



**West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting
Grand Rapids NW Service Center ▪ 215 Straight Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504**

The public may attend in-person or by remote participation via Teams.

[Join the meeting now](#) Meeting ID: 270 564 702 58 Passcode: tABbH7

[+1 616-803-9815,,43582485#](#) Phone conference ID: 435 824 85#

Monday, February 10, 2025 ▪ 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment – Agenda Items
3. Approval of December 9, 2024 Minutes **Action Required**
4. Presentation: Strategic Plan Update **Information Item**
One-Stop Operator (Strategic Policy Consultants)
5. Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Member Approvals **Action Required**
Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation
6. Policy Approval: WMW Draft 16-03c10 Welfare Reform Supportive Services **Action Required**
Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions
7. Board Member Spotlight **Information Item**
8. WDB Committee/Council Updates **Information Item**
 - a. Executive Committee: *Heather Daniel, WDB Chairperson*
 - b. CEAC: *Tonia Castillo, Committee Chairperson*
 - c. Legislative Committee: *Jim Fisher, Committee Chairperson*
 - d. Solutions Driven Committee: *Jordan Clark, Committee Chairperson*
 - e. Bev Drake Essential Services Awards Committee: *Mark Bergsma, Committee Chairperson*
9. Success Story: [LG Energy Solutions](#) **Information Item**
Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions
10. WDB Service Summary: *Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer* **Information Item**
11. Solutions Driven Updates **Information Item**
Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions, Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation
12. Other Business
 - a. Request for WIOA Youth RFP Review Committee
 - b. 10-Year Anniversary of West Michigan Works!
13. Public Comment
14. Adjournment



Future Meeting Dates

Workforce Development Board

April 14, 2025

June 9, 2025

October 13, 2025

December 8, 2025

Executive Committee

March 10, 2025

May 12, 2025

September 15, 2025

November 10, 2025

Solutions Driven Committee

April 25, 2025

July 11, 2025

October 3, 2025

Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC)

May 16, 2025

September 26, 2025

Legislative Committee

April 22, 2025

July 15, 2025

October 21, 2025

November 18, 2025 (if needed)



2024 Annual Meeting
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park (Huizenga Grand Room South)
1000 East Beltline NE ▪ Grand Rapids, MI 49525
Monday, December 9, 2024 ▪ Meeting 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
(Networking Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m.)

MINUTES

Workforce Development Board (WDB) Members Present: Shana Washington (Vice-Chairperson), Nora Balgoyen, Ryan Bennett, Mark Bergsma, Bryce Butler, Tonia Castillo, Jordan Clark, Cathy Cronick, Jay Dunwell, Jim Fisher, Jan Harrington-Davis, Jennifer Heinzman, Jon Hofman, TaRita Johnson, Nick Kacher, Greg King, Kelly Kroll, Charles Lepper, Lindsay Maunz, Dan Rinsema-Sybenga, Jen Schottke, Michelle Seigo, Samantha Semrau, Dan TenHoopen, Sara Whisler

WDB Members Absent: Emily Babson, Bradley Barrick, Heather Daniel (Chairperson), Paul David, Nate Henschel, Mark Thomas

Governing Board (GB) Members Present: David Hatfield (Chairperson), Larry Tiejema (Vice-Chairperson), Kim Cyr, Mark De Young, Matt Kallman, Chris Kleinjans, Joe Moss, Darrell Paige, Jim Storey, Milinda Ysasi

GB Members Absent: Tony Baker, Melissa LaGrand, Kelsey Perdue

Staff Present: Jacob Maas, Angie Barksdale, Kirsti Jones, Cara Achterhof, Kelly Allard, Olicia Blomstrom, Lisa Brewer, Kyle Brooky, Marlene Brostrom, Tawana Brown, Karrie Brown, Brittany Chase, Jeff Dornbos, Chrissy Douglas, Mark Dumouchelle, Tasha Evans, Liz Gensler, Rosa Hernandez, Erin Kenny, Jason Khoury, Amy Lebednick, Richard Lovell, Andrika Lyons, Janette Monroe, Abby Monterusso, Chad Patton, Malinda Powers, Richelle Smith, Jennifer Summers, Kelly Tang, Shakiya Taylor, Sue Witzel, Tawanna Wright

Guests/Public Present: Bernard Brown (MAISD), Megan Byrne (Hackley Community Care Center), William Campbell (Congressman John Moolenaar's Office), Dr. Cliff Cho, MD (University of Michigan Health-West), Tracie Coffman (WK Kellogg Foundation), Christi Conran (University of Michigan Health-West), Representative John Fitzgerald (District 83), Amy Gibson (Hackley Community Care Center), Ryan Graham (Kent ISD), Steve Heethuis (Praeco Skills), Michael Hill (Hope Network), Ryan Hundt (Michigan Works! Association), Rose Hunt, Shelondrea Johnson (Hackley Community Care Center), William Kitchen, Terri Legg (United Way of Montcalm-Ionia Counties), Joseph Lienesch (Kent ISD), Steve Martin (Rep. Carol Glanville's Office House District-84), Meg Mathis (Dan Vos Construction), Dan Mitchell (Mercantile Bank), Michael O'Connor (Zeeland Public Schools), Ted Paton (Ionia County ISD), Sherry Pfaff-Doody (University of Michigan Health-West), Kathryn Pina (Congresswoman Hillary Scholten's Office), Lisa Radak (GRCC), Ginger Rohwer (MiSTEM Network/GVSU), Annie Sanders (United Way of Gratiot-Isabelle Counties), Kristie Smith (Spectrum Health), Beth Strait (Aquinata Hall SL), Kristen Tjalsma (Miller Knoll), Pat Walstra (Kent ISD), Chauncy Williams (MCEC), Elizabeth Wilson (Vervint), Samantha Zentner (Orchard View Adult Education)

1. Call to Order at 12:03 p.m. by ACSET/West Michigan Works! Governing Board Chairperson, Com. David Hatfield.
2. Public Comment- None
3. Board Action Items: Com. David Hatfield

- a. Approval of October 28, 2024 Minutes

GB Action Required

Motion – Com. Tiejema

Second – Com. Ysasi

Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried

- b. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Bylaws
(Roll call vote-75% affirmative vote of members appointed and serving) **GB Action Required**
Motion – Com. Moss
Second – Com. Ysasi
Roll call vote taken: 11 out of 14 members present.
Yays – Com. De Young, Storey, Hatfield, Tiejema, Kallman, R. Baker, Cyr, Paige, Kleinjans, Moss, Ysasi
Nays – None
Item Approved by Vote – All 11 members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.
- c. Approval of October 14, 2024 Minutes **WDB Action Required**
Motion – Jon Hofman
Second – Mark Bergsma
Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried

4. 2024 Year in Review and Recognitions **Information Item**

David Hatfield, on behalf of the board and organization, thanked the guests, board members, and elected officials for joining the meeting. David extended congratulations to this year's award winners. To begin the 2024 year in review, David introduced Amy Lebednick, Business Solutions Director.

a. Business Solutions and Employer of the Year

Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions, reported that West Michigan Works!' demand driven approach to workforce development has allowed us to harness the potential of business, community partners and educators to provide outstanding career education, support services, coaching and training, to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers across our seven-county region. Amy reviewed the following 2024 highlights from Business Solutions programs: (1) the number of employers served, (2) the number of jobs filled, and (3) the number of potential new jobs. Amy also provided an overview of the WMW Industry Talent Councils (ITCs) and their accomplishments, Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF) awards, and registered apprenticeship programs.

Amy Lebednick recognized University of Michigan Health-West (UMHW) as the 2024 Employer of the Year. Amy presented this award for UMHW's outstanding contributions to healthcare and workforce development in our region. Further, Amy reported that the UMHW prioritizes employee retention by fostering a supportive environment through mentoring programs, education assistance, and structured apprenticeships. These efforts are designed to combat burnout, promote a positive workplace culture, and encourage career growth. Some key initiatives include the Medical Assistant and Surgical Technologist Apprenticeships, which offer hands-on training and advancement opportunities, as well as the JobSync program, which provides clear career pathways for healthcare professionals. UMHW also emphasizes youth career exploration through active participation in programs like MiCareerQuest, inspiring students to consider healthcare careers through interactive exhibits.

The organization is committed to diversity and inclusion, as demonstrated by its participation in evidence-based recruitment practices such as the HireReach initiative and implicit bias training for staff. These efforts help create a workforce that reflects the communities they serve.

Additionally, UMHW collaborates with institutions like Grand Rapids Community College to support nursing students through scholarships, mentoring, and educational pathways, ensuring long-term success for future healthcare professionals.

UMHW's comprehensive approach to workforce development underscores its dedication to building a sustainable, inclusive, and skilled healthcare workforce.

Steve Smith, Regional Manager of Talent Acquisition from University of Michigan Health-West accepted the award. Kathryn Pina, Director of Outreach & Grants from Congresswoman Hillary Scholten's Office, also provided special recognition to UMHW.

b. Talent Solutions and Partner of the Year

Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, reviewed the following 2024 highlights from Talent Solutions programs: (1) the number of job seekers served, (2) the number of jobs filled? (3) amount of wages earned, (4) the number of credentials earned, (5) the number of barriers removed, (6) amount of training dollars spent, and (7) training partners. Tasha also reviewed the expansion of refugee programs supporting New Americans and refugees as they navigate their path to employment. Tasha reported that in 2024, WMW nearly doubled the number of individuals served and is proud to be one of five collaboratives awarded the Make Michigan Home Grant, a first-of-its-kind regional talent retention and attraction pilot program focused on retaining current residents and attracting new talent to West Michigan.

Tasha recognized United Way of Montcalm-Ionia Counties (UWMIC) as the 2024 Partner of the Year for its demonstrated commitment to advancing workforce development in our community. Tasha reported that through vital partnerships with donors, volunteers, and organizations, UWMIC ensures that local residents have access to essential resources including education, housing, food, and financial stability. UWMIC has been a key partner in workforce development supporting job seekers by providing food drives, emergency services, and work essentials. UWMIC is involved in initiatives like MiCareerQuest and youth workforce development. UWMIC also leads in critical areas including leadership development, DEI training, and advocacy for issues such as childcare, affordable housing, and income tax credits.

Terri Legg, President & CEO of United Way of Montcalm-Ionia Counties accepted the award. William Campbell, District Staff from Congressman John Moolenaar's Office, also provided special recognition to United Way of Montcalm-Ionia Counties.

c. Development and Innovation and Impact Award Recognition

Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation, reviewed the following 2024 highlights from Development and Innovation programs: (1) the number of employers engaged, and average wage increases within the Elevate program, (2) the number of job seekers engaged in CareerPoint, (3) the number of youth served in the Ascend program, and (4) the number of overall workshop attendees. Chad also provided overviews for the Retention Solutions Network, HireReach, and MiCareerQuest.

Chad shared that WMW submits nominations for the Michigan Works! Association (MWA) Impact Awards each year. An Impact Award honors those that have built economic results by creating jobs and developing fresh talent in their communities. The awards ceremony will be held in Lansing on April 24, 2025, with local State legislators. This year, Shelondrea Johnson and Hackley Community Care were selected as Impact Award recipients. The video about the Impact Awardees can be seen [here](#). Shelondrea and Amy Gibson accepted the awards.

Kathryn Pina also provided special recognition to Shelondrea and Hackley Community Care on behalf of Congresswoman Hillary Scholten's Office.

d. Sharing Knowledge and Best Practices

Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer, shared that in 2024 WMW shared its best practices for talent solutions, business solutions, and development and innovation programming in more 25 presentations within the state and across the country. WMW continues to lead the nation in apprenticeship programming and has trained US DOL Apprenticeship Training Representatives in every state across the country.

5. Due to unforeseen circumstances that occurred prior to the meeting, West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board (WDB) Chairperson, Heather Daniel, was unable to attend the meeting. In her place, WDB Vice-Chairperson Shana Washington provided closing remarks. Shana reported that looking ahead into 2025, WMW will continue the great work of its programs, councils and committees. WMW will focus on building new relationships in the legislature to advocate for the important work WMW does and emphasize opportunities for flexible funding, local control, and success of programs. WMW will work to ensure the new administration recognizes the importance of a fully funded budget, demonstrating the return on investment that WWM programs deliver. Shana thanked board members, elected officials, and staff.
6. Shana Washington adjourned the meeting at 12:51 p.m.

Recorded by: _____ Received by: _____



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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Employment & Training Council
215 Straight Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 336-4100

SERVICE CENTERS

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Barry County

Hastings Service Center
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Montcalm County

Greenville Service Center
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12331 James St, Suite 130
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(616) 396-2154

MEMORANDUM

TO: West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)
FROM: Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation
DATE: February 10, 2025
RE: Career Education Advisory Council (CEAC) Member Approvals

Background

The CEAC brings education and business together by establishing a formal entity and mechanism to build and maintain a collaborative partnership with local school districts, employers, postsecondary institutions, advocates, and training centers to identify significant talent needs in a community and collectively develop and implement training strategies to effectively meet employers’ talent needs.

We have historically set CEAC terms based on the date the Workforce Development Board approved the appointment of representatives. We are asking the board to approve updated standard term where representatives are appointed for a 2-year term beginning on July 1 of either an odd or even year. We are proposing the following updates to align with these changes:

Term ending June 30, 2026:

- Michael O’Connor – Zeeland Adult Education
- Pat Walstra – Kent ISD
- Ted Paton – Ionia ISD
- David Tebo – Ottawa Area ISD
- Samantha Zentner – Orchard View Adult Education
- Shelbee Axom-Anderson – Junior Achievement
- Bernard Brown – Muskegon Area ISD
- Joe Tenbusch – Allegan County Technical and Education Center
- Tonia Costillo – Ottawa Area ISD

West Michigan Works! is a division of ACSET, an equal opportunity employer/program and a proud partner of the American Job Center network. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. West Michigan Works! is supported by state and federal funds; more details at westmiworks.org/about. TTY 711

Term ending June 30, 2027:

- Cary Stamas – Kent ISD
- Lisa Hungerford – Talent First
- Ginger Rohwer - MiSTEM Network's Greater West Michigan Region at GVSU
- Chauncy Williams – Muskegon Public Schools
- Rich Franklin – Barry Intermediate School District
- Kimberly Call – Trans-Matic
- Jacquie Rehkopf – Ottawa Area ISD

The CEAC is seeking approval of new membership representatives for the following individual(s) for a term ending June 30, 2027:

- Dan Tenhoopen – Heart of West Michigan United Way

Requested Action

We are requesting that the WDB approve the updated CEAC terms as listed above and the appointments Dan TenHoopen to the CEAC.

Member Name	Term End Date	Name and Type of Organization
Michael O'Connor	6/30/2026	Zeeland Adult Education
Pat Walstra	6/30/2026	Kent ISD
Ted Paton	6/30/2026	Ionia ISD
David Tebo	6/30/2026	Ottawa Area ISD
Samantha Zentner	6/30/2026	Orchard View Adult Education
Shelbee Admon-Anderson	6/30/2026	Junior Achievement
Bernard Brown	6/30/2026	Muskegon Area ISD
Joe Tenbusch	6/30/2026	Allegan County Technical and Education Center
Tonia Castillo	6/30/2026	Ottawa Area ISD
Cary Stamas	6/30/2027	Kent ISD
Lisa Hungerford	6/30/2027	Talent First
Ginger Rohwer	6/30/2027	MiSTEM Network's Greater West Michigan Region at GVSU
Chauncy Williams	6/30/2027	Muskegon Public Schools
Rich Franklin	6/30/2027	Barry Intermediate School District
Kimberly Call	6/30/2027	Trans-Matic
Jacque Rehkopf	6/30/2027	Ottawa Area ISD
Dan Tenhoopen	6/30/2027	Heart of West Michigan United Way

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westmiworks.org/about. TTY 711*

MEMORANDUM

TO: West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)

FROM: Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions

DATE: February 10, 2025

RE: Draft WMW 16-03c10 Welfare Reform Supportive Services Policy

Background

In October of 2017, the Workforce Development Board approved a Supportive Services Policy for Welfare Reform programs to provide guidance for providing supportive services to job seekers enrolled in the PATH and FAE&T program.

This policy simplifies the milestones for earning a transitional supportive service (TSS) and adjusts some increments. Larger increments offer more meaningful financial support to help individuals overcome employment barriers. TSS payments can be provided for successful milestones, with a maximum of \$300 per quarter and \$1,200 in a rolling 12-month period.

Requested Action

We are requesting that the WDB approve WMW 16-03c10 Welfare Reform Support Service Policy to reflect these changes.



Title: WMW 16-03c~~109~~ Welfare Reform Supportive Services

Effective Date: XX-XX-XXXX

Approved by: West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board on June 10, 2024

Programs Affected: Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH)
Food Assistance, Employment & Training (FAE&T)

Supersedes: WMW 16-03c~~98~~

Background: Michigan Works! Areas (MWA) are charged with managing payment of supportive services and are responsible for ensuring that the provision of supportive services is appropriate, with proper documentation on file. Supportive services are to be provided as appropriate through the first 180 days of a job seeker's employment (the 180-day job retention period). MWAs shall respond in a timely manner when supportive services are requested.

Policy:

Support services need to be authorized by the West Michigan Works! Staff. The need and rationale for service provision must be documented in the job seeker's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Vehicle purchase and all supportive services are dependent upon fund availability and are provided on an individually determined basis for all eligible PATH job seekers. This Support Service Policy does not create an entitlement.

The dollar amounts listed below may be exceeded if State policy changes an allowable support, amount, and/or limit or if blended with other state or non-state funding such as Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES).

I. Eligibility

- A. Welfare Reform Program guidelines allow for the provision of support services for Welfare Reform job seekers at any time during their participation.

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- B. In an emergency, in which a job seeker would lose his or her employment without immediate action, West Michigan Works! (WMW) Staff will respond within 24 hours to a request for supportive services to prevent the loss of employment.
- C. A job seeker who requests a supportive service must provide documentation of his or her eligibility and need for the service, according to the criteria described below. Staff will evaluate the supportive service request and request approval.

Supportive services do not constitute entitlements.

II. PATH Support Service Types:

Listed below are the Supportive Services that may be provided to PATH job seekers (subject to amendment by the Workforce Development Agency and approval of the West Michigan Works! Chief Executive Officer).

A. Clothing (\$500 limit within a 12-month period)

Clothing as required for job seekers assigned to activities or needed for employment. Allowable items include:

- Clothing needed for interviews.
- Work gloves, work boots, work shoes, hard hats, and personal safety items.
- Other protective/special clothing, personal safety items, uniforms, or other clothing needed for training and employment.
- Appropriate clothing needed to successfully participate with PATH or other employment-related activity.

A maximum of \$500 in clothing supportive services may be provided to each job seeker per 12-month period. In a two-parent family, each parent who is contributing toward meeting the case's participation requirement is eligible.

B. Vehicle Repair

Vehicle repairs may be authorized for a vehicle that is the job seeker's primary means of transportation, even if public transit is available. The total MDHHS/PATH program cost of repair may not exceed \$900.00 including any repair in the previous twelve (12) -months. Job seekers may contribute any amount over \$900.00 prior to WMW payment. In a two-parent family, each parent who is contributing towards meeting the case's work participation requirement may be eligible to receive up to \$900 towards the repair of an automobile, if the funding is directed

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towards separate automobiles for each parent, and the automobiles are used as the primary means of transportation for employment-related activities. With the repairs authorized, the vehicle must be determined to be safe and roadworthy.

The job seeker must provide the following information:

1. Registration showing the vehicle is registered in the name of an eligible family member. A member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is receiving assistance and is included in the household FIP grant.
2. Verify that the vehicle was not purchased by PATH in the last sixty (60) calendar days.
3. Proof of insurance for the vehicle showing it is insured in an eligible family member's name. A member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is receiving assistance and is included in the FIP grant.
4. One (1) estimate for repair by a licensed mechanic.

C. Vehicle Insurance

Assistance with vehicle insurance is limited to a \$2,000 maximum lifetime cap. Any payments made prior to January 1, 2020 will be counted toward the \$2,000 maximum lifetime limit. Vehicle insurance coverage is limited to the time period in which the client is establishing income to allow for their ongoing payment of the insurance up to 90 days at one time.

The job seeker must provide the following information:

1. Registration showing the vehicle is registered in the name of a member of the eligible family. "A member of the eligible family" is defined as any adult who is receiving assistance and is included in the FIP grant.
2. One (1) estimate for vehicle insurance.

D. Vehicle Purchase

PATH staff may authorize payment of up to \$5,000 toward the purchase of a vehicle if the vehicle will be used for a job seeker's primary means of transportation for employment-related activities and the job seeker does not already own a safe and roadworthy vehicle. The purchase must be approved in advance, and only one PATH or MDHHS Vehicle Purchase payment may be made to a job seeker during the job seeker's lifetime. In a two-parent family, if both parents are required to participate and need separate vehicles, an exception may be made prior to approving a vehicle purchase for a second parent. Before authorizing the purchase, all the following conditions must be met:

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1. Public Transportation is not reasonably available (such as considering the location and hours of employment, childcare, or long commute) and the job seeker has no other means to reach the job site reliably as defined in the MDHHS Bridges Eligibility Manual 233A.
2. The job seeker can afford payments, insurance and other expenses associated with owning the vehicle.
3. The job seeker is active in employment-related activities. The job seeker must either be employed or in PATH activity for his/her required number of hours per week.
4. The job seeker must possess a valid driver's license.
5. Verification is obtained from the Secretary of State records that the client does not own an unusable vehicle.
6. The vehicle will be insured and registered in the job seeker's name or a member of the eligible family. A member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is receiving assistance and is included in the FIP grant. If needed, PATH will provide assistance to start up insurance (not to exceed 90 days of coverage) and assist in registering the vehicle in the job seeker's name. Both services are already included under support services.
7. The cost of the vehicle will not exceed its retail value. The vehicle is safe and roadworthy. PATH will check the Kelly Blue Book or NADA appraisal guide. A vehicle inspection by a licensed mechanic, who is not employed by or related to the seller, is required and is to be placed in the job seeker's file. The cost of the vehicle inspection is allowable in addition to the maximum \$5,000 purchase price.

E. Moving/Relocation

A job seeker that verifies employment "outside of commuting distance" (as determined by the PATH Manual), may be provided relocation services on a case-by-case basis as approved by West Michigan Works!. The maximum allowance for moving/relocation expenses is \$1,500.00 per move. In a two-parent family, both parents are eligible if they both obtain employment that requires relocation. The need must be well documented, including actual cost.

- Trailer or truck rental.
- Compensation for persons assisting in the move.
- Mileage allowance.
- Rental of moving equipment such as dollies.
- Security deposit and payment of the first month's rent at the new location.

F. Medical Exams, Immunizations, and Tests

Certain services, which are not defined as medical services by the MDHHS, may be needed to

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overcome barriers to employment or training, and are allowable supportive service expenses.

These services include:

- Employment-related photocopies.
- The completion of an MDHHS Medical Needs form by a Medical Doctor (D), or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) certifying that based on previous medical records or recent medical examination, the client is able (or unable) to participate in employment-related activities, and whether or not there are limitations or restrictions on the types of activities in which the job seeker may be engaged.
- An employment or training-related general medical or physical examination by an MD or DO (including the completion of an MDHHS Medical Needs form).
- Immunizations or test when required to obtain, maintain, or enhance employment, and cannot be obtained free of charge.

PATH supportive services may be used for dental services that are not covered under Medicaid, another health insurance plan, or by a community public health agency that normally covers medical and/or dental services for the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of physical or mental diseases.

G. Other Employment-Related Expenses

Employment-related expenses must be approved on a case-by-case basis. The need must be well documented, including actual cost.

- One-time work-related expenses (license, fees, purchased tools, etc.).
- One-time business start-up expenses.
- Equipment for employment (task/responsibility of employee clearly defined).
- Driver's training (include name of the training provider and the period of training).
- Internet Services and the purchase of tablets, laptops, chrome books, smart phones, etc. (Job seekers must exhaust all free and low-cost resources before seeking this supportive service.)
- Any one-time employment-related expense as deemed appropriate by WMW.

H. Identification

The following forms of identification may be purchased for a job seeker based on the need. Identification may be provided once in a 12-month period. NO fines, penalties or fees, such as those associated with driver's license reinstatement, may be paid as a supportive service.

- Michigan ID
- Birth Certificate

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- Driver's License

I. Transportation

PATH job seekers may be provided with transportation assistance to fulfill PATH program requirements, including orientation, or to participate in employment and training activities, or employment. The career coach will determine the need for transportation assistance allowance for public transit, Uber, Lyft or Taxi Service.

Stipends to job seekers who utilize private transportation will be paid according to the following policy, which considers the job seeker's geographic location and component assignment.

Mileage associated with self-employment connected to home delivery services is reimbursable from the PATH job seeker's home to the first delivery and from their last delivery order back home.

Stipends for PATH allowable activities.

West Michigan Works! residents may receive a daily transportation allowance based on the total round trip distance miles to and from their home to their assigned allowable activities, which may include the distance to a childcare provider, according to the following table:

12 miles or less	\$3.00 per day
13 miles and up to 24 miles	\$9.00 per day
25 miles and up to 34 miles	\$12.00 per day
35 miles and up to 50 miles	\$17.00 per day
51 miles and up to 69 miles	\$20.00 per day
70 miles and over	\$.40 per mile

An additional stipend in the amount of \$5.00 a day may be provided to those participating in documented outside job search employer contact efforts (submitting applications, resumes and attending job interviews).

Listed below are the possible points for payment:

- To and from Orientation.
- To and from Job Search/Job Readiness Activities.
- To and from Community Service/Work Experience site.
- To and from Job interviews.
- To and from Child Care Provider.
- To and from Employment (up to 180 days of employment).
- To and from Training site.

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If a job seeker is requesting a stipend for his or her transportation payment, in order to receive a full stipend, the job seeker must be able to show that:

- The vehicle is registered in his or her name or an eligible family member's name;
- The job seeker obtained a ride with another person; or
- The job seeker is using a vehicle owned by another person with that person's permission. However, no more than one stipend may be issued for a single trip using the same vehicle.
- Valid Driver's License if job seeker is not riding with another job seeker.

If the job seeker cannot document any of the above, he or she may be issued \$3.00 a day, in lieu of payment for public transportation or in lieu of payment for private mileage reimbursement.

J. Child Care

The MDHHS is responsible for payment of childcare for all eligible Family Independence Program (FIP) recipients. WMW CANNOT pay any payments related to childcare or fees associated with enrolling a child in daycare.

K. PATH Program Supportive Services by Category:

Exceptions: State approval will be requested for all Policy Exceptions.

Auto Other

- Plates/Tags.
- Title Transfer.
- Registration.
- Driver's License, including Enhanced.
- Drivers Training/Drivers Permit/Road Test.
- Vehicle Inspections (related to auto purchase).
- Diagnostics.
- Towing.
- Taxes (auto purchase).

Auto Repair – Any Supportive Service-related repair of a vehicle to make it road worthy.

- Tires.
- Maintenance.

Auto Purchase – Purchase cost of a vehicle

Auto Insurance

Clothing

- Interview.
- Employment.
- Protective.
- Uniforms.

Other Supportive Services

- State ID, including Enhanced.
- Birth Certificate.
- Tools/Equipment/Registration Fees.
- Internet Services.

Pre-Employment Exam and Screening – Needed for a specific employment and if medical, not covered by Medicaid.

- Pre-employment physical/immunizations.
- Drug testing.
- Professional Licensure/certifications.
- Background checks.

Private Vehicle Mileage – Allowances for transportation**Public Transportation**

- Bus passes.
- Taxi service.
- Uber.
- Lyft.

Relocation – Must be related to an employment offer.

- Moving expenses.

III. Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAE&T) TLFA Support Services

Support Services for FAE&T job seekers are designed to assist job seekers in overcoming barriers that prevent them from engaging in employment and training activities. The Support Services must be reasonable and necessary, and directly related to participation in activities, not for supporting job seekers' involvement in unsubsidized employment. Beginning with Orientation and during active participation, a job seeker may receive a maximum of \$960 of support services in a rolling 12-month period. State approval is needed for all policy exceptions. The MWA should email LEO-FAET-Policy@michigan.gov with a detailed explanation regarding the exception request. The State

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will notify the WMW of the decision by email within 14 days. The monetary limit does not apply to Plus job seekers served by FAE&T Plus Contractors.

Support services may include:

- Breathalyzer for Vehicles/Ignition Interlock Device (See note at the end of this list).
- Clothing (appropriate for job search activity or interviews).
- Drug tests (required for employment or training program).
- Fees (i.e., activity, course registration, union dues, test fees, licensing and bonding fees, background checks needed for training or to support job search).
- Fingerprinting (required for employment).
- Housing assistance (limited to two months for rent & utilities only) applies only to Plus participants served by a Plus Contractor. Housing assistance is designed for emergency situations and rationale must be documented in the case file.
- Legal services (expunging a criminal record to secure employment).
- Medical services (i.e., TB test, vision exam, eyeglasses, dental care or physical to participate in the E&T activity or required for employment).
- Personal grooming supplies/services (i.e., personal hygiene products and services, including haircuts, to meet program or potential employer appearance standards).
- State of Michigan identification card, temporary driving instruction permit, driving skills test, and a driver's license.
- Technology equipment - enter in the OSMIS under fees
 - Cellular phone service (limited to three months and no other source of free data or phone service is available or appropriate for the situation).
 - Personal computer/laptop/tablet and necessary accessories.
 - Internet or hotspot (limited to three months unless provided for a training program with a longer length. Also, the MWA must ensure no other source of free internet is available or appropriate for the situation).
- Training materials, textbooks, and supplies.
- Transportation.
- Public bus pass.
- Gas cards for mileage reimbursement (using same table as PATH).
- Taxi (including Uber and Lyft Services). Taxi service must be temporary, and the rationale will be documented in the case file.
- Non maintenance vehicle repair (limited to \$350).
- Work and training tools (i.e., equipment, tools, safety clothing, and uniforms necessary to complete E&T training).

Note: Court-mandated breathalyzers in vehicles will be approved by LEO-WD on a case-by-

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case basis. Request for approval must be sent to LEO-FAET-Policy@michigan.gov and the MWA must confirm the following:

- Court documentation from the participant that the vehicle breathalyzer is required for them to drive, including required period of time.
- Cost of the breathalyzer installation, monthly costs for lease and maintenance, and cost to remove the breathalyzer.
- Documentation that the installation company is state- or court-approved.
- No other funding sources are available for low-income individuals to fund all or part of the cost of the breathalyzer (MWA should check with local courts/corrections office about funding for this).
- The use of a breathalyzer in the vehicle is directly related to the success of the participant in the FAE&T program.
- There are no other viable means of reliable transportation.

Support services may be provided in the form of prepaid allowances based on approximate costs, where the costs are reasonable and verifiable. Alternatively, support services may be provided through reimbursement to the participant for the actual cost of the service incurred.

Gas cards or vouchers can be provided as a prepaid allowance, but their use will be restricted to a specific purchase or service allowed by the program. Any prepaid allowance will require the job seeker to provide a receipt to be returned to WMW to use as justification it was used for its intended support service.

The case file, action plan, and OSMIS case notes will contain information that explains why the supportive service is necessary for participation in the E&T activities.

IV. FAE&T TLFA Job Retention Support Services (Entered in OSMIS as "Job Retention Supportive Services.")

Job retention support services will be used to assist the job seeker in maintaining employment and will only be provided when a job seeker is enrolled in the Job Retention activity. The annual maximum of \$960 is the combination of regular supportive services and job retention support services.

The following support services are allowable if they are required to maintain employment:

- Clothing (i.e., safety clothing, uniforms)
- Fees (i.e., union dues, test fees, licensing, and bonding fees).
- Personal Grooming Supplies/Services (i.e., personal hygiene products and services, including haircuts, to meet employer appearance standards).
- Transportation.

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- Public bus pass.
- Gas cards for mileage reimbursement.
- Taxi (including Uber and Lyft Services). Taxi service should be temporary, and the rationale must be documented in the case file.
- Non maintenance vehicle repair (limited to \$350).
- Work tools, (i.e., equipment, tools, safety clothing, uniforms).

V. Disallowed Support Services

The following are **not allowed** to be paid with FAE&T funds and do not qualify for reimbursement:

- Automobile insurance.
- Automobile ownership/operator taxes (tags, title, license).
- Automobile purchase.
- Drug/alcohol counseling therapy.
- Living stipend.
- Mental health treatment.
- Relocation expenses.
- Student loans, fees, penalties, or fines.
- Bad debt.
- Food staples and groceries.
- Expenditures to support employment that was obtained prior to enrollment in FAE&T.

VI. Transitional Support Services

Transitional supportive services (TSS) are to be provided as appropriate while the FIP case is open, including during the Application Eligibility Period, and through the first 180 days of the job seeker's employment.

- TSS payments are intended to be used by the job seeker to cover miscellaneous expenses not normally covered by regular supportive services.
- TSS payments may be provided to reward successful milestones and for permissible support [services](#) as determined by LEO-WD using these funds (see description below).
- TSS payments may be awarded at any time during the program from the date of orientation through PATH termination.
- Only one TSS payment per successful milestone is allowable per fiscal year.
- All TSS payments will be documented in the job seeker's file, on the Individual Service Strategy, in the support services screen in OSMIS, and case noted.

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SUCCESSFUL MILESTONE	SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTATION	AMOUNT
Completion of Comprehensive Assessment	Verification of Assessment Completion	\$25.00
Completion of AEP	OSMIS	\$25.00
Obtained Employment	Pay Stubs/Employment Verification	\$50.00 <u>\$100</u>
90 Days of Continuous Employment	Pay Stubs/Employment Verification	\$100.00
Completion of first 30 days of the Community Service Program (CSP) or Work Experience Program (WEP)	Worksite Evaluation	\$75.00 <u>\$50.00</u>
Pass <u>Obtain</u> General Educational Development (GED) / <u>High School Diploma/Completion/Equivalency</u> Test	<u>Diploma</u> /Test Results	\$100
High School Completion	Diploma	\$100
Completion of Vocational Training	Certificate or Degree	\$125.00 <u>\$100.00</u>
WorkReady Certificate	Certificate	\$50.00
WorkReady Plus Certificate	Certificate	\$50.00
Completion of Job Readiness Curriculum in Tovuti	Documentation from LMS	\$50.00
Satisfactory Completion of Subsidized Employment/OJT	Check stubs	\$125.00 <u>\$100</u>
Completion of Job Fit Assessment(s)	Assessment Results	\$50.00



2024-25 Bev Drake Essential Service Awards Update

Awardees

Chad Kooyer, Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Government, Kent County

Chad Schaefer, Tyson Foods, Skilled Labor, Ottawa County

Cindy Vandyken, Corewell Health, Food Service, Kent County

Jason Galentine, Candlestone Golf & Resorts – The Stone, Hospitality, Ionia County

Kathy Wildeboer, Dean Transportation, Transportation, Ottawa County

Kendra Swihart, Big Steps Little Feet, Childcare, Kent County

Lisa DeHaan, Wedgewood Christian Services, Admin/Office/Nonprofit, Kent County

Maria Garza, Gun Lake Casino, Cleaning/Housekeeping/Groundskeeping, Allegan County

Taylor Moreland, Laurels of Carson City, Healthcare, Montcalm County

Awards Presentation

Economic Club of Grand Rapids Luncheon

With Anthony Chang, PhD, Founder & CEO, BAMF Health, presenting *Just BAMF it: Turning a Vision Into a Revolution*

February 24, 2025

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

International Ballroom, JW Marriott

Note:

- Bev Drake legacy video will premier
- Follow WMW to like and share event coverage on social media

LG ENERGY SOLUTION'S MILESTONE IN MILITARY AND ENGINEERING RECRUITMENT



Targeted recruitment efforts and strategic partnerships can drive significant progress in the EV industry, paving the way for future advancements and opportunities. LG Energy Solution Michigan, Inc., a prominent player in the electric vehicle (EV) battery industry, has made strides in enhancing its workforce through the Talent Acquisition Team Electric Vehicle program. This initiative, a collaboration between the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and West Michigan Works!, is aimed at recruiting and upskilling workers for the burgeoning EV manufacturing sector.

Holland-based LG Energy Solution has long been a leader in advanced battery technology. With a strong foundation of 30 years in the industry, the company recognized the need to expand its workforce to meet growing demand. This led them to the TAT EV program, designed to bolster recruitment and training efforts.

The TAT EV initiative is part of a broader effort by the MEDC and WMW! to address the talent needs of Michigan's EV sector. As part of this program, LG Energy Solution Michigan has been actively working to fill new production roles at their plant, which is a key player in the production of lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles and other applications.

West Michigan Works! has been instrumental in supporting LG Energy Solution through strategic recruitment efforts expected to fill crucial roles in production and contribute to the company's growth.

"Having created the first integrated workforce development system in the country, Michigan has long been a leader among the nation's workforce systems," said West Michigan Works! COO Angie Barksdale. "Our team works with economic development and community college partners across the region to offer workforce support and training dollars for business expansion or attraction projects, which bring new jobs to West Michigan," Barksdale said. "Regional collaboration and problem-solving address talent, curriculum and advocacy issues on a broader level, resulting in a larger skilled labor pool and increased job placements."

Through the TAT EV program, LG Energy Solution Michigan has aimed to recruit and onboard 1,000 workers for its Holland facility. The program's highlight is a special military, veteran and spouse recruitment drive. The campaign features "Military Makeover – Operation Career," hosted by Montel Williams. This program was broadcasted across various platforms, including the American Forces Network and Lifetime Network, highlighting career opportunities for military personnel and their families.

Targeting LG Energy Solution's engagement with TAT EV aligns with the You Can In Michigan campaign, which aims to attract and retain top talent in the state. This collaboration underscores the effectiveness of public-private partnerships in addressing workforce challenges and supporting industry growth.

The TAT EV Program also helps sponsor LG's participation in Engineering Career Fairs, Engineering Industry days, Engineering Information Sessions, and Michigander EV Scholars events. These events proved to be crucial recruiting efforts- LG was able to tap into engineering talent at major Michigan colleges such as Grand Valley State University, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

As a result, LG's facility in Holland hired 15 new engineers and 27 new interns within the last year alone. Collaborative efforts such as these ensure companies like LG will secure qualified talent to continue producing quality, in-demand products.

LG Energy Solution's recruitment strategy leveraging TAT EV, particularly in reaching out to military and veteran communities and local college graduates, demonstrates their commitment to building a skilled and diverse workforce while contributing to the local economy.

For more information about the TAT EV program contact West Michigan Works! Business Solutions Department.

Service Summary Explanation

October 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Management Observations and Highlights

- *Service Center Traffic:* Service center traffic continues to show an upward trend when compared to PY23/24.
- *Employers Served:* The business solutions team consistently aids a higher number of returning employers compared to new employers each month. They continuously seek opportunities to engage with new employers while prioritizing quality service for existing customers. November and December saw an increase in numbers as less time was allocated to Going PRO Talent Fund.
- *Jobs Filled by Industry:* Jobs filled numbers have remained stable. October through December noted a decrease in hiring for Construction due to the winter season. October and December noticed an increase in jobs filled for the agribusiness and manufacturing industries due to recruitment efforts to attract talent for the EV industry and increased reporting for hiring under the Going PRO Talent Fund.
- *Training by Industry:* There has been a decrease in classroom and new hire training completed due to a decrease in training funds available outside of Going PRO Talent Fund. It is anticipated these numbers will increase as we work to diversify the training fund sources for FY24/25.
- *Going Pro Talent Fund:* total number of trainings completed *and* paid out each month. Reimbursement is not typically paid out the same month training is completed due to delays in employer reporting and documentation collection. Data is reflective of multiple fiscal years and/or cycles within a fiscal year. Current billing includes training authorized to take place under the FY24 Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 and FY25 Cycle 1 funding.
- *Hiring Events:* Employer participation in the monthly Virtual Hiring Events has been consistent and we are committed to maintaining this monthly offering. Over the last quarter the Business Solutions team strategically coordinated their employer hiring events to coincide with days of the week when higher volumes are typically experienced in the service centers. In March 2025, several events will be hosted in person across all WMW counties.
- *Retention Solutions Network:* We saw a slow-down in the number of employees serves and barriers addressed in the first quarter. This is standard through the holidays, however uncertainty in employer renewals during quarter one caused pauses in services for certain members. This has since been resolved and we expect to see an increase in services over the next few months like we have seen in past years, especially with the addition of more employers in January.
- *Talent Development:* This report has been updated to present the outcomes from the Talent Development department. The metrics will include WorkReady Certificates. Metrics will also include total workshop attendance, which captures the total number of attendees across all our workshops as well as the total number of workshops offered across our region.



Service Summary Oct. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2024

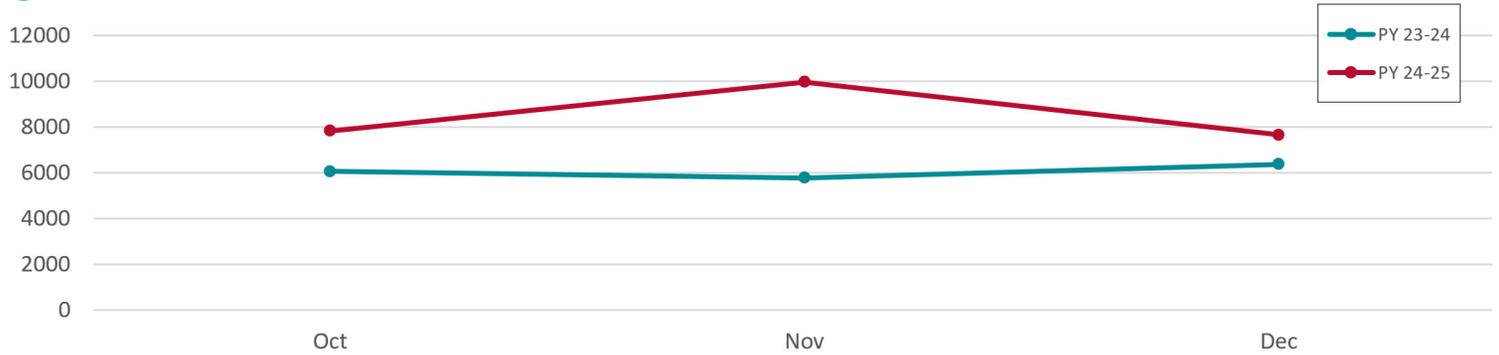
The data shown on this Service Summary indicates the organization's progress toward fulfilling of its services-based strategic priorities, as developed in the 2020 Strategic Plan: Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development and Diversity and Inclusion. Each indicator is a reflection of the work conducted on an operational level to ensure robust service delivery and strategic plan alignment.

Additional information and explanation about the data presented are included the narrative.

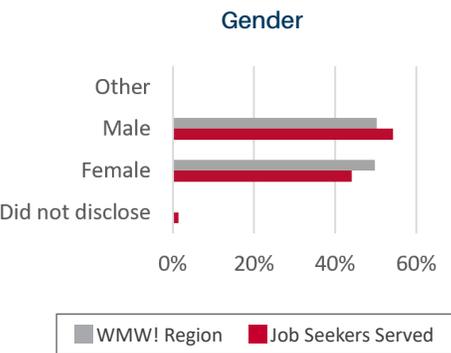
Strategic Plan Alignment

- Enhanced Relationships
- Pipeline Development
- Diversity and Inclusion

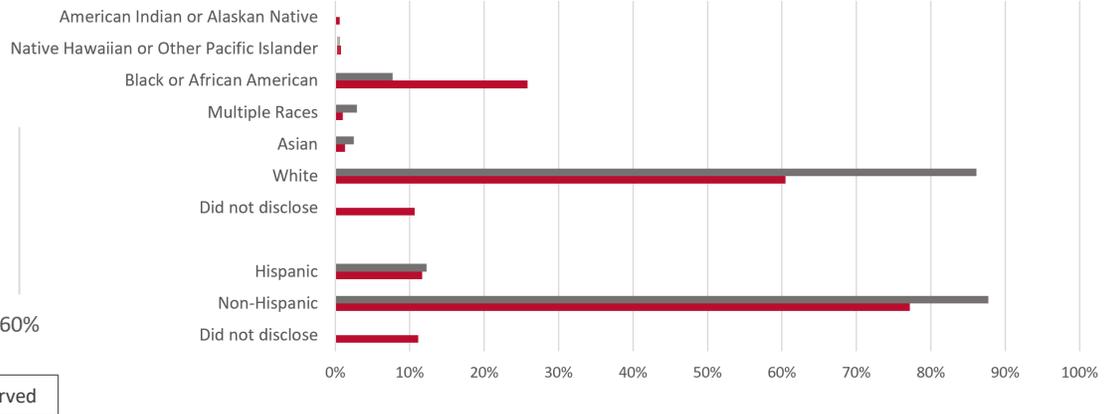
Service Center Traffic & Call Volume (PY comparison by month)



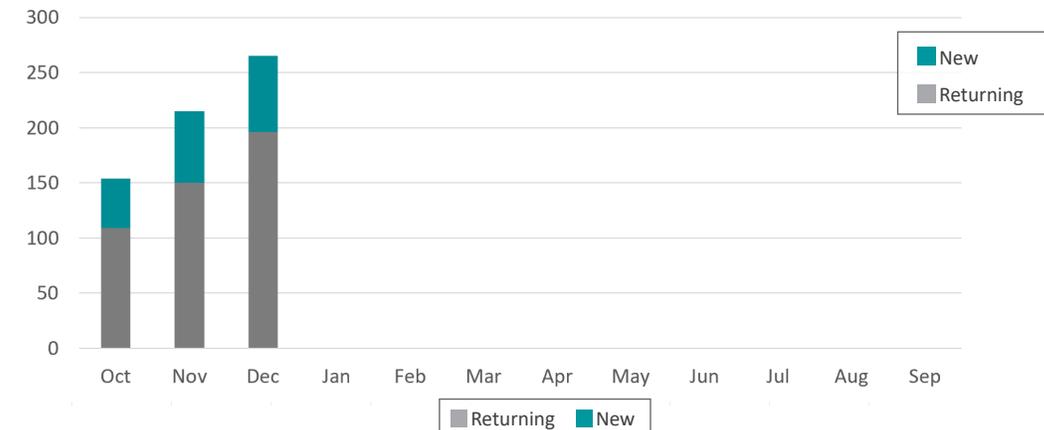
Diversity of Job Seekers Served



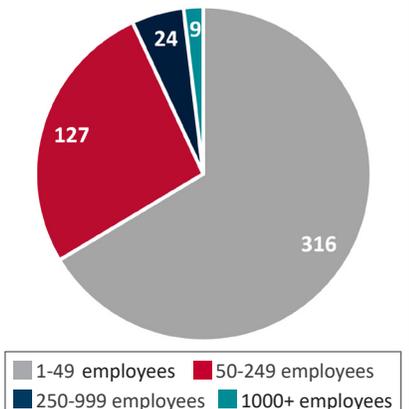
Race & Ethnicity



Employers Served (unique count)



Diversity of Employers Served (by size)



Jobs Filled by Industry

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Agribusiness	33	0	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	15	28	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Healthcare	102	98	183	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	9	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	549	374	561	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	117	148	503	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	825	656	1325	0								

Training: by Industry

	New Hire	Classroom	Apprenticeship	Credentials Earned
Construction	0	46	14	1
Health Care	26	130	37	52
Information Technology	0	5	0	1
Manufacturing	1	4	31	0
Other	21	41	82	32
Total	48	226	164	86

Active grants supporting new hire, classroom and apprenticeship training this reporting period:

- Sector Strategies Employer-Led Collaborative
- MDARD Specialty Crop Grant
- MiSTAIRS
- Early Childhood Investment Corporation
- One Workforce
- WIOA Individual Training Accounts
- WIOA On-the-Job Training

Training (completed): Going PRO Training Fund

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
New Hire	271	298	329	0	0	0	0
Classroom	336	250	452	0	0	0	0
Apprenticeship	183	35	74	0	0	0	0
Total	790	583	855	0	0	0	0

Hiring Events

	Participating		
	Events	Employers	Job Seekers
Q1	3	24	146
Q2	0	0	0
Q3	0	0	0
Q4	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	24	146

Retention Solutions Network

Members

10

Success coach hours

(cumulative, reported quarterly)

487



Talent Development Metrics (cumulative, reported quarterly)

800

Workshops Offered

1,997

Workshop Attendance

56

WorkReady Certificates



Service Summary
Oct. 1, 2024 to Dec 31, 2024

Service Summary: Strategic Plan Alignment and Indicator Descriptions

<p>Pipeline Development: Expand the local pipeline of work-ready talent to meet the needs of the workforce and of West Michigan employers.</p>	<p>Enhanced Relationships: Foster widespread networks to collaboratively address workforce needs in the region.</p>	<p>Diversity and Inclusion: Enable a culture that honors the worth and dignity of all people, where staff and customers have equitable access to opportunities.</p>
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The indicators shown on the Service Summary are provided to inform the board about the impact of services provided through a variety of workforce development programs. Each represents the implementation of goals in the Strategic Plan.

Indicator	Strategic Plan Alignment	Narrative
<i>Service Center Traffic & Call Volume</i>	Pipeline Development	This indicator shows the funnel of job seekers entering our system through the service centers and virtual appointments, giving us an opportunity to expand the talent pipeline. In October 2021, we began implementing a new tracking system. During this period, UIA reinstated the Register to Work requirement, which brought more people into the centers. The data does not include attendance at workshops, focused job search, or coaching sessions. This will be added as the tracking system is expanded.
<i>Diversity of Job Seekers</i>	Diversity and Inclusion	This indicator shows the variety of job seekers we work with compared to the region. With the implementation of the new tracking system, we resumed tracking demographic data. Although we are in the early stages of collecting this data, management regularly observes and monitors this information.
<i>Employers Served</i>	Enhanced Relationships	This indicator shows unique employers served each month, and reflects the widespread networks developed by staff. An employer is counted once per program year as unique; they likely received multiple services throughout the year. A new employer is one that has never engaged with WMW. A returning employer is one that has received services from WMW in a prior program year(s).
<i>Diversity of Employers</i>	Diversity and Inclusion; Enhanced Relationships	This indicator shows a comprehensive picture of our employer customers based on size (total number of employees). This data is helpful in planning initiatives and for identifying specific employer groups. Although we work with any size company, we target those most in need of our services which are often smaller companies without internal HR capacity.
<i>Jobs Filled by Industry</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	This indicator shows the number of jobs filled with employer customers of WMW and with our assistance. The variation in month-to-month numbers may reflect delays in reporting WMW, as well as unique needs within a variety of employers. Spikes in the numbers may also reflect hiring events supported by WMW.

Indicator	Strategic Plan Alignment	Narrative
<i>Training: by Industry</i>	Pipeline Development	This indicator shows WMW efforts to expand the local pipeline of work-ready talent by supporting training and skill upgrading. The data is presented by industries most in demand in the region. Food Processors, as part of Agribusiness, are currently reported under manufacturing. On-the-Job Training provided to New Hires results in advancement of skills and wages but does not provide a credential. This data does not include training funded by Going Pro Talent Fund.
<i>Training (completed): GoingPro</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	As one of our largest funding sources for employer-driven training, Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) is reported separately. Allowable training funded by GPTF includes new hire, incumbent, and registered apprenticeships.
<i>Hiring Events</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	This indicator shows hiring events that bring employers and job seekers together, requiring coordination across multiple departments and programs. We continue to look for new and innovative ways to conduct outreach to job seekers, including greater collaboration with community partners.
<i>Retention Solutions Network</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	This indicator shows how we leverage networks among community partners to provide services to member employers. Data reflects services provided by Success Coaches via dedicated on-site hours as well as virtual. Services provided to each employee does not consider the high number of touchpoints with the coach. Barriers addressed can include needs for transportation, housing, medical bills, utilities, and many more, all so that workers can successfully engage and fulfill their role for the employer.
<i>WorkReady Certificate Earned</i>	Pipeline Development	This indicator shows the delivery of employability skills training, the highest need for skillsets expressed by the region's employers. Job Seekers take a pre-assessment to determine areas of readiness and areas for improvement; they only attend workshops for areas identified as needing improvement. A post-assessment determines their skill attainment and if successful, earns a certificate. This conveys to employers that they are "work ready." Workshops are offered at service center locations and at partner locations.



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Area Community Services
Employment & Training Council
215 Straight Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 336-4100

SERVICE CENTERS

Allegan County

Allegan Service Center
3255 122nd Ave
Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 686-5079

Barry County

Hastings Service Center
130 E State St
Hastings, MI 49058
(616) 649-9850

Ionia County

Ionia Service Center
603 W Adams St
Ionia, MI 48846
(616) 389-8525

Kent County

Grand Rapids NW Service Center
215 Straight Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 336-4460

Grand Rapids SE Service Center
121 Martin Luther King Jr St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
(616) 336-4040

Rockford Service Center
10075 Northland Dr NE
Rockford, MI 49341
(616) 228-6724

Montcalm County

Greenville Service Center
114 S Greenville W Dr
Greenville, MI 48838
(616) 754-3611

Muskegon County

Muskegon Service Center
316 Morris Ave
Muskegon, MI 49440
(231) 724-6381

Ottawa County

Holland Service Center
12331 James St, Suite 130
Holland, MI 49424
(616) 396-2154

*West Michigan Works! is a division of ACSET,
an equal opportunity employer/program and
a proud partner of the American Job Center
network.*

*Auxiliary aids and services are available upon
request to individuals with disabilities. West
Michigan Works! is supported by state and
federal funds; more details at
westmiworks.org/about. TTY 711*

MEMORANDUM

TO: West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)

FROM: West Michigan Works! Staff

DATE: February 10, 2025

RE: Solutions Driven Updates

Enhanced Relationships:

Foster widespread networks
to collaboratively address
workforce needs in the
region.

Pipeline Development:

Expand the local pipeline of
work-ready talent to meet
the needs of the workforce
and of West Michigan
employers.

Diversity and Inclusion:

Enable a culture that honors
the worth and dignity of all
people, where staff and
customers have equitable
access to opportunities.

Grant Updates

Catalyze: WMW is currently in the running for Round 4 of the Catalyze Challenge. Catalyze will award up to \$1 million dollars to scalable programs and tools that advance career exploration for young adolescents (aged 11-22). WMW submitted a grant proposal that includes scaling MiCareerQuest, developing a career exploration event tool, and expanding career exploration events into our 7 counties in partnership with the industry talent councils. WMW was 1 of 80 applicants invited to engage in an interview with the Catalyze team. The interview is the final step before preliminary awards are announced in Mid-February. **Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development**

Make Michigan Home: WMW was awarded a \$91,250 MEDC grant called Make MI Home. WMW will partner with the six Industry Talent Councils, Grand Valley State University, Welcome Plan Collaborative, Literacy Center of West Michigan, and Global Detroit to implement the project. Funds will support training, employment, retention, and legal services for international students and New Americans. **Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development**

FutureTech Careers Program (formerly known as Strengthening Community Colleges Grant 4): This grant program, awarded to Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), is designed to enhance the capacity of community colleges to meet the skill development needs of employers and equitably support students in securing good jobs in high-demand industries. The grant program is centered on sector-based career pathways, which have been proven to improve employment outcomes. West Michigan Works! will collaborate with GRCC with the goal of developing targeted programs and curriculum. This grant will serve 622 participants between May 1, 2024, and April 30, 2028. **Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development**



Early Childhood Education (ECE) Registered Apprenticeships: WMW has fully expended a one year, \$120,000 grant from The Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) Childcare Investment Fund. WMW has received a second round of funding for \$373,000 to further support employer/childcare providers in creating opportunities for registered apprenticeships for early childhood educators. The period of performance for the grant ends February 2026 . ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA): The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awarded a \$2.9 million dollar Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) grant to Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). West Michigan Works! (WMW) has partnered with GRCC and Corwell Health, Cherry Health, and Trinity Health Systems to implement the grant. This three-year grant will expand the public health workforce in West Michigan through classroom training and apprenticeship opportunities. The focus is on 150 participants, with approximately 60% of grant dollars going directly toward students. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Michigan Career Opportunity Academies for Community Health (MiCOACH): The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awarded a \$3 million dollar Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) grant to the State of Michigan, Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). LEO has partnered with multiple Michigan Works! Agencies and Intermediate School Districts (ISD) to increase the number of Community Health Workers (CHWs) and Health Support in the ISDs. Locally, WMW will work with MAISD and the Muskegon Heights Public School system. This three-year grant will aim to improve the dissemination of health information, connection to mental health resources, and help create safer, healthier school environments and communities. Throughout the course of this grant, WMW will partner to serve 24 recently or soon to graduate Muskegon Heights youth. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

The Michigan Citizen Reentry Initiative (MiCRI): A cooperative grant opportunity with the US Department of Labor and the Department of Justice with a state award of \$7.6 million to launch the new initiative designed to reduce recidivism among justice involved citizens and increase their successful participation in employment and training opportunities. This includes individuals incarcerated in the Federal Correctional Institute (FCI) and Residential Reentry Centers (RRC). WMW will provide services in stage 2 -post release for participants in the RRC and Home Confinement (HC). ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD): The PROWD program, funded by the Joint First Step Act, intends to expand on the methodology of the MiCRI program to establish a statewide network of support for Justice-Involved Citizens to provide Stage 1, 2, and 3 pre-employment training services accessible at Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs) and to individuals in home confinement (HC) throughout the state. This grant will serve 250 participants



statewide over a 37-month period of performance from September 1, 2024, to September 30, 2027. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

Michigan Skilled Immigration Integration Program (MISIIP): The Michigan Skilled Immigrant Integration Program is part of a \$1M allocation for the Michigan International Talent Solutions (MITS) initiative as part of an overall \$5M appropriation received by Global Detroit. This program connects professional, college-degreed, internationally-trained job seekers with Michigan-based careers in their profession. Eligible participants will also receive assistance with job search, Networking coaching, Credential evaluation and Professional licensing resources. This program has been extended through September 30, 2025.

Diversity and Inclusion, Pipeline Development

Grand Rapids Community College One Workforce Grant: WMW has partnered with GRCC on a \$9.8 million H1-B One Workforce Grant, focusing on advanced manufacturing, received by GRCC. Similar to the America's Promise Grant, the H1-B One Workforce Grant is a 4-year grant and will rely on a network of partners across the region, including Montcalm Community College, Muskegon Community College and multiple community partners to provide training and employment to hundreds of workers across West Michigan. This grant is in its final year of implementation with an end date of December 31, 2025. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline***

Development

Barrier Removal and Employment Success (BRES) Expansion: The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) has awarded a total of \$14.6 million in Barrier Removal and Employment Success grant funds. West Michigan Works! Partnered with seven community-based organizations (CBOs) and received the maximum allocation of \$1 million. These funds will help remove barriers directly related to employment such as childcare, transportation, and housing. The CBOs include Grand Rapids Center for Community Transformation, Grand Rapids Women's Resource Center, GoodWill of Greater Grand Rapids, Steepletown Neighborhood Services, The Source, Treetops Collective, and United Way of Montcalm & Ionia.

Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion

Michigan's Inclusive Training, Technology and Equity Network (MITTEN):

The Michigan High Speed Internet Office (MIHI) has initiated a \$13 million grant program aimed at enhancing digital inclusion and capacity-building initiatives for regional organizations and collaboratives across the state. West Michigan Works!, in partnership with the Essential Needs Task Force (ENTF), Grand Vally State University Public Media (WGVU), Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), and Casual Simulation, has collectively submitted a response to the RFP to become the resource hub for Region 4b, which excludes the city of Grand Rapids. If awarded the grant, we will play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of the Michigan Digital Equity Plan within the proposed project areas and for the identified covered populations. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***



Michigan Rural Enhanced Access to Careers in Healthcare (MiREACH):

WMW has partnered with the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity on a \$2.5 million USDOL H1-B Rural Healthcare grant program. This is a 4-year grant which aims to increase the number of individuals training in healthcare occupations that directly impact patient care; and alleviate healthcare workforce shortages by creating sustainable employment and training programs in healthcare occupations serving rural populations. The MiREACH grant ended December 2024. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

MDARD Specialty Crop Grant: Funds from this grant are continued to market the grant to growers in our communications as well as sharing information with our commodity partners who post in their monthly newsletters. As expected, due to growers being in the fields, the number of employers applying for food safety training is currently down. End date for grant is March 31, 2025. We submitted an application for the 2025-27 grant cycle for \$125k to support training, staff wages, and MiCareerQuest. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Going PRO Talent Fund:

West Michigan Works! employer awards are outlined below:

Fiscal Year 2024:

- Cycle 1: 222 employers received a total of \$14.8M. Training may occur January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.
- Cycle 2: 95 employers received a total of \$5.2M. Training may occur July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

Fiscal Year 2025:

- Cycle 1: 175 employers received a total of \$11.2M with the possibility of 17 additional pending awards to potentially be issued for another \$984,865. Training may occur January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.
- Cycle 2: The application period is scheduled to start spring 2025.
- Employer Led Collaborative (ELC): The application period for Fiscal Year 2025 ELCs is tentatively scheduled to open March 2025.

A full list of grant recipients statewide is available online at

Michigan.gov/TalentFund. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative Grant: West Michigan Works! was awarded a \$406,472 Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative (ELCs) Grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity in July 2023 to support the development of new, or enhance existing, employer-led collaboratives throughout the state. This is a two-year grant ending September 30, 2025. Grant funds allow WMW to maximize impact of the existing employer-led Industry Talent Councils. Current funding has been used to hire a Project Coordinator, offset training costs for registered apprentice programs, expansion of the MiCareerLaunch initiative, which aims to prepare high school seniors for a career in a high demand industry and, the build-out of a career exploration event website



for use by parents, students, educators, employers, and partners. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Michigan Statewide Targeted Apprenticeship Inclusive and Readiness System

(MiSTAIRS): West Michigan Works! received \$324, 625 in funding from the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity to support the continuation of development and implementation of comprehensive strategies to support Registered Apprenticeship (RA) expansion; engage industry and workforce intermediaries, employers, and other partners to expand and market RA to new sectors and underserved populations; enhance capacity to conduct outreach and work with employers to start new programs; and expand and diversify participation in RA through innovations, incentives, and system reforms. WMW will target underrepresented populations for direct enrollment and completion of RAP. Funding will be available July 2, 2023, through June 30, 2025. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

Industry Talent Councils

There are a variety of ways to stay connected to the innovative work taking place under each of the WMW! Industry Talent Councils (ITC). Each council has expanded its outreach with dedicated LinkedIn accounts and bimonthly newsletters. The increased online presence will allow each ITC to provide employers and partners in each industry with pertinent information such as industry workforce trends, council initiatives and expansion of networks to participate in future projects.

Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development

Multi-industry Initiatives:

- Lunch & Learn – the Councils are funding a quarterly series of lunch and learns to connect employers with services supporting inclusive hiring and job seeker supports provided by WMW! community partners.
- Mental Health – All Councils approved the Workplace Well-Being Summit. This immersive, workshop-style event focuses on developing a comprehensive, sustainable strategy to address critical aspects of workplace mental health, including suicide prevention, addiction recovery, and overdose prevention. Anticipated for June 2025, employers, non-profits, and government agencies will have the opportunity to attend the first ever H.O.P.E Certification Cohort after the summit to obtain the H.O.P.E Certification. <https://www.hopecertification.com/>.
- Career Readiness Conference – Discover Manufacturing and Construction Careers Council are participating in the Career Readiness Conference with Talent First, The Right Place, and regional ISD partners. This event will bridge relationships between employers and educators to support greater career exploration activities in the region. It takes place on February 26th location GRCC Holland campus.



Agribusiness Talent Council of West Michigan (ATC) Mission: The Agribusiness Talent Council is an employer-led collaborative that seeks to expand the talent pool by promoting care pathways and opportunities in West Michigan agribusiness industry. Spotlight on Ag Readers, a project connecting industry employers with K-5 students, has 52 classrooms throughout our region to fill with volunteer readers throughout March. Sign-ups are still open. The new ATC Scholarship program launched January 17th and closes March 28th. High School seniors and college students majoring or planning to major in an agribusiness related field and are from our seven-county region are eligible to apply for one of three \$1,000 scholarships. Response from educators and community partners has been overwhelmingly positive. Currently, the council has received seven applications. The council will be submitting a new MDARD Specialty Crop Block application in February. If awarded the funding will cover food safety and leadership training for employers and career exploration connecting students to careers connected to the specialty crop industry during MiCareerQuest 2026 and 2027.

Construction Careers Council (CCC) Mission: The Construction Careers Council creates a bright future for West Michigan's construction industry by building a diverse and qualified workforce. Construction Field Trips project will be held February 5th and 7th 2025. The Feb 5th trip has 102 students hosted at the UA174 and IBEW 275 facilities with additional trades unions represented there. Another 41 students on Feb 7th are headed to WMCI and GRCC. Both trips have students engaged in hands on activities such as conduit bending, welding, pipe threading, concrete finishing, carpentry, and safety. Additionally, we are hoping to host a third trip on Feb 20th, where students will visit the Plumbers and Pipefitters facility for half a day then spend the second half at a local job site with the same intention as above.

The Construction Careers Council has also approved a Summer Build Scholarships, with 12 scholarships expected to be awarded in the spring to allow 6th – 8th grade students with priority given to those in opportunity zones to attend WMCI's summer camp for free which is led by industry experts and provides hands on experience and the opportunity to explore active jobsites.

Discover Manufacturing (DM) Mission: We Exist to Inspire and Expand Manufacturing Talent in West Michigan. Lisa Brewer was hired in November as the Industry Council Lead for Discover Manufacturing. The council is sponsoring the Career Readiness Conference (see Multi-industry Initiatives above). In addition, the Council is excited to offer scholarships for students pursuing manufacturing pathways. Applications are open and will be closed on March 15th, with awards supporting both high school seniors and current college students entering technical programs. DM remains committed to expanding industry outreach, strengthening partnerships, and fostering the next generation of manufacturing professionals.



Explore Hospitality: We elevate one of West Michigan’s leading employment sectors by developing careers, cultivating talent, and promoting a thriving, dynamic hospitality industry. The council continues to make progress in its planning efforts. All non-employer partners have now been onboarded. ExH is in the process of selecting a logo and hopes to finalize one within the next couple of months. The council has also approved participation in several key initiatives, including MiCareerQuest, the Workplace Well-Being Summit, and the Lunch and Learn series. ExH is eager to collaborate with other councils on these projects and looks forward to developing initiatives of its own.

West Michigan Health Careers Council (WMHCC) Mission: The purpose of WMHCC is to provide an employer-led collaborative council of healthcare employers, educators, workforce development, and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan’s healthcare talent needs. Brad Sims has been promoted from a Business Solutions Representative to lead the work of the council.

In partnership with the Grand Rapids African American Health Institute, the WMHCC is laying groundwork for the creation of a local Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) apprenticeship program. This apprenticeship program supports our goal of creating more equitable pathways into nursing careers.

The council recently approved a June series of Career Fair Carnivals to take place in Montcalm, Ionia, and Muskegon counties to recruit for healthcare positions across the region.

The Health Careers Expo is scheduled for March 5 in partnership with Kent ISD. The audience is in and out of school youth looking for entry level or earn and learn opportunities in the industry.

West Michigan Tech Talent (WMTT) Mission: West Michigan Tech Talent looks to engage employers of Information Technology professionals with best practices, resources and a community to grow, develop, recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive world class IT workforce in West Michigan. Jules Saldivar has been hired as the Industry Council Lead for the council.

The council launched an alternative networking experience called West Michigan Tech Trails in 2024. Feedback led to the renewal for winter trail events and beyond. Two hikes will be scheduled per quarter.

{Mi}Code Experience was held in December 2024. 1,100 students in Muskegon, Ottawa, and Kent learned from mentors sixteen companies as well as multiple computer science students from local colleges and universities.

Programs

West Michigan Works! Registered Apprenticeship Programs (WMW RAP):

West Michigan Works! currently holds standards for 55 US Department of Labor registered apprenticeships, with 319 active apprentices and 105 participating employers. The WMW Apprenticeship team met with 54 unique employers in the last 3 months to discuss their interest in sponsoring a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Program.



The apprenticeship team is making significant progress in developing a Pre-Apprenticeship Program aligned with Michigan's State Apprenticeship Expansion Team's pilot initiative, the Michigan Apprenticeship Readiness Certificate (MARC). West Michigan Works has been collaborating with Fox Motors and staff from the Kent Intermediate School District's Career Technical Center (KCTC). Fox Motors, which has an established and robust training program, will serve as the Related Technical Instruction (RTI) provider for their Automotive Specialist Technician Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). KCTC's training aligns closely with this program, and includes a detailed selection process to identify students suited for Fox Motors' apprenticeship. The KCTC training and selection process will be incorporated into the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) Occupation Standards. This will mark the first pre-apprenticeship program under our standards and will provide high school students in the area with the opportunity to earn MARC certification from the State of Michigan.

West Michigan Works continues to promote apprenticeship and provide intermediary consulting and workforce development training. In September, the organization was invited to the White House as part of the Apprenticeship Ambassador program to participate in a panel discussion, showcasing valuable insights on advancing and diversifying Registered Apprenticeships and promoting awareness of this proven workforce development model. The national recognition garnered interest from local media, leading to opportunities to promote apprenticeship through radio and digital news magazine interviews. Invitations were also received to speak at various conferences, including the Trends in Occupational Studies Conference from MODAC (Michigan Occupational Deans Administrative Council), the Business Engagement National Training for Job Corps from AIR (American Institute of Research), and the Kent ISD Career Readiness Panel for Educators. For National Apprenticeship Week in November, 5 events were registered, and 6 proclamations were submitted. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

Ascend Youth Programming: The Ascend team currently provides programming for eligible out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. Ascend is currently working on growing partnerships with high school counselors to recruit high school seniors who may need our services after graduation. We also continue to grow partnerships with adult education and other opportunity youth providers around the region. Meanwhile, we are already preparing for the 2025 Summer Career Readiness Program. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

MiCareerQuest: MiCareerQuest is a Career Exploration Experience for middle and high school students. MiCareerQuest will be held at DeVos Place on March 20, 2025. We expect to host nearly 9,000 8th-10th grade students at this year's event. Board member can register for a VIP tour by signing up at [here](#). Board members can also sign up to volunteer [here](#). ***Pipeline Development***



Elevate: Elevate is an expansion to Rise Up, a model of outside-in recruitment and inside-up career development that began in partnership with West Michigan Works!, The Source, and Trinity Health. Elevate uses the same model of Career Coaching, Resource Navigation, and employer coordination to reduce the friction of hiring and promotion. The staff is currently working on developing an inside-up academy for new employers. This will increase our inside-up pipeline to help incumbent workers achieve promotional opportunities with their current employers. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

HireReach: HireReach provides instruction and consulting to businesses interested in implementing skills-based hiring. The HireReach team continues to connect with national partners. We have also launched opportunities for local companies to engage in HireReach private academies. ***Diversity and Inclusion***

Retention Solutions Network: Retention Solutions Network (RSN) is a fee-based employer network focused on navigating resources and providing support services to member employees, thus helping them to stay in their job and advance within their business. RSN welcomed three new employer members in the new year: Lightcorp, Pliant Plastics, and Innerspace. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

Gain Employment. Maintain Support (GEMS) formally known as Learn, Earn and Provide (LEAP) Pilot: GEMS launched in Muskegon as a pilot program at the end of January of 2022. It is a program aimed to assist non-custodial parents in obtaining and maintaining employment and gets back on track with child support payments. This pilot will take place in close partnership with Muskegon County Friend of the Court and will include both voluntary referrals and mandated participation. This program has not been extended to Allegan and Ottawa counties. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

Initiatives

Electric Vehicle (EV) Industry Recruitment Pilot & EV Jobs Academy: The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Talent Attraction Team (TAT) is collaborating with West Michigan Works! (WMW) to pilot an attraction, retention, and development initiative for EV occupations critical to the success of the industry. WMW received \$1M to support these efforts over the next year. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity has allocated \$70,000 to WMW to support the EV Jobs Academy. This initiative aims to expand education and training in critical mobility careers, including those needing supportive services and incumbent workers who want to advance into new, emerging careers. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Manufacturing and Engineering Education Reimagined for All (MEERA) Regional Training Center (RTC): The Michigan Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (MDE-OCTE), Michigan Manufacturers Association (MMA),



MiSTEM, and Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) have worked together and are collectively recommending the Muskegon, Kent, and Ottawa (MKO) collaborative for the location of the first MEERA Regional Training Center (RTC) in Michigan, with the support of the Department of Defense's Innovation Capability and Modernization Office. The MKO collaborative permits a variety of opportunities for MEERA students with three career tech centers and five public high schools offering a variety of robust, high-quality CTE programs of study, including machine tool, mechatronics, welding, engineering, and mechanical drafting. The collaborative also has strong connections to postsecondary institutions that support the goals of the MEERA program, such as formal agreements that can lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, including apprenticeships and degrees. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

West Michigan Education-to-Employment Partnership (E2P): E2P is a Talent First initiative that brings together employers, education and training providers, and community-based organizations to help individuals who are un- or underemployed access skills-based pathways into high-demand jobs requiring postsecondary training. E2P aims to develop a regional opportunity marketplace that offers shared coaching, resources, and wraparound support to generate more talent, increase the efficiency of credential attainment, and retain graduates in West Michigan. West Michigan Works! supports the collaborations and actively participates in this initiative but is not a sponsor of the platform. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***