

CONNECT

Energize, Innovate, Engage with the West Coast Chamber

May 2019



Feature:

GMB Architecture + Engineering & Lakewood Construction Recognized for Robust Chamber Renovation

Pictured L-R: Dan Tryer of GMB Architecture + Engineering, Nick Nykerk, Steve Weatherwax and Kyle Engbers of Lakewood Construction.

Expert Contributors

Featured in Connect

To learn more about becoming an expert contributor, contact Patrick Avery at 616-414-2208 or pavery@bestversionmedia.com.

Edify North

Employee Benefits

Andy Spears - Farm Bureau Insurance

Personal & Business Insurance

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Kristine Kay

Residential Interior Design

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Troxel Custom Homes

Custom Home Builder

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Feature: GMB Architecture + Engineering & Lakewood Construction Recognized for Robust Chamber Renovation...4

Expert Contributor: Troxel Custom Home.....6

Expert Contributor: Kristine Kay Interiors.....8

Expert Contributor: Farm Bureau Insurance.....10

Calendar of Events.....12

Watch Out for These Companies to Watch.....14

Building a Network in a New Community.....16

West Coast Cash Merchant Spotlight: Carolyn Stich Studio..18

New Members.....19

Wake Up West Coast Preview: How Can You Prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution?.....21

Happenings at the Chamber.....22

ADVERTISING INDEX

Andy Spears Farm Bureau Insurance.....10

Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling.....7

Boer's Transfer and Storage.....9

Bosch's Landscape.....9

Buis Mattress & Bedroom Furnishings.....13

Burch Partners.....12

City Flats Hotel.....23

Edify North.....13

Engineering Supply & Imaging.....11

First National Bank.....9

Gordon Water Systems.....12

Holland Eats.....22

Holland Hospital.....11

Holland Litho Printing Services.....7

Hope College.....11

Hospice of Holland.....16

Kristine Kay Interiors.....8

Lakewood Construction.....9

Lighthouse Insurance Group.....13

Manpower.....11

Mercy Health Partners.....9

National LED Solutions.....22

Navigate.....13

Photo Op Studio.....7

Schreur Printing.....20

Shoreline Technology Solutions.....20

Smith, Haughey Rice & Roegge.....7

Town & Country Group.....20

Troxel Custom Homes.....6

Yacht Basin Marina.....15

Zeeland Lumber.....21



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Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast
Chamber of Commerce



As a Chamber, we place a high value on the lifelong learning concept that we call, "Learn, Innovate, Share," which is what makes this issue so special. The talent of dedicated professionals in our community is astounding, and we're pleased to share stories of a sample of members that are receiving recognition in their respective industries in state, regional and national levels. In this issue, you'll also learn about some leaders that are new to our community and come with innovative ideas to infuse into their businesses.

One story centers on the businesses that designed and built the Chamber offices. This building is truly a home for our members, playing host to a dozen events per week, ranging from large scale educational workshops, orientations and public policy sessions, to smaller Affinity Group, Board and Ambassador meetings, to personal one-on-one meetings with Members—new, existing and prospective. We especially love it when members drop by to say hello or to spend a little time working in our space. All of this tells us that we've created a home that's a valuable resource for our members to conduct business—on any scale. Please don't hesitate to come enjoy this wonderful space. We're here to be a resource for you and to provide the tools you need to succeed.

Best Regards,
Jane Clark

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Correction: In the April issue of Connect, the Expert Contributor: Electronic Privacy Concerns Reach Michigan article on page 7 was incorrectly attributed to Michael Doversberger. The article was written by Matthew Wiebe. We apologize for this error.

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Feature:

GMB Architecture + Engineering & Lakewood Construction Recognized for Robust Chamber Renovation

By Chelsea Scott

West Coast Chamber staff moved back into their newly renovated building at the end of April 2017 after seven months of construction. The building, built in 1972, was in need of repairs and alterations if it was going to properly reflect the vibrant community and continue to house Chamber operations. It's been described as the eastern gateway to downtown Holland, a beacon of light and a hub for members and it is all three, to be sure.

GMB Architecture + Engineering was hired to plan the space and Lakewood Construction managed the construction process and the result is a modern, light-filled building that includes a Learning Lab meeting space, additional conference room, state-of-the-art technology, collaborative office space for Chamber staff, and a larger parking lot. Recently, GMB Architecture + Engineering and Lakewood Construction were both recognized with awards for their work on the Chamber renovation project.

GMB Architecture + Engineering

For GMB Architecture + Engineering, the goal was to create a welcoming environment that sparked creativity and collaboration. The finished product went above and beyond what even they had envisioned and truly is a building that is more than the sum of its parts. "We wanted to create a community meeting space for the Holland/Zeeland area; a welcoming environment that fostered a strong community connection between local businesses," said Project Designer David Smoes, who worked on the project. "The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive." And the industry has taken notice, too.

GMB won the 2018 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Grand Rapids Small Commercial Design award for their work on the Chamber offices. "The AIA awards are among the most prestigious for the built environment and we are pleased to have been recognized by them," David said. "We are happy to share this moment with our neighbors, the West Coast Chamber." The local AIA Grand Rapids chapter held an evening event to recognize and acknowledge the various firms and projects that had won awards. GMB was honored to attend along with several local A/E firms and construction companies that play an active role in helping shape the West Michigan built environment.

David said GMB views their involvement in the "robust renovation" as more than just another project. "As a business within the Holland community and West Coast Chamber member, this project was important to us," he said. "We wanted to create a lantern to downtown Holland and accomplished this with a large gable with glass ends opening up to the community and enlarged punched openings within a large collaboration space and open office."

Solving the needs of the Chamber and achieving the community impact that the project demanded within a modest budget was a challenge, but David and the team feel the finished product meets the parameters successfully, which made the result more gratifying. "The Chamber wanted to ensure the building served not only their needs, but also the needs of their members," David said. "We were pleased to have met their high expectations."



Dan Tryer, GMB Architecture + Engineering
Photo by Photo Op Studio.

"The impact of creating the 'lantern' to downtown from the east is immediately clear from the glow of light emanating from the large glass areas of the façade and skylight," he said. "The increased flexibility and collaboration possible in the renovated interior space and the ability to host programs important to the Chamber's mission in the new learning center has created a value to the project that vastly exceeds its physical scale." —Architect Dan Tryer

"It was important for GMB to help create a space that would allow the Chamber to further foster growth within our community. A lot of our design professionals drive by this building every day. We are proud to see it and know that we had a part in something that will be part of growing the Holland/Zeeland area for many years to come." —Project Designer David Smoes

Lakewood Construction

In March of 2019, Lakewood was honored to receive an Excellence in Construction Eagle Award at the ABC (Associated Builders and Contractors) annual convention for the West Coast Chamber building project. Lakewood President Nick Nykerk, Vice President Kyle Engbers, and Project Supervisor Steve Weatherwax represented Lakewood at the awards ceremony, a black-tie event held in Long Beach, CA. The award is tangible confirmation of a job well done. “While there were quite a few projects valued in the millions of dollars and located in larger cities with a wider range of resources, we were able to demonstrate how a project like the West Coast Chamber will stand strong alongside the other award-winning projects because of the attention to detail and commitment we placed on making this vision a reality for our client and our community,” Kyle shared. “Winning an Eagle Award confirms that this building truly reflects who we all are as a community. World-class.”

Originally established in 1971, Lakewood has entered a new chapter of leadership with Nick and Kyle at the helm as President and Vice President, respectively. In this exciting transition, Nick and Kyle are further supported by a leadership team strategically assembled to assist in the development and implementation of short and long-term goals for the company. “There is a common desire of our entire Lakewood team to connect with those we interact with, both internally and externally, as we manage and build construction projects and create “raving fans,” Nick said. Kyle added, “We’re intentional about leaning in with those we work alongside to have a deeper connection, and we hope it leads to more enjoyment as we work through each project and advance our careers.”

Lakewood is a longtime Chamber member and their involvement has allowed them increased exposure to the community and to those that engage in the many events throughout the year. “We are proud to live and work in such a great place and consider ourselves blessed to have an organization like the West Coast Chamber,” Nick said. “Having the opportunity to work with the Chamber, their board and team on the “robust renovation” project was a really tremendous experience for Lakewood from the onset of the project to being able to showcase this project to our peers in the construction industry. It was a favorite project of the judging committee for the Excellence in Construction ABC|WMI.” One judge even wrote on their scoring sheet, “I want to work here!” Now that is a ringing endorsement.



Courtesy of Associated Builders and Contractors.



Kyle Engbers, Steve Weatherwax and Nick Nykerk, Lakewood Construction. Photo by Photo Op Studio.

“It was an honor for Lakewood Construction to be chosen to lead the construction of a facility at the heart of this vibrant business community. We’re passionate about the role we play in utilizing our experience and expertise in construction management to guide our clients through the challenges of the building process. It’s special to provide that service working with the Chamber because they impact so many businesses in our community.”
—President Nick Nykerk

“A great project is not simply measured by quality craftsmanship but also an unwavering dedication to safety and delivery that exceeds expectations. The robust renovation of the West Coast Chamber is the epitome of a great project—a project you never want to end.”
—Vice President Kyle Engbers



By Drew DeMeester, Owner

*“Quality of life actually begins at home.”
– Charles Kennedy*

The idea of “home” carries many symbolic and varied meanings and is influenced by physical design and space. “Home” impacts and enables the lifestyle we have, with the ideal being truly unique for each of us. The complex interaction of the physical space, the possessions which we choose to furnish that space with, and the people we live with, affect our interpretation of what we consider to be home. Our memories and feelings are a critical point of reference for our historical idea of such, but perhaps more importantly, we can also find new space to be a reference point in the narrative of our life story, how we will connect with others, and what we will think of as “home” in the future.

Spring is a time when many of us experience the urge to recreate our living space. As a homebuilder, this a season we talk to many people not just about the idea of a new home, but also about renovating the home that they currently have. The choice to renovate is unique to everyone, but we find the reason tends to fall into the following categories.

FUNCTION: This can be updated due to a change in family or a change in lifestyle and how we live in our homes. Are the kids (finally) moving away and updates can be made to meet your new empty-nest lifestyle, or are aging parents with their own unique needs coming to live with you? Other lifestyle changes can also require the home to function in new ways, such as the trend toward outdoor living spaces and the interaction of the indoor and outdoor living areas.

STYLE: Older homes can have a dated look, and whether we like it or not, that look can affect how others perceive us and how we perceive ourselves. Times change, and how we live in our homes has changed as well. We don’t live in the ‘80s (insert your home’s birthdate here) anymore, so why stay limited to the ideas of that period? Some trends are timeless, many are not.

SAFETY/EFFICIENCY/MAINTENANCE: Every home that is even a few years old has things that can be done to increase its efficiency or increase its longevity.

We would all love a truly maintenance free home, but every home does require maintenance. Often, as these things are addressed, it becomes an ideal time to do other renovations. By all means, don’t put off repairs that are safety issues —if you are unsure, have a professional look at your home.

With the change of seasons, you may find yourself dreaming of what home could look like for you, or you might want to redefine your life narrative by considering a change to the space that surrounds you. Whatever your reason for considering a change to “home,” feel free to connect with us on what it could look like for you.

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Interior Design— More Than Blue Paint

By Kristine Kay



Interior design is my passion. It is the proverbial fire in my belly. Sharing this passion with others comes from the heart, and it brings me joy to help others make their spaces as amazing and unique as they are.

But truth be told, I didn't always believe that this passion of mine would actually help people. After practicing in the medical field for many years, I worried about switching careers to one where I'd spend my days on seemingly trivial tasks such as selecting swatches of fabric and talking about the nuances of paint colors.

Thankfully, I am often reminded that interior design can have a huge impact on life experiences.

For instance, I recently received a phone call from a client who had worked with me through the selections for an entire home remodel. He had seen every cabinet, stick of flooring, paint color, and more... then called me while running through the newly completed home and exploring each room as if seeing it for the first time. He was seeing his new home come to life.

Then I spent a long afternoon with a client working through selections for her kitchen remodel. She was admittedly disinterested. But upon seeing the differing finishes of kitchen faucets alongside the other materials we had selected she exclaimed, "This stuff really



DOES matter! That one looks so much better with everything else!" We shared a good laugh at her revelation over such a minor detail. But I was thrilled to know she was getting a sense of the impact each material will have on the feeling of the completed space.

Of course there are days when I need to be reminded of the purpose behind my work. On those days I often read notes I've received from past clients. A favorite is from a client who wrote, "Thank you for making my home such an awesome place!" after she'd been living in her new home for a year.

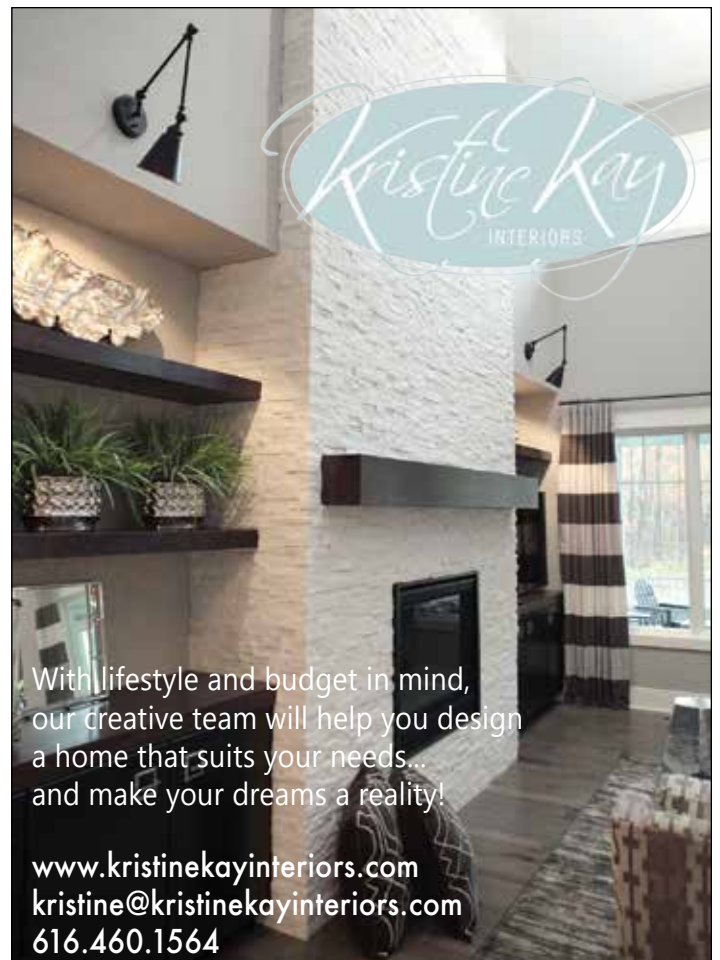
I remind myself that each day I have the privilege of helping business owners transform their space to be more functional for employees and offer a better customer service experience. I get to work with families who open up their lives to me. I get to help them build a home where they feel rooted so that they can grow and thrive.

You know that joy you feel when sharing your given talent with others? Yup, I get to experience it often.

So while you're out in the world tackling this crazy life, I implore you to work with an Interior Designer who can help set you up for success by creating spaces that support you, your families and your business. It really is about more than just

the nuances of varying shades of blue paint.

Kristine Kay is the principal designer at Kristine Kay Interiors, a full-service Interior Design firm specializing in custom homes and commercial spaces. We'd love to be a part of the team that helps your business soar. Check us out at www.kristinekayinteriors.com and give us a shout at 616-460-1564.



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Flood Insurance: Most Homeowners and Renters Insurance Policies Do Not Cover Flood Damage

By Andy Spears, Farm Bureau Insurance

Before spring temperatures start to rise, all Michiganders should evaluate their homeowners insurance policies to understand their water damage coverages. Homeowners should be aware that a homeowners insurance policy does not cover flood damage. You have to get a separate flood insurance policy to be covered in that area.

Water Damage is Expensive

Damage from flood waters can be significant. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) calculates that three inches of floodwater in a home could require replacing drywall, baseboards, carpets, furniture and other repairs. If you don't have flood insurance, your likely out-of-pocket cost (based on a 1,500 square foot, one floor home) is estimated at approximately \$15,000. Also, more than 20 percent of flood insurance claims come from outside high-risk areas.

While most homeowners and renters insurance policies do not cover flood damage, other water damage coverages in a standard homeowners insurance policy can also often be very limited.

Generally, water coming from the top down, such as burst fire sprinklers and ice dam seepage behind drywall, is covered by standard homeowners insurance policies. Water coming from the bottom up, such as foundation seepage from snowmelts, is usually not covered.

Damage caused by a water backup in your home's drainage system or sump pump overflow/failure is covered by a typical homeowners insurance policy. However, not all companies include this coverage, so please review your policy to see if your current carrier includes this.

Farm Bureau includes \$2,500 of coverage for this loss, and you can purchase higher coverage if needed beyond that. Property owners should contact their insurance agent to find out more about special endorsements and riders for expanded coverage.

Everyone Lives in a Flood Zone

Did you know that everyone lives in a flood zone? The question is whether it is a high-risk or a moderate- to low-risk zone. A separate flood insurance policy, sold through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), is available to residents living in participating communities to cover flood-related damages.

As a property owner, it's always a good idea to contact your insurance agent to discuss what your policy covers regarding water damage and flooding. Agents can help determine availability, your specific need, and cost for flood insurance.

Protect Yourself

A property owner may purchase flood insurance as long as the community in which they live participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes flood hazard maps based on various statistical data and these maps outline different flood risk areas.

Federal disaster assistance is customarily offered to homeowners and renters in the form of a low-interest loan and is only offered if the President declares a major disaster. When property owners and renters receive financial assistance from the federal government following a presidentially declared disaster, they may be required to purchase flood insurance coverage if they own the home or, if a renter, they continue living in that home.

If your home is located in a high-risk zone, called a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), you will be required to buy and maintain flood insurance for the term of your home mortgage loan and to become eligible for FEMA disaster assistance in the future. A standard rated policy is your only option.

If you live in a moderate- to low-risk area, you may qualify for a Preferred Risk Policy. That policy has the lowest premiums available.

The federal government sets the premium rates and the costs do not vary; So, there is no need to shop for rates. Typically, there

is a 30-day waiting period from date of purchase before the policy takes effect.

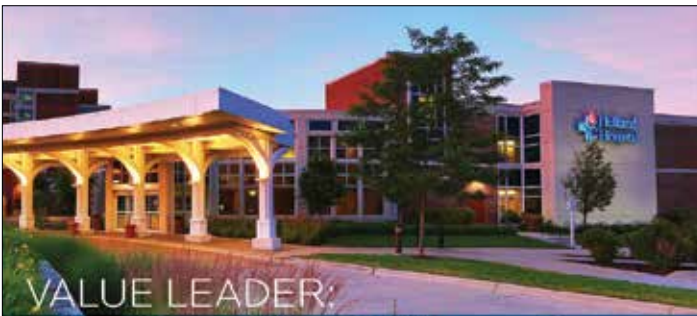
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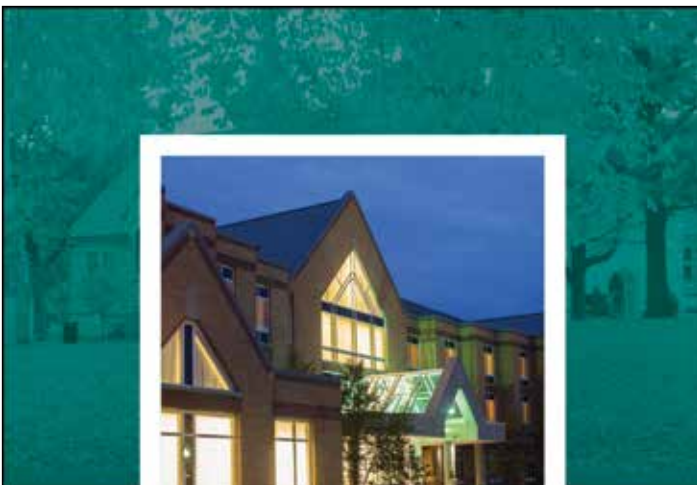
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May Calendar of Events

Friday, May 10, 2019

Advocacy in Action: Public Policy Committee Meeting

@West Coast Chamber, 272 E 8th St., Holland, MI



The West Coast Chamber serves as the region's advocate for business at the local, state and federal levels, representing the combined strength of our diverse industry sectors. Interested in governmental and political issues? The Public Policy Committee reviews issues of local and regional concern and makes position recommendations to the Board of Directors. Join us monthly for interesting and sometimes lively discussion about the issues that affect you and your business.

Time: 7:30am Coffee and Networking / 8-9:30am Meeting

Cost: There is no cost to attend

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Wake Up West Coast

@Haworth Inn and Conference Center, 225 College Ave. Holland, MI



Industrial Revolution number four is just around the corner. It describes the exponential changes to the way we live, work and relate to each other due to cyber systems, the Internet of Things and the Internet of Systems. David Shull is an industrial practice leader with Progressive AE, and he will show how the world is changing as well as share his eye-opening research on the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Time: 7am Coffee and Networking / 7:30am Breakfast and Presentation

Cost: \$25 per Chamber member / \$40 per non-member

Sponsor: WorkSighted

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

Community Impact Day

@Various local nonprofit organizations

Our first ever Community Impact Day is an opportunity for our West Coast Leadership alumni and Chamber members to contribute their time and talents to the greater good. There are many wonderful nonprofit organizations in our community that appreciate help accomplishing their missions, so check out the sign-up page to explore ways to give back. Come back to the Chamber after volunteering for food and a celebration of the impact.

Time: 1-4pm Volunteer Blitz / Celebration Event 4:30-6pm

Cost: There is no cost to attend, but pre-registration is required.

Sponsor: Fifth Third Bank

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Lakeshore Latinas Meeting

@West Coast Chamber, 272 E 8th St. Holland, MI



The Lakeshore Latinas mission is fostering advocacy, service, authentic relationships and opportunities for personal and professional development. We hope that you can join us! Beverages and light hors d'oeuvres will be provided.

Time: 5:30-7:30pm

Cost: There is no charge to attend, but registration is appreciated.

Sponsors: Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan and Warner Norcross + Judd

Monday, May 20, 2019

Advocacy in Action: Governmental Affairs Breakfast

@Alpenrose Restaurant / 4 E 8th St. Holland, MI



An integral component of

the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce's mission is to communicate the views of the business community to our elected officials. Our monthly Governmental Affairs Breakfast gives our members the opportunity to dialog with our local elected state and federal legislators. After a brief update from the Public Policy Committee and each of the legislators, the floor is open for questions from, and discussions with, our members.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$25 per Chamber member / \$40 per non-member

Sponsor: Huntington Bank

Thursday, May 23, 2019 Network @ Lunch

@CityFlats / 61 E 7th St. Holland, MI



You have to eat, right? Get to know other business representatives by spending an hour with them over a relaxing business lunch. You will also be assigned with other dining partners at the event, giving you the opportunity to make new contacts and share about yourself and your business. What could be easier?

Time: 12-1pm

Cost: \$20 per Chamber member / \$35 per non-member

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Time: 4:30-6pm

Cost: There is no cost to register, but attendees will be on their own for food and beverages.



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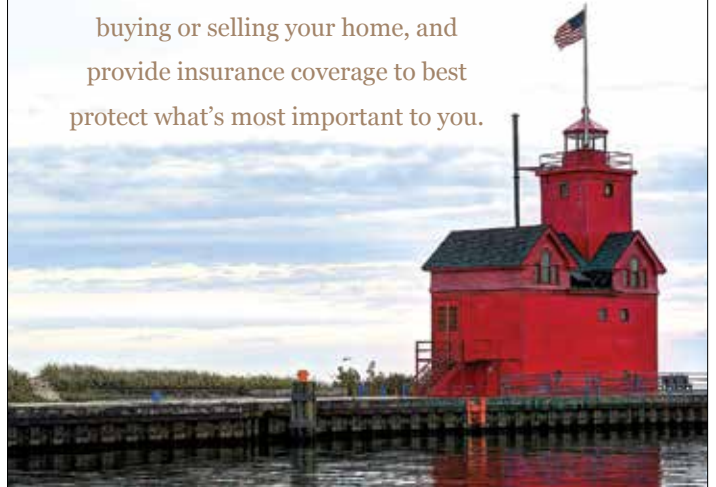
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Watch Out for These Companies to Watch

By Caroline Monahan | Photos by Emily Theisman



In March, Michigan Celebrates Small Business (MCSB) released its list of “Michigan 50 Companies to Watch” award winners for 2019, and two of the companies recognized are members of the West Coast Chamber. Among the 50 Companies to Watch are Midwest Construction Group, based in Zeeland, and Rutherford & Associates, based in Holland.

Companies nominated for the “Michigan 50 Companies to Watch” list must be second-stage companies, defined as having between six and 99 full-time-equivalent employees and generating \$750,000 to \$50 million in annual revenue or working capital from investors or grants. In addition, the companies must be privately held and headquartered in Michigan.

“We received 575 nominations for the Michigan 50 Companies to Watch award, which surpassed last year’s record of 425 nominations,” said Jennifer Deamud, Associate State Director of the Michigan Small Business Development Center and MCSB Board Chair. The 2019 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch are responsible for \$394.7 million in total annual revenue during 2018. Together they provide 1,589 full-time equivalent jobs within the state of Michigan and are projected to create over 424 new jobs in 2019.

“These businesses are excellent examples of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in West Michigan, and as their Chamber partners, we’re excited to work alongside them as they continue to grow,” said Jane Clark, President of the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce.

Midwest Construction Group

Based in Zeeland, Midwest Construction Group has been providing a full range of commercial construction services and solutions since 2010. The company’s mission is to be a leader in providing high quality, cost-effective and in budget construction services while exceeding customers’ expectations. Beyond exceeding customers’ expectations, Midwest Construction Group places a high priority of creating a culture of giving back and making a difference in our community.

“We are committed to being the preferred contractor while putting our values first and being a company that employees are happy to work for. Philanthropy has always been a key core value for us. We make it a point to work with several nonprofit organizations throughout the year and offer them discounted services. In addition, 11% of

our budget in 2018 was spent on charitable giving. We want to be known as a company who lives by the “golden rule,” said Scott Geerlings, President.

Scott Geerling’s interest in serving the greater good dates back to the founding of the business. In 2000, he left a large West Michigan construction company to start Geerlings Development. Eight years later his former coworker, Jason Hall along with Brian VanBeveren came to him with an idea to start a new company. They saw an opportunity in West Michigan for a niche that was not being met, to cater to and provide for personal service to small to mid-size companies. In 2010, Scott and Brian started Midwest and two years later, Jason joined forces. “We’ll be celebrating our tenth year in business in less than a year and we still continue to make it our goal to make sure our customers feel like their job, no matter the size or scope, is important to us.”



Scott Geerlings

Rutherford & Associates

Rutherford & Associates is a software solution provider based in Holland, MI. They have a staff of 80 employees who are passionate about growing and supporting their nationwide customer base, which is made up of some of the premier beer and wine wholesalers throughout the country, as well as the Coca-Cola Company. This innovative company has created an ERP solution that is specific to the wholesale Direct Store Delivery (DSD) market.

Rutherford & Associates was established by Mike Rutherford in Albuquerque, NM in 1986. The company initially provided software solutions to vending operators who desired accountability for inventory and cash and mobile solutions to track activity in the field. Eventually, the software was expanded to address multiple vertical markets such as office coffee, bottled water, bakeries, dairies, etc. In 1993, the company relocated to Holland, MI to work more closely with Brooks Beverage, a Dr. Pepper/7Up company headquartered in Holland.

Step into their newest facility in Zeeland, and you'll find the staff absorbed in creating custom technology solutions for their customers. The atmosphere in the building is playful and creative, with areas for collaborating, working out, and playing games, as

well as cozy pods for heads down work on analyzing challenges and creating solutions. "Our mission is to provide our customers with the most advanced and easy to use software to allow their teams to collaborate and excel in maximizing revenue, profit and customer service," said Paul Rutherford, Vice President of Rutherford & Associates.

Members of the Chamber since 2012, the company appreciates the opportunity to network and communicate with other local business leaders. "The Chamber helps by establishing a community-type atmosphere by connecting businesses and people with resources and platforms that might not otherwise be available."

On receiving the "50 to Watch" award, Paul said, "It is a great honor to be recognized as one of Michigan's 50 Companies to Watch. It is an indication that the products and services we provide have helped established our identity in the state, and nationwide. It's also proof that the trajectory of our company that we have plotted is correct." On the value of being part of the Holland and Zeeland community, he said, "We are a tech company on the rise, with planned strategic growth, and the support of our local community. While our customer base is nationwide, with plans to go global, our roots will always be based in West Michigan."



Mike Rutherford

Geerlings Development joined the Chamber in 2000, and Midwest Construction joined as soon as the business was formed. "As a smaller company with less in-house resources, we've been able to utilize and recommend the training and education resources as an option for our employees. Being part of the Chamber and attending events and hosting ribbon cuttings and ground breakings, we've been able to meet new people and network more effectively. We see our Chamber as a great resource for our business community."

The commitment to helping our community grow and remain competitive for attracting new businesses, employees and their families can be seen in the company's plans for the future. "We're working with Ryan Kilpatrick, Housing Next Director, on potential projects at

our properties to help solve and find solutions for the affordable housing issue in our community."

On receiving the "50 to Watch" award, Scott said, "It's humbling and a true honor to receive this award with so many great companies out there. We know that being recognized is truly a testament to the hard work and dedication of our employees. Without them, we wouldn't be where we are today. All of our staff has really gone above and beyond to keep the values consistent with what our intentions have been since 2010 when we started. We've created a culture in our organization that is truly unique."



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Building a Network in a New Community

By Caroline Monahan

For the third year in a row, the West Coast Chamber partnered with Lakeshore Advantage and Varnum Law to host the Lakeshore Women Connect Event. Held at Haworth corporate headquarters, this after-hours event is designed to welcome executives who are new to our area and help them build a professional network in our community. It's an evening spent getting to know new colleagues both personally and professionally.

Even without the pressures of new executive positions, navigating a new ecosystem can be intimidating. Anymore it is not unusual to uproot yourself to pursue job opportunities, and there are many resources to help with relocating. Companies are eager to bring in new talent and help them acclimate to their organization, and Chamber networking and advocacy events give a great introduction to our business community. But to round out your orientation, you'll also want to know where

to find delicious Thai food, a great fitness center, or the best coffee in town, and, most importantly, get to know others who share your interests. As a newcomer to a community, the ticket to unearthing this information lies in building a network of peers, with a little help from the Chamber.

This year we met three women new to their leadership roles in our business community. Take a few minutes to get to know these newcomers and help us welcome them to our community.



Andi Owen
President & CEO
Herman Miller, Inc.

What attracted you to your new role Herman Miller?

I joined Herman Miller in August 2018 after a 25 year career with GAP, Inc., most recently in the role of Global President for Banana Republic, in California. My husband Glenn and I have relocated to Michigan and are finally settled in our Grand Rapids home, with our 13 year old son. We love the welcoming nature of this area and I'm proud to be part of a talented group of women leaders and change agents who call West Michigan their home. I was drawn to Herman Miller because of its potential, its reputation in pioneering workplace concepts, its collection of unique brands that reach both businesses and retail customers, and its continuing practice of engaging the talents of legendary designers. In the end, I joined Herman Miller because of its rich history of believing in bigger ideas about what a company can do. I was and continue to be impressed with Herman Miller's long-

standing commitment to our employees, to our communities, to sustainability, and to creating an inclusive environment for all.

What advice would you give to young leaders?

For me, maintaining a healthy mind, body and spirit, despite my demanding work and travel schedule, is essential. While I am not always successful, I do make it a priority every day to ensure these things are in balance. As I think about my personal experience and what I would share with young leaders, there are a few things that stand out: seek out feedback, learn to use failure as a stepping stone, find trusted mentors that can help guide your journey, and, never give up. Persistence is more critical to success than brilliance. Most importantly, stand up for what you believe in and find a career that matches your personal values and passions. I've found that in Herman Miller and I am excited and humbled to be a part of this amazing community every day.



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Amy Sparks
Owner, President &
CEO
Nuvar, Inc.



Is this where you thought you'd end up?

If I go back to when I graduated from college and where I thought I would "end up", my answer would be "No". Since my junior year in High School, I knew I wanted to be a CPA and figured I would follow the "normal" career path. Fast-forward about seven years after graduation from college, and I entered the "corporate" business world in a CFO role. I did not plan on that role leading me to a VP of Operations position, then President and CEO role. While a part of me has always dreamt of owning my own business, this is truly a dream come true. It is also the culmination of a lifetime of not being afraid to try new things, to stretch and challenge myself, and most importantly making decisions that allowed me to keep my options open and broaden the opportunities that were available to me.

Have you experienced any challenges that you think are unique to women in leadership roles?

Over the course of my career I have chosen primarily male dominated professions. Unfortunately, many times I have been evaluated/judged first by my gender and then by my qualifications. I had a candidate for a senior engineering position that I extended an offer to call me back and said that before he could make a decision to accept the position, he wanted to meet with me one more time because he wasn't sure " he could work for a woman." I doubt any of my male CEO counterparts have had a candidate question if they could work for them because they were a man.

Who or what has been your greatest source of inspiration?

My inspiration comes from a long line of strong women, full of faith, conviction and determination each of whom at one point in their life had to overcome the seemingly impossible. They taught me that you sometimes have to dig deeper and work harder than you ever thought you were capable of doing and you'll find you will accomplish far more than you ever thought possible. I also have a wonderful father who taught me that the only one who could tell me I couldn't accomplish something, was me. I have had numerous "teachers" over my career. Knowingly or not every person I've worked for and with has taught me something in how I want to lead or not lead people.

What advice would you give your younger self?

Be true to yourself. Always. God made you and equipped you with special talents for a reason. When you are in the midst of a decision, be it personal or professional, listen to your "whole" self. If your head, your heart and your gut are aligned, you are moving in the right direction. If that voice in your head is sending a warning your heart doesn't want to hear, or your heart is hurting with what your mind is telling you has to be done, or you just generally feel like you're going to be sick, you are likely headed in the wrong direction, and you need to pause and figure out why.



Deedre Vriesman
President & CEO
Resthaven

Is this where you thought you'd end up?

Originally, I had planned to be a counselor which is why I completed my masters in counseling. I had always been interested in working with older adults, particularly those with dementia and their families, and focused in my internship on that area. While I never expected to be in management, roles that blended clinical work with leadership appealed to me. I had always planned to work in a nonprofit setting and it was important to me to be in a faith based environment. Knowing those priorities and my passions, I'm not surprised to be working with Resthaven today.

How do you balance work and life responsibilities?

One of the best lessons I learned was that my time is valuable and sometimes paying for convenience is wise. I no longer shop for the best deal by going to 3 different stores if I can go to one store that has it all thereby saving me time. Having 3 younger children at home (7, 5, and 3), it is important that I have some dedicated time at home to be with them. While that means I am less likely to

go out during the week with friends or meet with colleagues after work, it's a necessity for this stage of life.

Who or what has been your greatest mentor/motivator/source of inspiration? Are you, yourself a mentor?

In college, I interned with a gero-psychologist, Dr. Suzann Ogland-Hand. She continues to be my greatest mentor. She has always challenged me to have goals and dreams despite whatever limitations I put in place. It has been helpful to see someone who is a few years ahead of me in terms of stage of life and seeing how she balances professional commitments and goals with family life.

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Be open to opportunities as they come. I found I often didn't try for new roles or opportunities that came my way because I assumed what the outcome would be. I've learned that there is a lot to be learned through the process even if the outcome isn't what I would choose.



Carolyn Stich Studio

By Kara Wassink



Carolyn Stich stands by her Tulip Time poster, "Enduring Delft."

About the store:
29 W 8th St. Suite 100
Holland, MI 49423
616-298-2687
www.carolynstich.com



Carolyn Stich is driven by art, which has allowed her to have many opportunities. She has illustrated multiple children's books, drawn homes for real estate companies and architects, and completed commission artwork.

All artwork in her shop is personally created by Carolyn, primarily working with pen, ink and gouache paint. Her storefront in Holland offers colorful greeting cards, matted prints, mugs, rugs, pillows and many other unique gifts. With over 250 greeting cards to choose from, some of the most popular are her puns.

Community-based opportunities help Carolyn succeed as a small business owner, which is why she participates in the West Coast Cash program. She appreciates her local customers that embrace her art as well as the tourists that help sustain the

beautiful Holland community.

Carolyn was honored as Tulip Time's Art in Bloom poster winner in 2015, and she is on cloud nine after winning again this year. Her new piece "Enduring Delft" features a classic Dutch design combined with a vivid pattern. Throughout the month of May, you'll see her poster floating around the city of Holland on mugs, journals, ornaments, magnets and more. 2019 also marks the 90th anniversary of the festival, making an exciting time for residents, tourists and store owners.

After you eat an elephant ear, head down to the Tulip Time office to purchase official festival merchandise. Then stop by Carolyn Stich's studio to discover more of her work. Her store accepts West Coast Cash, so be sure to check it out!

What is West Coast Cash?

It's the community currency program designed to keep shopping local and support the businesses that form the fabric of our community. Certificates are conveniently purchased online at the West Coast Chamber website. Once ordered, purchasers simply print the certificates or email them to a recipient, and then it's time to shop. *Buy yours today at www.westcoastchamber.org.*

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How Can You Prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution?



By Caroline Monahan



David Shull

If asked to recount the industrial revolutions you learned about in history class, you'd start thinking about the inventions that dramatically shifted how humans live and work; those that shaped the socioeconomic profiles of communities, cities and countries around the globe. The three Industrial Revolutions that have altered the course of humanity to this point are steam and water power, electricity and assembly lines, and computerization, and revolution number four is just around the corner.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) describes the exponential changes to the way we live, work and relate to one another due to the adoption of cyber systems, the Internet of Things and the Internet of Systems. You've no doubt seen this coming. We think about the safety of data, political tensions surrounding ownership of

intellectual property, and the ethical considerations of computers and machines doing the work of humans. But the ramifications to industry, economy and humanity extend far beyond what most of us have considered.

Get ready for these historic changes by joining us for a truly eye-opening Wake Up West Coast Breakfast on Tuesday, May 14, as David Shull, industrial practice leader with Progressive AE, will share his research into the 4IR. David explains that "Technology is converging the physical, biological and digital sectors causing seismic shifts that effect how structural, intellectual and social capital generate and grow business." He will show how the world is changing, why it is happening, what to expect, and most importantly, how to harness this unprecedented market opportunity.

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Sergeant Larry Matzen of the Holland Department of Public Safety leads members through an active shooter training.



Guests network at Boatwerks at a busy Power Breakfast.



Poppy Hernandez discusses the vision for moving Michigan forward.



Panelists speak about the West Coast Leadership program at Wake Up West Coast.

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