



**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.

[Click here to join the meeting](#) Meeting ID: 276 897 363 072 Passcode: RJz5z6

+1 616-803-9815,,732739977# Phone Conference ID: 732 739 977#

Monday, February 12, 2024 ▪ 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Attendance
2. Public Comment – Agenda Items
3. Introduction of Kirsti Jones, Chief Financial Officer **Information Item**
4. Approval of Minutes **Action Required**
 - a. October 9, 2023
 - b. December 11, 2023
5. Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Member Approvals **Action Required**
Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation
6. Policy Approval: WMW 18-04c1 Service Animal Policy **Action Required**
Jeff Dornbos, Staff Attorney
7. Updated Vision Statement **Discussion Item/
Potential Action**
Janie McNabb, One-Stop Operator & Ad-hoc Strategic Plan-Vision Committee
8. WDB Activities: *Heather Daniel, WDB Chairperson*
 - a. Member Nomination, Nate Henschel, Consumers Energy **Information Item**
9. WDB Committee/Council Updates **Information Item**
 - a. Executive Committee: *Heather Daniel, WDB Chairperson*
 - b. Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC): *Tonia Castillo, Committee Chairperson*
 - c. Legislative Committee: *Jim Fisher, Committee Chairperson*
 - d. Solutions Driven Committee: *Jordan Clark, Committee Chairperson*
 - e. Ad-Hoc: Essential Service Awards Committee: *Mark Bergsma, Committee Chairperson*
10. [Success Story: Request Foods](#) **Information Item**
Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions
11. WDB Service Summary: *Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer* **Information Item**
12. Solutions Driven Updates **Information Item**
*Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions,
Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation*
13. Public Comment
14. Adjournment

Next Scheduled Workforce Development Board Meeting: April 8, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.



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

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[Click here to join the meeting](#) Meeting ID: 260 931 685 982 Passcode: PTkxUf

+1 616-803-9815,,127468698# Phone Conference ID: 127 468 698#

Monday, October 9, 2023 ▪ 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Workforce Board Members Present: Mark Bergsma (Chairperson), Heather Daniel (Vice-Chairperson), Nora Balgoyen, Ryan Bennett, Morgan Carroll, Tonia Castillo, Jordan Clark, Cathy Cronick, Paul David, Jay Dunwell, Jim Fisher, Kristin Garris, Jon Hofman (virtual), TaRita Johnson, Charles Lepper, Greg King, Shana Lewis, Kolene Miller, Dan Rinsema-Sybenga, Samantha Semrau, Dan TenHoopen, Sara Whisler

Workforce Board Members Absent: Kenyatta Brame, Jennifer Heinzman, Dave Kitchen, Jen Schottke, Michelle Seigo, Mark Thomas

Staff Present (physical location or virtually): Jacob Maas, Janette Monroe, Jeff Dornbos, Tasha Evans, Amy Lebednick, Chad Patton, Malinda Powers (virtual), Tawanna Wright

Guests Present: Janie McNabb (One-Stop Operator), Jan Harrington-Davis (Corewell Health), Emily Babson (Plascore), Kelly Kroll (Bradford White), Cynthia Walker (GR Job Corps)

1. Call to Order at 12:01 p.m. Chairperson, Mark Bergsma.
2. Public Comment- Mark requested introductions from those attending the meeting. Mark addressed the board and staff noting this is his last meeting as Chairperson.
3. Introduction of Jeff Dornbos, Staff Attorney **Information Item**
Jeff Dornbos, Staff Attorney, introduced himself to the board.

4. Approval of the June 12, 2023 Minutes **Action Required**
Motion – Jim Fisher
Second – Morgan Carroll
Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried

5. WDB Activities: **Action Required**

a. Election of WDB Officers: November 1, 2023 – October 31, 2025

Janette Monroe, Executive Assistant, reviewed that WMW recently collected nominations from WDB members for the offices of WDB Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the term dates of November 1, 2023 through October 31, 2025. Janette reported that at the time of the board packet mailing, only one (1) Chairperson nomination and three (3) nominations for Vice-Chairperson were received. All nominees were contacted to confirm their willingness and ability to serve. Two of the three Vice-Chair nominees graciously declined their nomination. Heather Daniel is being presented as the only nominee for Chairperson and Shana Lewis, the only nominee for Vice-Chairperson. Janette reviewed that each nominee has provided a biography in the board packet. Janette called for any additional nominations on the floor for Chairperson twice. Hearing none, Janette closed the nominations for Chairperson, with Heather Daniel being the only nominated candidate for Chairperson. Janette further requested any additional nominations for Vice-Chairperson twice. After hearing none, Janette closed the nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Being no further nominees, Janette reported that a ballot was not needed and requested a motion for approval of the candidates.

Motion – Jim Fisher moved to close the nominations, and to approve Heather Daniel to serve as Chairperson and Shana Lewis to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the WDB, for the term of office November 1, 2023 through October 31, 2025.

Second – Jordan Clark

Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried

- b. Member Term of Office: November 1, 2022 – October 31, 2024: **Information Item**
Janette Monroe, reported that as of July 2023, the WDB had two (2) vacant seats for the WDB member term of office through October 31, 2024. Janette reviewed that the first vacancy is for a private/ business sector seat, which was previously filled by Randy Boss, and staff are currently seeking a replacement to fill this seat. The second vacancy is in the Higher Education sector, as a result of Dr. Stacy Young announcing her departure from Montcalm Community College (MCC). MCC has since selected Connie Stewart as the interim President, while the college pursues Dr. Young's successor. Connie Stewart applied to fill the seat and her application was reviewed by the designated Nomination Committee. Janette reported that on September 18, 2023, the Executive Committee of the WDB approved and supported Connie Stewart's application. Staff will request formal appointment from the ACSET Governing Board for appointment to serve on the WDB with the term of office dates through October 31, 2024, and to continue seeking fulfilment of the business seat until further notice.
- c. Member Term of Office: November 1, 2023 – October 31, 2025: **Information Item**
Janette Monroe, reported that as of July 2023, the WDB had seventeen (17) board member seats, and one (1) additional vacant seat whose term of office expire on October 31, 2023. Of those, staff were notified that John Buchan recently retired from NN Inc., and Scott McLean from Corewell Health Ventures, requested to step down from his service on the board. Janette reviewed that applications were received and reviewed by the designated Nomination Committee and the proposed slate was provided in the board packet. Furthermore, Janette reported that on September 18, 2023, the Executive Committee of the WDB approved and supported the slate of applicants. Staff will request a formal appointment from the ACSET Governing Board to serve on the WDB with the term of office dates of November 1, 2023 through October 31, 2025.
- d. 2024 Meetings Schedule **Action Required**
Janette Monroe, reported that staff and the Executive Committee of the WDB met and discussed the meeting calendars for 2024. Janette presented the proposed 2024 meeting schedule to the board and requested any changes. Receiving none, Janette requested the WDB's approval of the 2024 meeting schedules.

Motion – Dan TenHoopen

Second – Paul David

Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried

- 6. Presentation: 2023 Job Survey **Information Item**
Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, presented on the 2023 Talent Survey: "What Job Seekers are Looking For and The Obstacles In Their Way". The full presentation can be viewed here: www.westmiworks.org/meetings. A discussion took place and staff answered board members' questions.
- 7. WMW 16-03c8 Welfare Reform Support Services Policy **Action Required**
Tasha Evans reported that this policy seeks to include language that allows for WMW to apply any updates to State Policy regarding an allowable support, amount, and/or limit to local policy. This change will allow WMW to provide job seekers access to all allowable benefits, based on available funds, should the State policy change to exceed previous caps. Tasha requested WDB approval of WMW 16-03c8 Welfare Reform Support Service Policy. Staff answered board members' questions.

Motion – Dan TenHoopen

Second – Dan Rinsema-Sybenga

Item Approved by Vote – Motion carried**8. WMW WDB Subcommittee Updates****Information Item**

- a. Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee (Executive Committee): Mark Bergsma, Chairperson, reported that the Executive Committee met on September 18, 2023 and discussed the July 2023 Board financials, the 2024 budget, discussed the terms of office, nomination committee and upcoming election of officers, today's meeting agenda, and staff provided updates on recent events and conferences.
 - i. Strategic Plan: Mark reported that with the lead of One-Stop Operator, Janie McNabb, the Executive Committee conducted its annual review of the WMW Strategic Plan. Discussion took place based on staff feedback and will be working to put together an ad-hoc workgroup to further discuss. Jacob reviewed that the general consensus is to revisit and rewrite the vision statement to align better with the work being done daily.
 - ii. Executive Committee Roster: Mark Bergsma reported that the EC discussed the roster. A recommendation and motion was made that during the Election of Officers every 2 years, the newly appointed Chairperson of the WDB will review board member committee assignments to the EC and will put out a call of interest to other members.
- b. Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC): Tonia Castillo, WDB Member and Council Chair, reported that the CEAC met on September 22, 2023. The council discussed grant updates, metrics, member activities, and initiatives taking place.
- c. Legislative Committee: Jim Fisher, WDB Member and Committee Chair, reported that the committee met on July 18, 2023. Discussion took place on the Wagner-Peyser (WP) Proposed Rule, service center visits/tours, and the State Fiscal Year 2024. Jim also announced that Marcus Keech from The Grand Rapids Chamber would be joining the committee.
- d. Solutions Driven Committee: Jordan Clark, WDB Member and Committee Chair, reported that the last committee meeting was on May 25th. Next meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2023.

9. Success Story**Information Item**

Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation, reviewed the success story on Shanti Burrell, which was provided in the board packet. The full story can be viewed online here:
<https://www.westmiworks.org/blog/success-story/achieving-dreams-thanks-to-the-wioa-youth-program/>.

10. WDB Service Summary**Information Item**

Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer, reviewed the Service Summary for October 2022 through August 31, 2023 with board members. Jacob 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.

11. 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: Chad Patton, reported that The Early Childhood Investment Corporation's (ECIC) Childcare Investment Fund awarded West Michigan Works! \$120,000 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. Under this 1-year grant, West Michigan Works! plans to convene early

childhood education stakeholders across our region to develop and launch a plan that will bolster the early childhood educator pipeline. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

- b. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA): Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- c. Michigan Career Opportunity Academies for Community Health (MiCOACH): Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- d. The Michigan Citizen Reentry Initiative (MiCRI): Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, reported that this is a cooperative grant opportunity with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) 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) in Milan, Michigan and four Residential Reentry Centers (RRC). Although the planning stages for this grant are anticipated to conclude in April, participants have not yet transitioned into the RRCs. Tasha reported that after the board mailing was sent out, WMW was advised to begin moving forward with implementing this grant. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***
- e. Michigan Incarcerated Veterans' In-Reach Program (MIVIP): Additional information provided in the board packet.
- f. Grand Rapids Community College One Workforce Grant: Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- g. Michigan Learning and Education Advancement Program (MiLEAP): Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- h. Barrier Removal and Employment Success (BRES) Expansion: Tasha Evans reported that initially, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) encouraged organizations who can assist Michiganders with removing barriers to employment to apply for the \$14.6 million Barrier Removal and Employment Success grant program starting Monday, May 22. Eligible applicants for funding include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and Michigan Works! agencies, private for-profit agencies, private non-profit agencies, and other established, experienced providers of supportive services. The total funding available for this initiative is \$14,625,000. Entities awarded funding under this Request for Proposals (RFP) that are not Michigan Works! agency (MWA) will be required to partner with a local MWA for the purpose of fiduciary responsibilities and required reporting. Tasha further reported that LEO rescinded the original BRES RFP that was published on May 22, 2023, and reissued it with a submission deadline of October 20, 2023.. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- i. Michigan Rural Enhanced Access to Careers in Healthcare (MiREACH): Additional information 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:

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity announced the award of \$64,792,406 to 1,103 employers statewide for the Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) for fiscal year 2023. West Michigan Works! employer awards are outlined below:

- Cycle 1: 201 employers received a total of \$17,463,904.00. Awarded training may occur from February 1, 2023 – January 31, 2024.
- Cycle 2: 69 employers received a total of \$3,697,712. Awarded training may occur from July 17, 2023 - July 16, 2024.

A full list of grant recipients statewide is available online at Michigan.gov/TalentFund.

Fiscal Year 2024:

The application for cycle 1 is tentatively scheduled to open October 9, 2023. The grant process is competitive, and funds are allocated quickly. Employers can learn more about the upcoming Going PRO Talent Fund application process for cycle 1 by watching this [information session video](#).

Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development

- n. 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. With the funding, WMW will hire 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 and a summer camp for the construction industry. ***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 all ITCs have expanded their outreach with dedicated LinkedIn accounts and bimonthly newsletters. Amy reviewed that the electronic copy of the packet has all the ITC's websites hyperlinked to access additional information. Further Amy reported that Experience GR (ExGR) has expressed interest in funding a Hospitality Industry Council through West Michigan Works! to help convene, create, and facilitate start-up of this council. Amy reported that staff are beginning to have conversations on this start up. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

- a. 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.** The ATC will host its next quarterly job fairs for opportunity populations, in partnership with regional and state partners who serve these populations. Planning will begin for 2024 Career AG-xploration events soon, as we await the decision for the MDARD Rural Readiness Grant, which would expand the event to 4 additional counties. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- b. 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 is currently working on an approved project designed around improving mental health within the construction industry focusing on substance abuse, suicide, stigma, and depression and anxiety among the workforce. The project team has been formed, has met once, and is working diligently to make sure the project is done correctly and can offer solutions to the issues listed above. Additional information is provided in the board packet.

- c. **Discover Manufacturing (DM) Mission: “We Exist to Inspire and Expand Manufacturing Talent in West Michigan.”** DM has implemented improvements for the council’s flagship event, Discover Manufacturing Week, which will be November 6 -10, 2023. The changes are designed to help streamline the registration and matching process, putting less stress on educational champions, while increasing the effectiveness of communication to employers. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- d. **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.** The council has made significant progress on revising and finalizing a comprehensive credential list for the healthcare industry. The directory is available online on the [WMHCC website](#) and continues to be updated with new programs. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- e. **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 Council Approved an event focused on assisting international students and small businesses with the Visa process. “Demystifying the Visa Process: The Small Business Guide to hiring International students”. Additional information is provided in the board packet.

Programs

- a. **WMW Sponsored Registered Apprenticeships Program (RAP):**
The apprenticeship team continues to experience steady growth driven by employer demand. WMW currently holds standards for 37 US Department of Labor registered apprenticeships, with 133 active apprentices and 73 participating employers. Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- b. **Ascend Youth Programming:** The Ascend team currently provides in-person and virtual programming for eligible youth across our 7-county region. The Ascend Summer Career Readiness Program wrapped up a successful season of summer work experiences with a total of 85 youth attending programming. With cuts to funding for this program, we were happy to only see a decrease of 3 youth served between this year and last year. We were also happy to see stability in youth served as we made a transition to providing 100% in-person work experience. The Ascend program will debrief for continuous improvement, and transition to year-round activities including recruitment, outreach, and youth retention through quality career coaching and services. Chad reported that they are planning a Fall Conference for the Youth. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- c. **MiCareerQuest:** MiCareerQuest is a Career Exploration Experience for middle and high school students. We are excited to announce that MiCareerQuest 2024 will take place on March 27, 2024 with March 28, 2024 as a back-up. Planning with the Steering and ISD Committees will begin at the end of September. Preparations for the event have already begun with fundraising, timeline planning, and curriculum development for our region’s schools. ***Pipeline Development***
- d. **HireReach (HR):** HireReach provides instruction and consulting to businesses interested in implementing skills-based hiring. HireReach continues to offer an Academy to 7 businesses in Kalamazoo in partnership with WE Upjohn and Southwest Michigan Works!. The HireReach team is also recruiting for a grant-funded academy in Kent County. This academy will host 6 Kent County employers. The HireReach team has also engaged in strategic planning for the next three years, and received funding for a project called Elevate, originally RiseUp. ***Diversity and Inclusion***
- e. **Retention Solutions Network (RSN):** 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 employer. Chad reported the RSN continues collaboration with the Business Solutions team and the Solutions Driven Committee of the WDB. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

- f. 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***
- b. USDOL Training For Apprenticeship Training Representatives: Amy Lebednick reported that WMW was commissioned by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) in response to an RFP to provide training for US DOL Office of Apprenticeship and State Apprenticeship Agency Apprenticeship Training Representatives (ATR). The training will equip ATRs to better assist Registered Apprenticeship (RA) program sponsors in engaging their local workforce development board staff for practical WIOA support. The training will provide ATRs with specific information and tools that help them move from understanding policy alignment to practical implementation with partners.

Greg King, Lakeshore Advantage, commended the team for its efforts and for the work being done for Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF).

12. Other Business

- a. Wagner Peyser (WP) Proposed Rule: **Information Item**
Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer, reported that he was recently on a call with the Michigan Works! Association (MWA) and the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to voice Michigan's concerns about the proposed rule, now that a rulemaking draft is being sent up to the White House/executive branch for additional review. Jacob stated he will continue to share any new updates with the WDB as they are received.
- b. Save the Date for the Annual Meeting Scheduled for Monday, December 11, 2023 at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park.

13. Public Comment- Jacob Maas welcomed new staff member Jeff Dornbos to the team. Jacob reminded staff that Melanie White retired during the past year. In addition, Jacob announced that staff member, Bob Perkins, CFO recently announced his retirement, and his last day is October 20, 2023. Jacob thanked Bob for his leadership in this role over the past couple of years. Jacob stated that WMW has contracted with Brenda Isenhardt, who was the CFO prior to Bob, and Orrin Bailey, who also recently retired from Kinexus this past summer, as part-time consultants with WMW to assist during this transitional period. Jacob stated the CFO position is posted and that WMW is working with a couple of recruiting firms to assist in filling the role.

Lastly, Jacob thanked Mark Bergsma and Heather Daniel for their service over the past four years. Mark displayed servant leadership as WDB Chair by always showing up to the meetings and attending events and conferences.

Mark stated he looks forward to Heather Daniel and Shana Lewis stepping into their new roles as Chair and Vice Chair of the WDB.

14. Adjournment at 1:26p.m. by Chairperson, Mark Bergsma.

Recorded by: _____ Received by: _____



2023 Annual Meeting
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park (Huizenga Grand Room South)
1000 East Beltline NE • Grand Rapids, MI 49525
Monday, December 11, 2023 • Meeting 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
(Networking Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m.)
MINUTES

Workforce Board Members Present: Heather Daniel (Chairperson), Emily Babson, Nora Balgoyen, Ryan Bennett, Mark Bergsma, Kenyatta Brame, Tonia Castillo, Jordan Clark, Cathy Cronick, Paul David, Jay Dunwell, Jim Fisher, Jan Harrington-Davis, Jon Hofman, Kelly Kroll, Charles Lepper, Dan Rinsema-Sybenga, Jen Schottke, Michelle Seigo, Samantha Semrau, Dan TenHooen

Workforce Board Members Absent: Morgan Carroll, Kristen Garris, Jennifer Heinzman, TaRita Johnson, Greg King, Dave Kitchen, Shana Lewis (Vice-Chair), Kolene Miller, Connie Stewart, Mark Thomas, Sara Whisler

Governing Board Members Present: Com. Ron Baker, Com. Tony. Baker, Mark De Young, Kim Cyr, Dave Hatfield (Vice-Chair), Melissa LaGrand, Joe Moss, Darrell Paige, Larry Tiejema, Milinda Ysasi

Governing Board Members Absent: Com. Jim Storey (Vice-Chair), Rebekah Curran, Matt Kallman, Kelsey Perdue

Staff Present: Jacob Maas, Angie Barksdale, Kelley Allard, Heather Bates, Olivia Blomstrom, William Braylock, Marlene Brostrom, Karrie Brown, Tawana Brown, Brittany Chase, Carol Distel, Jeff Dornbos, Chrissy Douglas, Mark Dumouchelle, Tasha Evans, Emily Gary, Zachary Graft, Rosa Hernandez, Jeremiah Hill, Erin Kenny, Laura Krist, Amy Lebednick, Richard Lovell, Trevor Mier, Janette Monroe, Abby Monterusso, Julie Moore, Chad Patton, Malinda Powers, Juan Rosario, John Rumery, Maggie Ryan, Larry Sanders, Richelle Smith, Julie Sooy, Abbigail Stalker, Tawanna Wright

Guests Present: Cindy Brown (GVSU), Cathy Cantu (Orchard View Schools), Jesse Carle (Walters Gardens), Tracie Coffman (WK Kellogg Foundation), Diane Cote (Walters Gardens), Jeran Culina (Business Leaders United), Arika Davis (GRCC), Anissa Eddie (Office of Congresswoman Hillary Scholten), Kyle Fiebig (MAISD), Ryan Graham (Kent ISD), Bill Guest (Metrics Reporting), Jan Harrington-Davis, Brenda Hennink (Aquinas College), Ryan Hundt (Michigan Works! Association), Marcus Keech (The Grand Rapids Chamber), Stephanie Kempa (Herbruck's Poultry Ranch), Kate Kooyman (Office of Senate Majority Leader Winnie Brinks), Kira Malinina (Walters Gardens), Oleksandr Malinina, Scott McLean (Corewell Health), Ben McLeod (Office of Congressman Bill Huizenga), Aimee Misiewicz (Herbruck's Poultry Ranch), Michael O'Connor (Zeeland Public Schools), Stephen Martin (Representative Carol Glanville's Office), Grace Platz (Herbruck's Poultry Ranch), Lisa Radak (GRCC), Ginger Rohwer (GVSU), Khristian Silvis (Office of Congresswoman Hillary Scholten), Pat Walstra (Kent ISD), Kimberly Way (Michigan Works! Association), Chauncy Williams (Muskegon Community Education Center)

1. Call to Order at 12:10 p.m. ACSET Governing Board Member, Com. Mark De Young. Mark reported that unfortunately, Com. Storey was unable to attend the meeting.

2. Public Comment- None.

3. **Presentation and Recognitions**

Information Item

Mark De Young, on behalf of the board and organization thanked the guests, board members, and elected officials for joining the meeting. Jim extended congratulations to this year's award winners. Mark reported that highlighted on the agenda, guests can view WMW's 2023 annual report by using the QR code on the agenda. To begin the 2023 year in review, Mark introduced Amy Lebednick, Business Solutions Director.

Amy reviewed that West Michigan Works!' demand driven approach to workforce development has allowed us to weather the changes in our economy over the last year- guiding our work to provide career education, support services, coaching and training- to meet the needs of businesses across our seven-county region. Amy reported how WMW had served employers and job seekers during, and post pandemic. WMW has been innovative and tenacious and did not lose sight of our mission. Change seems to be our only constant. We manage it by remaining hopeful and focusing on our impact. Amy stated that staff are pleased to share some of the major accomplishments of 2023.

a. Business Solutions and Employer of the Year

Amy Lebednick, Director of Business Solutions, reviewed the following highlights from Business Solutions programs: employers served, job filled, expansion/attraction projects, potential new jobs, Industry Talent Councils (ITCs) and its accomplishments, Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF) awards, and registered apprenticeship programs.

Amy Lebednick recognized Herbruck's Poultry Ranch Inc., as the 2023 Employer of the Year Award, for its commitment to the Michigan Works! system and the Agribusiness Talent Council. Amy reported that Herbruck's was an essential part in supporting and growing the industry beyond their own operation. They currently serve as an employer champion for the agribusiness sector in the career exploration event MiCareerQuest. Herbruck's offers comprehensive skill development through its apprenticeship program in partnership with Montcalm Community College and utilizing the GPTF. Stephanie Kempa, of Herbruck's accepted the award.

b. Development and Innovation and Partner of the Year

Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation, reviewed the following highlights from Development and Innovation: HireReach, MiCareerQuest, MiCareer Launch, youth served through Ascend, WorkReady and the Retention Solutions Network.

Chad presented Muskegon Community Education Center (MCEC) with the Partner of the Year Award. MCEC provides a unique alternative high school experience that enables students to move beyond their barriers and earn a diploma, identify a career path and transition into work or education. MCEC also supports Muskegon Public Schools by providing essential readiness programs to middle and high school students. Chad further reported that MCEC works closely with Ascend on programs such as Career Passport exploration, MiCareerLaunch, Summer Work experience, and MiCareerQuest to name a few. MCEC works directly with WMW staff and continues to seek innovative ideas, programs, and grants to support the mission of youth career readiness. Chauncy Williams of MCEC accepted the award.

c. Talent Solutions and Impact Award Recognition

Tasha Evans, Director of Talent Solutions, reviewed the following highlights from Talent Solutions programs: job seekers served, training dollars spent, credentials earned, barriers removed, partnerships, gained employment by jobseekers, and wages earned. Further, Tasha reviewed the expansion of the refugee programs and the 2023 talent survey.

Lastly, Tasha reviewed that WMW submits nominations for the Michigan Works! Association (MWA) Impact Awards each year. An Impact award honors those that have built economic results by creating jobs and developing fresh talent in their communities. The awards ceremony will be held in Lansing on April 17, 2024, with local State legislators. This year, Kira Malinina and Walters Gardens were selected as Impact Award recipients. The video of the Impact Awardees can be seen [here](#). Kira Malinina and Jesse Carle accepted the awards.

d. Organization Updates, Sharing Knowledge and Best Practices and What's Ahead

Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer, reported that in 2023 staff have provided over 30 presentations on topics across business solutions, talent solutions, and development and innovation programming. Angie reported that WMW continues to be recognized as a state and national leader in the work being done. Some of these organizations were from California, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Philadelphia, Texas, Virginia and Washington, D.C. to name a few. Angie reported that staff continue to focus on a positive workplace culture, building connections, and transparency in our on-site, hybrid, and virtual workplace. Angie reported that WMW provided quarterly "Ask Anything" town-hall style meetings for organization wide updates and for staff to ask questions, new hire meet and greets, a customized social security project, and CPR & AED trainings for staff. The board approved a new DE&I policy to cement accountability and desired company culture. Furthermore, Angie reported that innovative programs and initiatives are already in the works for 2024. These include the implementation of Elevate (with supports received from WK Kellogg Foundation, Doug & Maria DeVos Foundation, Amway, John and Nancy Kennedy), which will collaborate with community-based organizations and employers on recruitment, career development frameworks, a partnership with Experience GR to establish a new hospitality focused Industry Talent Council, and a partnership with other Michigan Works! agencies and Global Detroit to administer and expand the Michigan International Talent Solutions Program.

e. Potential Risks/Opportunities for 2024

Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer, reported that two weeks ago, the U.S. Department of Labor issued a final rule regarding Wagner-Peyser, allowing Michigan, Colorado, and Massachusetts (demonstration states) to deliver services under current staffing models. Jacob thanked the many supporters, staff, board members, and legislators, including Senators Peters and Stabenow, Representatives Huizenga, Moolenaar, and Scholten, and those who signed on opposing the rule, those who submitted public comment, and those who showed leadership through the uncertainty being faced. However, Jacob reported that the work is not quite done, as the final rule mentioned "rigorous evaluation activities" that the demonstration states must participate in to prove their current staffing models are "empirically supported". In addition, Jacob reported that several funding streams need reauthorization.

From a state level, Jacob reviewed that we continue to outperform other states across the country, and as a result have seen a decrease in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding year over year, with rising costs of goods, services, and labor, we are in a challenging situation, such as "due more for less". Although cuts in WIOA, we continue to serve more people year over year. Jacob stated he is hopeful to work on building relationships with many of the new representatives throughout the next year.

Furthermore, Jacob reported that in 2023, all 7 of our senators returned, we had 1 new congressional representative and 13 of our 20 representatives were new, or new to us due to re-drawn districts. Jacob stated that WMW conducted over 26 legislative visits.

Jacob announced that MiCareerQuest is scheduled for March 27, 2024, and that the Beverly A. Drake Essential Service Awards nomination period closes this Friday- December 15.

4. West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board (WDB) Chairperson, Heather Daniel, provided recognition to Mark Bergsma for his exceptional service as board chairperson over the past four years. Heather also thanked former WDB members John Buchan, Scott McLean, and Dr. Stacy Young for their valuable contributions. Heather reiterated the great strides in supporting the talent needs of employers and employment needs of jobseekers in 2023. Heather thanked all those attending for the challenging work they are all doing for workforce development across the region.
5. Heather Daniel adjourned the meeting at 12:57 p.m.

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: Chad Patton, Director of Development and Innovation

DATE: February 12, 2024

RE: Career Education Advisory Council (CEAC) Member Approvals

Background

The CEAC is renewing membership representatives for the following individuals:

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

Ottawa Area ISD has transitioned roles and responsibilities, Jacquie Rehkopf will take Dave Searles' position on CEAC for Ottawa Area ISD.

Action

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

Member Name	Application Date	Term End Date	Name and Type of Organization	Notes
Rich Okoniewski	6/10/2022	6/10/2024	Allegan County Technical and Education Center	
Ryan Bennett	9/9/2022	9/9/2024	U. A. Local #174	
Cary Stamas	12/12/2023	12/12/2025	Kent ISD	
Lisa Hungerford	12/12/2023	12/12/2025	Talent First	
Ginger Rohwer	12/12/2023	12/12/2025	MiSTEM Network's Greater West Michigan Region at GVSU	
Chauncy Williams	12/19/2023	12/19/2025	Muskegon Public Schools	
Rich Franklin	12/12/2023	12/12/2025	Barry Intermediate School District	
Kimberly Call	12/12/2023	12/12/2025	Trans-Matic	
Jay Edinger	3/11/2022	3/11/2024	Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes	
Dave Searles	3/14/2022	3/14/2024	Careerline Tech Center (Ottawa)	Stepping Down - Jacquie Rehkopf taking place
Michael O'Connor	3/14/2022	3/14/2024	Zeeland Adult Education	
Pat Walstra	3/16/2022	3/16/2024	Kent ISD	
Kyle Fiebig	3/21/2022	3/21/2024	Muskegon Area ISD	
Ted Paton	3/23/2022	3/23/2024	Ionia County ISD	
David Tebo	9/22/2022	9/22/2024	Ottawa Area ISD	
Cheryl Burmeister	3/30/2022	3/30/2024	Howmet	
Luke McCotter	3/31/2022	3/31/2024	ADAC Automotive	
Jimmy Brady	4/1/2022	4/1/2024	Consumers Energy	
Kim Baron	4/11/2022	4/11/2024	Grand Rapids Public Schools	
Tonia Castillo	9/20/2022	9/20/2024	Ottawa Area ISD	
Jacquie Rehkopf	1/19/2024	1/19/2026	Ottawa Area ISD	

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Holland, MI 49424
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MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: WMW Legal Department

DATE: February 12, 2024

RE: WMW 18-04c1: Service Animal Policy

Background

The Workforce Development Board ("WDB") approved a Service Animal Policy (WMW 18-04) on June 11, 2018. The Policy, consistent with both Michigan and federal law, permits a person with a disability to bring their service animal into a One-Stop Center operated by West Michigan Works! ("WMW"). The Policy does not, however, address service animals in training because service animals in training were not referenced in Michigan or federal law when the Policy was adopted.

The State of Michigan recently amended one of its statutes related to service animals—MCL § 750.502c—to require places of public accommodation to modify their policies to permit the use of a "service animal in training by an animal raiser or trainer." Specifically, the relevant portion states as follows:

a public accommodation shall modify its policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of a service animal in training by an animal raiser or trainer, if the animal raiser or trainer is being accompanied by the service animal in training for the purpose of training or socializing the animal.

MCL § 750.502c(3). WMW is a "public accommodation" and, therefore, must modify its policies to permit the use of a service animal in training by an animal raiser or trainer.

Attached, please find a draft of the proposed revised policy, WMW 18-04c1: Service Animal Policy, comparing it to the original version, with proposed additions highlighted in yellow and proposed deletions crossed out. The primary changes include:

- adding the definition of a "service animal in training" which is now defined under Michigan law to mean "an animal accompanied by an animal raiser or trainer with the intent that animal is being raised, socialized, and trained to become a service animal;"

- adding the definition of "animal raiser or trainer" which is now defined under Michigan law to mean "an individual who raises and socializes a service animal in training with the intent that the animal will become a service animal;"
- adding references to a service animal in training throughout the Policy to clarify that service animals in training are also permitted in One Stop Centers in addition to service animals.

A copy of amended MCL § 750.502c is also attached.

Recommended Action

WMW Legal Department recommends that the WDB approve *WMW 18-04c1: Service Animal Policy* to ensure that the Policy is consistent with the recent amendments to Michigan law requiring public accommodations to amend their policies to permit the use of a service animal in training by an animal raiser or trainer.



Title: WMW 18-04 **c1** Service Animal Policy

Effective Date: **February __, 2024** ~~June 11, 2018~~

Approved By: West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board on ~~6/11/2018~~ **2/__/24**

Program Affected: **All West Michigan Works! Programs**

Scope: This policy provides guidelines applicable to the presence of service animals **and service animals in training** in One-Stop Centers operated by West Michigan Works!.

Supersedes: **WMW 18-04 Service Animal Policy**

References: Section 188 of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), P. L. 113–128; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P. L. 101-36; 28 CFR 35.104; 28 CFR 35.136; 29 CFR 38.4; 29 CFR 38.16; MCL 750.50a; MCL 37.1101 *et seq*; **MCL 750.502c**.

Background: Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) prohibits any recipient of federal funds under WIOA from discriminating against any qualified person with a disability who applies for or participates in any employment and training program funded with WIOA funds, including the use of a One-Stop Center, on the basis of his or her disability. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) also prohibits a public entity, such as West Michigan Works!, from excluding any qualified individual with a disability from participation in or denying the benefits of the services, programs, or activities that it offers, or discriminating against that person, on the basis of his or her disability. The federal regulations that implement both of these statutes include rules specifically applicable to service animals. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 also prohibits recipients of federal funds from illegal discrimination on the basis of disability, but neither that statute nor its implementing regulations deal specifically with service animals.

Title III of the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act prohibits a public entity from denying an individual the full and equal enjoyment of a public service because of a disability that is unrelated to the individual's ability to utilize and benefit from such service, but it is silent concerning the use of service animals. However, section 50a of the Michigan penal code provides that no individual may “willfully and maliciously impede or interfere with, or attempt to impede or interfere with, duties performed by a service animal that he or she knows or has reason to believe is a service animal used by a person with a disability.”

WMW 18-04 c1 Service Animal Policy

- Policy:** It is the policy of West Michigan Works! (WMW) to provide any qualified individual with a disability, including any such individual who uses a service animal **or service animal in training**, the opportunity to take full advantage of any appropriate aid, benefit, service or training available at any service center included in the one-stop system that it administers.
- Definitions:**
- Section 29 CFR 38.4(f) of the USDOL regulations that implement Section 188 of WIOA defines a “service animal” as

Any **dog** that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are **not** service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

This language is identical to the definition of a service animal contained in the regulations that implement Title II of the ADA.

The ADA Title II regulations, as well as the Michigan law, indicate that a **miniature horse** may also be a service animal. A miniature horse is one that:

 - has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability who seeks to utilize any of the aids, benefits or services available in the service center;
 - **W**eighs no more than 100 pounds; and
 - **S**tands less than 26 inches in height at the withers.

Any such miniature horse is subject to the same rules as any other service animal as provided in this policy.
 - "Person with a disability" means a person who has a disability as defined in section 12102 of the ADA of 1990, 42 USC 12102, and the regulations that implement Section 188 of WIOA at 29 CFR 38.104.
 - “Work or tasks” that a service animal is trained to perform for a person with a disability include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. **However, the crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship, without more, do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.** 29 CFR 38.4(f); 28 CFR 35.104;

WMW 18-04 c1 Service Animal Policy

4. "Service animal in training" means "an animal accompanied by an animal raiser or trainer with the intent that animal is being raised, socialized, and trained to become a service animal." MCL 750.502c(14)(h).

5. "Animal raiser or trainer" means "an individual who raises and socializes a service animal in training with the intent that the animal will become a service animal." MCL § 750.502c(14)(a).

Rules:

1. No person may bring any animal into a One-Stop Center unless the animal is either: (a) a service animal brought in by a person with a disability; or (b) a service animal in training that is accompanying an animal raiser or trainer for the purpose of training or socializing the animal.

Any animal that is:

- a. Not a dog or a miniature horse; or
- b. Solely an emotional support animal that performs no work or tasks for the disabled person;

is **not** a service animal that is allowed in a service center.

Any animal that is:

- a. not a dog or a miniature horse; or
- b. is not accompanying an animal raiser or trainer for the purpose of training or socializing the animal;

is **not** a service animal in training that is allowed in a service center.

2. Any service animal or service animal in training that is brought into a service center by a person with a disability must be:

- Housebroken; and
- Under control of its handler. A service animal or service animal in training shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).

3. A Service Center Manager, an Assistant Manager, or a WMW employee designated by a Service Center Manager may require that a person remove an animal, including a service animal and/or a service animal in training, from a one-stop center if:

- The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;
- The animal is not housebroken; or
- The animal is **neither** a service animal **nor** a service animal in training as defined in this Policy.

4. If WMW staff properly excludes a service animal pursuant to this policy, WMW must give the individual with a disability the opportunity to return to the service center and participate in the service, program, or activity without having

WMW 18-04 c1 Service Animal Policy

the service animal on the premises. If WMW staff properly excludes a service animal in training pursuant to this policy, WMW must give the animal raiser or trainer the opportunity to return to the service center and participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal in training on the premises.

5. If a Service Center Manager, Assistant Manager, or designated employee requires that a person remove an animal from a service center, that person shall document ~~that~~ the incident on the WMW Service Animal Report attached hereto ~~to this policy~~.

6. WMW is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal ~~or service animal in training~~.

7. Individuals with disabilities must be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in all areas of a service center where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, beneficiaries, registrants, applicants, eligible applicants/registrants, applicants for employment and employees, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go. Animal raisers and trainers accompanied by their service animals in training for the purpose of training or socializing the animal must be permitted to be in all areas of a service center where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, beneficiaries, registrants, applicants, eligible applicants/registrants, applicants for employment and employees, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

8. WMW must not ask or require an individual with a disability to pay a surcharge because of the individual's service animal. WMW must not ask or require an animal raiser or trainer to pay a surcharge because of the individual's service animal in training for the purpose of training or socializing the animal.

9. WMW may charge an individual for damage caused by an animal, including a service animal ~~and a service animal in training~~, brought into a service center by the individual.

Inquiries:

1. If a person brings an animal into a service center, no member of the WMW staff may ask the person about the nature or extent of the person's disability.

2. No member of the WMW staff may require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

3. If a question arises about whether an animal is a service animal, a WMW Service Center Manager, Assistant Manager, or other WMW employee designated by the Service Center Manager, may **only** ask the individual the following **two** questions:

- **If the animal is required because of a disability, and**
- **What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.**

4. If a question arises about whether an animal is a service animal in training, a WMW Service Center Manager, Assistant Manager, or other WMW employee designated by the Service Center Manager, may only ask the animal raiser or trainer the following two questions:

- **If the animal is a service animal in training, and**
- **If the animal is accompanying the animal raiser or trainer for the purpose of training or socializing the animal.**

WMW 18-04 c1 Service Animal Policy

5. No WMW employee may make the above inquiries about a service animal or **service animal in training** when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (for example, the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability; or the animal is wearing an official patch or vest that identifies it as a service animal).
6. Whenever a proper member of the WMW staff makes any inquiry about a service animal **or service animal in training**, as provided **herein in Section 3**, he or she shall document the inquiry and response by completing the appropriate portion of the WMW Service Animal Report attached ~~hereto~~ **to this policy**.

WEST MICHIGAN WORKS! (WMW) SERVICE ANIMAL REPORT

This report must be completed (1) when an animal is excluded from the service center, or (2) when inquiries are made about an animal, regardless of whether it is excluded from the service center. The report must be sent to the WMW Equal Opportunity Officer within 24 hours after the exclusion or inquiries.

A **service animal** is any **dog** or **miniature horse** that is individually trained to **do work or perform tasks** for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. **Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition.** The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

A service animal in training is an animal accompanied by an animal raiser or trainer with the intent that animal is being raised, socialized, and trained to become a service animal.

An animal raiser or trainer is an individual who raises and socializes a service animal in training with the intent that the animal will become a service animal.

A **miniature horse** is a service animal if

- it has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability who seeks to utilize any of the aids, benefits or services available in the service center;
- Weighs no more than 100 pounds; and
- Stands no more than 26 inches in height at the withers.

Any animal that is:

- a. ~~N~~ot a dog or a miniature horse; **or**
- b. ~~S~~olely an emotional support animal that performs no work or tasks for the disabled person;

is **not** a service animal that is allowed in a service center.

Any animal that is:

- a. not a dog or a miniature horse; **or**
- b. is not accompanying an animal raiser or trainer for the purpose of training or socializing the animal;

is **not** a service animal in training that is allowed in a service center.

Work or tasks that a service animal is trained to perform for a person with a disability include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. **However, the crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship, without more, do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.**

A **person with a disability** means a person who has a disability as defined in section 12102 of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC 12102, and the regulations that implement Section 188 of WIOA at 29 CFR 38.104.

WMW 18-04 c1 Service Animal Policy

± A Service Center Manager, an Assistant Manager, or a WMW employee designated by a Service Center Manager may require that a person remove an animal, including a service animal or service animal in training, from a one-stop center. Any time that an animal is brought into a service center and that animal is excluded from the center, this form must be completed by the person who determined that the animal must be excluded.

Service Center Location: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Type of animal: _____ Customer's name: _____

Reason for exclusion: _____

Printed Name and Job Title of Employee Excluding Animal: _____

Signature of Employee Excluding Animal: _____

II. This section of the Report must be completed whenever the following inquiries are made about an animal, regardless of whether it is excluded from the service center. If a question arises about whether an animal is a service animal, a WMW Service Center Manager, Assistant Manager, or other WMW employee designated by the Service Center Manager, may only ask the individual the following ~~two~~ **three** questions:

Is the animal required because of a disability?

Response ("Yes" or "No"): _____

What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Response: _____

Is the animal accompanying an animal raiser or trainer for the purpose of training or socializing the animal with the intent that the animal will become a service animal?

Response ("Yes" or "No"): _____

No WMW employee may make the above inquiries about a service animal **or service animal in training** when it is **readily apparent** that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (for example, the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability; or the animal is wearing an official patch or vest that identifies it as a service animal).

An animal may be excluded without making the above inquiries if:

- **the animal is NOT a dog or a miniature horse (as defined above);**
- **the animal is NOT under the control of its handler; or**
- **the animal is NOT housebroken.**

WMW 18-04 c1 Service Animal Policy

If a person brings an animal into a service center,

- **No member of the WMW staff may ask the person about the nature or extent of the person's disability.**
- **No member of the WMW staff may require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained or licensed as a service animal.**

If WMW staff properly excludes a service animal pursuant to this policy, WMW must give the individual with a disability the opportunity to return to the service center and participate in activities without having the service animal on the premises.

Date: _____

Employee (Printed name): _____

Signature: _____

Job Title: _____

THE MICHIGAN PENAL CODE (EXCERPT)
Act 328 of 1931

750.502c Public accommodation; requirements; violation as misdemeanor; definitions.

Sec. 502c. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (2) and (3), a public accommodation shall modify its policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of a service animal by a person with a disability. If the service animal is a miniature horse, a public accommodation may use the following assessment factors to determine whether the miniature horse can be accommodated in its facility:

(a) The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features.

(b) Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse.

(c) Whether the miniature horse is housebroken.

(d) Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

(2) A public accommodation shall not ask a person with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises because of allergies or fear of the animal. A public accommodation may ask a person with a disability to remove his or her service animal from the premises only if either of the following applies:

(a) The service animal is out of control and its handler does not take effective action to control the service animal.

(b) The service animal is not housebroken.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) and this subsection, a public accommodation shall modify its policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of a service animal in training by an animal raiser or trainer, if the animal raiser or trainer is being accompanied by the service animal in training for the purpose of training or socializing the animal. A public accommodation shall not ask an animal raiser or trainer to remove a service animal in training from the premises because of allergies or fear of the animal. A public accommodation may ask an animal raiser or trainer to remove his or her service animal in training only if either of the following applies:

(a) The service animal in training is out of control and the animal raiser or trainer does not take effective action to control the animal.

(b) The service animal in training is not housebroken.

(4) If a public accommodation properly excludes a service animal under subsection (2) or a service animal in training under subsection (3), the public accommodation shall give the person with a disability or the animal raiser or trainer the opportunity to obtain goods, services, or accommodations without having the animal on the premises.

(5) A service animal must be under the control of the person with a disability and must have a harness, leash, or other tether. If the person with a disability is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe and effective performance of work or tasks, the service animal must be otherwise under the control of the person with a disability.

(6) A service animal in training must be under the control of the animal raiser or trainer and must have a harness, leash, or other tether. If the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the animal's safe and effective performance of work, tasks, training, or socialization, the service animal in training must be otherwise under the control of the animal raiser or trainer.

(7) A public accommodation is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal or service animal in training.

(8) If it is not obvious what service a service animal provides, staff of a public accommodation shall not ask about a person with a disability's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the service animal, or ask that the service animal demonstrate its ability to perform work or a task. Subject to subsection (9), staff may make the following 2 inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal:

(a) Whether the service animal is required because of a disability.

(b) What work or task the service animal has been trained to perform.

(9) A public accommodation shall not do either of the following:

(a) Require documentation when making an inquiry under subsection (8).

(b) Make an inquiry under subsection (8) if it is readily apparent that the service animal is trained to work or perform tasks for a person with a disability.

(10) A public accommodation shall permit a person with a disability to be accompanied by his or her service animal and shall permit an animal raiser or trainer to be accompanied by his or her service animal in

training in all areas of a place of public accommodation where members of the public, program participants, clients, customers, patrons, or invitees are permitted to go, including public areas of establishments that sell or prepare food, even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises. A public accommodation may exclude a service animal or a service animal in training from a facility if the animal's presence interferes with legitimate safety requirements of the facility such as a surgery or burn unit in a hospital in which a sterile field is required.

(11) A public accommodation shall not do any of the following:

- (a) Isolate a person with a disability accompanied by his or her service animal.
- (b) Isolate an animal raiser or trainer accompanied by his or her service animal in training.
- (c) Treat a person with a disability accompanied by his or her service animal less favorably than other patrons.
- (d) Treat an animal raiser or trainer accompanied by his or her service animal in training less favorably than other patrons.
- (e) Charge a fee to a person with a disability accompanied by his or her service animal that is not charged to other patrons that are not accompanied by service animals.

(f) Charge a fee to an animal raiser or trainer accompanied by his or her service animal in training that is not charged to other patrons that are not accompanied by service animals in training.

(g) Ask or require a person with a disability or animal raiser or trainer to pay a surcharge, regardless of whether individuals accompanied by pets are required to pay a surcharge, or to comply with other requirements that are not applicable to individuals that are not accompanied by pets.

(12) An animal raiser or trainer is liable for damage to a public accommodation or injury to an individual caused by his or her service animal in training. If a public accommodation normally charges people for damage caused, the public accommodation may charge a person with a disability for damage caused by his or her service animal.

(13) A public accommodation that violates subsection (1), (3), (4), (8), (9), (10), (11), or (13) is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(14) As used in this section:

- (a) "Animal raiser or trainer" means an individual who raises and socializes a service animal in training with the intent that the animal will become a service animal.
- (b) "Facility" means that term as defined in 28 CFR 36.104.
- (c) "Otherwise under the control of" includes, but is not limited to, voice control or signals.
- (d) "Person with a disability" means an individual who has a disability as that term is defined in section 3 of the Americans with disabilities act of 1990, 42 USC 12102, and 28 CFR 36.105. Person with a disability includes a veteran who has been diagnosed with 1 or more of the following:

- (i) Post-traumatic stress disorder.
- (ii) Traumatic brain injury.
- (iii) Other service-related disabilities.

(e) "Place of public accommodation" means that term as defined in 28 CFR 36.104.

(f) "Public accommodation" means that term as defined in section 301 of the Americans with disabilities act of 1990, 42 USC 12181, and 28 CFR 36.104.

(g) "Service animal" means all of the following:

- (i) That term as defined in 28 CFR 36.104.
- (ii) A miniature horse that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks as described in 28 CFR 36.104 for the benefit of a person with a disability.
- (h) "Service animal in training" means an animal accompanied by an animal raiser or trainer with the intent that animal is being raised, socialized, and trained to become a service animal.

(i) "Veteran" means any of the following:

- (i) An individual who performed military service in the armed forces for a period of more than 90 days and separated from the armed forces in a manner other than a dishonorable discharge.
- (ii) An individual discharged or released from military service because of a service-related disability.
- (iii) A member of a reserve branch of the armed forces at the time he or she was ordered to military service during a period of war, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized, and was released from military service in a manner other than a dishonorable discharge.

History: Add. 1953, Act 185, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953;—Am. 1980, Act 317, Eff. Mar. 31, 1981;—Am. 1984, Act 110, Eff. Oct. 1, 1984;—Am. 1995, Act 114, Eff. Jan. 1, 1996;—Am. 1998, Act 38, Imd. Eff. Mar. 18, 1998;—Am. 2015, Act 144, Eff. Jan. 18, 2016;—Am. 2022, Act 75, Eff. Mar. 29, 2023.

Compiler's note: Section 3 of Act 110 of 1984 provides: "This amendatory act shall take effect October 1, 1984."

MEMO

To: Workforce Development Board
From: Janie McNabb, One-Stop Operator
Date: February 12, 2024

Re: Updated Vision Statement

Background

In the fall of 2022, the Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee (ELSEC) and Workforce Development Board (WDB) approved an updated, streamlined strategic plan. The process for this update incorporated input from the committee and board, agency leadership, and frontline staff. During the summer and fall of 2023, I conducted a series of sessions with staff across the region to roll out the plan, ensuring that new staff were informed and seasoned staff were continuously engaged. These sessions helped to prepare for the ELSEC's annual review of the plan in September.

A common theme emerged from these discussions: the Vision Statement was outdated and did not resonate across staff, customers, and partners. The statement focused on the agency rather than the impact of its work. Also, it had not been reviewed or updated since the original strategic plan, developed when the organization first formed in 2016. Therefore, we launched a new process for reviewing and updating the West Michigan Works! Vision Statement.

Process

An ad hoc committee was formed, consisting of representatives of the board, along with management and frontline staff representation across various departments. We convened in three phases, as follows:

- *Define* our expectations from a Vision Statement;
- *Explore* the future we want to reflect in a new Vision Statement; and
- *Develop* a new statement to recommend to the full board.

The final phase, *Develop*, also involved a small subcommittee to fine-tune the language, as well as a survey to committee members and others (staff representatives who were not part of the process) for multiple perspectives.

Recommendation

The committee agreed on the following expectations from an updated Vision Statement:

- Be inspirational for all stakeholders, with an emphasis on staff;
- Describe the successful results and impact of our work;
- Provide teams (internal and external) with a unifying vision to help them work collaboratively towards shared outcomes regardless of program or role.

We also recognize that a single Vision Statement cannot fully capture all aspects of our purpose and impact, nor should it attempt to describe everything we do. Therefore, we recommend that the new Vision Statement be viewed as one component of a larger set of statements, including the Mission Statement and Core Values. The committee may also propose a "Belief" Statement that incorporates why we do what we do.

The committee's official recommendations are being finalized during the week of February 5 and will be presented to the full board at its meeting on February 12. The board will have an opportunity to review and discuss the new statement.

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MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Heather Daniel, Chairperson

DATE: February 12, 2024

RE: WDB Member Nomination

Background

As of November 2023, the West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB) had one (1) vacant private/business sector seat for the term of office through October 31, 2024. This seat was previously held by Randy Boss from Ottawa Kent Insurance. Staff have recently received an application from Mr. Nate Henschel with Consumers Energy to fill this seat.

Nate is currently the Community Affairs Manager and is the primary local contact for Consumers Energy engaging with local elected officials, stakeholders and customers in both Kent and Montcalm Counties. Nate previously held a position with The Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce and served as a member of the WMW Legislative Committee.

On January 8, 2024, the Executive Committee (EC) of the WDB supported the nomination of Nate Henschel to the WDB.

Staff will request a formal appointment from the ACSET Governing Board at its February meeting.

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MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: WDB Committee/Council Chairpersons

DATE: February 12, 2024

RE: Review of Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Background

At the January 8, 2023 Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee (Executive Committee or EC) meeting, discussion took place on the committee rosters of the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board. We are providing an update to the WDB on each of these committees and their various roles and responsibilities. Following the meeting, a survey form will be sent out seeking if any members of the board are interested in joining a committee.

Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement

Membership: WDB chair, Committee Chairs

Meeting Frequency: Six times per year (opposite months of Workforce Development Board)

Staffed by: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer

Charge: *The Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee will provide leadership on behalf of the Workforce Development Board, advising staff and setting strategic direction. The committee will serve as an aggregator of all other committees' focus areas, and ensure that strategic partnerships are reviewed, analyzed, and prioritized.* The committee's role is **Leadership**.

Strategic Plan Alignment: While all other committees stem from the Strategic Plan, this committee convenes all committee chairs to ensure alignment and connections. Because the *Enhanced Relationships* Strategic Priority is a common thread through all committees, the Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement committee will be the "aggregator" of that focus. Committee chairs will report not only on the activities of their committees, but also on the partnerships that are forming, any that are lacking, and the impact of those relationships. This will allow leadership to continuously assess the organization's role in the workforce development ecosystem, and to maintain a high-level emphasis on relationships throughout the year.

Career & Education Advisory Council

Membership: Mandated

Meeting Frequency: Three times per year

Staffed by: Chief Operating Officer, Directors of Business Solutions, Talent Solutions and Development & Innovation

Charge: *The CEAC will assist the Workforce Development Board (WDB) in facilitating and building a collaborative partnership between employers, labor, workforce development advocates, local school districts, postsecondary institutions, and training centers. The group's purpose is to identify and collectively develop and implement training strategies that effectively address Michigan employers' talent needs. The CEAC's role is **Advisory**.*

Strategic Plan Alignment: The CEAC convenes educational entities within the region and facilitates their connection to employers so that training is designed to meet local business need. This aligns with two Strategic Priorities: *Enhanced Relationships* and *Targeted Pipeline Development*.

- **Strategies:** Engage local talent, especially area youth, by providing work-based experiences that build occupational awareness and career pathways in the local economy; Increase connections with diverse talent through expanded partnerships and outreach efforts; Facilitate career pathways for the region's key industries in partnership with industry councils and postsecondary institutions.

Legislative

Membership: Regional influencers

Meeting Frequency: Three times per year

Staffed by: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer

Charge: *The Legislative Committee will educate legislators representing the 7-county region on workforce development programs and their impact on the local economy. The group will advocate for resources and good will with state and federal legislators. The committee's role is **Connections** and **Advocacy**.*

Strategic Plan Alignment: The Legislative Committee relies on relationships with legislators to strengthen their understanding of our system and to ensure their continued support. This aligns with two Strategic Priorities: *Enhanced Relationships* and *Resource Development*.

- **Strategies:** Advocate for systems and resources that lessen barriers to success for employers and underserved communities in West Michigan; Enhance the positive reputation of West Michigan Works! through brand association with workforce resources and opportunities.

Solutions-Driven

Membership: Employer members of the WDB; other employers including industry council representatives; Community-based organizations

Meeting Frequency: Three times per year

Staffed by: Chief Operating Officer, Directors of Business Solutions, Talent Solutions and Development & Innovation

Charge: *The Solutions-Driven committee will focus on addressing barriers to implementation of talent, business, and development solutions. The committee will serve as a sounding board for director-level staff, offering consultation and constructive feedback while brainstorming potential strategies and new approaches. Together, the committee and staff will seek ways to operationalize solutions to regional issues in alignment with the board's vision. The committee's role is Consultative.*

Strategic Plan Alignment: This committee addresses several items in the Strategic Plan, tying together the services provided to job seekers and those provided to employers. This aligns with the following Strategic Priorities: *Enhanced Relationships, Diversity & Inclusion, and Targeted Pipeline Development.*

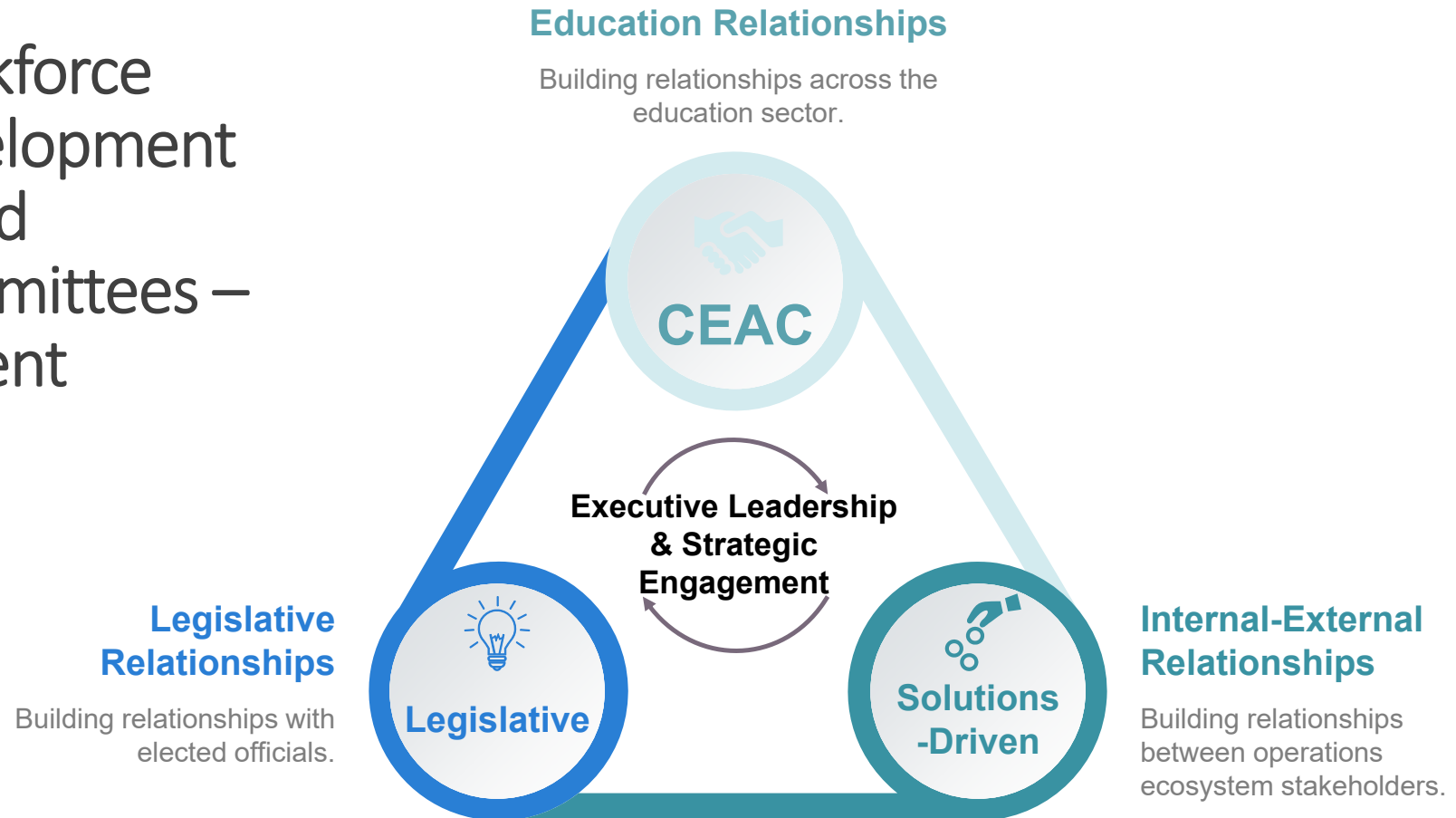
- **Strategies:** Increase connections with diverse talent through expanded partnerships and outreach efforts; Expand employability skills training services to new, targeted audiences across the region; Establish and expand services that provide solutions for retention of employees at West Michigan employers; Facilitate career pathways for the region's key industries in partnership with industry councils and postsecondary institutions.

Ad Hoc Workgroups: Called by Workforce Development Board Chair

Events: Support staff in developing and/or organizing major events. Called and meets as needed.

Awards: Support staff in identifying, nominating, and/or selecting winners of awards, such as Employer of the Year, Partner of the Year, Essential Service Awards, etc. Called and meets as needed.

Workforce Development Board Committees – current





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MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Ad-hoc: Essential Service Awards Committee

DATE: February 12, 2024

RE: 14th Annual Beverly Drake Essential Service Awards

The Essential Service Awards were created by the West Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board, to shine a light on employees who touch our lives daily and play a vital role in our economy and community.

As we experience rising costs and inflation, the role of a strong team of frontline workers is critical for all businesses.

This year, over 80 skilled individuals across West Michigan Works!' seven-county region were nominated either by their employer or a community member for going above beyond to deliver superior service.

A group of dedicated West Michigan Works! Executive Leadership and Strategic Engagement Committee members reviewed the nominations and selected the award winners. We were able to award 10 exceptional individuals. Awardees were recognized at their place of work with certificates and gifts and lastly received recognition on February 5, 2024 at the Economic Club of Grand Rapids' Luncheon.

Please look on Facebook or LinkedIn for the highlighted videos used during the awards.



- Derek Ryan, Courtesy Team Member, Grandville Meijer, Kent County
- Scott Kinyon, Cleaning, Aggressive Tooling, Inc, Montcalm County
- Beatrice Salgado, Preschool Lead Teacher, Early Learning Center, Kent County
- Kim Pitsch, Park Ranger, Allegan County
- Denver Sincler, Bartender & Server, Tantrick Brewing Co., Allegan County



- Marolyn Lopez, Receptionist, Plascore, Ottawa County
- Darci Wallace, Care Coordinator, Meals on Wheels of Western Michigan, Kent County
- Maria Solis, Senior Quality Assurance Specialist, Trans-Matic, Allegan County
- Kristi Azzoli, Customer Experience Specialist, The Rapid ITP, Kent County
- Heidi Carpenter, Program Aid, Barry County Commission on Aging, Barry County

HOLLAND-BASED COMPANY REQUEST FOODS AWARDED \$204,792 TO EXPAND BUSINESS



Pre-packaged food producer [Request Foods](#), a woman-owned business in Holland, MI, is home to over 900 employees and nearly 500 different custom food products – with big plans for growth. Their goal is to expand the company’s West Michigan footprint while providing quality careers and opportunities in the Holland area.

This need came alongside their newly constructed 145,000-square-foot cold storage warehouse and plans to build an 89,000-square-foot ready-to-eat foods manufacturing facility. Company leadership knew they would need to support this growth by hiring 198 employees over the next four years while training current staff for more specialized roles.

Having worked with West Michigan Works! since 2019, Request Foods connected their strategy with the [Going PRO Talent Fund](#) grant as an opportunity to bolster their hiring and training efforts.

“The heart of GPTF is to support organizations as they hire, train and retain employees in Michigan,” said Marco Rios, assistant manager of business solutions at WMW! and Request Foods’ main liaison for this project. “Based on their business expansion and commitment to their employees, Request Foods truly fit this program’s purpose.”

Working closely with Mark Zink, the company’s senior director of people’s services, Rios supported Mark and their team through the application process to ensure they were competitive enough for funding consideration.

Their collaborative effort led to Request Foods securing a \$204,792 reimbursement award during cycle one of the GPTF 2023 fiscal year. This will help the company fund 88 new hires and train 17 current employees, almost half of the total staff they planned to bring in.

“The impact of the work we do for our communities far exceeds the amount awarded,” Rios stated. “Their commitment to job creation in West Michigan, potential industry impact, innovation, a dedication to quality and giving back to our communities helps make West Michigan a better place to live and work.”

The scale of Request Foods’ expansion, their commitment to West Michigan job creation and the potential industry impact mark a monumental example of GPTF’s contribution to local business due to the scale of Request Food’s planned expansion.

“Request Foods is excited to continue expanding in West Michigan, providing excellent career opportunities for individuals and families who appreciate all that Holland has to offer,” Zink said. “We are extremely grateful for the collaboration and cooperation of WMW! in assisting with our applications for GPTF as well as providing us with talent acquisition avenues to help support our growth.”

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/.

Service Summary Explanation

October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

Management Observations and Highlights

- *Service Center Traffic:* Service center traffic continues to show an upward trend when compared to PY22/23.
- *Employers Served:* Consistently, the business solutions team serves more returning employers than new employers from month to month. We continuously strive to connect with new employers as time allows, while also maintaining quality services for existing customers. Numbers decreased slightly due to the intensive time spent preparing Going PRO Talent Fund applications for final submission to the state.
- *Jobs Filled by Industry:* Jobs filled numbers have remained steady. October noticed an increase in jobs filled for the manufacturing industry due to increase efforts to attract talent for the EV industry and increased reporting for manufacturers hiring under the Going PRO Talent Fund.
- *Training by Industry:* Credentials earned for construction and manufacturing (classroom) are low due to the reporting period of October-December. We anticipate these numbers to increase as job seekers earn certificate of completion.
- *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 Cycles 1 and 2 and FY24 Cycle 1 funding.
- *Hiring Events:* Business Solutions and Development & Innovation staff are collaborating to reimagine in-person hiring events in 2024. Virtual hiring events will continue to be offered monthly. Over the last quarter, West Michigan Works! Hosted multiple hiring events across the region for the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC).
- *Retention Solutions Network:* Employer membership and shares stayed the same to end the year with continuous referrals from Business Solutions Representatives. October – December usually sees fewer employees served and fewer barriers addressed, but December experienced an uptick in employees served. RSN's Project Manager received an internal promotion with interviews to backfill his position occurring in December.
- *WorkReady Certificates Earned:* With process updates for WorkReady assessments established, this quarter's certificate rate stayed on track with the previous two quarters. The Talent Development team now has a WorkReady curriculum improvement advisory group that will focus on making larger improvements to the content and structure of WorkReady.



Service Summary Oct. 1, 2023 to Dec. 31, 2023

The data shown on this Service Summary are indicators of the organization's progress toward fulfillment 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



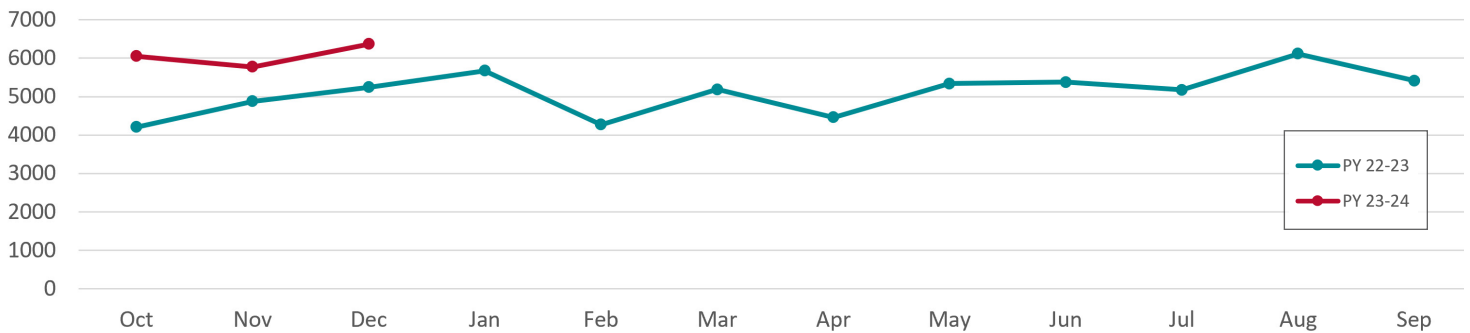
Pipeline Development



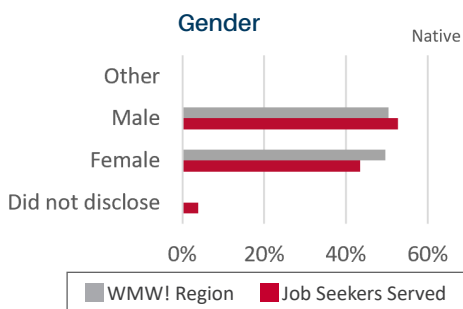
Diversity and Inclusion

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

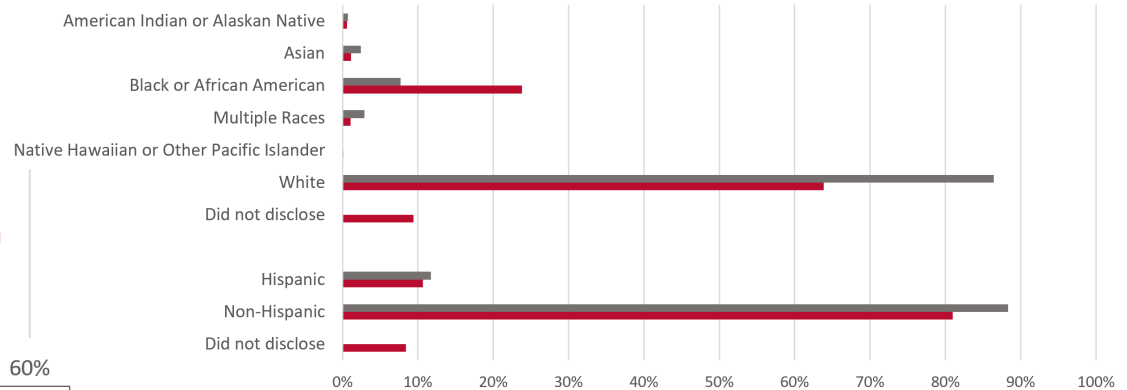
*call volume not included in PY 21-22 numbers



Diversity of Job Seekers Served



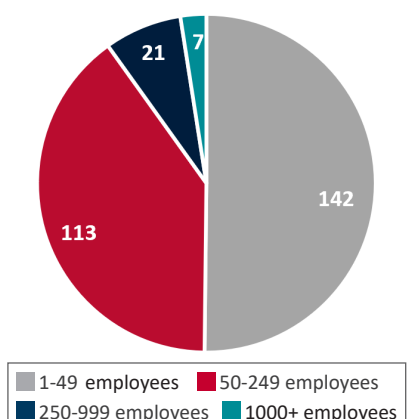
Race & Ethnicity



Employers Served (unique count)



Diversity of Employers Served (by size)



Jobs Filled by Industry

Item #11

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Agribusiness	59	24	168	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	94	19	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Healthcare	96	151	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	10	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	1052	321	112	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	169	125	152	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1480	642	460	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Training: by Industry

	New Hire	Classroom	Apprenticeship	Credentials Earned
Construction	11	199	1	1
Health Care	52	423	1	117
Information Technology	2	11	0	0
Manufacturing	54	92	0	0
Other	28	131	0	118
Total	147	856	2	236

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 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24	Apr 24	May 24	Jun 24
New Hire	234	657	428	0	0	0	0	0	0
Classroom	156	312	297	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apprenticeship	37	44	71	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	427	1013	796	0	0	0	0	0	0

Hiring Events

	Events	Employers	Job Seekers
Q1	7	38	115
Q2	0	0	0
Q3	0	0	0
Q4	0	0	0
TOTAL	7	38	115

Retention Solutions Network

Success coach hours
(cumulative, reported quarterly)

377



WorkReady Certificates Earned (cumulative, reported quarterly)

505 Pre-Assessments 33 Post-Assessments 57 WorkReady Certificates 38 WorkReady Plus Certificates



Service Summary
Oct. 1, 2023 to Dec. 31, 2023

Service Summary: Strategic Plan Alignment and Indicator Descriptions

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

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

Indicator	Strategic Plan Alignment	Narrative
<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.
<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
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Ionia County

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

Kent County

121 MLK Jr St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
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215 Straight Ave NW
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10075 Northland Dr NE
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Montcalm County

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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: February 12, 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

Early Childhood Education (ECE) Registered Apprenticeships: The Early Childhood Investment Corporation's (ECIC) Childcare Investment Fund awarded West Michigan Works! \$120,000 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. Under this 1-year grant, West Michigan Works! Plans to convene early childhood education stakeholders across our region to develop and launch a plan that will bolster the early childhood educator pipeline. An informational webinar was held January 25, with 64 participants registered, including childcare providers from all seven WMW counties. Providers attending the session all agreed that ECE RAP was desirable, and a follow-up meeting will be scheduled to work with the providers to develop the ECE RAP format. An additional round of funding through ECIC will be in place in fall of 2024 to support training the first group of apprentices. **Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development**

Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA): The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awarded a \$2.9 million dollar Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) grant to Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). West Michigan Works! (WMW) has partnered with GRCC and Corewell 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. Six of the eight participants successfully completed the first cohort. The second cohort is scheduled to begin March 19, 2024 ***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). This project was recently expanded, and we anticipate receiving referrals soon. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

Michigan Incarcerated Veterans' In-Reach Program (MIVIP): Led by LEO's Veterans' Employment Services team in partnership with the Michigan Department of Corrections and the Michigan Works! network. In addition to the in-reach employment services, veterans will receive post-release wrap-around services to help ensure each participant's success and reduce recidivism. One of the primary goals is to help incarcerated veterans understand how their military experiences can bring value to the civilian workplace including how to market their credentials as well as skills such as teamwork, problem solving, adaptability and effective communication. The \$2.4M in funding to support MIVIP was provided through a Pathway Home grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. ***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 are currently in year 4 of this grant. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Michigan Learning and Education Advancement Program: WMW, in partnership with Grand Rapids Community College, Montcalm Community College, Muskegon Community College, and West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT) received a \$2 million award to fund short term, high demand training that leads to a credential in the food processing, healthcare, IT, retail, sales, supply chain, and manufacturing. MiLEAP focuses on individuals who are dislocated, underemployed, essential workers, those living in distressed rural and urban communities and economically disadvantaged. The state granted a no cost extension through June 30, 2024 and we have expanded training opportunities to include high demand credentials offered through other local area providers. ***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 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***

State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) – West MI Works: The Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD) awarded WMW \$525,800 to help create 200 new registered apprentices during the grant period of April 13, 2021 through June 30, 2024. To date, we have enrolled 116 new apprentices and expended \$363,877 in grant funds including almost \$83,000 in direct employer supports. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) – Michigan Energy Workforce Development Consortium (MEWDC): WMW is providing Project Management and Apprenticeship Program Technical Assistance for the State Apprenticeship Expansion grant awarded to the MEWDC consortium by LEO-WD. WMW continues to support other contracted Michigan Works Agencies to enroll participants in the grant. 280 apprentices have been supported through this grant, including employer incentives of \$388,900. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

MDARD Specialty Crop Grant: The ATC has received approval to reallocate funds from its Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) Specialty Crop Block Grant for employers to receive 100% reimbursement for the Varnum Law Agricultural Employment Compliance Guide. This is a first step towards a workgroup that will investigate the utilization of various visa employment programs in farming and food production, and identifying resources to connect employers with to support recruiting and hiring from the global workforce. Currently have utilized 28% of funds. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Going PRO Talent Fund:

Fiscal Year 2023:

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity announced the award of \$64,792,406 to 1,103 employers statewide for the Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) for fiscal year 2023. West Michigan Works! employer awards are outlined below:

- Cycle 1: 201 employers received a total of \$17.5M. Awarded training may occur from February 1, 2023 – January 31, 2024.
- Cycle 2: 69 employers received a total of \$3.7M. Awarded training may occur from July 17, 2023 - July 16, 2024.

Fiscal Year 2024:

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity announced the award of \$64,792,406 to 1,103 employers statewide for the Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) for fiscal year 2023. West Michigan Works! employer awards are outlined below:

- Cycle 1: 222 employers received a total of \$14.8M. Awarded training may occur from January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.
- Cycle 2: The application period for cycle 2 is tentatively scheduled to open April/May 2024.

A full list of grant recipients statewide is available online at

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

Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative Grant: West Michigan Works was awarded a \$406,472 Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative (ELCs) Grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity in July 2023 to support the development of new, or enhance existing, employer-led collaboratives throughout the state. This is a two-year grant ending September 30, 2025. Grant funds 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 and a summer camp for the construction 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 career pathways and opportunities in West Michigan's agribusiness industry. The ATC will host its next quarterly job fairs for opportunity populations, in partnership with regional and state partners who serve these populations March 5th and will be held at the WMW SE Service Center. Planning has begun for 2024 Career AG-xploration event in Muskegon, as we await the decision for the MDARD Rural Development Fund Grant, which would expand the event to 4 additional counties. Spotlight on Ag Readers which takes place in March has double the outreach for this event in 2024 and increased number of classrooms reached from 20 to 44 and increased number of students reached from 550 to 1340.

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. October was Careers in Construction Month. As part of the Campaign strategy, the CCC held Construction Road Shows in 13 schools, with 12 industry volunteers teaching 445 students about the industry. The next stage of this project includes Before the Jobsite. This resume and interview tips toolbox is now available on the CCC website. The future state of Before the Jobsite will involve mock interviews with students and industry volunteers. The council blog, Women Who Build West Michigan continues to showcase women in

the industry to encourage women to join construction. The mental health project, approved in summer of 2023, has identified project team members. When the new CCC ICL is fully in the role, the project team will reconvene and determine what is feasible to offer resources around improving mental health, with a focus on substance use, suicide, stigma, depression and anxiety.

Discover Manufacturing (DM) Mission: “We Exist to Inspire and Expand Manufacturing Talent in West Michigan.” DM is partnering with the Michigan Manufacturing Association to promote the Prime School Initiative with funding for 13 more schools in the state. During the first round of grant funding West Michigan added three Prime schools.

DM is also working with Bradford White to promote the Fame initiative and begin a chapter in West Michigan. (Federation for Advanced Manufacturing) The Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education provides global-best workforce development through strong technical training, integration of manufacturing core competencies, intensive professional practices and intentional hands-on experience to build the future of the modern manufacturing industry.

FAME was created by Toyota and moved to the Manufacturing Institute for national scaling in 2019. Today, the Manufacturing Institute, as the workforce development and education partner of the National Association of Manufacturers, is proud to manage FAME USA as it continues to grow across the country with the support of more than 400 manufacturers.

DM is supporting a project team working on parent engagement in association with the Career Readiness Conference sponsored by DM, The Right Place, and Talent First. The April conference will be held at Ferris State University and once again will bring educators and manufacturers together to improve work-based learning opportunities for students.

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. WMHCC has partnered with Muskegon ISD for several events this school year. The first included collaboration with Hackley Community Care and the Michigan Health Council. We successfully piloted a health sciences curriculum, providing students with simulated outpatient office experiences and mentorship. The second involved Trinity Health Muskegon, who partnered for a work-based learning event simulating a traumatic injury. The scenario followed the patient from accident to full recovery. At each station of the recovery journey, students learned about a different area of medicine and the occupations available in that area. Lastly, we teamed up to plan a mini-medical school event targeting 677 third graders, focusing on body awareness, health habits, and health care careers. Planned for late February and early March, this event will feature career talks by

health care professionals. We are excited to expand these event to other counties after successful pilots.

In November, in partnership with Kent ISD and Kent Career Tech Center, the WMHCC offered over 750 health science students insights into in-demand health care careers through a two-day event. This included breakout sessions led by professionals in chosen careers, enhancing student understanding and engagement. An additional event will be held March 6th. WMHCC, in partnership with Kent ISD Workforce Development, will host our 2nd annual health careers expo. This event will feature employer booths, providing information on health care careers, application and interviewing tips, and educational support, with a focus on entry-level opportunities.

The council is organizing a Muskegon-based career fair carnival on May 4th at MOKA's location, following the success of a similar event in Kent County in 2023. Coinciding with the Agribusiness Council's Career Ag-xploration event, this fair aims to attract local employers and job seekers. We plan to include shared marketing efforts to be good stewards of council resources. These initiatives reflect our ongoing commitment to enhancing health care education and career opportunities in our community.

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 is hosting: [DeMystifying the Visa Process, A Guide to Hiring International Students](#), on February 21. We expect a full house of employers and students. Partners in this project include GVSU Colleges of Computer Science and Engineering, Padnos Center, ImLaw, Data Science Society, Bravo LT, Global Detroit, Corewell and BMF Health.

The WMTT Council has approved a series of networking and tech community building events. These events are set to be significant milestones in our efforts to foster a vibrant and dynamic tech community in West Michigan. The goal is to connect with over 400 technology professionals in the area and signal to the greater tech community in the country that West Michigan is a hub of innovation, collaboration, and opportunity. The approved events will feature strategic partnerships with leading organizations in the tech industry, including Mentavi Health (Keith Brophy), Trailhead Technologies, PeopleIT, Vervint, Hello West Michigan, and The Right Place.

Objectives:

- **Networking:** Facilitate meaningful connections among tech professionals in the region.
- **Skill Development:** Offer diverse formats, including workshops and panel discussions, to enhance participants' skills and knowledge.
- **Career Opportunities:** Showcase opportunities for career exploration and growth within the local tech community.

WMTT will be an annual sponsor of GRWebDev meetup group and an event sponsor of KISD and Aquinas College's inaugural Kent County Cup Esports Competition.

Programs

West Michigan Works! Registered Apprenticeship Programs (WMW RAP): The apprenticeship team continues to experience steady growth driven by employer demand. WMW currently holds standards for 42 US Department of Labor registered apprenticeships, with 154 active apprentices and 84 participating employers.

West Michigan Works! continues to develop programs with individual employers as well as our cohort model programs. The USDOL recently approved new standards for the Professional Services industry, bringing us to 5 high-demand industries (Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, IT, and Professional Services). We've recently launched new apprenticeship programs for Culinarian, Hand Former (Assembly), Composite Technician, and Community Health Worker, increasing the total number of occupations under our standards to 42.

On December 12, 2023 we held a graduation ceremony for our first cohort of Surgical Technologist apprentices, the first program of its kind in the country. There were many challenges to launching a program for a non-traditional occupation with complicated RTI schedules, multiple employer and education partners, and various regulatory requirements not to mention the time and dedication it would take to complete the program. At the ceremony apprentices were asked to present. Gabrielle Williams, an apprentice from Muskegon delivered an outstanding speech, capturing the challenges and hard work required for this milestone to be accomplished. An excerpt from that speech can be found [here](#). She repeatedly expressed how she had to press to continue forward. "Poverty is not my portion," she said, "My education is mine and nobody can take it from me." What a tremendous testament to the power of apprenticeship!

Ascend Youth Programming: The Ascend team currently provides programming for eligible out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. After hosting strategy sessions that included career coach engagement, Ascend has a plan to grow its services through intentional partnerships, youth voice in programming, and leveraging innovations like Virtual Reality (VR) and Tik Tok. We also have reengaged in a partnership with

kent Intermediate School District to provide Jobs for Michigan Graduates programming. Overall, we are excited about the direction of the Ascend program for 2024. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

MiCareerQuest: MiCareerQuest is a Career Exploration Experience for middle and high school students. MiCareerQuest 2024 will be held at DeVos Place on March 27, 2024. In order for this event to be as successful as it is, we need volunteers! If you are able to commit to volunteering during a morning session, afternoon session, or both, we would love for you to sign up [here](#). We look forward to seeing you at this year's event! ***Pipeline Development***

HireReach: HireReach provides instruction and consulting to businesses interested in implementing skills-based hiring. HireReach wrapped up its Kalamazoo hosted academy and is continuing to work with 9 employers in its Kent County hosted academy. The HireReach team was also featured on the podcast "Behind Every Employer" and is continuing to meet with national partners so that they can take HireReach academies on the road to other states. ***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 has begun engaging with member employers to develop a strategic plan. The goal of the plan is to make sure employers have a voice in how we deliver services and how we can increase value for them as we continue to grow the program. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

Learn, Earn and Provide (LEAP) Pilot: LEAP 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 get 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. The state is currently in conversation with other area Friend of the Court agencies with the goal of a statewide expansion. ***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 initiative designed to support TAT employers in the EV industry with attraction, retention, and development of EV occupations critical to the success of the industry. WMW received \$1M to support these efforts over the next year. Currently, there are two local employers participating in the program, with the potential for other employers to be added to the pilot. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity 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. WMW will assist with recruitment to fill approximately 1,300 Production Worker and Frontline Supervisor roles in the West region and connecting them to relevant short-term training programs where necessary. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

USDOL Training for Apprenticeship Training Representatives: WMW is working with the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) in response to an RFP to provide training for US DOL Office of Apprenticeship and State Apprenticeship Agency Apprenticeship Training Representatives (ATR). The training will equip ATRs to better assist Registered Apprenticeship (RA) program sponsors in engaging their local workforce development board staff for practical WIOA support. ***Enhanced Relationships***