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VP Member Engagement

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FOCUS

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

MAY 2024



Annual Dinner 2024

LRCC HONORS COMMUNITY STANDOUTS



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

No Time Like the Present to Revitalize Downtown Lansing

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) strongly supports the state's investment in our city's future through multiple projects including a new city hall campus. It's not merely about redeveloping a building; it symbolizes our city's progress and serves as the foundation for further economic growth.

State lawmakers have committed \$40 million toward development of a new Lansing City Hall. In recent polling, 58% of Lansing voters expressed their support for a new City Hall underscoring the community's eagerness to embrace positive change and drive Lansing towards a prosperous future. This and several other projects were part of the Capital Region Improvement Support Package (CRISP) developed by regional partners. Beyond city hall, approved state funding allocations include:

- \$40 million toward new Lansing housing projects
- \$50 million in road and water infrastructure projects in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties
- \$9.4 million for roadway improvements
- \$5 million toward Lansing Center renovations
- \$5 million towards construction of the Michigan Joint Training Innovation Center
- \$1.7 million toward Lansing Riverfront
- \$1 million ongoing state support for downtown Lansing

The Capital Council of Governments (CAPCOG) — a bipartisan collaborative effort by representatives from Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties, Michigan State University, and LRCC — is among a dozen regional and state organizations championing CRISP. The package seeks ongoing state aid of \$4.67 million and one-time investments of \$530 million for projects and services that could revitalize the Lansing region while readying it for anticipated future growth.

The next phase of the proposal package, CRISP #2, builds on the successes achieved through the FY24 budget allocations. CRISP #2 outlines regional priorities, including vital urban development projects, transportation infrastructure enhancements, and community development initiatives.

Significant strides have been made in positioning our city's center for future growth and success. With approvals for transformational housing initiatives and the full of funding for the Ovation Music and Arts Center, the city is fostering an environment to grow our population and revenues that will have a citywide impact.

These initiatives are instrumental in maintaining our downtown as a vibrant hub of creativity, building density, and connection at the core of our city.

The Lansing City Council currently has a city hall proposal under consideration, representing a pivotal opportunity to deploy these state resources. Any further delays or indecision risk not only the current investment from the state but also the potential for future investments. Our regional and state partners, along with our business community, are closely monitoring the Council's actions.

LRCC's message has been, and remains, unequivocal: There is no time like the present, and there is no funding to waste. The chance to rebuild Lansing is not just an option; it is an obligation. ●



TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



The chance to reconstruct and rebuild Lansing is not just an option; it is an obligation.”

Thank You Renewing Members

The Apothecary Shop	Farm Bureau Insurance Company	Matrix Consulting Engineers, Inc.	Thatch Computer Consulting
Applied Innovation	First National Bank of Michigan	McCall Hamilton	Theroux Development Co., Inc.
Art Craft Display, Inc.	Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.	Michigan Association of School Boards	Transworld Business Advisors of Lansing
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Tomie Raines Realtors	Fraser Trebilcock Davis & Dunlap P.C.	Michigan Optometric Association	Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Honigman, LLP	Michigan Works! Association	Triterra
Black Wall Street of Lansing	Image Builders Unlimited	NAI Mid-Michigan	Truscott Rossman
BMC-Business Machines Company	ITC Holdings Corporation	Patrick McPharlin	Wendy's - Team Schostak Family Restaurants
Builders Hardware Co.	K&P McClure Leasing Inc.	RC Contractors	Williams Auto World
Byrum Fisk	LAFCU	Robert Half International	
Capitol National Bank	Lake Lansing Road Mobil Service, Inc.	Ronald McDonald House of Mid-Michigan	
Capitol View Apartments	Lake State Landscaping & Snow Removal LLC	Shaheen Chevrolet, Inc.	
Cinnaire Corporation	Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores	Spartan Water & Coffee Service	
Community Quarterly			
Curvaceous Lingerie			

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!

Consumers Energy
85 Years

Peckham, Inc.
45 Years

Accident Fund Holdings (AF Group)
30 Years

Country Stitches
20 Years

DeWitt Charter Township
20 Years

Davies Project for Mid-Michigan Children
10 Years

MET - Michigan Education Trust
10 Years

Colliers International
5 Years

Ele's Place
5 Years

Oasis Senior Advisors of Mid-Michigan
5 Years

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W007955

Welcome New Members

Adventure Credit Union

adventurecu.org

2250 Lake Lansing Rd., Ste. A
Lansing, MI 48912

Capital City Janitorial LLC

capitalcityjanitoriallansing.com

CEDAM (Community Economic Development Association of Michigan)

cedamichigan.org

1118 S Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48910

Cintas Corporation

cintas.com

2408 South Canal Rd., Suite C
Lansing, MI 48917

Copper Moon - W.E.D.

wedmi.com

1247 Center St.
Lansing, MI 48906

Creekside Gathering Place

creeksidegatheringplace.com

9452 Peacock Rd.
Laingsburg, MI 48848

Delta Clean

deltacleanpowerwash.com

2381 Rollingridge
Holt, MI 48842

First Community Mortgage

firstcommunitymortgage.com/loan-officer/janaefredline

805 E Exchange St.
Owosso, MI 48867

Haven House

havenhouseel.org

121 Whitehills Drive
East Lansing, MI 48823

IBEW

ibew665.org

5710 Ivan Drive
Lansing, MI 48917

Intentional Energy

calendly.com/amycmollitor/discoverycall

3290 Old Hickory Tr.
Dewitt, MI 48820

JWR Enterprises LLC

jwrhealthservices.com

2722 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 100
Lansing, MI 48912

Kelly Equipment Services

kellyequipmentservice.com

13895 Center Rd.
Bath, MI 48808

Lifetime Roofing

lifetimeroofingmichigan.com

1880 Haslett Rd., Suite C
East Lansing, MI 48823

Midwest Vision Lansing Surgery Center

specialtyeyeinstitute.com

7397 E. Saginaw St.
East Lansing, MI 48823

MMD Signs, LLC

MMDSigns.com

3242 W. St. Joseph St.
Lansing, MI 48917

Moss Man LLC

<http://mossmanherbs.com>

3030 Vine St.
Lansing, MI 48912

Newman Lofts

newmanlofts.com

200 Albert Ave.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Okemos Coffee Shop

theOkemosCoffeeShop.com

1732 Hamilton Rd.
Okemos, MI 48864

Paychex

paychex.com

625 Kenmoor Ave. SE, Ste 100
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Pinnacle Dermatology

pinnacleskin.com/our-locations/okemos

2685 Jolly Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Plum Health

PlumHealthDPC.com

7402 Westshire Drive, Suite 110
Lansing, MI 48917

Rooted Real Estate at RE/MAX Real Estate Professional

kathryn-gandolfo.remax-rep.com

1755 Abbey Road
East Lansing, MI 48823

StrikeOut Baseball USA

strikeoutbaseballusa.org

1115 Candela Lane
Grand Ledge, MI 48837-2258

Tommy's Express

tommys-express.com/locations/mi443

6415 S. Cedar St.
Lansing, MI 48911

Uno Deuce Multimedia

unodeuce.com

P.O. Box 10105
Lansing, MI 48901

Versiti Blood Center

versiti.org

1036 Fuller Ave. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Waldorf University

start.waldorf.edu

106 South 6th St.
Forest City, IA 50436

Zap Zone XL

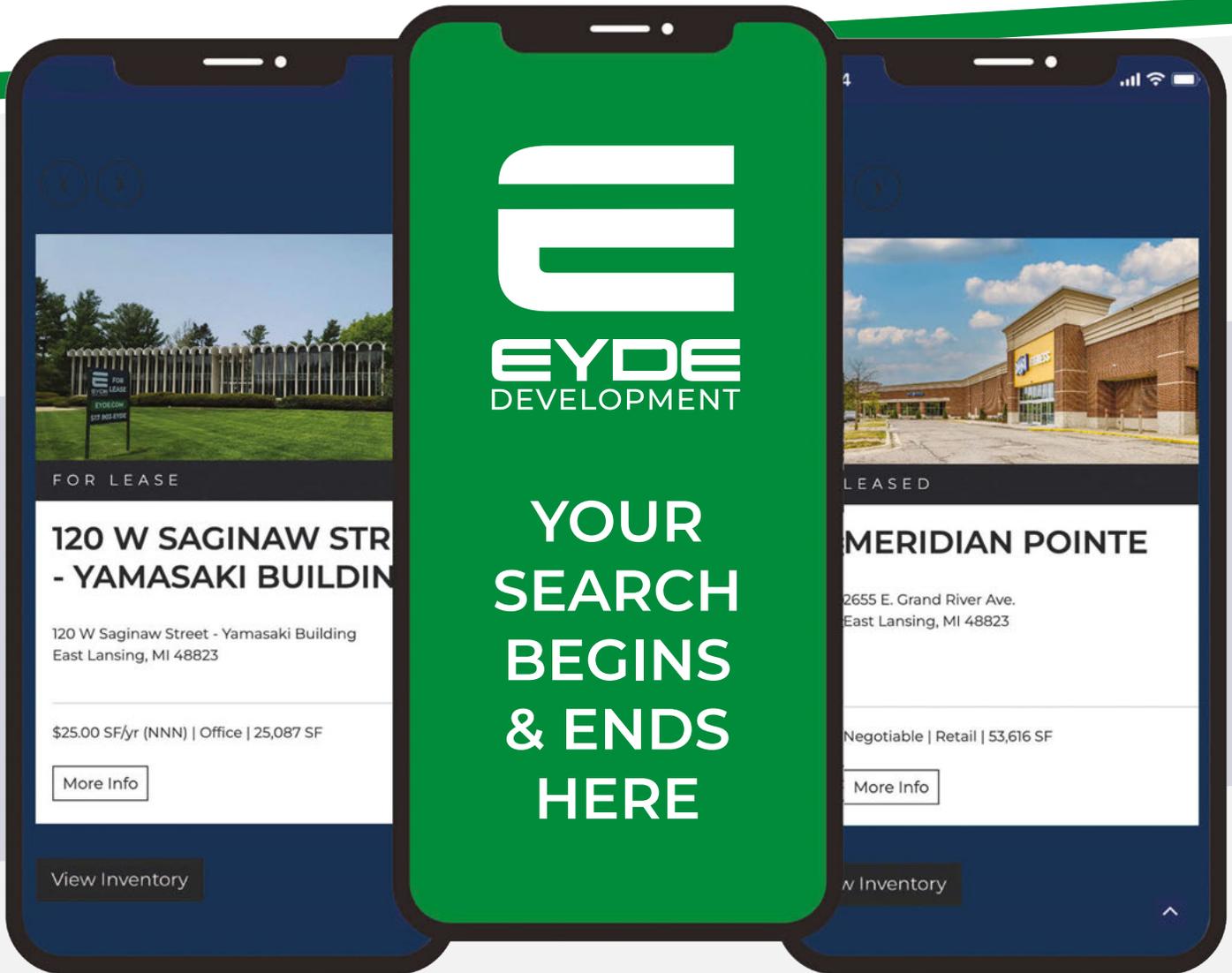
zapzonexl.com

5220 W. Saginaw Hwy.
Lansing, MI 48917

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.

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May 2024

5/2

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION SERIES: LEADING THROUGH INSPIRATION AND COMPASSION

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

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Series will welcome Dean Jong, MM, the owner and founder of Greater Lansing Open Soccer, Lansing's largest and most diverse adult recreational soccer leagues. Jong will dive into the nuances of leadership, namely the importance of listening, setting/respecting boundaries, and how to always come from a place of integrity. Whether you're managing employees or interacting with customers, building a foundation on these core values will give you the means to inspire those around you to attain your collective goals.

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

5/3

FIRST FRIDAY PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

Friday, May 3, from 11 to 11:30 a.m.
ZOOM

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.

LRCC BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES

Delta Township – Eaton County

Wednesday, May 1, from 9 to 10 a.m.
Delta Township District Library,
5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing

Lansing – Delhi Township

Wednesday, May 8 from 9 to 10 a.m.
Consumers Credit Union,
6935 South Cedar Street, Lansing

East Lansing – Meridian Township

Wednesday, May 15, from 9 to 10 a.m.
Independent Bank,
1380 West Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing

5/14

MAY MEMBER MIXER CO-HOSTED WITH CHOOSE LANSING

Tuesday, May 14, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive,
Lansing

Join us for an exciting evening of networking, collaboration, and community engagement during the May Member Mixer, co-hosted with Choose Lansing. This event provides an invaluable opportunity to expand your network, forge new connections, and foster meaningful relationships with like-minded individuals who share a passion for business growth and community development. Independent Bank & Lansing Shuffle have generously sponsored this mixer.

Cost: This event is offered at no cost.

5/15

ATHENA WIN: FLORAL SPRING WREATH WORKSHOP

Wednesday, May 15, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
The Plant Professionals, 16886 Turner Road,
Lansing

Come join Girls' Night Out to connect while creating your very own spring wreath with help from The Plant Professionals! This casual event offers the perfect opportunity to forge meaningful connections while crafting a beautiful decoration for your home or office. Guided by skilled instructors, unleash your artistic flair and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere filled with conversation. Don't miss this chance to expand your professional network and add a personal touch to your space. All flower arrangement items will be included with your registration fee. Light snacks and beverages will be provided.

Cost: Tickets are \$65 for ATHENA WIN members and \$75 for future ATHENA WIN members.

5/23

LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB

Thursday, May 23, from 11:30 a.m.
to 1:30 p.m.
Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center,
219 South Harrison Road, East Lansing

The May Lansing Economic Club will feature a panel discussion on Michigan's economic growth. Panelists include Quentin Messer, President and CEO, Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Hilary Doe, Chief Growth Officer, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, who will discuss the state's economic competitiveness from economic growth strategies, talent & workforce development, to population growth infrastructure investment, and more.

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.

Spotlight on MSU President Kevin Guskiewicz: Q&A with *FOCUS Magazine*

Michigan State University welcomed its 22nd president on March 4, 2024. *FOCUS Magazine* sat down with Kevin Guskiewicz to learn more.

Q: As the new president of Michigan State University, what are your top priorities for fostering stronger ties with the business community and the Lansing region?

A: I like to say that the best leaders — whether in business, health care, academia, sports or some other industry — are those who are always curious. Curiosity is at the heart of my 100-day plan for the university, with a top priority being listening and learning from the community, including the business community and all our partners in the Lansing region.

I don't want to get ahead of learning from the community, but through collaboration with partners and stakeholders, I do aim to position MSU as an engine that powers Michigan — and amplify our role as the university for Michigan. Here in Lansing, that means looking at the region's priorities vis-à-vis research, entrepreneurship, innovation and/or talent supply and development.

Q: What are your thoughts on MSU's investment outside of campus, specifically as we look at the MI Ave. Corridor, or downtown East Lansing or Lansing? Michigan State University plays a vital role in driving economic growth and innovation in the region. How can we strengthen partnerships between the university and local businesses to foster economic development and job creation?

A: A university like MSU is a huge driver of the regional economy to begin with, whether we're talking about the number of highly talented local people we employ, the students we bring to live and learn here or downstream economic effects, including enhancing the community's quality of life through athletic and cultural events.

We're working with state and regional consortium partners to establish an Economic Development Administration Tech Hub for an advanced materials-focused facility in the Lansing region. This would center and leverage the strength of the university and associated enterprises in materials research and development that can drive innovations across a range of critical 21st-century industries. Those could include semiconductor chips, defense and aerospace electronics,



advanced manufacturing, quantum computing and medical imaging and sensing.

Q: Arriving in East Lansing from the University of North Carolina and given the strength of Research Triangle Park, how can we build on this model within the University Research Corridor?

A: Research Triangle Park has been the gold standard for technology-based economic development for decades — dating back to 1959 — but it isn't the only model for economic development or collaboration today. Each of the University Research Corridor members — MSU, U-M and Wayne State — have our own approaches and a big collective impact on the state's economy.

The URC universities' economic impacts extend into every Michigan county and totals more than \$20 billion annually. The URC members' annual research spending together amounts to some \$2.6 billion and accounts for 91% of academic R&D in the state. We are all partners in the Michigan Opioid Technical Assistance Collaborative and collaborate with one another in many research and service areas.

There are also some big differences between the URC and the others around the country the URC benchmarks

itself against. For example, the URC enrolls and graduates far more students than the three Research Triangle universities, including in medicine and health care and high technology programs.

Additionally, I would say that the assets we have to offer right here at Michigan State rival the talent, applied research and partnership opportunities of anywhere in the United States. I'm thinking about MSU's 20-year partnership here with Fraunhofer USA, which developed from a German model of applied research collaboration. Our partnership, which focuses on R&D for advanced synthetic diamond materials, thin film coatings, plasma sources, industrial lasers and additive manufacturing, is conducting corporate and government-funded research to bring innovative products to the marketplace while training our students in cutting-edge technologies.

Let's look at space to grow new enterprises. MSU's 110-acre University Health Park has the new McLaren hospital as the anchor, other health care facilities and some land still available for lease. The VanCamp Incubator, not far from campus, offers wet lab and office space for new life science enterprises.

Like the Research Triangle Park, our innovation park plan has to include a dynamic mix of uses and companies in settings that make sense. Good outcomes and economic growth will come from solid relationships with companies like TechSmith that are innovating alongside the university.

Q: Access to talent is critical for business growth and competitiveness. How will you collaborate with regional businesses to provide students with hands-on learning experiences, internships, and mentorship opportunities that prepare them for success in the business world and meet the evolving needs of employers?

A: The question really boils down to how MSU is developing the talent we will all need to fill the jobs and support the businesses of today and tomorrow.

During my listening and learning tour across campus, I've been impressed with how much our colleges center career exploration as part of student success. Spartan students have access to college-based career services, community-engaged learning and curriculum opportunities that prepare them to excel in today's business landscape. I can tell that so many of the professors and instructors I've met are passionate about supporting students as they enter the workforce.

Building a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship starts with our educational programs, whether we're talking about the College of Business or the College of

Music. Our Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation empowers students in any study area to "learn by doing" to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and create new ventures. It's the best of both worlds: Students leave MSU prepared to excel as savvy and confident leaders in the careers of their choosing. It's also ranked among the nation's top 15 undergraduate entrepreneurship programs.

I also see our Career Services Network as an excellent avenue to connect students and employers. Each academic year, it offers a local job and internship fair and partners with our local employers to create internships that align with their needed skillsets for future growth. Our career services model not only supports students and recent graduates with job searches, career exploration and networking opportunities with alumni and local and national employers. And I'm a big proponent of experiential learning, community engagement and, overall, just "learning by doing" to prepare students for their future careers. So, I'm pleased that MSU colleges and programs work closely with regional businesses and community groups to place students in internships, full-time employment and volunteer opportunities.

Consider, for example, the Center for Community Engaged Learning, which supports the Community Engagement Scholars Program matching students with community organizations to complete community-identified projects or other opportunities. Students report to community-based leaders and get hands-on experience practicing what it means to operate within these organizations.

Moving forward, the university will continue to explore opportunities to collaborate with local businesses and organizations to ensure our curriculum aligns with their needs and trends. For example, we're planning to increase micro-credentials for profession-focused topics, such as marketing and brand management. We also recently hosted our first Future of Work conference, which brought together faculty from across MSU colleges and representatives from community employers.

Q: Research and innovation are catalysts for business growth and competitiveness. How do you plan to enhance partnerships between the university and industry, facilitating collaborative research projects, technology licensing agreements, and other initiatives that drive commercialization and create value for businesses in the Lansing region?

A: Let me answer this question by going all the way back to the founding of MSU, which reflected the land-grant ethos before there were even **» CONTINUED PAGE 12**

FROM PAGE 11 ▶

Spotlight on MSU President Kevin Guskiewicz: Q&A with *FOCUS Magazine*

land-grant universities. We were created to advance the competitiveness of the state by unlocking access to cutting-edge knowledge for all, not just the privileged or — with the advent of Extension services — even just the enrolled or degreed.

In the 19th century, that took the form of bringing science and evidence-based practices to agriculture and, over time, what they called “the mechanic arts.” In the 21st century, it’s still about expanding the boundaries of scientific knowledge to improve how we produce our food and protect our environment. But it’s also about innovation in technologies like electric and autonomous vehicles, AI, materials science and cutting-edge medical therapies. And it’s about innovating by applying interdisciplinary lenses to what we think we know — whether through quantum computing or creating art.

For our faculty innovators, we have built an innovation ecosystem that surrounds them with experienced entrepreneurs, seed funding and planning tools to launch a company on a path to success. From the earliest moments of discovery, faculty can get advice, support, and funding to move their concept toward an investable company. We can pair them with experienced business leaders to drive business development so our faculty can serve as the “chief scientific officer” while remaining a strong member of our faculty and leader in their academic field.

Our MSU Innovation Center is a pivotal component of our ecosystem dedicated to facilitating research partnerships with corporations, transferring MSU patents and innovations to businesses and starting new companies. The Innovation Center dedicates more than 20 people and several million dollars to facilitating the fastest path to economic and societal impact from MSU’s intellectual assets. We partner with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to maximize our impact on Michigan through novel products and services.

The Innovation Center is also a champion for the region, partnering with the MEDC, Lansing Economic Area Partnership and other economic development organizations. MSU hosts several MEDC grants that invest in the earliest stages of translational research that will foster the transition from research discoveries to a product or service that will impact the economy. Another vital component of our ecosystem is the MSU Research Foundation, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Using licensing revenue from university intellectual property and its own investments, the

foundation collaborates with the university, Innovation Center and external partners to drive economic growth across our region and state. In addition to supporting MSU research through annual grants, the foundation manages research parks and facilities, conducts venture investing through its Red Cedar Ventures and Michigan Rise funds and offers startup accelerator programs.

The Research Foundation, in fact, just recently launched its newest Conquer Accelerator cohorts, including one based in East Lansing sponsored by the MSU Federal Credit Union. The Conquer Finance and Insurance Accelerator will provide five startup companies working in the financial services and insurance area with initial funding from Red Cedar Ventures, mentorship from industry veterans and a variety of other support.

Q: With global competition for international students intensifying, what steps will you take to ensure that Michigan State University remains a top destination for students from around the world, offering a welcoming and inclusive environment that celebrates cultural diversity?

A: One of the reasons I was so excited to accept the presidency of MSU is that we are a leading global public research university. International students and scholars have long been an incredibly important part of the Spartan community — in fact, last year, before I joined the university, we celebrated the 150th anniversary of MSU’s first international students. We’re proud that so many international students choose MSU not just for a world-class education but also because of our diverse and welcoming campus environment.

I think MSU stands out with its holistic approach to international student engagement. Community building starts long before students begin their first class, with admitted student and pre-departure orientation programs in several countries — and an enhanced international student orientation program when they arrive in East Lansing.

I’ve been especially impressed with our excellent Office for International Students and Scholars, which works closely with the International Students Association to strengthen that sense of community. They offer a wide variety of programming such as field trips, service-learning opportunities and regular social events. Specialized career services are also available to help international students find internships and jobs after graduation, and our alumni office helps them stay connected with the global Spartan network no matter where they go.

MSU is also a partner in the Humphrey Fellowship program, and here we focus on economic development themes. Since 2002, the program has brought close to 250 fellows from nearly 100 countries to our campus for graduate study and to continue their professional development.

But we also know how important it is to engage the entire campus and local community to foster a welcoming environment. So, MSU's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts include a very intentional global focus. International Studies and Programs offers workshops, trainings and other resources designed to enhance inter- and cross-cultural competencies for faculty and staff, as well as educational programs that bring awareness to current international issues and offer diverse perspectives on topics such as race and religion in a global context.

Looking to the future, the newly launched Spartan Global Learning Initiative will enhance and connect these efforts for all Spartans — international and domestic — to better equip students, faculty and staff with the skills and education they need to adapt to our rapidly changing and increasingly connected world. We're also excited about working with Governor Whitmer and her team on ways that MSU can support the Growing Michigan Initiative, including those related to attracting international students and immigrants to this great state. ●



For our faculty innovators, we have built an innovation ecosystem that surrounds them with experienced entrepreneurs, seed funding and planning tools to launch a company on a path to success.

A detailed illustration of a space shuttle launching, angled upwards from the bottom left towards the top right. The shuttle is white with orange external tank and boosters. Bright orange and white flames and smoke are visible at the base of the boosters. The background is a dark blue sky with some white clouds at the bottom.

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The Vital Power of Language Interpretation Services in Business

By Taylor Moberg, MSUFCU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Manager

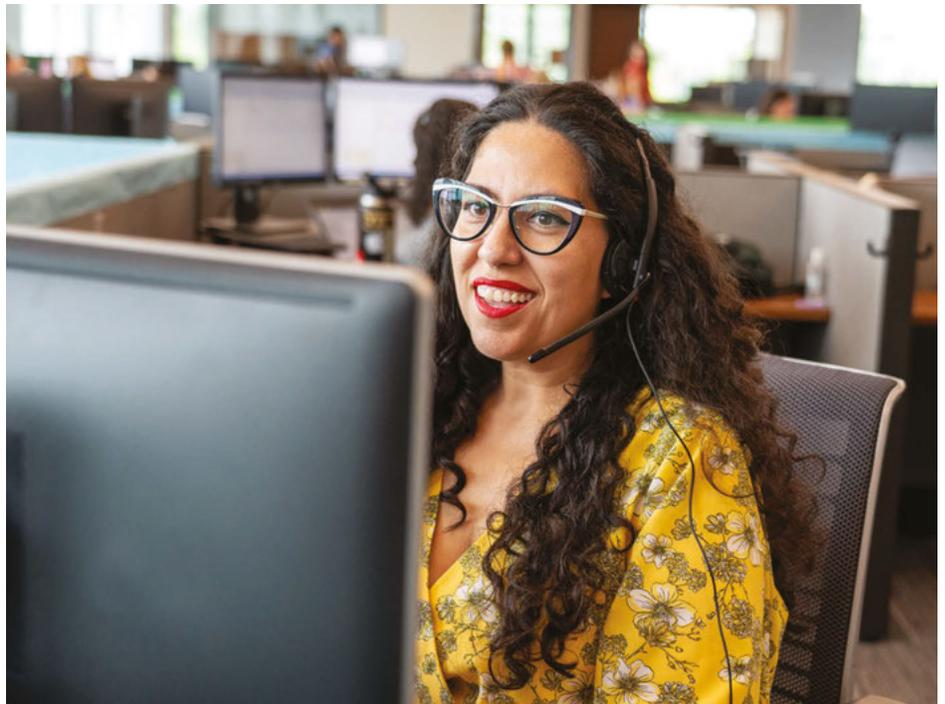
In today's business world, marked by global growth and cultural diversity, effective communication is essential for success. MSU Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU) understands this well. By tapping into both internal expertise and external resources, MSUFCU has facilitated numerous multilingual interactions. These efforts have significantly enhanced the member experience and fostered inclusivity within their community.

This article delves into the impact of language interpretation services on driving business success. Such initiatives allow companies, including yours, to break down linguistic barriers and create meaningful connections. By investing in language support, businesses can thrive in our interconnected world.

In 2023, MSUFCU took a significant step to meet the language needs of its diverse members. The Credit Union first introduced its Language Stipend Program, providing multilingual employees the opportunity to earn a stipend for using their language skills to assist members. During the first year, multilingual employees logged 3,944 interactions interpreting in four different languages: French, Swahili, Spanish, and Kiganda.

In addition to leveraging internal talent, MSUFCU has partnered with a third party to offer interpretation services in over 170 languages. Since launching this service in late 2023, MSUFCU has helped 1,922 members communicate in their preferred language, improving their experience and providing them with a more valuable partnership.

At MSUFCU, we prioritize serving both our existing member's and our community's needs. Our Language Stipend Program and interpretation services play a



crucial role in achieving this. Members who use these services see themselves represented and valued. By breaking down linguistic barriers, we engage with a diverse range of backgrounds, fostering stronger relationships and driving growth.

As businesses prioritize diversity and inclusivity, offering language interpretation services demonstrates their commitment to serving diverse communities and ensuring access for all. Investing in these services isn't just a matter of convenience – it's imperative for success in today's global economy. ●



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Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Announces Executive Leadership Addition

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) is pleased to announce the hiring of Bridget Drzal to the position of Vice President Member Engagement and the elevation of Amanda Matelonek to Digital Media Manager. This new addition and promotion come as part of LRCC’s commitment to evolving its organizational structure to better serve its members and the broader business community.



Drzal

Bridget Drzal brings over 15 years of professional sales and marketing experience to her new role as Vice President Member Engagement. With a proven track record of success in driving business growth and fostering meaningful connections, Drzal is poised to lead LRCC’s efforts in enhancing member engagement and business value.

Commenting on her new role, Drzal expressed her enthusiasm, stating, “I am thrilled to join the LRCC team and contribute to the organization’s mission of supporting and empowering our members to connect, grow and thrive. I look forward to leveraging my experience and strong relationships to deliver value to the Chamber’s diverse membership base.”



Matelonek

Amanda Matelonek, who has demonstrated exceptional leadership during her tenure at LRCC, has been promoted to Digital Media Manager. Matelonek’s innovative approach and strategic vision have played a pivotal role in advancing LRCC’s digital presence and effectively engaging with members in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Reflecting on her promotion, Matelonek stated, “I am honored to take on this new role and continue working alongside our dedicated team to drive impactful digital initiatives. In today’s interconnected world, it is important to leverage digital platforms to further our mission and amplify the voices of our members.”

Tim Daman, President & CEO of LRCC, emphasized the significance of these changes in aligning LRCC’s operations with the evolving needs of its members and business community. “I believe this new structure best positions our team and organization for even more success in the future,” Daman remarked. “Their collective expertise and dedication will be instrumental in advancing LRCC’s mission and fostering economic growth and prosperity in the region.”

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce looks forward to the continued contributions of Bridget Drzal, Amanda Matelonek, and its entire team as it strives to empower businesses and drive positive change in the Lansing community. ●

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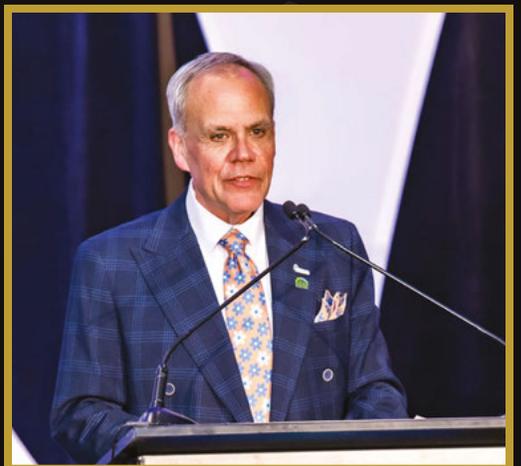
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Annual Dinner 2024

LRCC HONORS COMMUNITY STANDOUTS

BY JENNIFER MCENTEE

PHOTOS BY JOE PRUITT

What better way for the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) to mark the passage of another busy and productive year than to bring together business and community leaders for an Annual Dinner.

“Every year, our annual meeting serves as a powerful reminder of the collective strength of our business community,” said Lisa O’Connor, LRCC’s 2024 Board Chair. “It’s a time for celebration, recognition, and a recommitment to our shared purpose — a stronger, more vibrant community.”

LRCC’s Annual Dinner was held the evening of Thursday, April 25th, at the Lansing Center in downtown Lansing for the first time in a dozen years. Bob Hoffman of the Wharton Center and FOX 47 served as the emcee for the program.

With more than 600 of Greater Lansing’s business and community leaders in attendance, the event shined the limelight on some of the region’s standouts, including:

- Outstanding Small Business: **InVerve Marketing**
- Community Service Award: **Phil and Barb Tripp of Tripp’s Collision**
- Diversity Star Award, given in partnership with LEAP: **Cinnaire**
- Legacy Award: **Lansing State Journal**

The event was a celebration of how much the local business community can accomplish when they collaborate, O’Connor said.

“Together, we forge connections, advocate for change, and chart the course for a vibrant future,” said O’Connor, president of the marketing firm Publicom Inc. “I am proud to witness the impact of our annual gathering in energizing and uniting our diverse business community.”

OUTSTANDING SMALL BUSINESS

Lisa Smith, president of InVerve Marketing, said receiving this year’s Outstanding Small Business award is a much-appreciated validation that her company is on the right track.

“Businesses as a whole don’t get a lot of feedback. Achieving this award is external proof of our success. It means the world to us,” Smith said.

Since 2000, InVerve Marketing has worked to further its clients’ businesses with expertise in branding, consulting, and marketing technology. Smith said her team has put tremendous effort into scaling and expanding the firm’s services, revenue, and client base.

She said LRCC has been an invaluable resource for networking, understanding the local business and political landscapes, and leadership training.

“Some of our team members have relocated here from Grand Rapids and New York City, and this involvement further deepens our knowledge of, and pride, in the mid-Michigan region,” said Smith, who’s also an LRCC Board Member at Large.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Meanwhile, Phil and Barb Tripp of Tripp’s Collision were recognized with the Community Service Award for their legacy as local leaders in both business and philanthropy. The family-run business has grown since 1988 from Phil’s part-time high school job to a thriving vehicle repair business with locations in Jackson, Lansing, and East Lansing. According to Jeremy Tripp, community investment has always been a cornerstone of Tripp’s Collision.

“My dad has always been a firm believer that he’s in the people business. I think that’s why getting this award is pretty special to him,” said Tripp, who joined Tripp’s Collision last year to handle strategic outreach. “We practice what we preach by investing in the community.”

Tripp said his parents have always been willing to sponsor community organizations and events, whether it was their school baseball team or the local Hot Air Jubilee.

“One of the things that made us successful is knowing what matters,” he said.

DIVERSITY STAR AWARD

Area businesses are increasingly embracing the value of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in their workplaces. Among the local successful stories: Cinnaire, which earned the Diversity Star Award at the Annual Dinner. The LRCC and the Lansing Economic Area Partnership jointly created the Diversity Star Award.

“It’s an honor to be recognized with the Diversity Star Award for our DEIB efforts,” said Corinne Hyzny, senior vice president of strategic communications for Cinnaire. “The concept is so critical to us that it is woven throughout our specific long-term business goals, versus itemized separately.

“Studies show that incorporation of DEIB drives the bottom line for business success, and our success is rooted in these values.”

Hyzny said that Cinnaire’s leadership made a commitment in 2016 to begin expanding opportunities for women and people of color within the organization. By 2023, 35 percent of new hires were people of color, and 38 percent were female. Overall, Cinnaire estimates more than half of its staff is female, and 33 percent are people of color.

“We believe that integrating DEIB in our organization is a journey versus a goal achieved, and we will continue to dig deeper, learn more, and expand our practices,” Hyzny said.

Annual Dinner 2024

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.

So far, Cinnaire has invested \$5.7 billion to develop more than 1,000 housing communities in nine states, resulting in 63,000 affordable apartments.

LEGACY AWARD

The *Lansing State Journal* received the Legacy Award as it marks 70 years of membership in the LRCC. As a longtime LRCC member and investor, the Chamber honored the Gannett-owned newspaper for its lasting legacy as a consistent and reliable news source for the region. The *Lansing State Journal* began in 1855 as the *Lansing Republican*.

"In our role as an information leader in the community, we want to be a part of the business community just like we're a part of all other communities," said executive editor Stephanie Angel of the *Lansing State Journal's* involvement in the LRCC. "It's important for the LSJ to work side-by-side with other businesses to ensure our region's lasting success."

Advertising director Staci Holmes said the newspaper's sales team frequently attends LRCC mixers and counts many of LRCC's members among its print and online advertisers.

"It's great to be recognized as a valued partner with the Chamber in our community," Angel said. "Relationships matter, and the community is better if it has a viable news organization that can stitch together the various stories in our community."

"I AM PROUD TO WITNESS THE IMPACT OF OUR ANNUAL GATHERING IN ENERGIZING AND UNITING OUR DIVERSE BUSINESS COMMUNITY."

**— LISA O'CONNOR,
LRCC'S 2024
BOARD CHAIR**

Also recognized during LRCC's Annual Dinner, was Ambassador of the Year, Casey Jacobsen, Grassroots Marketing Manager, LaFontaine Automotive Group. LRCC Ambassadors volunteer their time at Chamber events and help members connect with each other.

Numerous other award recipients recognized in the previous year were also honored. Award recipients include Julie Pingston, 2023 ATHENA Leadership Award recipient, Justine Bell, 2024 ATHENA *PowerLink* recipient, the ten young professionals awarded a 10 Over the Next Ten Award in 2023, and the recent graduates of Leadership Lansing. ●

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Choose Lansing: Plan on Something Greater

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Did you know that you can have a similar impact in the Lansing area by helping to attract and host those types of events in the capital region?

Every year, visitors bring millions of dollars into Greater Lansing's economy, supporting businesses, restaurants, attractions, and jobs. Choose Lansing exists to cultivate this positive impact by promoting Lansing as a premier destination for meetings, conventions, and sporting events.

THE IMPACT OF TOURISM

The Greater Lansing region attracts more than 5 million visitors each year, generating an economic impact of more than \$682 million. The tourism and hospitality industry is responsible for 11,000 jobs in the region.

BRINGING EVENTS AND VISITORS TO LANSING

Our sales team promotes the region to event planners to bring meetings and conventions to the Lansing area. When an event planner reaches out with an RFP, our team crafts a proposal highlighting why Lansing is the perfect fit for each group. We highlight our state-of-the-art facilities, diverse entertainment options, central location, and other factors that contribute to a successful and memorable event.

CUSTOMIZED EVENT SUPPORT

Once an event is booked, our services team steps in. They provide a variety of event services from venue selection and logistics to vendor connections and marketing support. Local expertise means our team can help with sourcing vendors, recommend unique venues and activities, assist with booking speakers, and more.



Most of our services are complementary, and our team works hard to ensure every event runs smoothly and exceeds expectations.

LANSING SPORTS COMMISSION

The Lansing Sports Commission (LSC), a division of Choose Lansing, promotes economic growth by attracting a diverse range of sporting events to the Lansing region. The LSC is also committed to regional destination development through the creation and maintenance of safe, high-quality athletic facilities.

Once a tournament or competition is booked, the team provides a variety of services depending on each event's unique needs. The team assists with venue negotiations, marketing, program planning, volunteer recruitment, and much more.

Contact us today to see how we can support your event in Lansing. Choose Lansing and plan on something Greater! Learn more at lansing.org. ●

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PNC Has a Long History of Supporting Women In Business

By Joy Meade, PNC, VP, Senior Communications Manager, and ATHENA WIN Board Member

Fifty years ago, President Gerald Ford signed the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which made it illegal for lenders and the federal government to discriminate against female loan applicants. Prior to 1974, many banks required women to have a male co-signer just to open a bank account!



Meade

We've come a long way!

- According to a recent McKinsey report, more than two-thirds of U.S. wealth will be held by women by 2030.
- The U.S. Dept of Labor reports that one out of every 11 American women owns a business.
- Women represent as much as 85% of all consumer purchasing.

The great progress women have made is one of the reasons I'm proud to represent PNC as an ATHENA WIN board member. Our organization brings together an amazing group of leaders who provide a support system for professional women in Greater Lansing.

PNC has a long history of providing support for women financial decision makers. PNC's efforts include the PNC-Certified Women Business Advocates program, through which more than 5,200 employees receive special training

to support women financial decision-makers, including those who own or run businesses.

Another example of PNC's efforts on behalf of women will occur May 13 – 17, when the bank will celebrate its annual Women in Business Week. Launched in 2010, the goal of this dedicated week is to be even more intentional in connecting with, engaging and inspiring women financial decision makers through networking and educational opportunities.

There's a lot to explore through this year's women-led, women-focused money webinars during **PNC Women in Business Week**, which will include: "Building Wealth at Any Stage," "Supporting Employee Financial Wellness," and "Planning for Succession - Because Money is Every Woman's Business." ●

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:

- Tri-Star Trust Bank
- Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.
- WLNS

Individual:

- Amy McNamara
- Judi Harris
- Lauren Palmer

ATHENA WIN Empowers Women Professionals with Transformative Leadership Insights From Chelsea Jay

In April, ATHENA WIN held a Professional Growth & Development Series, facilitated by career coach Chelsea Jay. The series focused on the key characteristics of authentic leaders, emphasizing the significance of self-awareness, transparency, and leveraging individual strengths.



ATHENA WIN would like express its heartfelt gratitude to Chelsea Jay for taking the time to provide insights into leadership that will empower women professionals in the Greater Lansing business community. Jay provided an opportunity for participants to discover their personal leadership values, which was truly invaluable.

To learn more about upcoming ATHENA WIN events and register, please visit lansingchamber.org. ●

First Lansing-Based Public Relations Firm Celebrates Milestone Anniversary

PUBLICOM COMMEMORATES ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY THROUGH 2024

This year is special for marketing communications firm Publicom as it commemorates its 45th anniversary in 2024.



O'Connor

Founded in February 1979 by Richard Cole and David Hayhow, Publicom was the first public relations firm in Lansing, Michigan. It was established in response to seeing the region's critical and significant need for a PR firm that could understand and be sensitive to the public policy process. Publicom's office was near the state capitol in downtown Lansing for 20 years to effectively manage and assist its government clients.

The firm moved away from its public policy roots and broadened its offering in 1995 when Jim Wardlaw purchased the company, and current president and owner Lisa O'Connor joined in 1996. Publicom is now a fully integrated marketing communications company that provides strategic planning, marketing research, creative services, advertising, media planning and buying, in addition to public relations.

Shortly after diversifying its offering, the firm relocated to downtown East Lansing in 1998, where it operated for 20 years. The office was moved to Okemos, Michigan, in 2019.

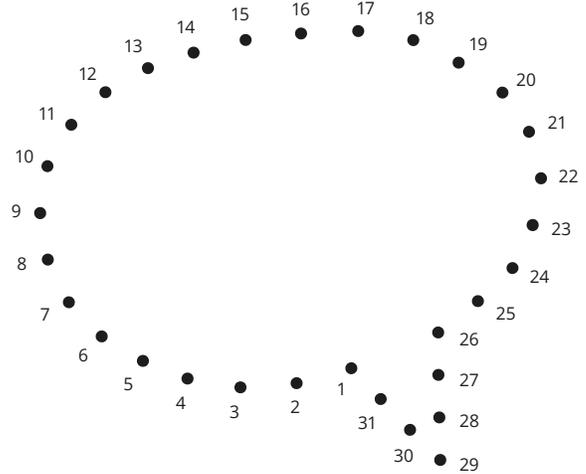
O'Connor attributes Publicom's enduring success to the team's responsiveness and ability to effectively solve problems for its clients, which has led to many long-term client relationships.

"We've worked with some clients for over 20 years," she said. "We place a high priority on integrity and listening. Our job is to make our clients' lives easier by taking things off their 'to do' lists and developing solutions to their problems."

Year after year, the firm has produced award-winning work for local, regional, national, and international clients with budgets of all sizes. ●



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Congratulations to **Transcendence Performing Arts Centers, Inc.**, who recently celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony! Transcendence Performing Arts Centers, Inc. opens the doors to endless possibilities in the performing arts world, ensuring that young people, especially those underrepresented in the Greater Lansing Community, have access to opportunities. The program is designed to build a strong community, promote equity, and cultivate a positive identity while empowering students to pursue careers in the performing arts.



Congratulations to **Tommy's Express**, which recently celebrated the grand opening of its new location on 6415 Cedar Street, with a ribbon cutting ceremony! Friends, family members, and government officials were in attendance for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Tommy's Express offers a high-quality car wash that suits any lifestyle. They are committed to promoting a clean and green environment, and their industry-leading wash uses low energy and reclaimed water, making it eco-friendly.

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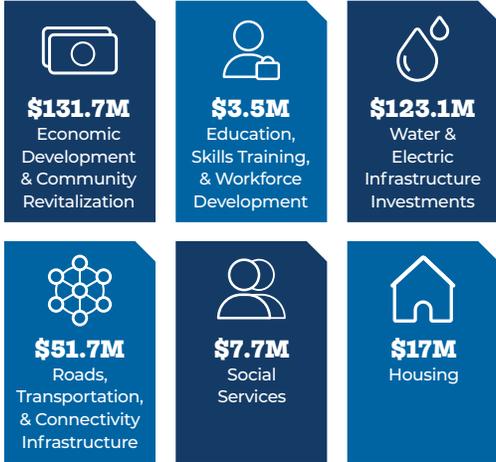
Congratulations to **Jack M. Miceli, CRPC** of Edward Jones Investments recently celebrated its new location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Edward Jones Investments is located at 2390 Woodlake Dr., Ste. 340 in Okemos, and specializes in assisting long-term investors. They prioritize their clients and are dedicated to helping them achieve their long-term investment goals.

CRISP #2 Provides Blueprint for Regional Development & Revitalization

The Capital Region Improvement Support Package (CRISP) #2 document represents a strategic roadmap for further enhancing the development of Lansing’s central city and the broader region. This comprehensive package encompasses a range of projects and services designed to bolster the ongoing revitalization efforts, building upon the successes achieved through the recent budget allocations in 2023.

CRISP #2 lays out a series of regional priority requests to the state, emphasizing proactive measures to drive economic growth, improve infrastructure, and enhance the overall quality of life throughout the region. These initiatives include vital urban

ONE-TIME INVESTMENTS OVERALL FUNDING REQUEST: \$334.7M



renewal projects, transportation infrastructure enhancements, and community development initiatives, all aimed at fostering sustainable progress and prosperity for Lansing and its neighboring areas.

By combining these proposed projects and services, CRISP #2 demonstrates a steadfast commitment to ensuring that Lansing’s central city and the surrounding region continue to evolve into vibrant and thriving hubs, capable of meeting the demands of the future while honoring the legacy of the past. It underscores the community’s dedication to building a brighter, more prosperous future for all its residents and stakeholders. ●



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Don't Make a Bigger Mess of Michigan's Contaminated Sites

The Retain Brownfield & Urban Investment Laws for Development (#RebuildMI) is a coalition united in opposing deceptively named "Polluter Pay" legislation that is unnecessary and will simply make a mess of Michigan's current brownfield redevelopment laws.

Local governments and businesses in the Rebuild MI coalition agree that these proposals are bad for Michigan's future. Instead of redeveloping and rejuvenating the historic districts of our cities and former industrial sites, these misleading proposals will grind many hopeful redevelopment proposals into the ground.

SB 605-611 and HB 5241-5247 are an attack on Michigan's successful and responsible brownfield redevelopment policies. They will discourage the clean-up and redevelopment of these sites by setting unattainable one-size-fits-all standards that increase red tape and push costs beyond what is attainable. The Rebuild MI is calling



on legislators to drop this plan and instead focus on brownfield redevelopment policies to incentivize more private investment in housing, office, manufacturing and retail space development on these currently unusable sites in our urban centers and more.

The Great Lakes Growth Coalition (GLG) is led by Michigan's leading pro-growth business organizations and supported by countless additional groups, job creators and individuals under four specific issue-based coalitions: contamination site management, independent contractors, benefit mandates and local economic regulations.

GLG's founding members include the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Manufacturers Association, Detroit Regional Chamber, Grand Rapids Chamber, Michigan Bankers Association, West Michigan Policy Forum and the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. ●

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NEW HIRES



Borie

Robert Borie joins **Triterra** as an environmental technician, working as a part of the technical services team. His work focuses on installing and inspecting vapor mitigation systems, and taking soil, groundwater, and soil gas samples from contaminated sites. He also analyzes the data, writes reports, and conducts site research and evaluation. Borie holds an associate degree in diesel mechanics from Baker College.



Nemetz

Custom Built has added **John Nemetz** as a project development advisor. Nemetz will lead in the Boyne City office. Custom Built is a home design and remodeling company.



Febres-Cordero

Tri-County Office on Aging has welcomed **Heather Febres-Cordero** to its community engagement and development team. This newly established role will use her experience in community building, community education, grant writing, and seeking sustainability funding for TCOA programs and services. Febres-Cordero is a long-time nonprofit and senior services community advocate.

PROMOTIONS

Peckham Inc. has named **Lorely Polanco** as its new assistant vice president of marketing. Polanco will lead and manage the strategic vision



Polanco

for business development and marketing strategy to generate new revenue by identifying new lines of business and contracts. Polanco has served as Peckham's director of marketing and communications since 2020. She previously worked for Whirlpool, Artemis Technologies, and Davenport University. Peckham is a nonprofit vocational rehabilitation organization that provides paid job training opportunities for people with disabilities and other barriers to employment.

APPOINTMENTS



Lippert

Origami Rehabilitation has appointed **Dr. J'Aimee Lippert, D.O.**, to its board of directors. With over 20 years of experience, she brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise. She is the interim chair of the Department of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine at Michigan State University's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

AWARDS



Dernovshek

recognizes young lawyers who have distinguished themselves through exemplary character, integrity, judgment, and legal scholarship; service to the profession and the

bar; service to the community; and a reputation for the advancement of the highest legal standards and professional responsibility. The award was presented to Dernovshek at the ICBA's Annual Barrister's Night on March 14th. Dernovshek began at Foster Swift as a summer associate before joining the firm full-time as an associate attorney in November 2018.



Latham

Certified public accountant **Matt Latham of Maner Costerisan** has earned the Certified Exit Planning Advisor designation from the Exit Planning Institute. Attainment of this credential means Latham has proven expertise in master planning and exit strategy. Latham earned the designation after completing an intensive five-day educational program that involved about 100 hours of pre-course study, 30 hours of classroom instruction, and a three-hour, closed-book proctored exam. Latham has nearly 20 years of public accounting experience and joined Maner's principal group in 2021. He provides tax consulting and support to the firm's affordable housing, construction, manufacturing, and small and midsize business clients.



Ingham ISD Superintendent **Jason Mellema** presents **Joseph Ballagh** with his scholarship check at the Wilson Talent Center Wall of Fame & Awards Dinner.

The **Wilson Talent Center** awarded nearly \$18,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors in March. Students were selected for the scholarships based on an application and a recommendation from their

Wilson Talent Center instructor. Additionally, six outstanding alumni were added to the WTC Wall of Fame. The alumni have significantly contributed to their industries and mentored students in their respective fields. They include **Mitchell Dorin**, Assistant Service Manager, LaFontaine Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep & Ram; **Noelle-Marie Mwangi**, Police Officer, Lansing Police Department; **Ronald Payne**, Lead Field Service Technician/Branch Trainer, Crown Lift Trucks; **Nathan Pierce**, Field Technical Specialist, Alta Equipment Company; **Aaron Rustem**, Construction Project Superintendent, The Christman Company; and **Carrie Schray**, Administrative Manager, University of Michigan, Biomedical Research Facilities. The Wilson Talent Center, operated by Ingham Intermediate School District, offers career and technical education programs for high school juniors and seniors.



Fifteen students from the Business & Risk Management program at the **Wilson Talent Center** recently earned their Certified Authority on Workers' Compensation designation. The students took the coursework through the AF Group, focusing on workers' comp fundamentals, claims, loss control, return-to-work, and experience rating. Students must pass the final exam with at least a 70 percent to earn the designation. The Business & Risk Management program is a two-year program in which students work toward earning their Certified Insurance Service Representative designation through the National Alliance for Insurance Education and Research.



Colizzi

Monique Colizzi, a business and risk management instructor at the **Wilson Talent Center**, was recently awarded an "Excellence in Education Award" from

the Michigan Lottery and Fox 47 News- WSYN. Colizzi is in her twenty-second year of teaching, with the last eight at the WTC. Colizzi was nominated for the award by a former student. The Michigan Lottery established the "Excellence in Education" awards in 2014 to recognize outstanding public-school educators statewide. Winners of the weekly award receive a \$2,000 prize. At the end of the school year, one of the weekly winners will receive the lottery's "Educator of the Year award" and a \$10,000 prize.

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Financial Technology, Inc. of East Lansing has been named to the National Association of Plan Advisors' list of the nation's top-defined contribution advisor teams. This is the seventh consecutive year the firm has been recognized for its expertise in 401(K) plans. Financial Technology, Inc. has been in business since 1980 and serves the greater Lansing area and the state of Michigan in providing retirement plan, investment, and group insurance services. The Financial Technology, Inc.'s top-defined contribution advisor team includes **Dick Herrold, John Gingas, Michael Cantor, Brian Shepard, and Sara Frank-Hepfer.**



Danielle Robinson, vice president of corporate communications and responsibility at Jackson, with a Junior Achievement class.

Junior Achievement of Mid Michigan, a division of Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes, has received \$130,000 in financial support from Jackson National Life Insurance Co., the main operating subsidiary of Jackson Financial Inc. The gift was given as part of Financial Literacy Month in April. Jackson has served as a Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes partner since 2007, providing financial and volunteer support. Junior Achievement of Mid Michigan is dedicated to educating students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy through experiential, hands-on programs.

Four local student robotics teams are forging a path to bring **FIRST** to each district in mid-Michigan. FIRST, an acronym for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology," is an international



k-12 program that encourages students to discover STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) through hands-on robotics building and competition. The consortium of teams known as **Capital Area Robotics** was recently established to bring FIRST to schools in Ingham, Clinton, and Shiawassee counties. This year, the four founding members of Capital Area Robotics earned the Impact Award at their respective district events: Tractor Technicians #3655 (Mason High School), RoboRams #6078 (Holt High School), Red Thunder Robotics #7166 (Laingsburg High School), and Error 404 #7226 (Waverly High School). The Impact Award recognizes the teams' efforts to promote FIRST to its community. Teams that qualified at the Michigan State Championship include Laingsburg, Mason, and Waverly high schools. Those teams advanced to the National Championship.

COMPANY NEWS



Downtown Lansing Inc., the management agency championing the revitalization of downtown Lansing, recently announced a new website and refreshed brand. The new Downtown Lansing brand is intended to reflect the organization's objective to preserve and protect the history and culture of Michigan's downtown area while illuminating a path forward. The refreshed Downtown Lansing website, www.downtownlansing.org, is designed to be an information hub and haven for visitors, residents, and locals alike.



Origami Rehabilitation hosted its annual "An Evening of Reflections" event at Peckham Inc.'s headquarters in March. This inspiring event allowed attendees to hear stories of resilience, courage, and recovery firsthand. This year's theme focused on the story of trauma and recovery and featured four storytellers.

Resch Strategies is celebrating 15 years in business in 2024. The public affairs and digital marketing firm is headquartered in downtown Lansing and serves a diverse list of corporate, nonprofit, and trade association clients. Its team of eight public affairs professionals offers advocacy, communications, and digital marketing services.

The **Lansing Economic Area Partnership** — in collaboration with Lansing region stakeholders Michigan State University, Michigan State University Research Foundation, University of Michigan Health-Sparrow, Michigan Economic Development Corp., Neogen, Niowave, MichBio, Emergent BioSolutions, and McLaren Greater Lansing — unveiled in April the brand launch of Michigan's Health Core. The new brand identity aims to grow and attract new businesses in health, medical technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing to the Lansing region. The brand development and launch followed research and data analysis that culminated in the Lansing region's first Life Sciences and MedTech game plan strategy in late 2022, as well as two MedTech accelerator programs in late 2022 and throughout 2023. The Economic Development Administration provides primary funding. ●

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