learn more about LRCC's marketing strategy. In my business classes, we've learned about different marketing concepts, but it doesn't compare to having real-world experience. I've really enjoyed learning about social media engagement and seeing how different posts perform, and understanding what resonates with our members the best. I've also liked learning about local and state policy issues. Most of my public policy courses are focused on national topics, so I've enjoy getting to work on issues that are closer to home.

Looking ahead, what are your long-term career goals or aspirations in the field of public affairs or related areas?

In the future, I'm interested in working in a marketing role that's focused on public affairs and making a difference within our community. Working at the LRCC has helped me realize that I'm interested in working directly with local businesses and being involved in community engagement. ●



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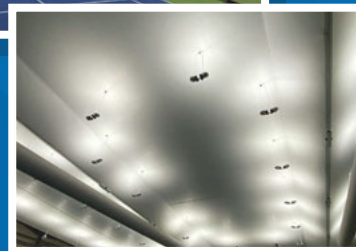
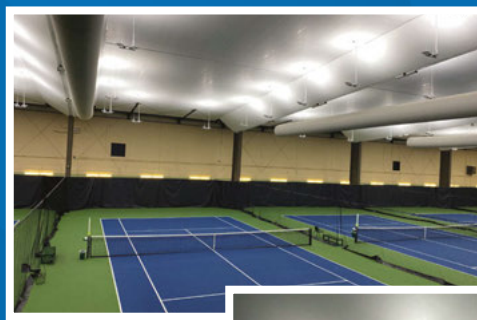
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DELTA

Serving Up Savings

The Sparrow Michigan Athletic Club took advantage of rebates from BWL's Hometown Energy Savers® program to upgrade the lighting for their 10 indoor tennis courts. The new upward facing LED lights are not only more efficient, but reduce glare on the courts.

"The lights have made a big difference to the entire tennis area. Visually, it's more open, the courts are brighter... I just wish my game improved." – Jim, MAC member



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The Lansing Regional Chamber hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for **Apex Automotive Group** and their team! Apex Automotive Group offers honest, expert auto repairs at affordable prices and provides truck and car repair services in Lansing. Since 2023, Apex Automotive Group has been providing Lansing area customers with clear and upfront estimates before starting any service or repair. Their certified technicians and experienced auto repair specialists provide top-notch service on all makes and models.

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Lansing City Council Approves Transformation Housing Projects in Downtown

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) extends its appreciation to the Mayor and Lansing City Council for their action to approve transformational downtown housing developments. The \$228 million housing developments includes \$40 million of state appropriated investment to support economic growth in downtown Lansing.

The transformational housing developments not only garnered the backing of civic, labor, and business leaders but also received strong support from the community, with 73 percent of Lansing voters supporting the acceptance of state funds for downtown attainable housing projects.

The LRCC is excited about the transformational housing development moving forward and looks forward to continuing to work with city leaders on finding a viable and positive solution to the city hall funding, development, and redevelopment plans.

These transformation projects will create new opportunities and set the stage for long-term prosperity that will allow our community to continue to thrive. We understand the significance of this moment and the potential it holds for our city's future. ●



The LRCC is excited about the transformational housing development moving forward."



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Lansing Labor and Business Unite to Endorse Lansing City Charter Commission Slate

As the May 7th elections for the Lansing Charter Commission approach, the city's organized labor and business communities stand united behind a slate of candidates dedicated to ensuring a fair and prosperous future for Lansing. With the task of reviewing and potentially amending the city's Charter, often referred to as the city's Constitution, the importance of selecting the right candidates cannot be overstated.

Representing a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences, the endorsed slate of candidates has been carefully chosen to prioritize the interests of all Lansing residents.

The endorsed slate of candidates includes:

- **Stephen Purchase**, staff, Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters & Millwrights
- **Ben Dowd**, Associate Director, Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, Chair of Lansing Pride
- **Joan Bauer**, former member of the Lansing City Council and state representative
- **Muhammad Qawwee**, President of UAW Local 4911
- **Elizabeth Driscoll Boyd**, former Communications Director for Governor Jennifer Granholm
- **Brian Jeffries**, former member of the Lansing City Council and Ingham County Commission
- **Miranda Swartz**, member of IBEW Local 665
- **Keith Williams**, former executive director, Michigan State University Alumni Office
- **Guillermo Lopez**, Board of Education Trustee for the Lansing School District

The Lansing Regional Chamber Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) is one of the only business political action committees focused on local elections. The LRC-PAC only takes voluntary contributions. The LRC-PAC does not use membership dues for any political efforts. ●

The Lansing Regional Chamber-PAC
Endorsed Candidates for Lansing City Charter Commission

JOAN BAUER
Former member of the Lansing City Council and state representative

BEN DOWD
Associate Director, Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, Chair of Lansing Pride

ELIZABETH DRISCOLL BOYD
Former Communications Director for Governor Jennifer Granholm

BRIAN JEFFRIES
Former member of the Lansing City Council and Ingham County Commission

GUILLERMO LOPEZ
Board of Education Trustee for the Lansing School District

STEPHEN PURCHASE
Staff, Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters & Millwrights

MUHAMMAD QAWWEE
President, UAW Local 4911

MIRANDA SWARTZ
Member IBEW Local 665

KEITH WILLIAMS
Former executive director, Michigan State University Alumni Office

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NEW HIRES

Lansing-based public relations and digital marketing firm **Martin Waymire** has hired **Mariam Robinson** as its director of public relations. Robinson has worked in the greater Lansing area for 17 years, with experience in public policy, government relations, project management, marketing and communications, and association governance. She's worked for organizations such as the Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association, Emergent Holdings, and Ngage Management.



Andretz

Fraser Trebilcock has hired criminal defense and professional licensing attorney **Robert J. Andretz** to work primarily in the law firm's Lansing office.

With two decades of experience, Andretz has represented felony and misdemeanor clients in state and federal courts throughout Michigan. He previously served as president of the Clinton County Bar Association and the Catholic Lawyers Guild of the Diocese of Lansing.

PROMOTIONS



Howell

LAFCU has promoted **Robyn Howell** to executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Michigan credit union. In her new role, Howell is responsible

for overseeing and guiding LAFCU's activities to fulfill the credit union's goals. This is Howell's third promotion since joining LAFCU in 2017 as the credit union's human resources manager. She was promoted in 2018 to vice president

of human resources and to chief human resources officer in 2021. She's also an alumna of the Lansing Regional Chamber's Leadership Lansing program.



(L to R) Adam Frost, Ana Loew, Brendan Baker, Kelly Decker, Adam Rivera, Madison Reavis, Madison Ley, Steven Guipe, Steven Osborn and Will Kwiecinski.



Todd

Maner Costerisan has announced 11 staff promotions within its business consulting, wealth management, technology, and public

accounting firm. **Kevin Todd** has been promoted from manager to senior manager in Maner's tax department, where he will focus on tax planning and compliance for individual and for-profit business returns and provide support for federal and state controversy work. Meanwhile, 10 team members have been promoted to manager including **Adam Frost, Ana Loew, Brendan Baker, Kelly Decker, Adam Rivera, Madison Reavis, Madison Ley, Steven Guipe, Steven Osborn** and **Will Kwiecinski**.

Choose Lansing has announced the recent promotion of five staff members within the Greater Lansing area marketing organization. Formerly vice president of marketing communications, **Tracy Padot** has been promoted to chief marketing officer. Padot has been a part of the Choose Lansing team since 2000 and leads the marketing efforts for both Choose Lansing and the Lansing Sports Commission. After six years at Choose Lansing, **Stephanie**



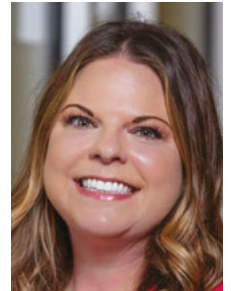
Padot



Wohlfert



Backus



Jespersen



Lavender

Wohlfert has been promoted to director of sales, state accounts. **Ariel Backus** joined the Choose Lansing sales team in 2022 with more than a decade of event

management and sales experience. In her new role as director of sales, national accounts, Backus aims to attract new business to the region from around the country. **Beth Jespersen** is now the research and technology systems manager to recognize her role in working with Choose Lansing's data vendors and providing data analysis for Choose Lansing. Meanwhile, **Anne Lavender** is now an executive coordinator, to fully encompass her role with the Board of Directors and coordination of membership and CTA responsibilities.

AWARDS

McLaren Greater Lansing nurse **Lindsay Lukavsky** was honored with the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. Lukavsky was nominated by a caregiver of a patient who said, "Lindsay was so caring and compassionate with my mother. The



emergency department was very busy, and Lindsay had a lot of sick patients, but she always made us feel just as important as the others.”

McLaren Greater Lansing received Laboratory Accreditation with Exemplary status from the American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine. The laboratory accreditation criteria ensure patients receive quality medical care in a safe environment.



Garza

Valencia Garza has been selected as the 2023 Outstanding Latino Caregiver Award recipient sponsored by the Lansing Latino Health Alliance. Garza

has worked in health care for more than 12 years, including the past six years with **McLaren Greater Lansing**. Garza has been an emergency medicine technician for two years. In her nomination for the award, a fellow nurse said that Garza is a compassionate and kind caregiver who gives patients the space and empathy they need to adjust during a difficult time.

COMPANY NEWS

Amy Piper from **Follow the Piper** authored a new book, “Secret



Piper

Michigan: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure.” Reedy Press released the book on April 1. The book uncovers the backstories behind well-

known places and reveals places even some Michiganders don’t know. The book includes several Lansing area attractions. Piper also wrote “100 Things to Do in Lansing Before You Die.”

McLaren Health Care, headquartered in Grand Blanc, has been included among *Newsweek’s* “America’s Greatest Workplaces for Diversity.” Companies included on the list are those that “nurture an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued.” *Newsweek* and *Plant-A Insights* reviewed 1.5 million

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companies across 78 industries. Through its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, McLaren Health Care is committed to driving positive change throughout the organization by providing staff with opportunities to engage, grow, and lead.



Welch

Choose Lansing held its annual meeting on Feb. 27, sharing the state of the tourism and hospitality industry and 2023 local visitor economic impact. As part of

the annual meeting, Choose Lansing celebrated the launch of its rebrand and recognized many of the region's 476 Certified Tourism Ambassadors dedicated to making every visitor experience a positive one. **Tracy Welch** was honored as the "CTA Star of the Year." Those acknowledged included CTAs who have served the community for five and ten years, and the anniversaries of these longstanding local businesses including **Silver Bells in the City** - 40 years; **Beggar's Banquet** - 50 years; **Abrams Planetarium** - 60 years; **Riverwalk Theatre** - 60 years and **Linn & Owen Jewelers** - 107 years.

The emergency department at **McLaren Greater Lansing** has begun offering an online check-in option so that patients can save a spot in line from home rather than the ER waiting room. Online check-in allows patients to receive an email confirmation and text alerts for their arrival time, reducing crowds and the spread of germs in the waiting area. The option is recommended for

patients with non-life-threatening concerns, such as a twisted ankle or knee, or a cold, cough, or sinus issues. Patients experiencing more serious conditions — like chest pain, shortness of breath, severe belly pain, severe headaches, uncontrolled vomiting, bleeding during pregnancy, or a major fall — should still go directly to the emergency room. Patients can register for online check-in at mclaren.org/lansingER.

McLaren Greater Lansing has brought back its physician-led lecture series, "Healthwise." The events are free to the public. Upcoming topics include ligament and tendon tears, heart valve disease, and bariatric surgery. To learn more, log on to mclaren.org/Healthwise.



Issawi

a team of 10 people in LAFCU's information technology department. The annual conference brings service management leaders and technical support professionals from across the globe to explore the elements of optimal service management strategy. Issawi's one-hour presentation, "Going from Zero to 100 in ITSM," discussed overcoming senior leadership barriers and staff skepticism when implementing new information technology systems.

McLaren Proton Therapy Center has treated its 1,000th patient since it opened in December 2018: Lansing resident Tammy Jugovich, who received proton therapy after surgery and chemotherapy for invasive ductal breast cancer. The McLaren Proton Therapy Center in Flint is one of two proton therapy centers in Michigan.



After extensive renovations, **Union Bank** reopened its Lake Odessa branch to the public on Feb. 12. It now serves as the hub for key operations such as the Financial and Operations Centers, Union Investment Solutions, and Virtual Branch. On Feb. 28, Union Bank's board of directors, employees, and community members gathered to celebrate the grand reopening of the Lake Odessa branch. Established in 1934, Union Bank has been part of the Lake Odessa community for 90 years.



Cavanaugh

The law firm Fraser Trebilcock Davis & Dunlap, P.C. has changed its legal name to **Fraser Trebilcock Davis Dunlap & Cavanaugh, P.C.** The change adds the surname of **Michael E. Cavanaugh**, in recognition of his long tenure and significant contributions to the firm. The firm's trade name will continue to be **Fraser Trebilcock**. Cavanaugh has litigated cases at all levels of the state and federal courts, including two cases before the United States Supreme Court. He has a background in commercial, employment, and constitutional matters. Cavanaugh has been a Fraser Trebilcock's Board of Directors member and is involved in the State Bar of Michigan and the Ingham County Bar Association. ●

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