

# CONNECT

AUGUST 2020

## The Vision: Holland Museum as Cultural Leader and Community Collaborator



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# Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

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We look forward to being in conversation and partnership with you as we move forward to listen, learn, and, most importantly, act toward the unity and equity we all desire. Please join us.

Best Regards,  
Jane Clark



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# The Vision: Holland Museum as Cultural Leader and Community Collaborator

By Caroline Monahan

Ricki Levine has served as Executive Director for the Holland Museum for close to three years, and has a passion for making the museum truly reflective of the diversity of the residents of the Holland area. “When I interviewed for the job, I told them that I intended to tell the whole story of the people of this area. Fortunately, they hired me, which tells me that the Board was on board with that and was open to that change.” Opening in 1937 and first called the Netherlands Museum, the Holland Museum’s original purpose was to showcase works featuring the lives of Dutch immigrants. Holland looks different in 2020, and the organization’s new strategic plan calls for bringing in collections that broaden the narrative and tell the story of our community now.

The museum recently went through the process of revising its strategic plan. One thing that came out of it was changing the museum’s mission to “Preserving our past and imagining our future.” Their vision is to be a cultural leader and a community collaborator inspiring the next generation of leaders, thinkers and innovators. Four main priorities were established, including sustainability, sharing their collection, and being more visible in the community. Ricki is most passionate about the fourth priority, which is celebrating our diversity.

Growing up in a diverse community in New York, Ricki Levine notes that she was exposed to friends of all colors at a very young age. When she went to college in Washington DC, she was surprised to learn that she had classmates that had grown up in places where they had never met a person of color or from other cultures. She remembers thinking how fortunate she was that she had that diverse experience as a child, and how it influenced the way in which she related to the people around her. She’s been a champion for equity and inclusivity ever since.

At the end of 2019 and into the beginning of 2020, the Holland Museum featured the exhibit, “THEM: Images of Separation,” a



Photo by Caroline Monahan

Ricki Levine

traveling exhibit that showcases items from popular culture used to stereotype groups of people. The exhibition is a traveling exhibit from the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University. The entire museum staff had the opportunity to travel and see the exhibit at Ferris State. Ricki remembers being blown away when she saw it and wanting to share it here.

The idea to bring the exhibit to Holland was embraced quickly by the Board and Staff at the museum. While there have been other types of exhibitions in the past about different minority groups, most recently Latinx, there had been nothing like this. “There was a lot of conversation about bringing it, and about what it meant to the community. This was a really harsh, brutal look at what has been going on in our country,” said Ricki. The intent was to educate people and start a conversation.

Ricki enlisted the insights of other organizations in the community that could help accurately frame the exhibit from their own direct witness of and experiences of

racism. “I wanted to have conversations with people who know more than I do. There are many organizations that work on this every day, particularly nonprofits, and I wanted to learn from them.” She cites organizations such as the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance (LEDA), Lighthouse Immigration, and the Alliance of Ethnic and Cultural Harmony.

Christine Mwangi, Founder and President of Be A Rose, a women’s health organization located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, first met Ricki while serving as the LEDA Program Director. Christine worked with Ricki on several projects, including to provide the diversity, equity and inclusion training material for the staff, Board and volunteer docents at the Museum in advance of the arrival of the Jim Crow THEM exhibit.



Photo courtesy of Christine Mwangi

Christine Mwangi

Christine’s role was to help Ricki and her team to find the language and be empowered to properly guide and educate our community members on that exhibit. “When you’ve never had the experience of leading people through racialized material in an exhibit, it is a new challenge and you may lack the confidence needed to express not just the academic or formal piece of learning material, but to be transparent enough to infuse your lived experiences or empathy to convey the impact of the exhibit.”

The partnerships developed with nonprofit organizations and experts also helped the museum to extend the learning opportunity. The partners helped them develop resources for people to learn more after they leave the exhibit and helped create current and future programs that can continue the conversation long after the exit of the exhibit.

The response to the exhibit was powerful. So powerful that upon exiting the exhibit, they set up a “Reflection Wall” and asked visitors to use comment cards or sticky notes to share their thoughts. They also asked people to take a few minutes to review other’s posts as well. “People needed a moment to take a breath and digest what they saw,” said Ricki. All reflections have been recorded and archived.

Because of the nature of the exhibit, the museum was very intentional about who was allowed in to see it. This particularly pertained to children, who were not allowed into the exhibit without a parent to provide guidance. To broaden the opportunity to talk race with all generations, the museum also created a lobby exhibit more suited for younger visitors.

Local schools took the opportunity to use the museum’s exhibit as an educational tool. Andrea Mehall is the Director of Holland Early College, Assistant Principal at Holland High School, and also works with the Holland Public Schools Equity Alliance. Formed in 2016, The Equity Alliance consists of a group of community stakeholders exploring ways to create more just and inclusive schools, finding resources in the community to help inform programs in the schools, and making recommendations to the school board around equity work.

Andrea reflected, “The demographics of Holland Public School are very different than the demographics of Holland as a community. I feel like there are two worlds. The Holland I live in is super diverse and reflects all sort of experiences of community members, backgrounds and identities.” The THEM exhibit caught Andrea’s attention since it explored the history of the more diverse population served at HPS. “It showed that the museum had the opportunity to be a community building space, and a space that shares stories and experiences from all segments of the population of the community. It marks an important transition to what the museum for this community could become.”



Photo courtesy of Andrea Mehall

### Andrea Mehall

On February 10, the Equity Alliance hosted a Holland Public Schools Night at the Museum as an opportunity for students, staff and family members to explore the exhibit and have conversations related to their experience in school. “For example, In What Ways are Schools Agents of Separation? In What Ways Can school be Agents of Change and Unity? We used that as an opportunity to collect feedback from our community to build into our ongoing programs for the district,” said Andrea.

In July, Ricki and LEDA Executive Director, Gloria Lara were the featured speakers for the Chamber’s “Listen, Learn and Act: A DEI Call to Action” virtual event. The event provided an opportunity for attendees to listen as these leaders explained the issues that exist in our community and to learn how individuals and businesses can influence positive change. During her 20-year corporate career in the automotive industry, Gloria Lara, who joined LEDA in 2019, always saw herself as a Universal Translator, helping people with different experiences and points of view understand each other. “Now what I do at LEDA is help build bridges between all sorts of different groups and people and organizations. It’s something I’ve been doing my entire career.”

Ricki is a member of the West Coast Leadership class of 2020, and those who have spent time working with her point to her strong sense of leadership and vision. Christine Mwangi said “She is very brave and inspiring. She’s a great listener



Photo by Photo Op Studio

### Gloria Lara

and takes great care and concern for the feedback that she receives at the museum and does her best to integrate that into museum policies and procedures.” She recommends that those who have feedback, suggestions, ideas, information, resources, and opportunities for partnership or donor support for the museum to give it consideration.

“As a cultural leader in the community, the museum has an opportunity and responsibility to bring awareness to social justice issues including racism, and we have the space to have meaningful discussions around those issues,” said Ricki. The Chamber salutes Ricki Levine as a Diversity Champion and appreciates her dedication to making diversity, equity and inclusion a priority for our community.

#### COMING TO THE HOLLAND MUSEUM ON AUGUST 27:

#### “The Power of Pronouns: The Impact of Affirming Language”

Jay Knight, Chair of the Healthy Pride Inclusion Resource Group at Spectrum Health will lead a discussion reviewing pronouns and how to incorporate affirming language into daily practices. Pronouns provide an avenue to build bridges and promote healthy communication with others.

See the museum’s website (<https://hollandmuseum.org>) for additional upcoming educational opportunities.



# Catching Up With the 2019 Corporate Champion of Diversity Award Recipient

By Chelsea Scott with Robyn Afrik

Last April, Ottawa County was recognized with the 2019 Corporate Champion of Diversity Award at the West Coast Chamber's Celebrating Diversity Luncheon. At the time, Ottawa County had recently established the Diversity and Inclusion Office, responsible for developing templates to discover and eliminate implicit bias, promoting diversity and implementing training programs to be an internal consultant in diversity, equity and inclusion topics and issues.

Under the leadership of Ottawa County Administrator Al Vanderberg, Ottawa County had already made strides in the area of inclusion by putting programs in place to train over 650 employees on fair hiring practices within the Sheriff's Office, the Courts, the Public Health Department, the Community Health Department and the general government offices. But there was more work to be done.

Robyn Afrik was hired as the first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Director for Ottawa County in June of 2019 and had this to say about what drew her to the position: "When leadership of this magnitude decides to elevate DEI from a value proposition to a key priority, Ottawa County's vision of WHERE YOU BELONG is further advanced," she explained. "By positioning DEI in this way, the County can impact the prosperity, quality of life and economic growth for all residents." This, along with the creation of the first DEI office, is when Robyn personally felt inspired to consider this role. She began to see the many ways she could personally leverage the decade culmination of DEI expertise she gained from working in multiple industries across different parts of the US and invest it back into the county to serve and lead sustainable changes that are required for the growing diverse residents who call Ottawa County their home. Recently, we caught up with Robyn to talk about the accomplishments of the past year, challenges faced and how we can all take part in the important work that still must be done in DEI.

## A Year in Review

**October 2019**—The 58th District Court closed all three of its locations to dedicate the day to professional development and working on strategic efforts to improve Court operations, access and service delivery. The theme of the event was "Procedural Fairness: Ensuring Equal Access for All" and the court partnered with the DEI Office to design and implement the training for the leadership and staff.

**November 2019**—The DEI Office joined forces with the City of Holland and the Cultural Intelligence Center (CIC) for the 4th Annual Diversity Forum. This all-day learning event for the community focused on equity in public service. In addition to seeing a 72% increase in attendance, participants surveyed showed an increased knowledge in DEI and an increased sense of responsibility. "The forum also gave out its first Excellence in Equity Award to Reyna Masko, an OC employee demonstrating and focusing on deepening the awareness of equity and diversity throughout the county," Robyn said.

**December 2019**—The DEI Office also completed the Racial Equity Worksheet (REW), one of five goals for the department. The purpose of this tool is to help departments and leaders rethink their current practices and identify implicit bias. The worksheet will be piloted by two departments; with rollout determined by feedback and results from the early adopters.

That same month, the DEI Office took their first steps toward developing and conducting the DEI Strategy for all human differences. The following are currently in process (as of **June 2020**):

• **March 2020**—The DEI Office joined the Ottawa County 20th Judicial Circuit Court / County Recovery Court to assist and help lead the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Gains Center Criminal Justice Communities of Practice (CoP) for Equity and Inclusion in Adult Drug Courts. "This project brings together stakeholders and agency leaders to explore equity and



Photo by Photo Op Studio

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Director for Ottawa County Robyn Afrik

inclusion in Adult Drug Courts and begin improving the recovery support services for people with substance use disorders returning from jail or prison," Robyn said. "The DEI Office will participate over a four-month period and be part of an onsite training and plan development for capacity and sustainability of the work thereafter."

• **April 2020**—An Ottawa County DEI Workgroup was formed. The group, which consists of 11-15 county employees across different departments and levels of leadership, was formed and will play an integral role in supporting the DEI Office toward the ultimate creation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy.

The Cultural Intelligence Committee (CIC), a 15-member OC employee volunteer affinity group, has officially moved under (the direction of) the DEI Office. "In 2020, the CIC had a 50% increase in new sponsorship requests and made key improvements to the CIC guidelines, recruitment process, website and

orientation,” Robyn shared. “The CIC also created a sustainability plan for the leadership pipeline and will implement measurable outcomes and impacts.”

The office also updated the Language Application Tool (previously Spanish/English) on all OC websites. The tool will now include Chinese (Simplified), French, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Vietnamese, Thai, German, Dutch and Hindi. “Languages chosen were based on community feedback, statistics and tested by community members representing specific languages requested,” said Robyn.

Robyn’s work continues as she comes alongside cities, townships and villages while strategically partnering with local universities, chambers, non-profits and businesses, all within Ottawa County. She responds to requests that can range from DEI training, speaking, collaborations for special projects, resourcing, referring, and serving on various collaboratives i.e. Community SPOKE, West Michigan Diversity Officer Collaborative (WMDOC), and committees i.e. Talent 2025 DEI, Government Alliance for Race Equity (GARE) and Hope College’s Racial Equity Steering Committee. She also assumed a corporate board position, serving on the Inclusion Advisory Board for Shape Corp. Since June of 2019, Robyn has had over 90 + requests for various engagements like, but not limited to the ones above.

### **Moving Through Challenges**

2020 has been a challenging year in many ways and the events that saturate the media have amplified the severity of what can happen because of racial disparities and stigmas. This, Robyn pointed out, only reinforces the priority and importance of DEI efforts moving forward. “I’d like to see a call to all our leaders/leadership across all sectors, commit and continue to build a deep bench and skillset of what is called the Cultural Intelligent (CQ) leader,” she began. “Why? Because people cannot move any faster or further than the leadership quotient of the community and organization being led. If we have emotional intelligent (EQ) leaders but not culturally intelligent (CQ) ones, it’s all the difference between attracting diverse talent but not being able to keep it. We may demonstrate what it means to be welcoming but if we do not know when we’re operating out of implicit bias, we directly negate the progress of DEI within systems and inadvertently erode trust within communities. Innovation doesn’t come from diverse talent being in the same room. It comes from those who know how to effectively lead that diverse talent through a culturally intelligent way.”

### **Chamber Partnership**

As an active Chamber member, Robyn is a graduate of the West Coast Leadership and Holland First programs and has also participated in minority business programs and Governmental Affairs Breakfasts. “The West Coast Chamber impacts diversity and inclusion in Ottawa County by looking at ways to support organizations and leaders within the community who are already doing the work. They are good at sharing resources, convening and collaborating in order to build capacity for others,” she pointed out. “One example is how they host the Lakeshore Latinas and convene diverse leadership seeking input for programming.”

It is up to all of us to continue to push forward and build on the work that has already been done in the area of DEI. “If community/businesses/nonprofits want to ensure they’re doing their part, they must begin to recognize what impacts are being made and for who, when putting their decision making through the lens of equity,” Robyn explained. “In doing this, leaders begin the process of reducing implicit bias as an intentional, proactive priority vs. an afterthought and this keeps us moving in the right direction.”

*For more information, visit [www.miottawa.org/Departments/Diversity/](http://www.miottawa.org/Departments/Diversity/).*

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# Avoid Coverage Gaps Under New No Fault Law

By Andy Spears

The new no fault reform law went into effect July 2, 2020. Consumers will have the option to opt out or lower their personal injury protections (PIP)—or the auto coverage that protects you in the event of an accident. While “opting out” of these coverages may be appropriate for some and save money initially, it’s important to consider your existing health insurance coverages, too, before making this important decision.

There are several issues to consider. Even if you do have existing health care coverage, limiting your PIP coverage or opting out altogether may create unwanted coverage gaps.

**Health insurance:** Health insurance does not work like auto personal injury protection coverage. It includes deductibles, co-pays out of pocket maximums, and coinsurance that you will be responsible for.

Importantly, with a health plan, there are limitations on skilled nursing and therapies such as physical therapy, speech therapy, occupation therapy, and chiropractic treatments. Also, most health care plans offer coverage for attendant care, lost wages, home renovations, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible alterations.

**Self-Funded Plans:** Large employers who are self-funded or fully-funded can exclude auto accidents on their health insurance. If a large employer excludes auto coverages at policy renewal, any participants being treated for injuries as a result of an auto accident will not have coverage going forward. Once the contract ceases, coverage ceases for the claim. A covered claim could also stop being covered due to a job loss or change in employer. COBRA coverage, or optional

coverage available for purchase after separation from an employer, only lasts 18 months.

**Medicare:** In the event of an auto accident, PIP offers coverage Medicare does not. PIP will provide long-term care (also called custodial care), most dental care, eye exams related to prescribing glasses, dentures, cosmetic surgery, acupuncture, hearing aids and exams for fitting them and routine foot care. There are quite a few advertisements targeting seniors describing how much they will save if they opt out. They will not have coverage for the above items if they do so.

**Medicaid:** PIP offers coverage Medicaid does not in the event of an auto accident. PIP will provide items or services provided by immediate relatives or members of the recipient's household—including medical equipment and supplies for an individual in a nursing facility, swing bed or intermediate care facilities.

Your auto PIP covers custodial care, too, which includes services for individuals over 21 and under 65 in the state hospital, a public institution or an institution for mental disease, self-help devices, exercise equipment, protective outerwear, personal comfort items or services, and environmental control equipment.

**Attendant Care Rider:** Limited PIP medical coverages may not be enough to cover your medical expenses, including attendant care. If you do not have a health care plan that covers attendant care, you will be personally responsible for covering the expenses. This additional coverage could be an important option, depending on your coverage needs.

**Compare and Contrast:** So, remember, before you make any

changes to your current auto coverages this year, look at your health plan’s deductibles, co-pay, out of pocket maximums, and coinsurance. Is the annual savings on the auto truly worth opting out or limiting PIP? In the event of a motor vehicle accident, probably not—especially if the accident is severe.

**Talk to an agent:** I’m an agent. So, I’m biased here. But there are many issues to consider that could have a significant financial impact if you’re ever involved in a motor vehicle accident in the future. So, take some time and consider your current health care coverages before you make decisions

regarding your auto insurance before the no fault law goes into effect. An educated consumer can make better decisions for their future and their family. In addition to all the no-fault resources, agents also have access to health insurance markets for individual, group, and Medicare plans and more. So, reach out to an agent so you can make the best decision for your individual situation.

*Andy Spears is a respected agent for Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan serving the Holland area. You may contact Andy at 616-396-3333 or [aspears@fbinsmi.com](mailto:aspears@fbinsmi.com).*

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# Asking “Why”

By Jennifer Reeves



Jennifer Reeves is the Market Manager for Gill Staffing’s Holland location. Gill Staffing has two locations in West Michigan, with 2 more offices opening in 2020. For more about employee engagement, follow their blog at [www.gillstaffing.com/blog](http://www.gillstaffing.com/blog).

As a leader, it can feel like you’re supposed to have all the answers. But did you ever take a step back and start asking questions, specifically “why”? If not, then now’s the time to start.

Asking “why” can benefit your company in several ways. It’s why Toyota started employing the “5 Whys” concept in their manufacturing process. It simply means that to get to the root cause of an issue, you have to ask “why” at least five times. Once you understand the root cause, you can then act faster in order to resolve it. Not only that, but you can also take steps to ensure the issue doesn’t happen again. This can lead to better problem-solving and a more innovative environment.

But that’s not all that asking “why” does. When you do the same, you can take advantage of other benefits:

**It creates focus.**

If you’re working on a project, you and your team might be talking about tasks and timelines. But in reality, the first topic for discussion should be “why.” In other words, “why are you taking on this project” and “why is it important?” When everyone understands the “why,” all employees will be on the same page in terms of the desired outcome and potential impact on the company.

**It gets rid of confusion.**

Mistakes and miscommunication can often happen due to preconceived notions or partial

knowledge of a situation. Asking “why,” however, helps you see the bigger picture, so you have a more complete understanding of what’s going on.

**It challenges the status quo.**

It’s easy to get in the habit of doing the same thing every day. But when you start asking “why” questions, it ensures that what you’re doing still makes sense. If it doesn’t, and there needs to be adjustments, then you can make the right moves.

**It leads to more engagement.**

Don’t be the only one asking “why.” Encourage your employees to do the same. They need to understand not only their jobs, roles, and goals, but the impact they have on the company and customers. This will help to motivate them and keep them engaged, enhancing your bottom line in the process.

Recommended reading to improve as a leader and increase engagement:

- It Starts with Why* – Simon Sinek
- Dare to Lead* – Brené Brown
- Guts! Companies that Blow the Doors Off Business as Usual* – Kevin and Jackie Freiberg
- The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* – John C. Maxwell
- People Over Profit* – Dale Partridge
- Become Unmistakable* – Michael Novakoski with John M. Parker

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# Advocacy in Action: Interview with Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist II

The West Coast Chamber has hosted many advocacy webinars with elected officials since the pandemic began in March. In June, Chamber President, Jane Clark talked with Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist. Below is an excerpt of their conversation. The full interview can be seen on our website, on the Chamber Media and Videos page.

**Jane:** Thank you, Lieutenant Governor so much for joining us today and for your leadership in our state. I thought we could spend some time talking about equity, infrastructure and economic issues. There's so much going on in the world right now, and I know folks are turning to you as one of our important black leaders in our community. Can you speak a little bit more about that?

**Garlin:** Absolutely. Every call for justice in our nation's history has really been a call for equity. It's been a yearning to say our communities have been treated differently and have not been invested in equitably and that has led to some of the outcomes because of those choices that have been made by people in the past. I think that's true of this call as well. If you were to close your eyes and think about, when in your life you felt the most safe, it was when you felt taken care of, invested in, nurtured, believed in. When you felt like the people around you cared about your future and your dreams and who you wanted to be and what you wanted to achieve.



There are a series of investments that we can make in people and in infrastructure that supports opportunity that I believe will truly deliver a broad sense of public safety. If we are investing in education access, early childhood experiences, job training opportunities, infrastructure like connecting people to the internet, these things that open the doorway to possibility and imagination for people, and then we make sure that their lives are not cut short unjustifiably, that will create the sense of safety. That's what I believe all of our communities want.

So, we have work to do, but I believe that work can be done. I believe that we have an opportunity to make the reforms, to



change the relationships, and then lay the foundation for public safety to truly be experienced for every person in our state, regardless of their zip code, regardless of their identity, regardless of their station in life.

**Jane:** I appreciate that and respect that perspective so much. You mentioned a little bit about some of the reforms. Can you talk a little bit about some of your thoughts on criminal justice reform?

**Garlin:** Last year I actually co-chaired a task force on Jails and Pretrial. We were looking at ways to safely reduce our jail population. While our jail population has been increasing, it didn't seem like that was having a positive impact on public safety. We have a bipartisan diverse group of task force members, including legislators, law enforcement, lawyers, survivors of crime, victims' rights advocates, mental health experts. All these people who made a set of recommendations about how we could better serve people in our communities by doing things other than putting them in jail.

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I testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of a package of legislation called Clean Slate. That's a legislation that calls for the automated expungement of certain types of criminal offenses from your record after a certain amount of time. That's important, especially going forward, because coming out of this COVID-19 induced recession, we're going to need job programs. We're going to need people who are eligible and ready to work. And the Clean Slate initiative will make that possible for lots of people.

Our administration has announced a series of reforms related to the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards. We've called on our Michigan Mental Health Diversion Council and the Department of Health and Human Services to make recommendations to law enforcement about how to address, when they get service calls for people who are having a mental health episode.

**Jane:** Let's talk about statewide issues that have come to the forefront during the pandemic, namely in the area of education.

**Garlin:** Folks may not know I'm a technologist by training. I'm a software

engineer. One inequity in our state that had a bright light shone upon it was inequitable access to the internet. And that was made clear when we made the decision to cancel face-to-face K-12 education.

In our state, 600,000 children do not have access to an internet-enabled device in their homes. Sixty thousand kids do not have internet access of any kind in their homes. That makes learning at a distance all but impossible for those households and kids in those households. I've been working with internet service providers and other pathways to try to get internet access into the hands of as many children as possible so they can continue to learn at a distance. Also, to support the education professionals who have now had to facilitate learning at a distance for the first time in their careers. I believe that the State of Michigan can be the first state to connect all of our people to the internet.

**Jane:** Let's talk about some of the economic issues that we're all facing right now. Can you tell our members a little bit about what to expect with Federal emergency funding?

**Garlin:** It's been a key part of our federal advocacy, given my interest in protecting

the smallest businesses in our community. It's funny. It's almost like the smaller the business, the more connected it is to a community's identity. The state will continue to merit out restart grants and the MEDC has also worked to pass some different grant and loan programs at the state level.

The Paycheck Protection Program, the first shot of it, had some pretty serious flaws and it led to basically a lot of businesses being able to get those PPP loans based on their existing relationship with their lender, rather than the need that their business had. And so, we want to make sure that Federal programs going forward are better designed to be more responsive to a more diverse set of businesses from a broader set of industries.

**Jane:** Thank you so much for spending your time with me today. We look forward to the day we can welcome you back to Michigan's West Coast over here in Holland and Zeeland.



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# Chamber Golf Outing 2020



The Chamber knows how much our annual golf outing plays into your summer networking, and we've worked hard to bring you a covid-friendly experience for 2020. Golfers who join us on August 11 will enjoy great golfing at the Ravines Golf Club, awards and prizes, modified food and drink service, and copious adherence to safety and sanitation practices. Our sponsors are excited to say hello, and the staff looks forward to seeing familiar faces, even if it's from a social distance.

Here's our plan for a streamlined and safe 2020 Golf Outing:

## PLAYER HEALTH AND SAFETY

- If you are experiencing any symptoms associated with COVID-19 such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, we ask that you remain home.
- If you have been exposed to a person with confirmed COVID-19 within the last 14 days, we ask that you remain home.
- Please, no handshaking this year. We recommend air-fives and elbow bumps.

- Golfers unable to attend due to COVID-19 illness, exposure, or symptoms will be eligible for an 18-hole rain check and must notify Chamber staff by August 4.

## GOLF FORMAT

- This year's golf outing will feature assigned tee times to avoid gathering experienced with a traditional shotgun start.
- Teams will tee off every ten minutes 7:30 am – 12:30 pm.
- The format will be a four-person team scramble with a 2-Putt Max.
- Golfers should arrive 15 minutes before your designated tee time and leave no later than 15 minutes after your game has concluded.
- Electronic Scorecards on GPS Carts will be used this year.
- Players are required to leave the flagstick in the hole at all times.
- Bunker rakes will be removed from the sand traps and placed on golf carts for use.
- Top 3 placing teams will be announced the following day on social media.

## CARTS

- Upon arrival, Ravines Golf Club staff will meet you at your vehicle and load your clubs onto a sanitized cart. Each foursome will be assigned two carts.
- Please identify a driver and passenger for the round and do not alternate drivers throughout play.

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- To continue limiting gathering, a boxed lunch will be available for pickup on the turn inside the Clubhouse Bar.
- Each player will receive 2 drink tickets good for a Domestic Beer, 12 oz. Craft Beer, Wine, or any non-alcoholic beverage, including coffee in the morning.
- The Clubhouse Bar will be open and there will be 2 Beverage Carts available on the course.

## SAFETY PRECAUTIONS + PUBLIC SPACES

- Hand sanitizer will be given to each player on their cart and will also be located throughout the property.
- The lobby bathrooms in the clubhouse will be open



and social distancing is still encouraged indoors.

- Ravines Golf Club will conduct extra sanitizing of restrooms, touch points, and public spaces throughout the day.

*Registration is limited.*

*Check the event calendar on our website for details.*  
[www.westcoastchamber.org](http://www.westcoastchamber.org)

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# It's All About You



The Chamber's **Why** boils down to this: It's All About You. Being a partner for you, a resource for you, and an ally for you. When you renew your Chamber membership, it tells us that we are being responsive to your needs and providing value, and that you trust us to be here for your business whenever you need us. Your renewal is the ultimate source of feedback on the positive impact the Chamber has on fostering strong businesses that support a thriving community. Thank you!

We appreciate our members who renewed their memberships in June:

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# Premier Partners: A Look at How Chamber Sponsors are Addressing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## Blue Cross, Blue Shield and Blue Care Network of Michigan

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For more than 80 years, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan has been committed to improving the health of everyone in Michigan. We have long worked to understand and address health and health care disparities that impact minorities and other vulnerable populations.

Our inclusive culture is part of our corporate DNA. In addition to the vast programming offered to our employees, our community outreach is significant. For years, our Health Disparities Action Team has worked to ensure we're reaching out in the right way to meet the needs of all our members.

And as Michigan's largest private donor to free clinics, we understand the importance of access to quality medical, dental and behavioral health care for everyone.

We're proud to help build vibrant, inclusive communities through partnerships with community events and organizations including the Grand Rapids Hispanic Festival, and the Chamber's Lakeshore Latinas group. Through our Faith in Wellness Blues Community Challenge, we also help address social conditions that impact health.

Blue Cross Blue Shield is also actively addressing health disparities in our Michigan communities related to the coronavirus which has hit the African American, Hispanic/Latino and other vulnerable populations the hardest. And we're working with the state to help bring change. We're educating stakeholders and supporting community organizations to address food insecurity, while partnering with the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and others to enhance telehealth services, a key to expanding access to care.

At Blue Cross we know together we will improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.



**Dan Loepp, President and CEO of BC/BS of Michigan**

## The City of Holland

### Listen, Learn and Act: A DEI Call to Action, Premier Sponsor



**Brainstorming at a City of Holland Inclusive City Initiative feedback session**

The Human Relations Commission exists to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in housing, education, employment and public service. The Human Relations Commission advocates for all citizens, with special care to under-served communities. Their vision is to foster an inclusive community where all residents are honored and empowered to become productive members of the community, unhindered by bias, misunderstanding and conflict.

In 1966, the City of Holland created the Human Relations Commission by ordinance. At the time of its inception, there were very few commissions serving in this capacity in a community the size of Holland in the United States.

The Commission works in collaboration with other organizations that serve with a heart for diversity, equity and inclusion and encourages civil engagement that allows for open dialogue and diverse opinions. Key initiatives include the annual Social Justice Awards, Community Network for Education, advises tenants and landlords in matters related to housing, works collaboratively with cultural organizations to celebrate the diverse community and works closely with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to bring awareness around civil rights. The Commission started a Crisis Response Team to address racial/bias incident and conducted the Inclusive Cities initiative to bring awareness to the needs of Holland residents, created the Diversity Rocks the Books collaborative to bring diverse books to elementary and middle-school, aged students.

Thank you to all of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Sponsors on these pages, and also those listed here:

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## Consumers Energy Premier Partner



### Members of the Consumers Energy Team

From supplier diversity initiatives to robust Employee Resource Groups and expanded worker benefits, Consumers Energy is pursuing its commitment to a triple bottom line of caring for people, protecting the planet and powering Michigan's prosperity.

Across the Lower Peninsula, 8,700 employees are encouraged to bring their whole self to work—and everyone is eligible to join one of seven employee groups. With the recent changes brought on by COVID-19, these networks have helped hundreds stay connected while working apart.

The Employee Resource Groups lead the diversity initiatives and promote this culture through education, leadership, development and networking. They include: capABLE, Genergy, Minority Advisory Panel, Pride Alliance of Consumers Energy, Veteran's Advisory Panel, Women's Advisory Panel and Women's Engineering Network.

As part of its talent recruitment strategy, the company also actively employs a diverse group of interns each year and supports careers in energy, with a focus on the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math in communities across the state. That helping hand stretches out to all.

Additionally, in January 2020, leaders at Bank of America, the Consumers Energy Foundation and The Right Place, Inc. announced plans to develop the New Community Transformation Fund to increase ethnic and racial diversity in business ownership in West Michigan.

These and other efforts have helped Consumers Energy be named the No. 1 Michigan Company for Diversity in 2019 by Forbes® Magazine and recognized as a Gold-Level Veteran Friendly Employer by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. Learn more at [www.ConsumersEnergy.com/diversity](http://www.ConsumersEnergy.com/diversity).

## EV Construction Premier Partner



### The team at EV Construction

“The construction industry, both locally and nationally, has been experiencing a labor shortage for several years. The industry is also changing rapidly to adapt to accelerated schedules, technology and safety considerations related to COVID-19. The importance of diversity in thought, ethnic background and cultural perspective has helped EV Construction tackle these challenges and helped our business grow to serve clients throughout the United States.

EV Construction undertook several initiatives related to diversity and inclusion as part of our 2023 Painted Picture strategic plan. These efforts are championed by a committee of employees working closely with our executive team. Diversity and inclusion initiatives are firmly embedded into our strategic plan and reviewed regularly by the executive team throughout the business year.

Major initiatives in 2020 include the presentation of all safety signage, manuals and policies in Spanish and English and the adaptation of a diversity scorecard which is reviewed regularly by our executive team. The inclusion of dual language safety materials increases compliance with important safety standards, but also helps reduce anxiety among individuals for whom English is a second language. Our diversity scorecard puts measurable performance indicators around our diversity and inclusion programs, including goals for recruitment of new team members and goals for support of community groups whose mission is to increase the positive aspects of diversity in the workplace.

A mixture of perspectives and cultural backgrounds increases the overall resiliency of our organization. The ability to adapt to a changing economic and labor market has allowed our company to thrive. We will continue to our strong focus on diversity and inclusion as part of our overall business strategy.”

 Continued on page 20

## PREMIER PARTNERS

### Fifth Third Bank

Premier Partner

Our culture brings our core values to life every day. It exemplifies who we want to be and how we get things done, whether it's to our employees, our customers or our communities. Inclusion and diversity are integral to that culture. They're not a guideline or a goal; they're how we behave with every transaction and interaction. It's how we earn a reputation for being trustworthy and for conducting ourselves ethically and professionally.

At Fifth Third, we strive to be an inclusive, diverse and thriving organization, one in which each person feels valued, respected and understood.

We are excited to work for the betterment of our communities in a tangible and meaningful manner. Our \$32 billion community commitment, \$3.8 billion in West MI, is an example of our focus on corporate citizenship. It's what building a better kind of bank is all about—a bank that fundamentally improves the lives of customers and the well-being of communities we serve and live in; a bank that uses the power of our diversity and our commonality to build a better future.

### Haworth

Premier Partner



Team members working on the line at Haworth.

We value the richness that diversity brings to our workforce—it makes our company better and the communities we serve stronger. Haworth is committed to creating and sustaining a workforce that represents many backgrounds and cultures. An environment where all members, dealers, customers and suppliers feel valued and are able to perform to their full potential and where the contributions of all stakeholders are valued and respected.

Members around the world connect to bring a spirit of optimism and inclusiveness through various channels of communication shared with the organization. To support an inclusive environment where our members feel empowered to share their experiences and ideas, we have encouraged the creation of a variety of Member Resource Groups, including groups for Women, Veterans, Latinx, and Young Professionals.



### Lake Michigan Credit Union

Listen, Learn and Act: A DEI Call to Action, Premier Partner



LMCU Community Crew making a difference in our community.

Community outreach has been embedded in our culture since we opened our doors in 1933. Whether through volunteerism, philanthropy, sponsorships or other forms of community engagement, it has been important to be a catalyst for change and growth in the communities we serve. One of our greatest joys as a credit union is serving the people that make each of our local communities diverse and investing in organizations and causes that meet the needs of the community with our time, energy, talents and financial gifts. We focus our efforts toward increasing access and addressing inequities in three key areas: 1. Education; 2. Health and Well-Being and 3. Housing. These areas form the foundational blocks that are vital to thriving and successful communities.

We are thankful to LMCU staff for making meaningful contributions to help improve the communities where we live and work. In 2019, LMCU staff volunteered over 6,000 hours to impact a cause they're passionate about. We extend a big "THANK YOU" to our valued members for their involvement and help ensuring LMCU remains in a position to reinvest back in the communities we serve and support programs like the West Coast Chamber's Diversity Event and Community Impact Day.



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## Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge Premier Partner



The team at Smith Haughey Rice and Roegge

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge recognizes that diversity is a strength and an asset that advances a rich and dynamic environment where everyone is respected and valued. This includes men and women of varying races, religions, ages, genders, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, national origins, sexual preferences or orientations, medical conditions or disabilities, and marital, veteran or family status, and all the other unique qualities that make each of us who we are.

The firm's dedication to diversity and inclusion is championed and reinforced by our Diversity & Inclusion Committee. This committee facilitates training, education, and leads by example. We sponsor speakers on diversity and inclusion topics, and regularly sponsor employees to participate in the Institute for Healing Racism.

We strive to enhance our diversity by intentionally seeking diverse candidates and by ensuring that all employees are given equal access to opportunities, including promotions, leadership roles, and the chance to work on challenging and rewarding assignments.

We also support community organizations that enhance the diversity and inclusion of our communities through financial support, but more importantly through our employees who volunteer their time and expertise to help these organizations thrive and grow.

The firm also offers benefits that support our diversity and inclusion efforts, including generous parental leave for both parents, flexible scheduling and part-time options, and policies that encourage pro bono work.

At Smith Haughey, we appreciate that true diversity is a journey, not a destination, and we are committed to continuous efforts to achieve and maintain an inclusive environment.

## Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital Premier Partner



Spectrum Health team members out in the community.

At Spectrum Health, we believe in achieving and sustaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture that fosters respect among our team and improves the health of all people in our community. In signing the #123 for Equity Pledge, our President and CEO, Tina Freese Decker, committed to taking action to eliminate health care disparities, deepening our commitment to improving health even further. Part of that action involves recognizing the importance of localized community engagement and collaboration. Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital is an active partner in our communities sponsoring:

- LAUP's 2019 annual Fiesta! celebrating Latino culture. We provided 500 bags of fresh fruits and vegetables, in partnership with the YMCA Veggie Van.
- "Them: Images of Separation" exhibit at the Holland Museum in February 2020 presented by the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University.
- "Equity and Disparities in Healthcare" panel discussion featuring Spectrum Health experts.

Each January, we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day by encouraging team members to volunteer at organizations across our community. This year, our team members volunteered at 40 organizations in 14 cities.

Our eight, employee-led inclusion resource groups (IRGs) foster collaboration and engagement in and outside the walls of our organization and reflect the diversity of our team members and communities. Our IRGs are formed around common demographics and shared interests. They leverage the strength of their diversity to help the organizations grow and commonly focus on culture, commerce, career and community.

Embracing diversity, equity and inclusion starts with each of us. We believe it is so much more than having good intentions and being good people. It is about being intentional and working alongside community partners for the health and safety of all.

 [Continued on page 22](#)

**Warner Norcross + Judd**  
Premier Partner



The WNJ DEI Committee at work.

At Warner Norcross + Judd, we strive to provide workplaces that value and reflect the diversity of our clients and our communities, create equity by removing barriers to opportunity and provide an inclusive place where everyone can be themselves and enjoy doing their best work.

Warner’s culture is built on teamwork, and we believe that when every firm member feels valued and comfortable sharing different ideas, we generate innovative solutions that provide better results for our clients.

Our 25 dedicated Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Committee members find innovative ways to help the firm promote these values. To bring firm members together during our COVID-19 quarantine, they created our sometimes fun, sometimes thought-provoking “Question of the Day” internal survey. Each day as the answers were published, firm members were able to connect over shared interests and learn more about each other, which helps break down implicit bias.

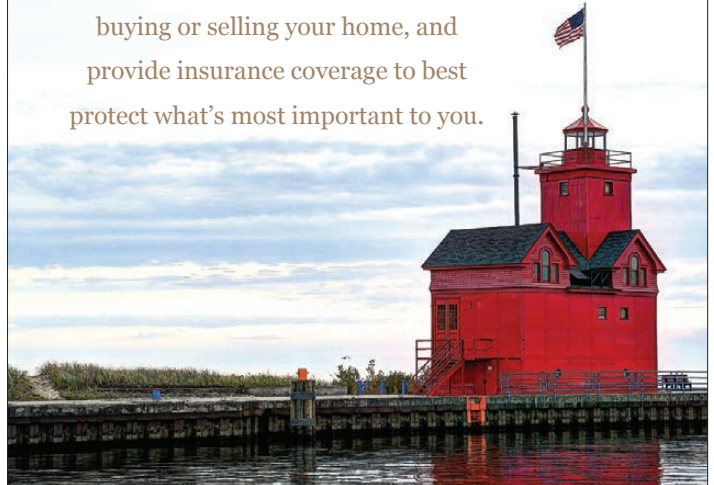
Our Action Committee also assists with Warner’s sponsorship of community conferences, festivals and efforts aimed at improving DEI, including our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest for 6th graders in the Grand Rapids Public Schools and our annual Diversity Scholarships that support students preparing to be attorneys, paralegals and legal secretaries. Learn more about our efforts at <https://www.wnj.com/About-Us/Diversity>.

Our DEI efforts have a strong synergy with those of the West Coast Chamber as they work to connect people and celebrate the differences that make our communities strong and vibrant. We support these Chamber activities and are proud to sponsor the Chamber’s annual Celebrating Diversity Luncheon recognizing local Champions of Diversity.



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## In Your Community, for Your Community

As our business continues to grow, so does our commitment to the communities in which we practice.

Smith Haughey and its attorneys are proud to serve Holland and be members of this extraordinary community!

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# Happenings at the Chamber



President Scott Geerlings, and the team at Midwest Construction Group, Inc. in partnership with Brent Gibson of Construction Simplified, celebrate the groundbreaking of the Black River Flats project in Holland.



Manager, Rob Veldman, and staff at West Coast Cash Merchant, Gazelle Sports, show off their social distancing skills on the sales floor of their shop in downtown Holland.



West Coast Cash Merchant Peachwave - Self Serve Frozen Yogurt is open and ready to serve your needs with their new safety guidelines.



Staff at The Curragh Irish Pub & Restaurant plan safe seating in their new outdoor dining patio.

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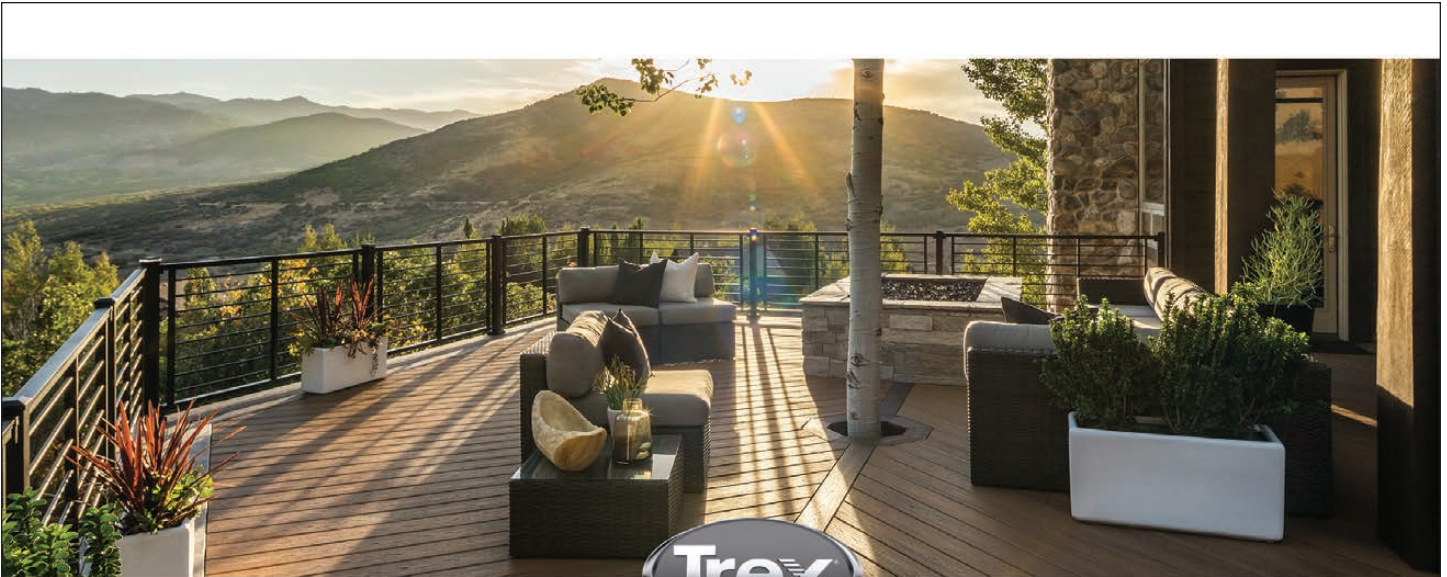
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