2021 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT
Growing a Stronger West Michigan Workforce

The Agribusiness Talent Council (ATC) is a collaborative of agribusiness employers, educators, workforce development and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan’s current and future agribusiness talent needs.

The Agribusiness Talent Council:
• is employer-led and convened by West Michigan Works!
• is collaborative in nature.
• supports local efforts to connect individuals with employment opportunities in agribusiness.
• creates new programming when needed.
• provides opportunities for employers to engage in growing the region’s talent pool.

STRATEGIES
• **Promote the Industry:** We are focused on promoting agribusiness as a great career pathway for all ages.
• **Recruit and Retain Talent:** We create and join efforts to bring new talent into the industry and maintain talent long term.
• **Train:** We connect businesses with resources to upskill their current workforce.
• **Connect to Resources:** We create and share beneficial resources for the agribusiness industry.

COUNCIL EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS

ADDITIONAL PROJECT PARTNERS
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Shady Lane Farms, Jawor Brother Blueberries, Double L Enterprises, Tender Lawn Care, Landscape Design Solutions, Zeeland Farm Services, Ceres Solutions, Litehouse Food, Michigan Turkey, Sietsema Farms, Telamon, Burch Partners, Cargill, PMSI, Arbre Farms, Kellogg’s, Roskam Baking Company, House of Flavors Premium Ice Cream, Peterson Farms, Right Management
INITIATIVES

Agribusiness Job Fair

The job fair was held, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, during the Agribusiness Spotlight Week. The event connected:

- 13 agribusiness employers with 36 job seekers.

Agribusiness Spotlight Week

The industry-specific spotlight week helped us shine a light on the great careers available in agribusiness. The week featured:

- 7 participating agribusiness employers.
- The premier of a video highlighting agribusiness careers that was viewed over 180 times on YouTube.
- 6 career exploration workshops through the Michigan State University Institute of Agricultural Technology.

MiCareerQuest

MiCareerQuest is an innovative, experiential, one-day career event that was developed in response to employers’ needs for future talent. Agribusiness participated as a stand-alone sector for the first time in 2021. The event featured:

- 11,493 registered middle and high school students.
- 19 agribusiness employers who collaborated on 12 exhibits.
- 15,657 unique visits to booths in the agribusiness sector.

West Michigan Works! Training Grant Expansion

Through the Going Pro Talent Fund, incumbent, and on-the-job training, the ATC was able to:

- Invest over $630,000 in training grant awards.
- Make training accessible and affordable for 486 individuals.

Custom Leadership Training

The agribusiness industry provides advancement opportunities for production workers to become managers and leaders. These workers may not have formal leadership training, and this project was created to develop critical leadership skills, reduce turnover, and improve production. In partnership with Right Management, the ATC piloted a training for first-line supervisors, making it possible for:

- 18 employees at 5 local agribusiness employers to develop their leadership skills.
If the past year taught us anything, it’s that everyone needs to eat, and our local food systems are the most reliable. Even during economic booms and busts, our farms need to be able to produce food, which makes agriculture a near recession-proof industry. Agriculture-related businesses need more young talent interested in all aspects of ag so that we can continue to grow and produce healthy food here in Michigan.”

- Allison Brink, executive director
Michigan Allied Poultry Industries
2021 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT
We exist to inspire and expand manufacturing talent in West Michigan

We are a talent council collaboration between manufacturers, education, economic development and workforce development recognized as a critical resource to our region’s manufacturers in supporting their long-term talent needs.

Our project-based initiatives take a three-pronged approach:

- Promote manufacturing careers.
- Develop training opportunities.
- Share best practices across our region.

MEMBERS

Over 280 companies/organizations involved in project-based initiatives.

Over 600 companies/organizations within our network.

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED ON OUR BOARD

West Michigan Works! The Right Place, NN Mobile Inc, Herman Miller, Wolverine Coil Spring, Scherdel Sales, Flex Fab, Kent ISD, and Muskegon Community College

Discover Manufacturing’s leadership team is comprised of additional representation from 22 employers.
INITIATIVES

Manufacturing Week
Manufacturing Week is a national initiative to expose students to careers in advanced manufacturing. Our 2020 virtual event engaged:
- **35** manufacturers
- **65** schools
- **12,839** students

Notable:
26% growth in the number of students.
DM YouTube channel launched to house Manufacturing Week digital content.
Five $500 scholarships awarded to high school seniors pursuing a career in manufacturing.

Adopt-a-School
In partnership with Talent 2025, this initiative was designed to connect manufacturers with local schools to build long-term engagement and increase awareness of manufacturing career opportunities.

Resources for employers are now available on the DM website.
- **11** schools adopted.

West Michigan Works! Expansion of Training Grants
- **$106,032** awarded for incumbent worker training, resulting in **78** upgraded skill certifications.

Industry Spotlight Week
A West Michigan Works! initiative to build awareness of career opportunities in five high-demand industries.

A video highlighting manufacturing’s impact and career opportunities was created and promoted on the West Michigan Works! and Discover Manufacturing websites, social media, and the Discover Manufacturing YouTube channel.

A live virtual discussion with four industry experts highlighted the benefits of automation from a talent perspective.

Two manufacturers were interviewed on a WZZM segment.

Going PRO Talent Fund
- **$5,471,376** awarded to manufacturers in West Michigan.
- Resulted in training for **2,259** new hires.
- Created **206** new apprentices.

Career Pathways Development
Job analysis sessions continue as the first step in creating career pathway maps for all manufacturing jobs identified as high demand in wmw’s 2020 hot jobs.
- **2** job families verified (3 additional job families scheduled).
Discover Manufacturing’s project-based initiatives are designed to positively impact the regional talent pool and provide pathways to highly skilled and high-demand manufacturing jobs.”

- Jerry Hill
  Discover Manufacturing Lead
Building a pipeline of qualified health care talent for West Michigan

The West Michigan Health Careers Council (WMHCC) is an employer-led, collaborative council of health care employers, educators, and workforce development and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan’s health care talent needs.

West Michigan Health Careers:
- is employer-led and convened by West Michigan Works!
- is collaborative in nature.
- supports local efforts to connect individuals with employment opportunities in health care.
- creates new programming when needed.
- provides opportunities for employers to engage in growing the region’s talent pool.

STRATEGIES

- **Outreach & Promote**: We work with employers and community partners to encourage careers in the health care industry.
- **Education & Trainings**: We provide opportunities for individuals to learn about and enter the industry, as well as work effectively in the field.
- **Funding & Resources**: We connect employers to funding opportunities and resources that support West Michigan’s health care talent needs.
- **Retention**: We create solutions to help health care employees stay within the industry or at their organization.

ENGAGEMENT

- Onboarded 5 new employer members this year.
- Engaged over 115 employers through partner meetings, newsletters, events, and more!

COUNCIL EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS

Health Care Spotlight Week

The industry-specific spotlight week helped us shine a light on the great careers available in health care. **Highlights include:**

- Online content reached over **6000** individuals.
- **Video highlighting health care careers** premiered on the WMHCC website, social media and YouTube.
- Media coverage on **WZZM 13.**
- An industry-specific **job fair.**
- An employer-led panel that highlighted the benefits of working in the industry.

MiCareerQuest

MiCareerQuest is an innovative, experiential, one-day career event that was developed in response to employers’ needs for future talent. **The 2021 event featured:**

- **11,493** registered middle and high school students.
- 6 health care organizations participated.
- **68,807** unique booth visits in the health care sector.
- Information on **Over 20** health care occupations.

Implicit Bias Training

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic’s disproportionate impact on people of color, Governor Whitmer issued a directive for health care professionals to receive implicit bias training. **WMHCC funded and hosted the training, with the following impact:**

- Over **50** individuals received mandatory training.
- **27** health care organizations were represented at the training.

Community Health Worker Training

WMHCC funded the three-month training through GRCC and Spectrum Health. The credential earned through the training can help participants secure a job as a community health worker or allow those already in the field to better serve their community. **The training provided important job skills to:**

- **7** job seekers in programs at West Michigan Works!
- **6** health care workers employed at the Hispanic Center of West Michigan, Mercy Health, SHMG Zeeland Family Medicine, and Spectrum Health.
West Michigan Health Careers Council allows us to partner with others in a similar industry, share our experiences and challenges, hear best practices that others have developed, and identify ways we can influence the labor market through partnerships with community organizations.”

- Michael Hill, Council Member
Hope Network
FUELING THE IT INDUSTRY IN WEST MICHIGAN

WMTT is a collaborative of technology employers, educators, workforce development, and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan’s current and future technology talent needs.

GOALS

• Work as a region to expand the IT talent pool.
• Create a network of IT employers focused on talent initiatives.
• Connect IT employers to resources available to upskill their talent.
• Connect IT employers with local non-profits, initiatives, and events that promote tech careers.

MEMBERS

100+ companies/organizations within our network

BOARD & SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations have supported the work of WMTT through board membership and funding. All funding goes directly to support local projects.


*Non-board member - provided financial support in 2021.
INITIATIVES

IT’S HAPPENING NETWORKING EVENT
In partnership with Hello West Michigan, WMTT hosted the first-of-its-kind networking event for West Michigan IT employers and tech talent to connect virtually. Through IT’s Happening, WMTT connected:

- 6 IT employers with
- 37 local tech professionals

AFA CYBERCAMP
In partnership with the West Michigan Center for Arts + Technology (WMCAT), WMTT made it possible for middle and high school students to build fundamental technical skills for a career in cybersecurity while exploring STEM careers. Because of WMTT’s support:

- 30 students were able to attend virtual camp.

STEM GREENHOUSE
STEM Greenhouse provided STEM curriculum to students in grades six, seven and eight during the 2020-21 school year. The program was offered at two schools in the Grand Rapids Public Schools district, which do not have middle school science teachers. Because of WMTT’s support:

- 35 students participated in a rigorous STEM curriculum to build knowledge and interest in the field.

HOUR OF CODE
WMTT organizes local participation in this global initiative to bring introductory coding to elementary students in our region. Through Hour of Code, WMTT engaged:

- 2400 West Michigan elementary students
- 81 West Michigan teachers
- 12 West Michigan IT employers

INDUSTRY LED COLLABORATIVE TRAINING

GOINGPRO TALENT FUND (GPTF)
The GPTF program provides employers with support to train new staff and upskill current employees in high-demand occupations to meet their talent needs. Because of the GPTF:

- 17 IT companies/departments received grants.
- $500k in training GPTF grant dollars were awarded.

EXPANSION OF TRAINING FUNDS
The expansion of grants, including GPTF, incumbent worker training, and on-the-job training funds, resulted in:

- $847k in funding
- 498 total trainees
“West Michigan Tech Talent acts as a catalyst to make connections between employers of IT professionals and the community. We aim to grow, develop, recruit and retain top tech talent in our region. We want to accelerate this process by promoting IT careers to K-16 students, upskilling our current workforce and adult career changers, and partnering with Hello West Michigan to create IT specific recruitment campaigns to fill in-demand occupations.”

- Anne Pentiak
  West Michigan Tech Talent Lead