



**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: 220 867 315 235 Passcode: ZjCxqU

[+1 616-803-9815,,919436635#](#) Phone conference ID: 919 436 635#

**Monday, October 14, 2024 • 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment – Agenda Items
3. Approval of June 10, 2024 Minutes **Action Required**
4. Presentation: Michigan Center for Data and Analytics  
Department of Technology, Management and Budget  
*Nick Gandhi, Economic Analyst* **Information Item**
5. WDB Activities: *Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer*
  - a. Member Term of Office: November 1, 2023 – October 31, 2025 **Action Required**
  - b. Member Term of Office: November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2026 **Action Required**
  - c. 2025 Meetings Schedule **Action Required**
6. Proposed Bylaws of the WMW WDB *Tawanna Wright, Staff Attorney* **(2/3 vote of members present)** **Action Required**
7. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Four-Year Regional and Local  
Plans for Program Years 2024 through 2027  
*Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions* **Action Required**
8. Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Member Approvals  
*Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation* **Action Required**
9. Board Member Spotlight \*New  
*Heather Daniel, WDB Chairperson* **Information Item**
10. 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*
11. [Success Story: Jessica Kreason](#)  
*Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions* **Information Item**
12. WDB Service Summary: *Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer* **Information Item**
13. Solutions Driven Updates **Information Item**  
*Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions,  
Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation*

14. Other Business
15. Public Comment
16. Adjournment

**Workforce Development Board**  
December 9, 2024 at 11:30 a.m.

**Executive Committee**  
November 18, 2024

**Solutions Driven Committee**  
October 11, 2024

**Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC)**  
September 27, 2024

**Legislative Committee**  
October 15, 2024-canceled  
November 19, 2024



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Grand Rapids NW Service Center ▪ 215 Straight Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504**

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**[Join the meeting now](#) Meeting ID: 235 724 632 02 Passcode: Qr3aTY**

**Dial-in by phone [+1 616-803-9815,,166912906#](#) Phone conference ID: 166 912 906#**

**Monday, June 10, 2024 ▪ 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

## MINUTES

**Workforce Board Members Present:** Heather Daniel (Chairperson), Emily Babson, Nora Balgoyen, Mark Bergsma, Kenyatte Brame (virtual), Jordan Clark, Cathy Cronick, Paul David, Jay Dunwell, Jim Fisher (virtual), Nate Henschel, Jon Hofman, TaRita Johnson (virtual), Greg King, Kelly Kroll, Charles Lepper, Jen Schottke, Michelle Seigo, Samantha Semrau (virtual), Dan TenHoopen

**Workforce Board Members Absent: Shana Lewis (Vice-Chairperson)** Ryan Bennett, Tonia Castillo, Kristin Garris, Jan Harrington-Davis, Jennifer Heinzman, Dave Kitchen, Kolene Miller, Dan Rinsema-Sybenga, Connie Stewart, Mark Thomas, Sara Whisler

**Staff Present (physical location or virtually):** Jacob Maas, Angie Barksdale, Kirsti Jones, Janette Monroe, Jeff Dornbos (virtual), Tasha Evans, Amy Lebednick, Chad Patton, Malinda Powers (virtual), Shakiya Taylor (virtual), Tawanna Wright (virtual)

**Guests/Public Present:** Susan Corbin (LEO), John LoPorto (LEO), Jason Moon (LEO), Jayshona Hicks (LEO), Reid Fraiser (LEO), Deb Lyzenga (LEO), Natalie Taylor (MEDC TAT), Steve Heethuis (Praeco Skills)

1. Call to Order at 12:01 p.m. Chairperson, Heather Daniel.
2. Public Comment- None
3. Approval of April 8, 2024 Minutes **Action Required**  
**Motion – Mark Bergsma**  
**Second – Dan TenHoopen**  
**Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried**
4. Presentation: State of Michigan Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) **Information Item**  
 Statewide Workforce Plan  
 Susan Corbin, Director of LEO presented the [statewide workforce plan](#). The presentation included information on some of the following: 1.) Vision of the plan, 2.) Goals, 3.) Key Factors embedded in the plan, 4.) local alignment, 5.) 3 pillars (Skills, Opportunity, Growth), 6.) All-Access Michigan Approach. Following the presentation, a brief discussion took place and Susan answered the board members' questions.
5. Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Member Approvals **Action Required**  
 Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation, reported that the CEAC is renewing membership representatives and reviewed the memorandum and proposed slate of members with the board. Chad requested approval to appoint the individuals to the CEAC.  
**Motion – Jon Hofman**  
**Second – Dan TenHoopen**  
**Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried**

6. **Contract Extensions: Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids and Steepletown Neighborhood Services, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth** **Action Required**  
 Chad Patton reported that Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids and Steepletown Neighborhood Services are providers of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Out-of-School Youth (OSY) services in Kent County. Chad reviewed that both agencies contracted with ACSET to provide services beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. These contracts allow for three (3) one-year extensions at the sole discretion of ACSET, based on performance. As a result of satisfactory performance and monitoring, Chad requested that the contracts for both agencies be extended for the third and final year through June 30, 2025, to allow for continued youth services in Kent County. Staff answered board members' questions.  
**Motion – Dan TenHoopen**  
**Second – Paul David**  
**Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried**
7. **Draft WMW 16-03c9 Welfare Reform Supportive Services Policy** **Action Required**  
 Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, reported that this policy provides guidance for providing supportive services to job seekers enrolled in the Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope (PATH) and the Food Assistance, Employment & Training (FAE&T) program. This policy revision introduces new language to update permissible support services within the FAE&T program in accordance with the revised state policy. Additionally, it revises the wording related to transitional support services by removing the monthly dollar limit and allowing the allocation of funds for other eligible supports as determined by LEO.  
**Motion – Jordan Clark**  
**Second – TaRita Johnson**  
**Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried**
8. **WDB Terms of Office and Vacancies** **Information Item**  
 Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer, reported that there is 1 vacant seat and 15 members whose terms of office expire on October 31, 2024. Staff will be collecting applications for the November 1, 2024-October 31, 2026 office term and encouraging current board members to reapply.
9. **Board Member Spotlight \*New** **Information Item**  
 Heather Daniel, WDB Chairperson, reported that at the last Executive Committee meeting, discussion took place on implementing this item to the WDB agenda. Afterwards, WDB Members Paul David and Mark Bergsma shared the following board member spotlight information with the full board: 1.) Name, title, and organization; 2.) Years of Service on the WDB/Committee/Councils; and 3.) An explanation about how they or their organization partners or contributes with West Michigan Works!. Each member spotlight will be highlighted on social media and the WMW blog.
10. **WMW WDB Subcommittee Updates** **Information Item**
- a. Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee (Executive Committee): Heather Daniel reported that at its March 2024 meeting, the EC reviewed financials as provided to the Governing Board, discussed committee interests, board vacancies, and today's meeting agenda. Heather reported that the next meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2024.
  - b. Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC): Chad Patton, on behalf of Tonia Castillo, WDB Member and Council Chair, reported that the CEAC met on May 17, 2024. Discussion took place on regional grant updates, MiSTEM, Adult Education, and CTE programs. The next meeting is scheduled for September 27, 2024.
  - c. Legislative Committee: Jacob Maas, on behalf of Jim Fisher, WDB Member and Committee Chair, reported that the committee last met on April 16 and discussed a recap on the Michigan Works! Association (MWA) 2024 Legislative Day, recap of the National Association of Workforce Boards Forum (NAWB), and Legislative Tours and visits. The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2024.

- d. Solutions Driven Committee: Jordan Clark, WDB Member and Committee Chair, reported that the last committee meeting was on April 12, 2024. Jordan reported that the next meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2024. The committee discussed WMW Retention Solutions Network and Digital Literacy. Jordan reported that the committee will be discussing Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the workforce at its next meeting.
- e. Ad-Hoc: Essential Service Awards (ESA) Committee: Mark Bergsma reported that the committee is in its planning stages for the 2024-2025 Essential Service Awards. Mark reviewed the timeline with the board as presented in the board packet.

#### 11. Success Story

**Information Item**

Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions, reviewed the success story on Roskam Foods, which was provided in the board packet. The full story can be viewed online here:

<https://www.westmiworks.org/blog/success-story/food-processor-roskam-foods-upskills-employees-with-the-going-pro-talent-fund/>

#### 12. WDB Service Summary

**Information Item**

Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer, shared the Service Summary for October 2023 through April 30, 2024, with board members. Angie reviewed the Management Observations and Highlights which included information and data on: Service Center Traffic, Employers Served, Jobs Filled by Industry, Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF), Hiring Events, Retention Solutions, and WorkReady Certificates Earned. Angie reported there were not many changes since the last report.

#### 13. Solutions Driven Updates

**Information Item**

Summaries of each initiative highlighted under solutions-driven updates include a notation identifying its alignment with strategic plan goals. These “alignment indicators” are ***Diversity and Inclusion, Enhanced Relationships, and Pipeline Development.***

##### Grant Updates:

- a. Early Childhood Education (ECE) Registered Apprenticeships: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- b. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA): Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, reported that The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awarded a \$2.9 million-dollar HRSA grant to Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). WMW has partnered with GRCC and Corewell Health, Cherry Health, and Trinity Health systems to implement the grant. Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- c. Michigan Career Opportunity Academies for Community Health (MiCOACH): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- d. The Michigan Citizen Reentry Initiative (MiCRI): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***
- e. Michigan Skilled Immigration Integration Program (MISIIP): Tasha Evans reported that 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. Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Diversity and Inclusion, Pipeline Development***
- f. Grand Rapids Community College One Workforce Grant: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

- g. Michigan Learning and Education Advancement Program: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- h. Barrier Removal and Employment Success (BRES) Expansion: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- i. Michigan Rural Enhanced Access to Careers in Healthcare (MiREACH): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- j. State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) – West MI Works: Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- k. State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) – Michigan Energy Workforce Development Consortium (MEWDC): Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- l. MDARD Specialty Crop Grant: Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- m. Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF):  
Fiscal Year 2023:  
  - Additional information provided in the board packet.Fiscal Year 2024:  
Additional information provided in the board packet.  
  - Cycle 1: 222 employers received a total of \$4.8M. Awarded training may occur from January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.
  - Cycle 2: Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions reported that the application period for Cycle 2 closed on May 10, 2024. In total, WMW submitted 174 applications for a total of \$7,795,784.99. Award announcements are scheduled to take place late June 2024. Training may occur July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
  - Employer Led Collaborative (ELCs) formerly Industry Led Collaborative: Additional information is provided in the board packet.
A full list of grant recipients statewide is available online at [Michigan.gov/TalentFund](https://Michigan.gov/TalentFund). ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- n. Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative Grant: Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- o. Michigan Statewide Targeted Apprenticeship Inclusive and Readiness System (MiSTAIRS): Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

**Industry Talent Council Initiatives:** Amy Lebednick reported that there are many updates with the council initiatives and has highlighted a few of them below. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

- a. **Hospitality Talent Council**: In partnership with Experience G.R., WMW continues to work towards the creation of a new industry talent council for the hospitality industry in Kent County. WMW onboarded an Industry Council Lead, Shakiya Taylor, to help lead the efforts of this newly formed council.
- b. **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 career pathways and opportunities in West Michigan's agribusiness industry. Amy Lebednick reported that the ATC and Discover Manufacturing are working on four Career Carnivals in June. These career fair carnivals will

be held in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Montcalm, and Holland and are open to job seekers and their families that are looking for employment. Additional information is provided in the board packet.

- c. **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.** Amy reported that the CCC is developing an initiative to address the high suicide rate in the construction industry through a mental health event during Construction Suicide Awareness Week in September 2024. This will be a free, 3-hour public event, which will feature community resources, employer testimonials, a keynote speaker, and networking to raise awareness and provide support. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- d. **Discover Manufacturing (DM) Mission: “We Exist to Inspire and Expand Manufacturing Talent in West Michigan.”** Amy reported that DM is actively planning for the proposed Discover Manufacturing Week events to begin around October 28<sup>th</sup> to November 8, 2024, with variances around each county. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- e. **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.** Amy reported that the WMHCC held a mini-medical school event which included 13 employers and 677 third graders focusing on body awareness, health habits, and healthcare careers. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- f. **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.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.

## Programs

- a. **West Michigan Works! Sponsored Registered Apprenticeships Program (WMW RAP):** Amy Lebednick reported the team continues to receive requests to provide training and/or consultation services to other workforce entities interested in operating in the apprenticeship space. On May 23, 2024, WMW provided the first of two training courses to USDOL Office of Apprenticeship, Apprenticeship Training Representatives (ATRs) on *Understanding the Public Workforce System and the Business Service Representatives Role*. Amy reported that the quality survey following the training indicated that 92% of attendees agreed the information provided will be beneficial in their work. Amy stated that Part 2 on *Promising Practices for Building Effective ATR/BSR Partnerships* will take place on June 11. Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- b. **Ascend Youth Programming:** Chad Patton, reported that The Ascend team provides programming for eligible out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. Chad reported that Ascend had 298 youth apply to be part of the Youth Summer Career Readiness program. Funding is only available to serve 115 youth, so the Ascend team will be working towards expanding this opportunity for more youth in the future. Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- c. **MiCareerQuest:** Chad Patton reported that a 3D walkthrough of MiCareerQuest 2024 will be live soon at [micareerquest.org](http://micareerquest.org). The 2025 date is pending approval from the steering committee. Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Pipeline Development***
- d. **Elevate:** Chad Patton reviewed that Elevate is an expansion to Rise Up, and a soft launch model of outside-in recruitment and inside-up career development that began in partnership with West Michigan Works!, The Source, and Trinity Health. Elevate’s community-based partners are The

Source, the Urban League of West Michigan, and Ergasia, and its employer partners are Trinity Health, Corewell Health, Cascade Engineering, and Praxis Packaging. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

- e. HireReach (HR): Chad Patton reviewed that HireReach provides instruction and consulting to businesses interested in implementing skills-based hiring. HireReach wrapped up its Kent County specific academy and is now focusing on building national partnerships to expand across the nation. HireReach also sold its first ever private academy and will be consulting with Kentwood Public Schools to help the district adopt a skills-based approach to hiring. Furthermore, Chad reported that HireReach is also going to be a part of the National Governors Association, Skills in the States conversation, being one of 250 organizations attending the invite-only event on skills-based hiring and development practices. HireReach was selected to present at the end of May 2024, at the national Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS), which will include stakeholders from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, state and local administrators, practitioners, policymakers, and federal officials to discuss research on family self-sufficiency and social welfare programs and policies. ***Diversity and Inclusion***
- f. Retention Solutions Network (RSN): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***
- g. Gain Employment. Maintain Support. (GEMS) formally known as Learn, Earn and Provide (LEAP) Pilot: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

#### Initiatives

- a. Electric Vehicle (EV) Industry Recruitment Pilot & EV Jobs Academy: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

#### 14. Other Business

- a. Angie Barksdale reported that WMW was notified last week, that we have been accepted into the Results for America, which is a state and local workforce fellowship program focused on advancing quality jobs. Angie, along with a manager from the Talent and Business Solutions departments will participate in this 6-month learning series on a national platform with the potential of implementing some new initiatives after the education portion is done.
- b. Lastly, Dr. Lepper from GRCC reported that there is an open house on June 18<sup>th</sup> for the new AI Incubator Lab. Beginning in the fall, GRCC will be offering a 1-year AI certificate. This will not only be for the faculty and students, but also for the community.
- c. TaRita Johnson reported that the Intern Connect event is scheduled for June 26, 2024 and there is still time to register. It's a half day professional development conference designed to teach area interns about West Michigan's economic opportunities.

#### 15. Public Comment- None

#### 16. Adjournment at 1:31p.m. by Chairperson, Heather Daniel.

Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by: \_\_\_\_\_





**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

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

**SERVICE CENTERS**

**Allegan County**

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

**Barry County**

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

**Ionia County**

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**

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

**Muskegon County**

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

**Ottawa County**

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

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee  
(Executive Committee or EC) of the West Michigan Works! (WMW)  
Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**RE:** Member Term of Office: November 1, 2023 – October 31, 2025

**Background**

As of September 2024, the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board was notified that David Kitchen, representing the organized labor sector will be stepping down from the board. David made a recommendation to have Bryce Butler serve his remaining term. Staff have since received an application from Bryce to fill David’s seat for the remainder of the term of office. In addition, Kolene Miller whom previously represented Perrigo, Inc. over the past couple of years has also stepped down from serving on the board. The nomination committee is still working to fill this seat in the near future.

<b>Business (1): vacant</b>
<b>Organized Labor/Employee Rep (1): Bryce Butler</b>

On September 16, 2024, the Executive Committee approved and supported the replacement of David Kitchen with Bryce Bulter through October 31, 2025. A request for formal appointment by the ACSET Governing Board will take place at the October 28, 2024 meeting.

*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.*



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Area Community Services  
Employment & Training Council  
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(616) 336-4100

**SERVICE CENTERS**

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**Barry County**

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

**Ionia County**

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**

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

**Muskegon County**

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

**Ottawa County**

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

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee  
(Executive Committee or EC) of the West Michigan Works! (WMW)  
Workforce Development Board  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**RE:** Member Term of Office: November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2026

**Background**

As of September 2024, the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board had 16 board members whose term of office expire on October 31, 2024.

Of those members, the following members have notified staff they will not be reapplying:

- 1. Kristin Garris representing Goodwill Industries of West Michigan in Muskegon filled a Community Based Organization (CBO) seat on the board.
- 2. Kenyatta Brame from Cascade Engineering in Kent County filled a private/business sector seat.

The nomination committee met and determined that the full board composition needs at least a minimum of 1-3 more members representing the private/sector to serve on the board. With that, the board is not required to fill the CBO seat at this time. These changes will still allow the WDB to stay in compliance with federal/state regulations.

Since, Nick Kacher whom currently serves as the President/CEO of The Employers' Association has applied to fill a private sector seat. A couple of recommendations have been made and we will be working with these nominees' interest in joining the board.

In addition, there are a few notable changes to the slate.

- 1. Greg King recently left Lakeshore Advantage and has reapplied as an economic development representative from the Greater Muskegon Economic Development which was previously filled by Morgan Carroll. Lindsay Maunz has applied to fill Greg's seat, from Lakeshore Advantage.
- 2. Connie Stewart who was serving as the interim President of Montcalm Community College (MCC), is being replaced with Dr. Bradley Barrick who was recently hired as the new President. Dr. Barrick has applied to serve on the board to fill this seat.

The proposed slate of applicants is listed on below. Please note the names highlighted are new applicants.

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<b>Business (6):</b> Nora Balgoyen, Mark Bergsma, Heather Daniel, Nate Henschel, Sara Whisler, <b>Nick Kacher</b>
<b>Community-Based Organization (3):</b> TaRita Johnson, Jen Schottke, Mark Thomas
<b>Economic Development (2):</b> Gregory King <b>Lindsay Maunz</b>
<b>Higher-Education (2):</b> <b>Bradley Barrick</b> , Dan Rinsema-Sybenga
<b>Organized Labor/Employee Rep (1):</b> Daniel TenHoopen
<b>Vocational Rehab (1):</b> Cathy Cronick

### Requested Action

The Executive Committee of the WDB and the Nomination Committee approved and supported the above-listed slate of members with the term of office dates November 1, 2024 through October 31, 2026. A request for formal appointment by the ACSET Governing Board will take place at the October 28, 2024 meeting.

The proposed full board slate is provided.

## West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board

Item #5b

Sector	First Name	Last Name	Company	Term Dates	
Adult Education	Tonia	Castillo	Ottawa Area Intermediate School District	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Emily	Babson	Plascore	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Nora	Balgoyen	ITC Holdings	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Business	Mark	Bergsma	Berends Hendricks Stuit Insurance	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Business	Nick	Kacher	The Employers' Association	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Business	Heather	Daniel	Haworth, Inc	11/1/24-10/31/26	Chair (2023-2025)
Business	Jordan	Clark	Meijer	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Nate	Henschel	Consumers Energy	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Business	Sara	Whisler	CarbonSix	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Business	Paul	David	Fleis & Vandenbrink	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Jay	Dunwell	Wolverine Coil Spring Co	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Jim	Fisher	Second Act, LLC	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Jan	Harrington-Davis	Corewell Health	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Jon	Hofman	Holland Board of Public Works (HBPW)	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Kelly	Kroll	Bradford White Corporation	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Business	Shana	Lewis	Trinity Health	11/1/23-10/31/25	Vice-Chair (2023-2025)
Business	Samantha	Semrau	Kendrick Plastics	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Community Based Organization	Jennifer	Heinzman	Barry County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Alliance	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Community Based Organization	TaRita	Johnson	The Right Place Inc	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Community Based Organization	Jen	Schottke	West Michigan Construction Institute	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Community Based Organization	Mark	Thomas	Northview Public Schools	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Economic Development	Gregory S.	King	Greater Muskegon Economic Development	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Economic Development	Lindsay	Maunz	Lakeshore Advantage	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Higher Education	Charles W	Lepper	Grand Rapids Community College	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Higher Education	Daniel	Rinsema-Sybenga	Muskegon Community College	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Higher Education	Bradley	Barrick	Montcalm Community College	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Labor	Bryce	Butler	West Michigan Electrical JATC	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Organized Labor/Employee Rep	Ryan	Bennett	West Michigan Plumbers & Fitters #174	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Organized Labor/Employee Rep	Daniel	TenHoop	Heart of West Michigan United Way	11/1/24-10/31/26	
Public Assistance Agencies (PA 491 req)	Michelle	Seigo	MI Department of Health and Human Services, Ionia & Montcalm Counties	11/1/23-10/31/25	
Vocational Rehab	Cathy (Catherine)	Cronick	Michigan Rehabilitation Services	11/1/24-10/31/26	



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**RE:** 2025 Meeting Schedules

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**Background:**

We proposed meeting dates for the upcoming 2025 Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee and Workforce Development Board Meetings. On September 16, 2024, the Executive Committee supported the following calendar meeting schedules for 2025.

**Executive Committee at 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

- January 13, 2025
- March 10, 2025
- May 12, 2025
- September 15, 2025
- November 10, 2025

**Workforce Development Board at 12:00 p.m. (lunch at 11:30 a.m.) – 1:30 p.m.**

- February 10, 2025
- April 14, 2025
- June 9, 2025
- October 13, 2025
- December 8, 2025 (Annual Meeting Combined with Governing Board)

**Requested Action:**

We are requesting support and approval from the Workforce Development Board for the 2025 meeting schedules.

*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/](http://westmiworks.org/about/). TTY 711.*



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** ACSET Legal Department  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**RE:** Proposed WDB Bylaws Revisions Addressing the Proxy and Alternative Designee Process

**Background**

During the period of June 25-28, 2024, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Regional Office conducted a WIOA Key Provisions Monitoring Review on West Michigan Works! programs. On August 7, 2024, WMW received the following finding from USDOL with respect to the WDB bylaws:

**“WDB By-Laws Missing Required Content – West Michigan Works! (Objective 3.a.3 Internal Controls)**

The West Michigan Works! Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) by-laws are missing required content as follows:

The by-laws did not include a proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when an LWDB member is unable to attend a meeting and assigns a designee.

Section 20 CFR 679.310(g)(5) states:

The CEO must establish by-laws, consistent with State policy for LWDB membership, that at a minimum address “...(4) The proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when a WDB member is unable to attend a meeting and assigns a designee as per the requirements at 20 CFR 679.110(d)(4).”

The lack of a proxy and alternative designee process was identified in the monitoring report dated November 30, 2018. The LWDB subsequently made the specific determination to not provide a process to allow its members to attend meetings via a proxy or alternative designee and failed to update its by-laws in accordance with this requirement.

It is important for local boards to formalize this process in the by-laws as this ensures that LWDB members can add value to meetings with stakeholders, education partners, and employers and participate in decision making and strategy development of the LWDB.

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**Corrective Action:** The State must ensure that the LWDB by-laws are updated to include all required content. The State must provide a copy of amended, fully executed by-laws to the Regional Office in response to this report.”

As requested by the USDOL, WMW is submitting revised bylaws language to address the “Proxy or Alternative Designee Process” in Article VI “Meetings” of the WDB Bylaws. Attached please find Article VI of the WDB Bylaws with proposed changes, which are either highlighted or stricken.

### Requested Action

WMW is requesting the WDB’s approval of the proposed revisions to the Workforce Development Board bylaws.

**Per Article VII, Section 1 of the Workforce Development Board Bylaws, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the WDB members present is required to approve amendments to the WDB Bylaws.**

**WDB DRAFT LANGUAGE**  
**Proxy Alternative Designee Process**

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular Meetings. At the first regular meeting after the annual appointment of new members by the Governing Board, the WDB shall set a day and time for the regular monthly meeting of WDB during the next 12 months. Meetings will be held at least once each quarter. An annual schedule of meetings must be submitted to the LEO-WD and posted on ACSET's website by January 15 of each year.

Section 2: Special Meetings. At the discretion of the Chairperson, or upon the written request of five or more members of the WDB, a special meeting of WDB may be called, provided that written notice is mailed to each member at least seven calendar days prior to the day on which the special meeting shall be held. This written notice must state the time, place and purpose of the meeting, and the business of the special meeting must be confined to the items described in the notice.

Section 3: Quorum and Voting. A quorum shall exist when a majority of the current members of the WDB are present. A member is "present" for purposes of a quorum when he or she is either physically present at an in-person meeting or virtually present via electronic means in compliance with applicable law and the ACSET West Michigan Works! Virtual Meeting Policy. A motion shall be passed or defeated by a majority of those members voting at a meeting where a quorum has been established. Each member shall be entitled to one vote. ~~No proxies or substitutes shall be permitted.~~

Section 4: Proxy and Alternative Designee Process. A member of the board may designate a proxy or alternative designee to attend a WDB meeting in his or her absence subject to the following requirements:

1. An alternative designee from the business sector must have optimum policy-making hiring authority, which means that the member may reasonably be expected to speak affirmatively on behalf of the organization or entity and have authority to commit the entity to a chosen course of action.
2. An alternative designee representative from any other sector must have demonstrated experience and expertise in addition to optimum policy-making authority. "Demonstrated experience and expertise" means an individual with documented leadership in developing or implementing workforce development, human resources, training and development, or a core program function and may include individuals with experience in education or training of job seekers with barriers to employment.

Any member who chooses to designate a proxy or alternative designee is required to notify the Board Chair in writing by 12:00 noon two (2) business days prior to the scheduled board meeting. The notice must include the full name, job title, email address, and name of organization the individual will represent, along with a brief explanation of how the individual



meets the proxy or alternative designee requirements. If accepted, the Board Chair will notify the proxy or alternative designee in writing about the meeting details. The proxy or alternative designee may act on behalf of the board member to the extent allowable under Michigan's Open Meetings Act.

Section 54: Conflict of Interest. All WDB members and Committee members shall comply with the ACSET Conflict of Interest and Nepotism Policy, which is applicable to all ACSET officers and agents. If it is established at a meeting of the WDB that a member knowingly violated this Policy, the Chief Executive Officer of ACSET will report that finding to the ACSET Governing Board at its next meeting and ACSET may terminate any contract or contracts which are the subject of the violation. The Chief Executive Officer of ACSET may also request that the Governing Board remove the offending member from the WDB. Notice of the alleged violation will be provided in the written agenda for the WDB meeting.

Section 65: Conduct of Meetings. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised will be the official document governing the conduct of meetings of WDB, and all its committees except as it may conflict with these bylaws, special rules of order WDB may adopt, WIOA, and applicable federal or state statutes or regulations.

Section 76: Compliance with Open Meetings Act. The WDB and the Executive Committee will abide by the provisions of the State of Michigan's "Open Meetings Act." A notice of the date, time and place of meetings will be posted in advance.

Participation in meetings of WDB or its committees shall be limited to members except in the following cases:

1. Non-members specifically invited to give information to WDB;
2. Non-members who desire to address WDB and who are recognized for that purpose by the Chairperson at appropriate points during the meeting; and
3. Members of Committees who are not members of the WDB may participate in committee meetings.

Section 87: Virtual Meeting Attendance.

A. Any member of the Board may participate in a meeting of the Board or a committee thereof by virtual means when permitted by law and the ACSET West Michigan Works! Virtual Meeting Policy. Upon confirmation by the Chairperson that a board member's virtual attendance at a meeting is permissible under applicable law, the Chief Executive Officer of ACSET, or his or her designee, will make accommodations ~~will be made~~ for that board member to attend the meeting by virtual means, as defined herein. The Board member requesting virtual participation should notify the Board Chairperson or the ACSET CEO in writing by 12:00 noon two (2) business days prior to the meeting so that teleconferencing and/or videoconferencing can be arranged. Any board member who attends a meeting virtually will be indicated on the meeting minutes as "Present via teleconferencing."

B. Participation by virtual means is defined as a method of participation in the meeting from a remote location by telephonic, video conferencing, or other electronic methods that provides for:

1. Two – way communication, so that all members of the Board, including those physically present and those who are participating by electronic methods, can hear each other; and
2. Members of the public attending the meeting, either physically or by electronic means, can hear all members of the Board, including those who are physically present and those who are participating by electronic means, and be heard by all members of the Board participating in the meeting during the public comment period. If a meeting of the Board is being held electronically, the Board may use appropriate technology to facilitate typed public comments during the meeting submitted by members of the public participating in the meeting that may be read to or shared with members of the Board and other participants to enable members of the public to be heard by others and be permitted to address the meeting during the public comment period.

| Section 98: Minutes. Minutes of all meetings of the WDB and the Executive Committee shall be duly recorded and made available to all interested parties, as required by law. Members of the WDB and the Executive Committee shall review, amend as necessary, and approve the Minutes by formal action at their next meeting. Copies of minutes of meetings shall be posted on ACSET's Internet website within five (5) business days of their approval. Such minutes shall remain posted on the website for at least two (2) years.



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** Tasha Evans, Talent Solutions Director  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**RE:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)  
Four-Year Regional and Local Plans for Program Years 2024  
through 2027

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**Background:**

In accordance with Policy Issuance (PI) 24-13, all local areas are part of a planning region, and all local areas must submit a Regional and a Local Plan in alignment with requirements outlined in WIOA Sections 106(c) and 108, and WIOA Final Regulations.

Both the Regional and Local Plans were subjected to a 30-day public review and comment period as described in the WIOA Final Regulations. No comments were submitted during this review.

Please view draft copies of the plans [here](#).

**Requested Action:**

We are requesting support and approval from the Workforce Development Board for both the Regional and Local Plans.

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**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.

The CEAC is renewing membership representatives for the following individuals:

- Tonia Castillo – Ottawa Area ISD

The CEAC is seeking approval of new membership representatives for the following individuals:

- Joe Tenbusch – Allegan Tech Center
- Bernard Brown – Muskegon Area ISD

**Requested Action**

We are requesting that the WDB approve the appointments of the individuals to the CEAC.

## Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC)

Member Name	Application Date	WDB Memo Date	Term End Date	Name and Type of Organization
Cary Stamas	12/12/2023	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	Kent ISD
Lisa Hungerford	12/12/2023	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	Talent First
Ginger Rohwer	12/12/2023	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	MiSTEM Network's Greater West Michigan Region at GVSU
Chauncy Williams	12/19/2023	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	Muskegon Public Schools
Rich Franklin	12/12/2023	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	Barry Intermediate School District
Kimberly Call	12/12/2023	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	Trans-Matic
Jacquie Rehkopf	1/19/2024	2/12/2024	2/12/2026	Ottawa Area ISD
Michael O'Connor	3/19/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Zeeland Adult Education
Pat Walstra	3/22/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Kent ISD
Ted Paton	3/22/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Ionia ISD
Luke McCotter	4/3/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	ADAC Automotive
David Tebo	4/8/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Ottawa Area ISD
Samantha Zentner	4/15/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Orchard View Adult Education
Penny Dora	5/1/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Montcalm ISD
Shelbee Admon-Anderson	3/22/2024	6/10/2024	6/10/2026	Junior Achievement
Bernard Brown	10/2/2024	10/14/2024	10/14/2026	Muskegon Area ISD
Joe Tenbusch	8/19/2024	10/14/2024	10/14/2026	Allegan County Technical and Education Center
Tonia Castillo	9/26/2024	10/14/2024	10/14/2026	Ottawa Area ISD



## **Oct. 14, 2024 Bev Drake Essential Services Awards Update**

### **Nominations closed: Sept. 30, 2024**

We received 26 complete nominations for qualifying individuals from Allegan, Kent, Muskegon, Montcalm and Ottawa Counties. Nominations included the skilled labor, transportation, childcare, healthcare, admin/office/ nonprofit, cleaning/housekeeping/maintenance/groundskeeping, and government categories.

### **Nomination scoring: Oct. 2-10, 2024**

### **Scheduling: Oct. 11-18, 2024**

Working with business solutions representatives, and winner's supervisors to schedule the on-site celebration, a photo shoot and in some cases a video shoot.

### **On-site celebrations, photo and video: Nov. 4-22, 2024**

Photo, video and celebrations at workplaces will take place Nov. 4-22, 2024. Winner's team members and leadership will gather to recognize them. They'll be given a gift card and their employer will be given a certificate for their efforts to support employee excellence – all covered on social media. Follow West Michigan Works! on social media to congratulate our winners by liking, commenting and sharing posts to your feeds.

### **Awards ceremony: Winter 2025**

Winners will be awarded this winter at the start of an Economic Club of Grand Rapids luncheon. New in the program this year will be a video honoring the legacy of Bev Drake and sharing the purpose of the awards.

### JESSICA KREASON BREAKS COMPANY RECORD IN HER FIRST WEEK



Jessica Kreason began her career journey when she sought out West Michigan Works! and the state's PATH program after applying for Family Independence Program (FIP) benefits through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Jessica's first PATH orientation at West Michigan Works! Muskegon Service Center marked a pivotal step in starting over. She stopped in only two weeks after being released from incarceration to search for more than just a job. She was looking for a career, and needed support with basic needs such as housing, transportation and clothing.

While she was there, Jessica met her Career Coach Amy Simon. As they began working together weekly Amy noticed Jessica was focused on long-term solutions.

"I realized that not one time did Jessica use being justice-involved as a reason to stop seeking employment," Amy shared. "She was driven to accomplish her goals and was always willing to do her part to receive the assistance she needed."

Overcoming Jessica's background meant continuing her education through adult education classes and leveraging her positivity, skills, education in business management and West Michigan Works!' services.

"I am aware that my criminal history will stay with me forever, but I refuse to let it make me a different person or hold me down," Jessica said.

Amy made sure of this too. Jessica got the job search assistance she needed through advocacy, assessments to explore her strengths and identify career goals, and resume and cover letter workshops. Amy also helped Jessica get the financial support she qualified for to help with basic needs.

Through her hard work and tenacity, Jessica secured a job with [Reminder Media](#) just one month after that first PATH orientation. During that interview process, Jessica was worried about passing the background check. She was honest with her employer about being justice-involved, and her effective communication led her to a new career.

Jessica found immediate success at Reminder Media by breaking a company sales record in her first week. After two promotions, Jessica now works as an account executive with plans to further her education.

"I feel good about my career goals and direction, and I appreciate the support and services from West Michigan Works!," Jessica shared.

# Service Summary Explanation

October 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024

## Management Observations and Highlights

- *Service Center Traffic:* Service center traffic continues to show an upward trend when compared to PY22/23.
- *Employers Served:* The business solutions team consistently aids a higher number of returning employers compared to new employers each month. We persistently seek opportunities to engage with new employers while prioritizing quality service for existing customers. This quarter our focus shifted, resulting in increased numbers, as less time was allocated to the Going PRO Talent Fund application. Moreover, the completion of training for new members on our Business Solutions Team has contributed to a rise in the number of employers served.
- *Jobs Filled by Industry:* Jobs filled numbers have remained stable. February through April noticed an increase in jobs filled for the construction and manufacturing industries due to employers preparing for construction projects starting with warmer weather and the continued 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 steady dip in credentials earned due to higher demand for training dollars resulting in available training funds fully expended faster than anticipated. We anticipate these numbers to increase as WIOA funding for the new FY24/25 becomes available. Additionally, we saw lower than average employer metrics reported during the period of October-February.
- *Going Pro Talent Fund:* total number of trainings completed *and* paid out each month. Training is not always paid out the same month the training was 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 FY23 Cycle 2 and FY24 Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 funding. The grant period for FY23 cycle 1 ended 1/31/24 and we are working to close out all open grants and process the remaining employer reimbursements.
- *Hiring Events:* Business Solutions has seen an increase in employers participating in our monthly Virtual Hiring Events 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. Several Career Fair Carnival events were hosted across our region in June resulting in increased metrics for Q3.
- *Retention Solutions Network:* We saw an increase in employees served and barriers resolved in July and August. After conversations with member employers about how we can improve utilization, RSN worked with employers to improve marketing strategies for RSN. It is good to see that employee utilization is growing once again.
- *WorkReady Certificates Earned:* The WorkReady Post-Assessment rate increased in Quarter 3 with more jobseekers post-testing compared to those who pre-tested. The Credential rate stayed the same in Quarter 3. The Talent Development Team is actively working on updating both the WorkReady curriculum and assessment process to improve data and utilization.





# Service Summary Oct. 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024

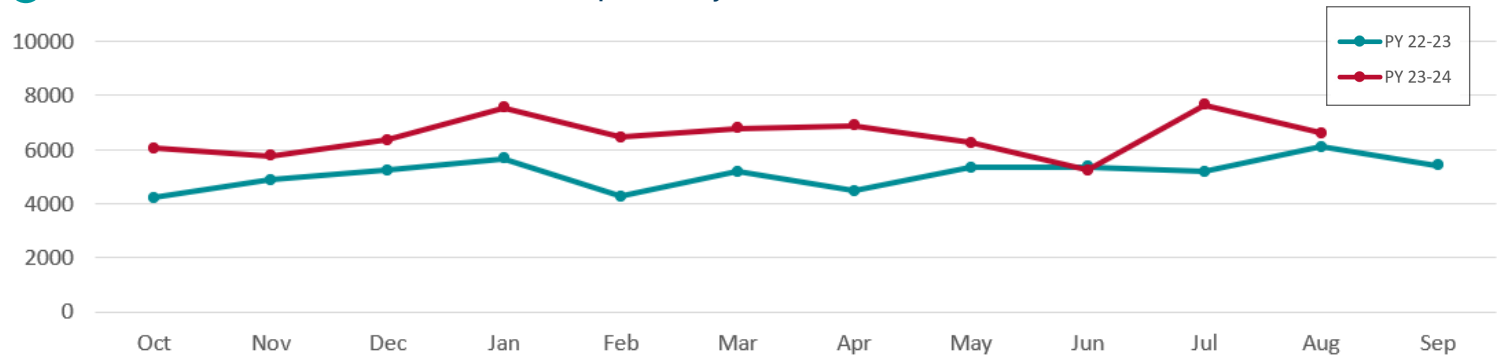
The data shown on this Service Summary indicates the organization's progress toward fulfilling of its services-based strategic priorities, as developed in the 2020 Strategic Plan: Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development and Diversity and Inclusion. Each indicator is a reflection of the work conducted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

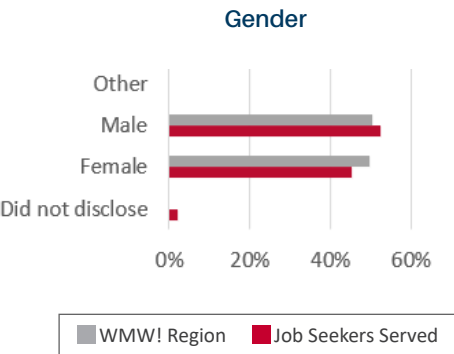
## Strategic Plan Alignment

- Enhanced Relationships
- Pipeline Development
- Diversity and Inclusion

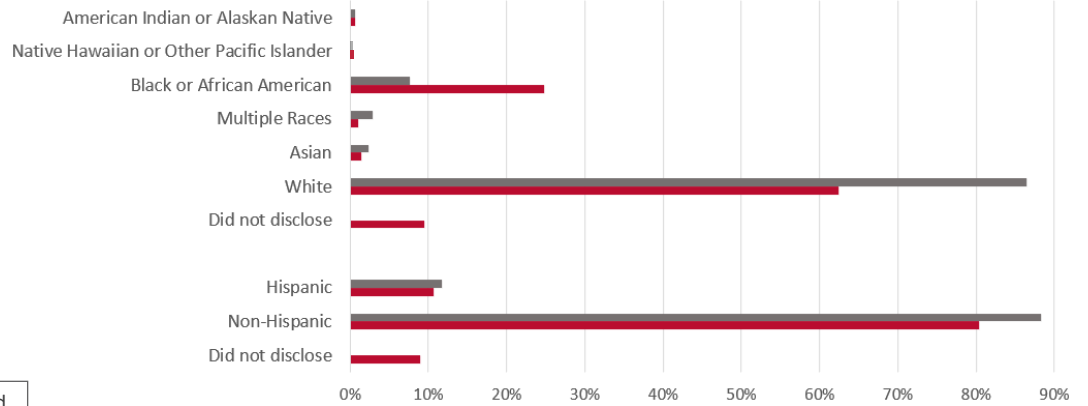
### Service Center Traffic & Call Volume (PY comparison by month)



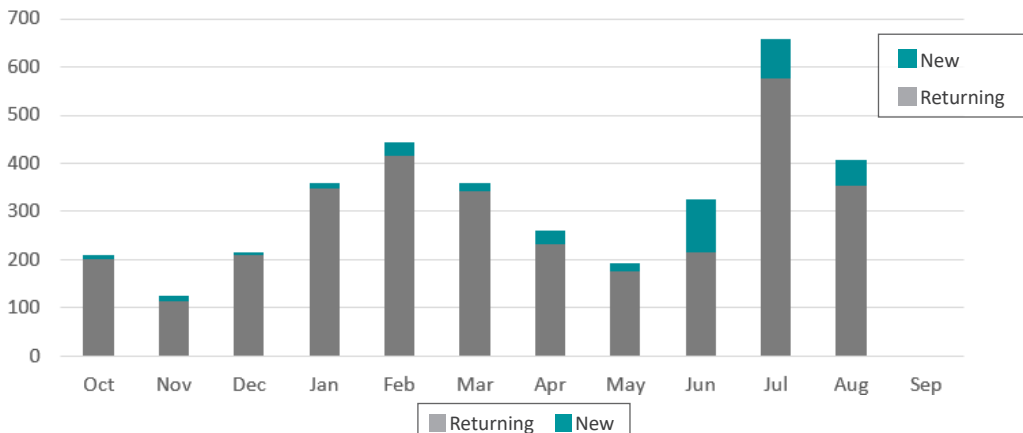
### Diversity of Job Seekers Served



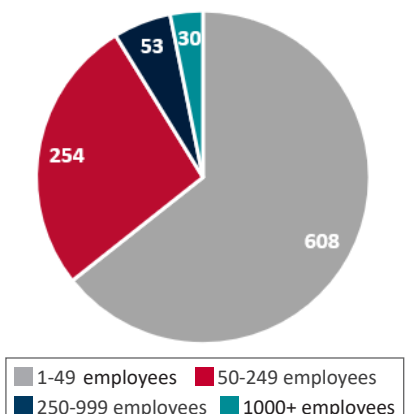
### Race & Ethnicity



### 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	59	24	168	29	94	0	23	8	3	1	68	0
Construction	94	19	10	39	109	57	32	15	22	26	49	0
Healthcare	96	151	16	97	83	154	129	111	175	11	73	0
IT	10	2	2	1	0	22	23	5	4	4	19	0
Manufacturing	1052	321	112	376	708	306	861	173	302	383	140	0
Other	169	125	152	39	204	466	178	95	78	199	149	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1480</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>1198</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b>1246</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>0</b>

## Training: by Industry

	New Hire	Classroom	Apprenticeship	Credentials Earned
<b>Construction</b>	15	295	1	6
<b>Health Care</b>	146	699	2	435
<b>Information Technology</b>	3	35	0	26
<b>Manufacturing</b>	66	158	0	12
<b>Other</b>	87	183	4	207
<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>1370</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>686</b>

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

- Going PRO Apprenticeship (GPA)
- MiREACH
- MiLEAP
- One Workforce
- PATH Subsidized Employment
- State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE)
- WIOA Incumbent Worker Training
- WIOA Individual Training Accounts
- WIOA On-the-Job Training
- WIOA Youth Work Experience
- Young Professionals
- DTE Foundation

## Training (completed): Going PRO Training Fund

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
<b>New Hire</b>	234	657	428	795	543	402	440	273	417	323	313	0
<b>Classroom</b>	156	312	297	561	370	379	298	178	289	349	205	0
<b>Apprenticeship</b>	37	44	71	226	169	183	126	82	105	135	96	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>1013</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>1582</b>	<b>1082</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>0</b>

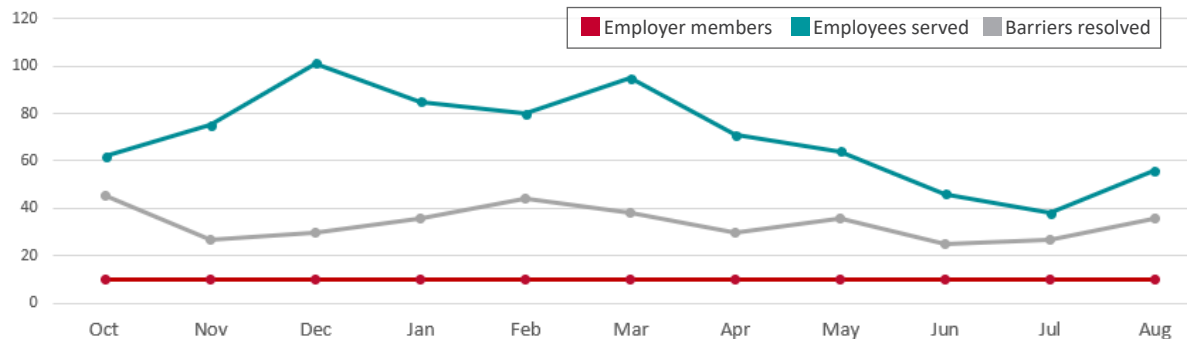
## Hiring Events

	Events	Employers	Job Seekers
<b>Q1</b>	7	38	115
<b>Q2</b>	7	56	397
<b>Q3</b>	11	138	520
<b>Q4</b>	6	39	228
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>1260</b>

## Retention Solutions Network

Success coach hours (cumulative, reported quarterly)

**1,216**



## WorkReady Certificates Earned (cumulative, reported quarterly)

**1,203**  
Pre-Assessments

**108**  
Post-Assessments

**144**  
WorkReady Certificates

**97**  
WorkReady Plus Certificates



Service Summary  
Oct. 1, 2023 to Aug 31, 2024

## Service Summary: Strategic Plan Alignment and Indicator Descriptions

<p><b>Pipeline Development:</b> Expand the local pipeline of work-ready talent to meet the needs of the workforce and of West Michigan employers.</p>	<p><b>Enhanced Relationships:</b> Foster widespread networks to collaboratively address workforce needs in the region.</p>	<p><b>Diversity and Inclusion:</b> 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 &amp; 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**

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

**Barry County**

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

**Ionia County**

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**

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

**Muskegon County**

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

**Ottawa County**

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

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB)  
**FROM:** West Michigan Works! Staff  
**DATE:** October 14, 2024  
**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**

**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***

**Strengthening Community Colleges Grant 4 (SCC4):** 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. The grant supported efforts to convene leaders to develop solutions that will help finance, provide educational support, and increase compensation for jobseekers who want to become early childhood educators. An additional round of funding through ECIC is anticipated in October 2024 to support the expansion of registered apprenticeships in early childcare and help offset the training costs for classroom learning.

***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

*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.*

**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.

***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. We recently learned the USDOL has approved a no-cost extension for this grant. The period of the grant was extended to end on 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.

**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. ***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. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

**Going PRO Talent Fund:**

Fiscal Year 2024:

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity announced the award of \$42,112,597 to more than 800 employers statewide for the Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) for the first cycle of fiscal year 2024. West Michigan Works! employer awards are outlined below:

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

A full list of grant recipients statewide is available online at [Michigan.gov/TalentFund](https://Michigan.gov/TalentFund).

Fiscal Year 2025:

- Cycle 1: The employer application period for the FY25 Cycle 1 began October 1 and will close October 18, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. Award recipients will be announced in mid-December.

Employer Led Collaborative (ELCs - formerly Industry Led Collaboratives):

The application period for Fiscal Year 2025 ELCs is tentatively scheduled to open March 2025. ***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 will allow WMW to maximize impact of our existing employer-led Industry Talent Councils through. WMW has hired a Project Coordinator to assist all five WMW industry talent councils with project implementation, connecting with the community, and building diverse talent pipelines. Additionally, funding would support training registered apprentices in brand new high demand occupations, the build-out of a career exploration event platform, and expansion of the MiCareerLaunch initiative, which aims to prepare high school seniors for a career in a high demand industry. Funding also supports designing and building a career exploration website for parents and students to learn of events based on county and industry. ***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***

**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.** Planning begins in October 2024 for a project called Spotlight on Ag Readers. School recruitment for the project will begin in November. The Muskegon Career Ag-xploration (CAX) event will join forces with GVSU's "STEAM Along the Lakeshore." The focus and audience of STEAM Along the Lakeshore is the same as the CAX project, targeting students in K-5 grades and showcasing careers and opportunities in the field of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math. By combining events the council expects to increase the number of students for the project from 225 to over 600. Hand-on activities will be offered by employers and community partners tied to this industry.

**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.** The CCC's inaugural "Building Minds" event was a success. Sixty-five employees from twenty-three local construction employers and 9 community partners were in attendance. The goal of the event was to reduce mental health stigma in the construction industry. In the follow up to the event, 86% of attendees indicate they plan to implement new strategies in their workforce, which could potentially impact over 11,000 construction professionals.

The CCC's Construction Field Days initiative will be put on hold in 2025 due to construction at the Kent Career Tech Center campus in 2025. The council will work

with local schools by partnering to help with employer recruitment for job fairs in the 2024-2025 school year.

The next Construction Field Trips project will be held February 2025. The council will wrap up two trips held in October and will start recruiting students for the 2025 event, shortly after. Once completed, the framework for this project will be used to develop a streamlined process that can be used by West Michigan construction employers to host students at local job sites – allowing students to see and learn more about construction careers in action.

**Discover Manufacturing (DM) Mission: We Exist to Inspire and Expand Manufacturing Talent in West Michigan.** DM is actively recruiting manufacturers to provide tours during Manufacturing Week, which will be held October 28 through November 8. Registration is live on the [DM website](#). Last year, this project was able to reach over 15,000 students and expose them to the fantastic career opportunities in this industry. The goal this year is to increase that number by 10%. DM is partnering with The Right Place Manufacturer’s Council to promote their AI Roadmap program designed to help manufacturers implement AI solutions in their business. The launch for the AI Roadmap program was held on August 14. DM is also partnering with the Michigan Manufacturing Association’s new Director of Talent Initiatives, Laura Preuss. The DM Executive Team has added three new manufacturers to its council and is excited to build on prior success, providing value to industry employers and furthering the council’s mission to be a recognized leader in talent.

**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 for the hospitality industry has formally been named “Explore Hospitality.” The inaugural employer members have established the council’s key strategies of focus to align with the industry needs. Those strategies are: Elevate (recruit & promote the industry), Train, and Retain. The council has also finalized the mission statement, as noted above. Council logo options are currently under review by the council. Non-employer council members will be invited to apply and will join the employer partners at the start of the new year. The council will review its first project proposal in October.

**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.** 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 held their second annual healthcare career fair carnival in Kent County on August 7th at the GRCC M-TEC. 317 individuals attended the event (a 27% increase from the 250 attendees in 2023), including 169 job seekers. 142 of those job seekers anticipate finding a job because of attending the event. 24 employers, 6 education and training providers, and 2

community partners had exhibits at the carnival. Additionally, the WMHCC was excited to hold the first Ottawa County carnival on August 20<sup>th</sup> from 4pm-7pm at the GRCC Lakeshore Campus. 42 individuals attended the event and had valuable conversations with 18 exhibitors.

**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.** WMTT launched an alternative networking experience called “West Michigan Tech Trails.” The response has been extremely positive. A summary of the last hike can be found [here](#) and more information on the final event can be found by clicking [here](#).

WMTT is beginning a two-year partnership with GVSU’s STEM Network to enhance and grow our K-12 outreach programs. The first project in this joint venture will be the {MI}CodeExperience.

## Programs

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

West Michigan Works! currently holds standards for 51 US Department of Labor registered apprenticeships, with 276 active apprentices and 102 participating employers.

The Construction industry has been very active recently, adding 7 new employers to our standards. Active apprentices have increased by 36 to a current total of 95 apprentices, and we have added 4 new occupations:

- Chimney Technician
- Commercial Interior Carpenter
- Construction Craft Laborer
- Glazier

The WMW Apprenticeship team has received 28 referrals and has had 33 discussions with employers interested in USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Programs and has registered 9 programs in the last 3 months. In October, the WMW Project Manager, Joel Elsenbroek will go to the White House to take part in an event celebrating the inaugural cohort of the USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Ambassadors, of which WMW has been engaged. ***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 has wrapped up its summer career readiness program. Ascend kicked off MiCareerLaunch projects in two new locations: Orchard View Adult Education and My School at Kent ISD. The Ascend team will also launch a Fall 2024 career conference. Looking ahead, the program team is excited to connect with high school counselors to provide opportunities for seniors interested in entering the workforce immediately. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

**MiCareerQuest:** MiCareerQuest is a Career Exploration Experience for middle and high school students. We are excited to announce that MiCareerQuest 2025 will be held at DeVos Place on March 20, 2025. There are a number of ways to participate in this event: as a volunteer, exhibitor, by attending a VIP reception, or by having your organization sponsor the event. We encourage any and all levels of partnership and collaboration. ***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. Elevate currently partners with Trinity Health, cascade Engineering, Praxis Packaging, The YMCA, Custom Profile, and Holland Home. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

**HireReach:** HireReach provides instruction and consulting to businesses interested in implementing skills-based hiring. The HireReach team has been hard at work connecting with national partners in the skills-based initiatives space. We also had the opportunity to present at the Michigan Works! Conference with a panel of experts and stakeholders connected to HireReach. ***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 continues to update its strategic plan along with a strategy for increasing membership. ***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 is now also fully implemented in Allegan County with plans to pilot in Ionia, Montcalm and Ottawa Counties in the next few months. ***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***