



Governing Board Meeting
Grand Rapids NW Service Center
215 Straight Ave. N.W. Grand Rapids, MI 49504
The public may attend in-person or by remote participation via Teams.

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Meeting ID: 267 163 815 769 Passcode: 8YJQkn
Monday, April 28, 2025 • 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment – Agenda Items
3. Approval of February 24, 2025 Minutes **Action Required**
4. Report on Financial Activities
 - a. ACSET Financial Report - Notes to March 2025 Board Financials
Kirsti Jones, Chief Financial Officer **Information Item**
 - b. Proposed FYE 2026 Budget *(75% affirmative vote of members present)*
Kirsti Jones **Action Required**
5. Report on Administrative Activities
Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer
 - a. ACSET Personnel Actions Report **Information Item**
 - b. ACSET Operations Staffing **Information Item**
 - c. Request to update Staffing Chart **Action Required**
6. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Activities:
Jacob Maas
 - a. Member Appointments *(75% affirmative vote of members present)* **Action Required**
7. WDB Service Summary Dashboard and Solutions Driven Updates
Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer **Information Item**
8. Other Business **Information Item**
 - a. Michigan Works! Association (MWA) State & Federal Priorities
 - b. 2025 Congressional Directed Spending
 - c. 10-Year Anniversary of West Michigan Works!
 - d. [2025 HotJobs! List](#)
9. Public Comment
10. Adjournment

Next Scheduled Governing Board Meeting: Monday, June 23, 2025

Remaining Meetings:

August 25, 2025

October 27, 2025

December 8, 2025



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Meeting ID: 228 363 675 327 Passcode: dQeBc7
Monday, February 24, 2025 ▪ 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

MINUTES

Governing Board Members Present: Commissioners Hatfield (Chairperson), Tiejema (Vice-Chairperson), De Young, Dugan (virtual), Kallman, LaGrand, Morales, Alexander, Cyr, Paige, Moss, Zylstra, Belchak, Perdue

Governing Board Members Absent: None.

Staff Present (physically or virtually): Jacob Maas, Angie Barksdale, Kirsti Jones, Janette Monroe, Laura Krist, Tawanna Wright, Jeff Dornbos, Tasha Evans (virtual), Amy Lebednick (virtual), Chad Patton (virtual), Malinda Powers (virtual)

Guests Present: William (Bill) I. Tucker, CPA, (Maner Costerisan), Gabe Seng (Maner Costerisan)

1. Call to Order by Commissioner Tiejema, Vice-Chairperson at 8:31 a.m.
2. Public Comment- None.

3. Approval of the December 9, 2024 Minutes

Action Required

Motion – Com. Tiejema

Second – Com. Moss

Item Approved by Vote – All members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.

4. 2025 Governing Board Election of Chair and Vice-Chairperson **Action Required**
 Tawanna Wright, Staff Attorney, stated that the newly elected officers will begin their duties at this Governing Board meeting immediately following the election. Based on the rotation listed in the Interlocal Agreement, it is Ionia County's turn to serve as Chairperson, and Kent County's turn to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Board for 2025. Larry Tiejema is the sole representative from the Ionia County Board of Commissioners. Matt Kallman, Melissa LaGrand and Nancy Morales are the representatives from the Kent County Board of Commissioners.

Motion – Com. Hatfield nominated Com. Tiejema to serve as the Chairperson of the ACSET Governing Board for 2025.

Second – Com. Kallman

Item Approved by Vote – All members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.

Motion – Com. LaGrand nominated Com. Kallman to serve as the Vice-Chairperson of the ACSET Governing Board for 2025.

Second – Com. Morales

Item Approved by Vote – All members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.

Com. Tiejema proceeded to conduct the meeting as the newly appointed Chairperson of the ACSET Governing Board.

5. **Policy Approval: Protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Policy** **Action Required**
 Tawanna Wright reviewed that ACSET is required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Wagner-Peyser Act, The Trade Act of 1974, and their implementing regulations, to collect large quantities of personal information from applicants and participants. ACSET also processes PII as it pertains to its own employees. Tawanna reviewed the draft policy as provided in the board packet. Discussion took place and staff answered board members' questions. Tawanna requested approval of the PII Policy from the Governing Board.
Motion – Com. LaGrand
Second – Com. Belchak
Item Approved by Vote – All members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.
6. **Report on Financial Activities**
 - a. **Presentation of the Audited Financial Statements** **Action Required**
 Bill Tucker, CPA, Maner Costerisan, presented a summary of the annual audit results, which is an opinion of ACSET's financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2024. As a result of the single audit, Bill reported on ACSET's internal control over financial reporting and its major federal programs. Bill stated that no findings were reported. A brief discussion took place, and Bill answered board members' questions. Com. Tiejema requested a motion to accept the audit as presented.
Motion – Com. LaGrand
Second – Com. Kallman
Item Approved by Vote – All members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.
 - b. **ACSET Financial Report – Notes to December 2024 Board Financials** **Information Item**
 Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer, reviewed ACSET's statement of revenue and expenditures for the six months ending December 31, 2024. A brief discussion took place and Jacob answered board members' questions.
 - c. **Renewal of Line of Credit** **Action Required**
 Jacob Maas reported that ACSET holds a \$325,000 line of credit with Fifth Third Bank, which expires in March 2025. Jacob reported that this line of credit would only be needed in the event of unforeseen expenses or a delay in receiving cash requests. A brief discussion took place and Jacob answered board members' questions.
Motion – Com. LaGrand
Second – Com. Paige
Item Approved by Vote – All members present voted affirmatively. Motion carried.
7. **Report on Administrative Activities**
 - a. **ACSET Personnel Actions Report** **Information Item**
 Laura Krist, Human Resource Director, reported that there have been fourteen (14) appointments, nine (9) separations and four (4) promotions/transfers.
 - b. **ACSET Operations Staffing** **Information Item**
 Laura Krist reported that ACSET currently has 218 out of 241 positions filled. Laura answered board members' questions.
 - c. **ACSET 360 Degree CEO Performance Review** **Information Item**
 Laura Krist reported that the ACSET CEO will undergo a 360-degree performance review that will be conducted by an outside consultant, HR Collaborative. Laura reported that kickoff will likely happen this summer, and this review will be presented to the Governing Board in late October for approval.

8. West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB) Service Summary Dashboard and Solutions Driven Updates **Information Item**

WDB Service Summary Dashboard

Angie Barksdale, Chief Operating Officer, shared the Service Summary for October 2024 through December 31, 2024, with board members. Angie reviewed the Management Observations and Highlights which included information and data on: Service Center Traffic, Employers Served, Jobs Filled by Industry, Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF), Hiring Events, Retention Solutions, and WorkReady Certificates Earned. Angie reported that numbers typically are down during the holiday season, but traffic numbers remained consistent. Brief discussion took place and Angie answered board members' questions.

Solutions Driven Updates

Angie reported she would highlight a few of the updates provided in the board packet asking members to review what is not highlighted. As a reminder, the summaries of each initiative highlighted in the solutions driven updates will also include a notation identifying its alignment with strategic plan goals. These "alignment indicators" are ***Diversity and Inclusion, Enhanced Relationships, and Pipeline Development***.

- i. Catalyze: Angie Barksdale reported that WMW is in the running for Round 4 of the Catalyze Challenge. Catalyze will award up to \$1 million dollars to scalable programs and tools that advance career exploration for young adolescents (aged 11-22). WMW submitted a grant proposal that includes scaling MiCareerQuest, developing a career exploration event tool, and expanding career exploration events into our 7 counties in partnership with the industry talent councils. WMW was 1 of 80 applicants invited to engage in an interview with the Catalyze team. The interview is the final step before preliminary awards are announced in Mid-February.
Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development
- ii. Make Michigan Home: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- iii. FutureTech Careers Program (formally known as Strengthening Community Colleges Grant 4 (SCC4)): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- iv. Early Childhood Education (ECE) Registered Apprenticeships: Additional information is provided in the board packet. A brief discussion took place and Angie answered board members' questions. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- v. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA): Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- vi. Michigan Career Opportunity Academies for Community Health (MiCOACH): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- vii. The Michigan Citizen Reentry Initiative (MiCRI): In response to a board member question, Angie reported that WMW have received 2 participant referrals so far this year from Residential Re-entry Centers. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***
- viii. Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- ix. Michigan Skilled Immigration Integration Program (MISIIP): Angie Barksdale reported that the Michigan Skilled Immigrant Integration Program is part of a \$1M allocation for the Michigan International Talent Solutions (MITS) initiative as part of an overall \$5M appropriation received by Global Detroit. This program connects professional, college-degreed, internationally trained job

seekers with Michigan-based careers in their profession. Eligible participants will also receive assistance with job search, networking coaching, credential evaluation and professional licensing resources. This program has been extended through September 30, 2025. Angie answered board members' questions. ***Diversity and Inclusion, Pipeline Development***

- x. Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) One Workforce Grant: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- xi. Barrier Removal and Employment Success (BRES) Expansion: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- xii. Michigan's Inclusive Training, Technology and Equity Network (MITTEN): Angie Barksdale reported that the Michigan High Speed Internet Office (MIHI) has initiated a \$13 million grant program aimed at enhancing digital inclusion and capacity-building initiatives for regional organizations and collaboratives across the state. WMW, in partnership with the Essential Needs Task Force (ENTF), Grand Valley State University Public Media (WGVU), Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), and Casual Simulation, has been awarded a portion of the grant to become the resource hub for digital inclusion in Region 4b, which excludes the city of Grand Rapids. The collaborative will play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of the Michigan Digital Equity Plan within the proposed project areas and for the identified covered populations, which includes training individuals to use technology. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- xiii. Michigan Rural Enhanced Access to Careers in Healthcare (MiREACH): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- xiv. MDARD Specialty Crop Grant: Angie Barksdale reported that the funds from this grant are continued to market the grant to growers in our communications as well as sharing information with our commodity partners who post in their monthly newsletters. As expected, due to growers being in the fields, the number of employers applying for food safety training is currently down. The end date for grant is March 31, 2025. We submitted an application for the 2025-27 grant cycle requesting \$125k to support training, staff wages, and MiCareerQuest. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- xv. Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF):

Fiscal Year 2024:

Additional information is provided in the board packet. Below are the WMW employer awards:

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

Fiscal Year 2025:

- Cycle 1: The employer application period for the FY25 Cycle 1 began October 1, 2024 and will close October 18, 2024 at 4:59 p.m. Award recipients will be announced in mid-December.
- Cycle 2: The application period is scheduled to start spring 2025.

Employer Led Collaborative (ELCs - formerly Industry Led Collaboratives): The application period for FY25 ELCs is tentatively scheduled to open March 2025. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

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

- xvi. Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative Grant:
Additional information provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- xvii. 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 Councils (ITCs)

Angie Barksdale reported that there are a variety of ways to stay connected to the innovative work taking place under each of the WMW Industry Talent Councils (ITC). ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Multi-Industry Initiatives: Angie reviewed some of the multi-industry initiatives taking place.

- Lunch & Learn – the Councils are funding a quarterly series of lunch and learns to connect employers with services supporting inclusive hiring and job seeker supports provided by WMW community partners.
 - Mental Health – All Councils approved the Workplace Well-Being Summit. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
 - Career Readiness Conference – Discover Manufacturing and Construction Careers Council are participating in the conference with Talent First, The Right Place, and regional ISD partners. Additional information is provided in the board packet.
- i. **Agribusiness Talent Council of West Michigan (ATC) Mission: The Agribusiness Talent Council is an employer-led collaborative that seeks to expand the talent pool by promoting care pathways and opportunities in West Michigan agribusiness industry.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.
 - ii. **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.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.
 - iii. **Discover Manufacturing (DM) Mission: We Exist to Inspire and Expand Manufacturing Talent in West Michigan.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.
 - iv. **Explore Hospitality: Mission: We elevate one of West Michigan's leading employment sectors by developing careers, cultivating talent, and promoting a thriving, dynamic hospitality industry.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.
 - v. **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.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.
 - vi. **West Michigan Tech Talent (WMTT) Mission: West Michigan Tech Talent looks to engage employers of Information Technology professionals with best practices, resources and a community to grow, develop, recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive world class IT workforce in West Michigan.** Additional information is provided in the board packet.

Programs

- i. **WMW Sponsored Registered Apprenticeships Program (WMW RAP):** Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- ii. **Ascend Youth Programming:** The Ascend team currently provides programming for eligible out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. Ascend is currently working on growing partnerships with high school

counselors to recruit high school seniors who may need our services after graduation. We also continue to grow partnerships with adult education and other opportunity youth providers around the region. Meanwhile, we are already preparing for the 2025 Summer Career Readiness Program. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

- iii. MiCareerQuest: Angie reported that MiCareerQuest will be held at DeVos Place on March 20, 2025. We expect to host nearly 9,000 8th-10th grade students at this year's event. Board members can register for a VIP tour by signing up at [here](#). Board members can also sign up to volunteer [here](#). ***Pipeline Development***
- iv. Elevate: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***
- v. HireReach: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Diversity and Inclusion***
- vi. Retention Solutions Network (RSN): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***
- vii. Gain Employment Maintain Support (GEMS) formally known as Learn, Earn and Provide (LEAP) Pilot: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

Initiatives

- i. Electric Vehicle (EV) Industry Recruitment Pilot & EV Jobs Academy: Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- ii. Manufacturing and Engineering Education Reimagined for All (MEERA) Regional Training Center (RTC): Angie reported that the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (MDE-OCTE), Michigan Manufacturers Association (MMA), MiSTEM, and Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) have worked together and are collectively recommending the Muskegon, Kent, and Ottawa (MKO) collaborative for the location of the first MEERA Regional Training Center (RTC) in Michigan, with the support of the Department of Defense's Innovation Capability and Modernization Office. The MKO collaborative permits a variety of opportunities for MEERA students with three career tech centers and five public high schools offering a variety of robust, high-quality CTE programs of study, including machine tool, mechatronics, welding, engineering, and mechanical drafting. The collaborative also has strong connections to postsecondary institutions that support the goals of the MEERA program, such as formal agreements that can lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, including apprenticeships and degrees. Angie answered board members' questions. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***
- iii. West Michigan Education-to-Employment Partnership (E2P): Additional information is provided in the board packet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

9. Other Business –

Information Item

- a. Bev Drake Essential Service Awards: Jacob Maas reviewed that the ESAs were created to shine light on employees across the region who play a vital role in our economy and communities. The presentation of awards takes place in partnership with the Economic Club of Grand Rapids at their luncheon on February 24, 2025. Highlights and videos of the ceremony will be shared on WMWs social media accounts. New this year is a legacy video that commemorates Bev Drake who was the Executive Director when ACSET was created.
- b. MiCareerQuest: As a reminder, Jacob Maas reported that MiCareerQuest is taking place on March 20, 2025 DeVos Place ([VIP Tour Sign up](#) or [Volunteer Sign up](#)). Jacob and Angie answered board members' questions.

- c. Service Center Tours: Jacob Maas stated that if any GB members are interested in touring their local service center, staff would be happy to accommodate them.
- d. Legislative Tours: Jacob Maas reported that he plans to schedule visits with some of the new state legislators and that he will inform GB members about the visits should any of them have an interest in attending.
- e. Com. DeYoung introduced Com. Dugan from Allegan County who attended the meeting virtually.

10. Public Comment- None.

11. Adjournment at 9:28 a.m. by Commissioner Tiejema.

All members present voted affirmatively.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2025.

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**

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

Barry County

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

Ionia County

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

Kent County

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

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

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

Montcalm County

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

Muskegon County

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

Ottawa County

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

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a proud partner of the American Job Center
network.*

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

MEMORANDUM

TO: ACSET Governing Board

FROM: Kirsti Jones, Chief Financial Officer

DATE: April 28, 2025

RE: March 2025 Board Financials

Revenues

Revenues for the nine months ending March 31, 2025, total \$29.9M, which is \$872k below budget and \$6.2M below the prior year, due mainly to Going Pro Talent Fund.

Expenditures

Operating expenses are \$92k below the FY24-25 budget and \$186k above the prior year.

Wages and fringe benefits are up \$616k (5.2%) over the prior year, mainly due to annual wage increases (average 3.8% per employee) coupled with the higher cost of employee benefits.

Consumable supplies are \$90k lower than budget due to the annual Launchpad license expense of \$125,000. This entire expense was budgeted in March, but we are treating it as a prepaid and it will be expensed over the life of the licenses (one year).

Outside services are also below budget YTD, by \$203k, due in part to lower-than-expected payments to Springthrough, Strategic Policy Consultants, and Radian Hub.

Space and communication costs are \$30k above budget due to higher-than-expected utility costs.

Equipment purchases are lower than budget due to the annual computer purchases that have not yet occurred.

Other Expenses are \$38k higher than budget partially due to increased advertising costs. The TAA program added an outreach component requiring advertising to find potential program participants resulting in approximately \$30k of additional expenses.

Training for the fiscal year to date is \$12.6M, \$6.2M below the previous year, mainly due to GPTF.

Area Community Services Employment and Training Council
Michigan Works Agency Programs
Statement of Revenue & Expenses
For the Nine Months Ending March 31, 2025

	YTD Thru March 2025 Actual	YTD Thru March 2024 Actual	YTD 2024/2025 Budget	Budget Variance	Budget Variance %
Total Revenue	\$ 29,957,288	\$ 36,169,649	\$ 30,829,100	\$ (871,812)	-2.83%
Expenses					
Operating Expenses					
Wages	\$ 9,165,426	\$ 8,745,489	9,095,600	\$ 69,826	0.77%
Fringe Benefits	3,409,388	3,213,805	3,274,300	135,088	4.13%
Consumable supplies	526,851	671,551	616,700	(89,849)	-14.57%
Transportation	129,511	157,208	138,400	(8,889)	-6.42%
Outside services	720,981	928,769	924,200	(203,219)	-21.99%
Space and communications	1,108,626	1,166,684	1,078,400	30,226	2.80%
Equipment rent and maint	53,932	55,263	45,800	8,132	17.76%
Equipment purchases	9,393	11,453	138,500	(129,107)	-93.22%
Other expense	712,758	700,298	616,700	96,058	15.58%
Total Operating Expense	15,836,865	15,650,519	15,928,600	(91,735)	-0.58%
Subcontractors	\$ 355,823	\$ 467,134	\$ 677,600	\$ (321,777)	-47.49%
Training	\$ 12,601,384	\$ 18,372,038	\$ 12,451,200	\$ 150,184	1.21%
Direct Client Expenses	\$ 1,163,215	\$ 1,679,959	\$ 1,771,700	\$ (608,485)	-34.34%
	\$ 14,120,423	\$ 20,519,130	\$ 14,900,500	\$ (780,077)	-5.24%
Total Expenses	29,957,288	36,169,649	30,829,100	(871,812)	-2.83%
Excess of Revenue over Expense	-	-	-	-	0.00%

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Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 686-5079

Barry County

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

Ionia County

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

Kent County

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

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

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

Montcalm County

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

Muskegon County

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

Ottawa County

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

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westmiworks.org/about. TTY 711*

MEMORANDUM

TO: ACSET Governing Board

FROM: Kirsti Jones, Chief Financial Officer

DATE: April 28, 2025

RE: Proposed FYE 2026 Budget

The proposed budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, is presented for your consideration.

Revenues

The proposed 2025-2026 budget plans for \$37,513,000 of total revenue, which represents an 8.5% decrease compared to the approved FY2024-2025 budget. ACSET has not yet received allocations for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, although we did receive tentative projections from the State for WIOA and Wagner Peyser. The proposed budget was prepared using the following assumptions: a 10% decrease compared to the State projections in funding for WIOA and Wagner Peyser, decreased funding in GPTF based on the trends of the FY23-FY25 allocations awarded, as well as a slight decrease in PATH and FAET programs. These decreases were partially offset by new funding for the Make MI Home and State Apprenticeship Expansion programs.

Expenditures

The budget for salaries and the associated fringe expenses is expected to increase approximately \$300k due to merit raises, market demand for higher starting wages, and increasing rates for health insurance.

The other operating expense categories have been adjusted accordingly and include initial planned expenditures for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Direct client expenses are down mainly due to the anticipated decrease in WIOA funding and training expenses are expected to decrease related to GPTF.

A budget modification will be presented to the board for approval once finalized allocations are received from our grantors.

Request Action

We ask that the proposed budget be considered for approval.

Pursuant to Article II, Section 6(a) of Area Community Services Employment & Training (ACSET) Amended Bylaws dated April 26, 2021, a seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote of the members present is required for the budgets and amendments., which means minimum of 8 members must be present, then 6 must vote "Yes".

Area Community Services Employment and Training Council
General Fund
Michigan Works! Budgetary Request
For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

	Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget	Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Approved Budget	Increase (Decrease)
Revenues			
Grant Income	\$ 37,493,000	\$ 40,975,000	\$ (3,482,000)
Program Income	20,000	20,000	-
Total Revenue	\$ 37,513,000	\$ 40,995,000	\$ (3,482,000)
Expenses			
Operating Expenses			
Wages	\$ 11,267,000	\$ 12,095,000	\$ (828,000)
Fringe Benefits	4,105,000	4,354,000	(249,000)
Consumable supplies	676,000	820,000	(144,000)
Transportation	200,000	184,000	16,000
Outside services	949,000	1,229,000	(280,000)
Space and communications	1,233,000	1,434,000	(201,000)
Equipment rent and maint	76,000	61,000	15,000
Equipment purchases	75,000	184,000	(109,000)
Other expense	823,000	820,000	3,000
Total Operating Expense	19,404,000	21,181,000	(1,777,000)
Subcontractors	\$ 1,745,000	\$ 901,000	844,000
Training	\$ 14,282,000	\$ 16,557,000	(2,275,000)
Direct Client Expenses	\$ 2,082,000	\$ 2,356,000	(274,000)
	\$ 18,109,000	\$ 19,814,000	\$ (1,705,000)
Total Expenses	37,513,000	40,995,000	(3,482,000)
Excess of Revenue over Expense	-	-	-

Unaudited

ACSET Personnel Actions – April 21, 2025

Appointments

<u>Class</u>	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Business Solutions Representative	Harmony Battreall	Permanent	4/14/25	Montcalm
Career Navigator	Christopher Anderson	Permanent	4/21/25	Muskegon
	Karryssa Doran		4/17/25	Muskegon/Ottawa
	Dominique Roque		4/15/25	Ottawa

Separations

<u>Class</u>	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Separation Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Accountant	Brian Williams	Permanent	4/4/25	Administrative Office
Career Coach	Julia Majewski	Permanent	4/1/25	Grand Rapids SE
Project Coordinator	Rachel Kowalk	Permanent	3/28/25	Grand Rapids NW

Promotions/Transfers

<u>Class</u>	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Career Navigator to Career Coach	Charles Laper	Permanent	3/31/25	Montcalm
	Monica Martinez		2/24/25	Ottawa
Success Coach to Assistant Manager	Chris Kirkendall-Moss	Permanent	2/24/25	Ottawa

Current

April 2025

CLASSIFICATION	Approved	Filled (Permanent)	Filled (Other)	Vacant
Accountant	4	1	0	3
Accounting Assistant	4	4	0	0
Accounting Manager	1	1	0	0
Accounting Supervisor	1	0	0	1
Apprenticeship Success Coordinator	2	2	0	0
Assessment Specialist	4	3	0	1
Assistant Manager	14	14	0	0
Attorney	2	2	0	0
Business Solutions Director	1	1	0	0
Business Solutions Manager	2	2	0	0
Business Solutions Representative	17	13	0	4
Business Systems Analyst	1	1	0	0
Career Coach	54	51	0	3
Career Navigator	28	24	0	4
Chief Executive Officer	1	1	0	0
Chief Financial Officer	1	1	0	0
Chief Operating Officer	1	1	0	0
Computer Support Specialist	2	2	0	0
Director of Development and Innovation	1	1	0	0
Executive Assistant	1	1	0	0
Facilities Coordinator	1	1	0	0
Facilities Assistant Manager	1	1	0	0
Facilities Manager	1	1	0	0
Grant Development Manager	1	1	0	0
Human Resource Assistant	3	3	0	0
Human Resource Director	1	1	0	0
Industry Council Lead	6	5	0	1
Information Technology Manager	1	1	0	0
Marketing & Communications Coordinator	3	3	0	0
Marketing & Communications Director	1	1	0	0
Payroll Coordinator	1	1	0	0
Performance Analyst	6	5	0	1
Policy Manager	4	4	0	0
Procurement Manager	1	1	0	0
Project Coordinator	9	8	0	1
Project Manager	7	7	0	0
Quality Assurance Specialist	10	10	0	0

Records Service Specialist	5	5	0	0
Resource Specialist	4	4	0	0
Success Coach	4	2	0	2
Talent Development Instructor	11	10	0	1
Talent Development Manager	1	1	0	0
Talent Development Specialist	9	7	0	2
Talent Solutions Director	1	1	0	0
Talent Solutions Manager	6	6	0	0
Youth Solutions Manager	1	1	0	0
TOTALS	241	217	0	24

CLASSIFICATION	Filled
Participant/Temporary	0

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Muskegon County

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Muskegon, MI 49440
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Ottawa County

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

MEMORANDUM

TO: ACSET Governing Board

FROM: Laura Krist, Human Resource Director

DATE: April 28, 2025

RE: Request to update Staffing Chart

Background

ACSET/West Michigan Works! is scheduled to contract with Michigan Works! Southwest (MWSW) to provide Wagner Peyser Employment Services at their service centers starting July 1, 2025. To provide services, ACSET/WMW! will act as the employer of record for 8 staff members located in the MWSW locations in Kalamazoo, Calhoun, St. Joseph, and Branch counties. ACSET/WMW! will rely upon staff assigned from MWSW to provide functional coordination and oversight of the ACSET/WMW! staff assigned to those locations to allow for seamless integration of Wagner Peyser Employment Services into the other programs administered by MWSW. ACSET/WMW! will provide administrative oversight to the employees associated with this contract.

Additions:**Career Navigators (8)**

Working in collaboration with Michigan Works! Southwest and reviewing the needs of their facilities, it has been determined that eight (8) career navigators will be needed to provide the Wagner Peyser employment services at these locations.

Requested Action:

We are requesting Governing Board approval to add eight (8) career navigators to the West Michigan Works! staffing chart. Funding to support these new positions will be provided by MWSW.

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

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

MEMORANDUM

TO: ACSET Governing Board

FROM: Jacob Maas, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: April 28, 2025

RE: WDB Member Nominations and Vacancies

Background

As of November 2024, the West Michigan Works! (WMW) Workforce Development Board (WDB) had two (2) vacant private/business sector seats. Lisa Marie Barkel-Williams is the Communications & Project Manager at Cascade Engineering and she has applied to fill one vacancy. Prior to Lisa Marie's application to join the board, Kenyatta Brame, Executive Vice President served on the WDB from 2015-2024. The term of office for the seat Lisa Marie would fill is through October 31, 2025

Secondly, WMW received an application from Maria Dennison, Director of Human Resources at Gun Lake Casino. The term of office for this seat is through October 31, 2026.

On March 10, 2025, the Executive Committee (EC) of the WDB supported the nomination of both applicants. Following the EC meeting, WMW has been notified of a few additional board member changes. We will work with the EC to address the board roster and necessary changes that need to be made.

1. Mark Thomas from Northview Public Schools has recently retired and has since resigned from his service on the WDB.
2. Gregory King from Greater Muskegon Economic Development has also resigned from the WDB as he will be transitioning to a new employer outside of the WMW region; and
3. On April 14, we were notified that Dr. Charles Lepper from Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) resigned from his position.

Requested Action

We are requesting ACSET Governing Board for appointment of Lisa Marie Barkel-Williams and Maria Dennison to serve on the WDB for the terms of office listed above, and to continue seeking the additional vacancies until further notice.

Pursuant to Article II, Section 6(a) of the Area Community Services Employment & Training (ACSET) Amended Bylaws April 26, 2021, a seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote of the members present is required for approval of appointment to the Workforce Development Board, which means minimum of 8 members must be present, then 6 must vote "Yes".

Service Summary Explanation

October 1, 2024 –February 28, 2025

Management Observations and Highlights

- *Service Center Traffic:* Service center traffic continues to show an upward trend when compared to PY23/24.
- *Employers Served:* The Business Solutions team consistently assists a higher number of returning employers each month compared to new ones. While prioritizing quality service for existing clients, they also actively seek opportunities to engage with new employers. The number of employers served in January and February remained consistent with previous months. Additionally, we are closely monitoring the impact of changes to the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA) and minimum wage, particularly in the hospitality (food and beverage) industry.
- *Jobs Filled by Industry:* The number of jobs filled has remained stable. From January to March, there was an increase in hiring within the Construction sector as employers prepare for the warmer Michigan seasons. However, there was a decrease in jobs filled in the Manufacturing industry, as employers are assessing the political climate, which is typical during election years.
- *Training by Industry:* There has been a decrease in classroom and new hire training due to an overall reduction in available training funds outside of the Going PRO Talent Fund. However, we continue to seek opportunities to diversify and increase our funding sources for FY24/25.
- *Going Pro Talent Fund:* This metric tracks the total number of trainings completed and paid out each month. Reimbursement is usually not processed in the same month the training is completed due to delays in employer reporting and documentation collection. The data reflects multiple fiscal years and/or cycles within a fiscal year. The current billing includes training authorized under the FY24 Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, as well as the FY25 Cycle 1 funding.
- *Hiring Events:* Employer participation in the monthly Virtual Hiring Events has remained steady. Over the past quarter, the Business Solutions team strategically aligned hiring events with days of the week that typically see higher volumes in the service centers. In March 2025, several in-person events were held across all WMW counties, and the outcomes from those events will be included in the next dashboard report.
- *Retention Solutions Network:* Employer membership increased in the new year. We also saw an increase in the number of employees served as well as the number of barriers resolved. This type of increase is typical during the first months of the calendar year. Q2 retention and success coach data will be available at the next board meeting.
- *Talent Development:* This report has been updated to present the outcomes from the Talent Development department. The metrics include workshops offered, workshop attendance, and number of WorkReady certificates earned. Q2 data will be updated for the next board meeting.



Service Summary Oct. 1, 2024 to Feb. 28, 2025

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

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

Strategic Plan Alignment



Enhanced Relationships

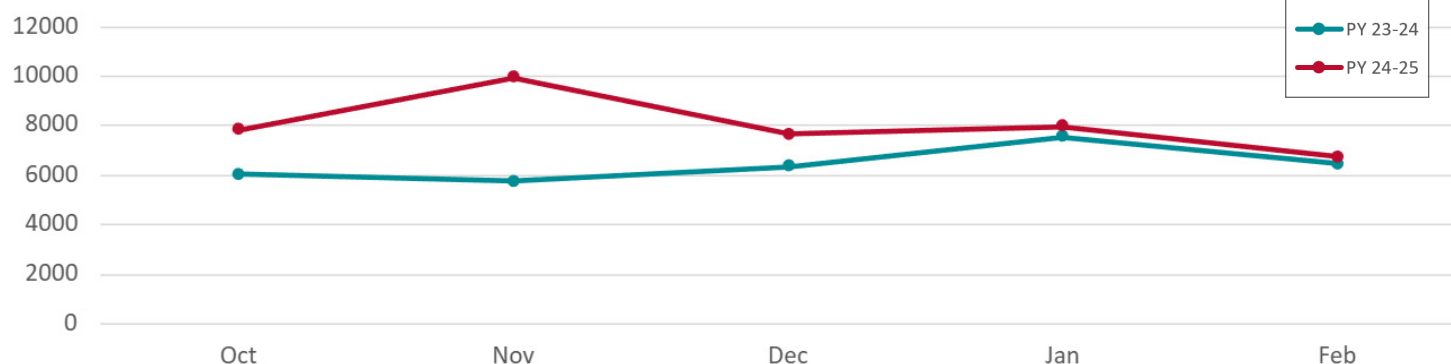


Pipeline Development

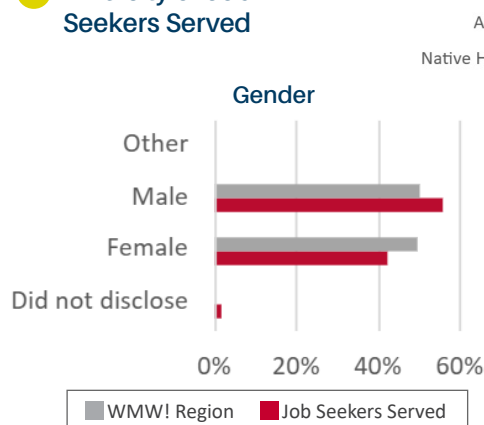


Diversity and Inclusion

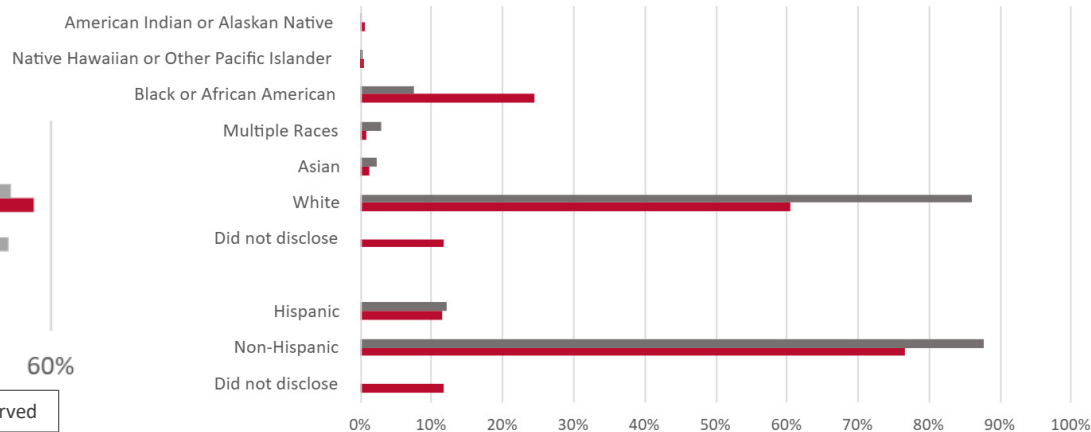
Service Center Traffic & Call Volume (PY comparison by month)



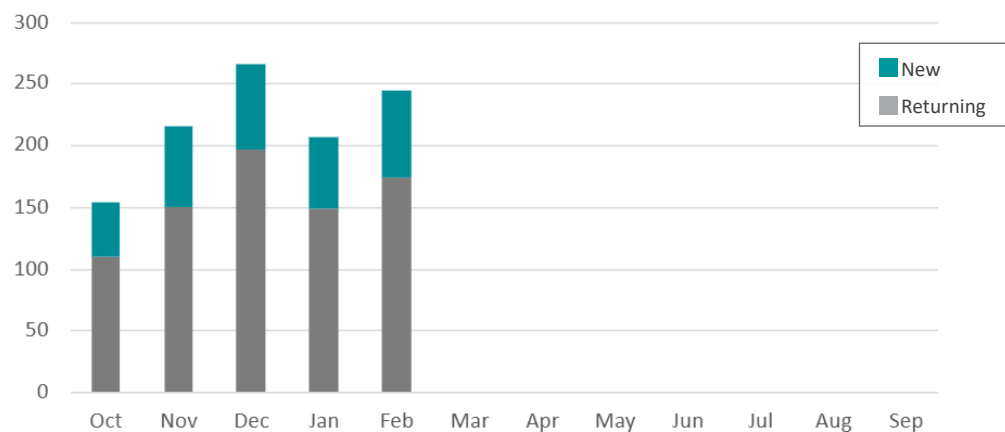
Diversity of Job Seekers Served



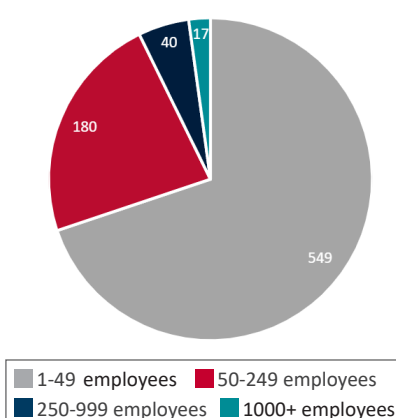
Race & Ethnicity



Employers Served (unique count)



Diversity of Employers Served (by size)



Jobs Filled by Industry

Item #7

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Agribusiness	33	0	68	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	15	28	8	32	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Healthcare	102	98	183	122	96	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	9	8	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	549	374	561	317	414	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	117	148	503	233	92	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	825	656	1325	706	654	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Training: by Industry

	New Hire	Classroom	Apprenticeship	Credentials Earned
Construction	0	3	49	45
Health Care	35	186	1	75
Information Technology	0	10	0	1
Manufacturing	0	8	33	29
Other	25	120	14	58
Total	60	327	97	208

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

Sector Strategies Employer-Led Collaborative

MDARD Specialty Crop Grant

MiSTAIRS

Early Childhood Investment Corporation

One Workforce

WIOA Individual Training Accounts

WIOA On-the-Job Training

Training (completed): Going PRO Training Fund

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
New Hire	271	298	329	423	696	0	0
Classroom	336	250	452	472	348	0	0
Apprenticeship	183	35	74	116	172	0	0
Total	790	583	855	1011	1216	0	0

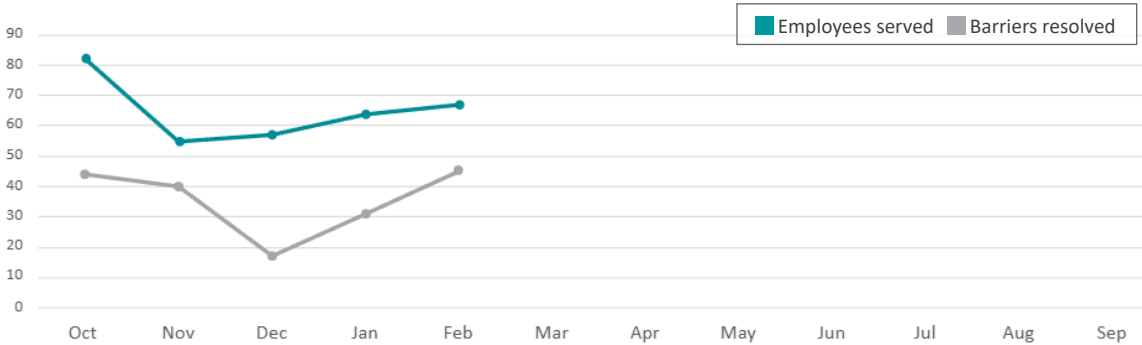
Hiring Events

	Events	Employers	Job Seekers
Q1	3	24	146
Q2	5	23	218
Q3	0	0	0
Q4	0	0	0
TOTAL	8	47	364

Retention Solutions Network

Members
12

Success coach hours
(cumulative, reported quarterly)
487



Talent Development Metrics (cumulative, reported quarterly)

800 Workshops Offered

1,997 Workshop Attendance

56 WorkReady Certificates

Service Summary: 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.
<i>Jobs Filled by Industry</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	This indicator shows the number of jobs filled with employer customers of WMW and with our assistance. The variation in month-to-month numbers may reflect delays in reporting WMW, as well as unique needs within a variety of employers. Spikes in the numbers may also reflect hiring events supported by WMW.

Indicator	Strategic Plan Alignment	Narrative
<i>Training: by Industry</i>	Pipeline Development	This indicator shows WMW efforts to expand the local pipeline of work-ready talent by supporting training and skill upgrading. The data is presented by industries most in demand in the region. Food Processors, as part of Agribusiness, are currently reported under manufacturing. On-the-Job Training provided to New Hires results in advancement of skills and wages but does not provide a credential. This data does not include training funded by Going Pro Talent Fund.
<i>Training (completed): GoingPro</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	As one of our largest funding sources for employer-driven training, Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) is reported separately. Allowable training funded by GPTF includes new hire, incumbent, and registered apprenticeships.
<i>Hiring Events</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	This indicator shows hiring events that bring employers and job seekers together, requiring coordination across multiple departments and programs. We continue to look for new and innovative ways to conduct outreach to job seekers, including greater collaboration with community partners.
<i>Retention Solutions Network</i>	Enhanced Relationships; Pipeline Development	This indicator shows how we leverage networks among community partners to provide services to member employers. Data reflects services provided by Success Coaches via dedicated on-site hours as well as virtual. Services provided to each employee does not consider the high number of touchpoints with the coach. Barriers addressed can include needs for transportation, housing, medical bills, utilities, and many more, all so that workers can successfully engage and fulfill their role for the employer.
<i>Talent Development Metrics</i>	Pipeline Development	This indicator shows the number of jobseekers who attended any of our workshop offerings. It also shows the number of workshops offered during each quarter in service centers and at external partner locations. Workshop offerings include resume writing skills, job application skills, digital literacy skills, interview skills, and many other workshops that assist jobseekers in obtaining and retaining a job. The indicator also shows the number of jobseekers who obtained a WorkREADY employability skills certificate. 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.”

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westmiworks.org/about. TTY 711*

MEMORANDUM

TO: ACSET Governing Board

FROM: West Michigan Works! Staff

DATE: April 28, 2025

RE: Solutions Driven Updates

Enhanced Relationships:

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

Pipeline Development:

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

Diversity and Inclusion:

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

Grant Updates

Catalyze: WMW is currently in the running for Round 4 of the Catalyze Challenge. Catalyze will award up to \$1 million dollars to scalable programs and tools that advance career exploration for young adolescents (aged 11-22). WMW submitted a grant proposal that includes scaling MiCareerQuest, developing a career exploration event tool, and expanding career exploration events into our 7 counties in partnership with the industry talent councils. WMW was 1 of 80 applicants invited to engage in an interview with the Catalyze team. The interview is the final step before preliminary awards are announced. The announcement of awards has been pushed back to end-of-March. We have not received an update yet. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Make Michigan Home: WMW has been awarded a \$91,250 Make MI Home grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The funds will be used to support training, employment, and retention efforts for Michigan residents. The grant period runs from March 18, 2025, through February 2, 2026. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

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

Early Childhood Education (ECE) Registered Apprenticeships: WMW received a second round of funding totaling \$373,000 to continue supporting childcare providers in developing registered apprenticeship opportunities for early childhood educators. The grant's performance period will conclude in February 2026.

Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development

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

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

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

Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD): The PROWD program, funded by the Joint First Step Act, intends to expand on the methodology of the MiCRI program to establish a statewide network of support for Justice-Involved Citizens to provide Stage 1, 2, and 3 pre-employment training services accessible at Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs) and to individuals in home confinement (HC) throughout the state. This grant will serve 250 participants statewide over a 37-month period of performance from September 1, 2024, to September 30, 2027. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

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

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

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

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

MDARD Specialty Crop Grant: The grant's performance period ended March 31, 2025. An application for the 2025-27 grant was submitted on February 6, 2025, requesting \$125,000 to support specialty crop grower training in agribusiness and career exploration at MiCareerQuest. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Going PRO Talent Fund:

Fiscal Year 2024:

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

Fiscal Year 2025:

- Cycle 1, Awards: 175 employers received a total of \$11.2M with the possibility of 17 additional pending awards to potentially be issued for another \$984,865. Training may occur January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025.
- Cycle 2, Independent Applications: The application for cycle 2 will be open April 14 – May 2, 2025 5:00 p.m.
- Employer Led Collaborative (ELC) Applications: Applications are open for Employer-Led Collaboratives, which must include two or more employers with shared training needs. The application period opened on March 24, 2025, and will remain open until MWAs are notified that ELC funding has been exhausted.

A full list of grant recipients statewide is available online at

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

Sector Strategies Employer Led Collaborative (SS ELC): In July 2023, West Michigan Works! was awarded a \$406,472 Sector Strategies Employer-Led Collaborative (ELC) Grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity to support the creation of new, or enhancement of existing, employer-led collaboratives statewide. This two-year grant runs through September 30, 2025. The funds will help WMW maximize the impact of the existing employer-led Industry Talent Councils. Current funding has been used to hire a Project Coordinator, offset training costs for registered apprenticeship programs, expand the MiCareerLaunch initiative to prepare high school seniors for careers in high-demand industries, and develop a career exploration event website for use by parents, students, educators, employers, and partners. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Michigan Statewide Targeted Apprenticeship Inclusive and Readiness System (MiSTAIRS): West Michigan Works! received \$324,625 in funding from the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity to continue developing and implementing strategies that support the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships (RAs). This includes engaging industry and workforce intermediaries, employers, and other partners to promote and expand RA to new sectors and underserved populations. The funding will also enhance capacity to conduct outreach, work with employers to establish new programs, and encourage participation in RA through innovations, incentives, and system reforms. WMW will specifically target underrepresented populations for direct enrollment and completion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs). The funding is available from July 2, 2023, through June 30, 2025. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) 2025: West Michigan Works! is one of five organizations selected to receive State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) grant funding from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). Awarded organizations had to demonstrate prior success with grant programs, a proven track record of performance, effective utilization of grant funds, and the expertise to monitor progress and meet performance targets. WMW will receive \$212,360 to support 32 registered apprentices in non-infrastructure occupations. The SAE grant program is designed to assist organizations that currently sponsor or partner with sponsors of Registered Apprenticeship Programs. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Industry Talent Councils

There are various ways to stay connected to the innovative work taking place under each of the West Michigan Works! Industry Talent Councils (ITC). Each council has expanded its outreach through dedicated LinkedIn accounts and bimonthly newsletters. The increased online presence enables each ITC to provide employers and partners in their respective industries with pertinent information such as workforce trends, council initiatives, and opportunities to participate in future projects. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development***

Multi-Industry Talent Council Initiatives:

- **Lunch & Learn** – The Councils are funding a quarterly series of lunch and learns to connect employers with services that support inclusive hiring and job seeker support provided by WMW! community partners. The first event, focusing on supported employment for individuals with disabilities, will be hosted at the Muskegon Service Center on May 7.
- **Workplace Well-Being Summit/Hope Certification** – All Councils have approved the Workplace Well-Being Summit. This immersive, workshop-style event focuses on developing a comprehensive and sustainable strategy to address critical aspects of workplace mental health, including suicide prevention, addiction recovery, and overdose prevention. Anticipated for October 2025, employers, non-profits, and government agencies will have the opportunity to attend the first-ever H.O.P.E. Certification Cohort after the summit to obtain the H.O.P.E. Certification. [H.O.P.E. Certification Website](#).
- **Career Readiness Conference** – The Discover Manufacturing and Construction Careers Council participated in the Career Readiness Conference, hosted with Talent First, The Right Place, and regional ISD partners. The February 26 event reached 175 employers and educators and helped foster relationships to support greater career exploration activities in the region.

Agribusiness Talent Council of West Michigan (ATC)

Mission: The Agribusiness Talent Council is an employer-led collaborative that seeks to expand the talent pool by promoting care pathways and opportunities in West Michigan agribusiness industry.

Ahead of National Agriculture Month in March, the ATC invited local farmers, food processors and growers to participate in the Spotlight on Ag Readers (SOAR) initiative. Professionals can volunteer to spend 45 minutes in a K-5 classroom,

reading an agriculture-focused book, answering students' questions and, if time permits, leading a hands-on activity. The Spotlight on Ag Readers initiative concluded on March 31, 2025, engaging 25 schools, 56 classrooms, 1,273 students, and 44 industry volunteers. This included a visit from Michigan Agri-Business Association President Chuck Lippstreu and State Senator Roger Victory at a 2nd-grade class at Jamestown Lower Elementary School in the Hudsonville Public School District.



The ATC Scholarship program received 21 applications from high school seniors and college students majoring or planning to major in agribusiness-related fields within the seven-county region. The scholarship review team is currently scoring applications and will select three awardees by April 16, 2025.

Additionally, the ATC will collaborate with Muskegon County partners, including Muskegon Community College Fab Lab, Hackley Library, Lakeshore Museum Center, and Muskegon Museum of Art, for the STEAM Along the Lakeshore event. This event will connect 750 Muskegon County K-12 students with hands-on activities related to careers in agribusiness.

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 Construction Field Trip Project expanded to include two additional trips, reaching more counties. On March 28, sixteen high school students from Ottawa County toured the Acrisure Amphitheater, The Diatribe, and United Methodist Community House projects. They observed active construction, met trades professionals, and learned about internship opportunities. Students from Barry County will have a similar experience at the GRR Airport in early May.



The council also launched the Summer Build Scholarships, which will close on April 25, 2025. Twelve middle school students will receive full tuition for the West Michigan Construction Institute's summer camp in June, where industry experts will provide hands-on experience exploring various careers. The Women in Construction Week concluded with seven nominees from six companies, each of whom will be interviewed for the Women Who Built West Michigan blog series to inspire more women to enter the field.

Discover Manufacturing (DM)

Mission: We exist to inspire and expand manufacturing talent in West Michigan.

The Discover Manufacturing Council sponsored and participated in the Career Readiness Conference (see Multi-industry Initiatives above).

DM scholarship applications closed with 12 submissions from students pursuing manufacturing pathways. Scholarships, ranging from \$500 to \$1,500, will be awarded to 11 applicants at a ceremony on May 21, 2025. The council continues to recruit West Michigan based manufacturers to be showcased on the DM [Earn and Learn Directory](#) website. The Earn and Learn Directory is a resource for students, parents and educators to explore manufacturing opportunities and connect them with potential resources to further a student's education.

Explore Hospitality (ExH):

Mission: We elevate one of West Michigan's leading employment sectors by developing careers, cultivating talent, and promoting a thriving, dynamic hospitality industry.

ExH successfully completed its first project, MiCareerQuest, marking its inaugural year of showcasing hospitality occupations. A total of eight exhibits represented all five sub-sectors of the hospitality industry. The council aims to expand its presence next year.



ExH continues to make significant progress in planning efforts. Final logo options are expected to be approved this month. Additionally, the council has initiated project brainstorming sessions and is actively working on the development and implementation of new initiatives in the coming months.

West Michigan Health Careers Council (WMHCC)

Mission: The purpose of WMHCC is to provide an employer-led collaborative council of healthcare employers, educators, workforce development, and economic development organizations working together to meet West Michigan's healthcare talent needs.

In partnership with the Grand Rapids African American Health Institute, WMHCC is laying the groundwork for creating a local Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) apprenticeship program. This program supports the goal of creating more equitable pathways into nursing careers. The council has also renewed the Career Fair Carnivals project, with the first event scheduled for May 7 at Montcalm Community College Greenville Campus. Additional events will be held in Ionia, Kent, Ottawa, and Muskegon counties to recruit for healthcare positions across the region.

The Health Careers Expo, held on March 5 in partnership with Kent ISD, featured nine employers and nine community or education partners presenting entry-level or earn-and-learn opportunities to 51 youth and 28 parents in attendance.

West Michigan Tech Talent (WMTT)

Mission: West Michigan Tech Talent looks to engage employers of Information Technology professionals with best practices, resources and a community to grow, develop, recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive world class IT workforce in West Michigan.

Jules Saldivar has officially completed onboarding and now serves as the Industry Council Lead. Four new members joined the WMTT council in 2025: Katie Born (Vervint), Charles Elwood (SolisMatica), Rodd Lowell (GVSU), and Mali Unger

(Corewell Health), each bringing expertise in talent experience, AI innovation, career development, and user-centered design. Outgoing members included Cindy Brown (GVSU), Elizabeth Wilson (Vervint), Greg Snow (Corewell Health), and Sara Schmidt (US Foods).

Due to the success of the 2024 launch of West Michigan Tech Trails, the series has expanded in 2025 to include two hikes per quarter. The next event will take place in partnership with Friends of GR Parks during Arborfest on April 25 from 1–4 PM, creating space for community connection while celebrating nature.



Tech Trends 2025 will be held at WMCAT on June 4 from 5–8 PM, featuring futurist and entrepreneur Keith Brophy sharing insights on emerging technologies. In partnership with STEM Greenhouse, all ticket proceeds will support STEM education for underrepresented students.

WMTT continues to support the Future Tech Careers initiative with GRCC, with over 15 employers joining the advisory committee and three implementing new work-based learning programs. A panel event featuring companies like Fusion IT and Corewell Health is scheduled for April 10 from 2–3 PM at the West Michigan Works! Northwest Service Center to encourage additional employer engagement.

Programs

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

West Michigan Works! currently manages 58 U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL)-registered apprenticeships, serving 355 active apprentices and 121 participating employers. Since January 1, 2025, 61 unique employers have received registered apprenticeship services, including information sessions and technical assistance. As a result of this support, six new occupations have been registered with the USDOL.

The apprenticeship team is increasing its efforts to develop Pre-Apprenticeship Programs in alignment with Michigan's State Apprenticeship Expansion Team's pilot initiative, the Michigan Apprenticeship Readiness Certificate (MARC). The MARC acknowledges high-quality apprenticeship readiness programs that help individuals access training leading to RAP opportunities, while also enabling sponsors to more easily find qualified RAP applicants. When specified in USDOL-approved RAP standards, the MARC can serve as an industry-recognized credential that meets Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirements and qualifies as a Postsecondary Recognized Credential under Perkins V. West Michigan Works! has submitted documentation for MARC Levels I and II in connection with the Fox Motors Auto Tech program. Additionally, discussions have taken place with Royal Technologies in Hudsonville, MI, to incorporate MARC Levels I and II into

their Mechatronics program. Conversations are also underway with regional Career Technical Centers to align work-based learning opportunities for high school juniors and seniors with RAPs across the seven-county region.

West Michigan Works! continues to expand the reach of registered apprenticeship programs in the region by promoting apprenticeships and offering intermediary consulting and workforce development training. Recent training sessions tailored specifically for internal Talent Solutions staff (Career Coaches) have been well received, with additional sessions scheduled for the next quarter. The recent work on MARC was shared with the WMW Ascend youth services team to ensure alignment and was also presented at the Career Readiness Conference in Holland, MI, where networking took place with employers, educators, and other workforce development professionals. In conjunction with the Governor's announcement of \$1.9 million in State Apprenticeship Expansion Funding, the apprenticeship team was interviewed by Wood Radio regarding regional efforts to expand pre-apprenticeship programs and apprenticeships in non-traditional industries.

Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion

Ascend Youth Programming: The Ascend team provides programming for eligible out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. Ascend continues to grow referral partnerships throughout the region. The program also just launched its application for its Youth Summer Career Readiness Program on April 10. Youth ages 14 to 24 will be able to apply to be placed in a work experience for 6-weeks with a partner employer.

Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion

MiCareerQuest: MiCareerQuest is a Career Exploration Experience for middle and high school students. MiCareerQuest was held at DeVos Place on March 20, 2025. This was one of MiCareerQuest's biggest years with nearly 8500 students at the event representing 89 different schools. ***Pipeline Development***

Elevate: Elevate is an expansion to Rise Up, a model of outside-in recruitment and inside-up career development that began in partnership with West Michigan Works!, The Source, and Trinity Health. Elevate uses Career Coaching, Resource Navigation, and employer coordination to reduce the friction of hiring and promotion. Staff are recruiting employers to join an inside-up academy so that we can further scale impact for career growth. ***Enhanced Relationships, Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

HireReach: HireReach provides instruction and consulting to businesses interested in implementing skills-based hiring. HireReach continues to make its services available to employers who are interested in unlocking skills-based hiring processes. ***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. Retention Solutions Network is currently partnering with Elevate to provide light career coaching as well as the resource navigation that it is known for. ***Enhanced Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion***

Gain Employment. Maintain Support (GEMS) formally known as Learn, Earn and Provide (LEAP) Pilot: GEMS launched in Muskegon as a pilot program at the end of January of 2022. It is a program aimed to assist non-custodial parents in obtaining and maintaining employment and gets back on track with child support payments. This program is in close partnership with Friend of the Court and includes both voluntary referrals and mandated participation in Allegan, Ionia, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. ***Pipeline Development, Diversity and Inclusion***

Initiatives

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



FY 26 State Legislative Priorities

IMPACT AREAS



Economic
Growth



Labor Force
Participation



Increased
Wages



Access to
Opportunity



Skills
Development

Surveys among Michigan business leaders reveal persistent concerns regarding talent acquisition and retention, with approximately **68% of top employers struggling to fill positions** across various skill levels. As of November 2024, Michigan's **labor force participation rate stood at 62.3%**, slightly below the national average of 62.4%. Increased investment in workforce development is essential to not only bolster Michigan's appeal for business growth and relocation, but also promote equitable access to resources and enhance wage prospects for workers.

PA 491 of 2006 established Michigan Works! as the state's workforce development engine – a system equipped with the infrastructure, expertise, and statewide footprint to drive Michigan's workforce objectives through regional implementation, partnerships, and evidence-based resource deployment.

Going PRO Talent Fund



Request: \$20 million increase for FY 26

The Going PRO Talent Fund provides grants to employers to assist with training, developing and retaining current and newly hired employees. Each year, demand for the program outpaces available funding. With an additional \$20 million, Michigan could train 6,500 more people per year, helping more workers get ahead and supporting business growth statewide.

Michigan Skills Fund



Request: \$10 million increase for FY 26

The MI Skills Fund provides financial support for short-term training and credentialing in high-demand fields. Funding will address immediate labor-market needs and offer upskilling opportunities.

Registered Apprenticeship Expansion



Request: \$19 million for FY 26

Michigan has doubled the average number of registered apprenticeships per year since 2016, and now ranks 4th nationally in active apprentices. This is a huge win, given that apprentices have a 93% employee retention rate, providing employers with a skilled, loyal workforce. The Michigan Works! network can distribute these funds to regional training partners and increase the number of registered apprentices in the state.

Barrier Removal Employment Supports (BRES) Program



Request: \$7.5 million for FY 26

The BRES program addresses critical barriers to employment by connecting individuals with essential supports such as transportation assistance, stable housing, and childcare—services coordinated through regional distribution by the Michigan Works! network. Sustained funding remains vital to ensure these barrier-removal resources stay accessible to those working to overcome obstacles in their job searches.

2025 Federal Legislative Priorities

\$ Workforce development programs like **WIOA** deliver a **\$15 return** on every **\$1 invested**, proving their powerful impact.

↘ **Workforce funding** has declined by nearly **50%** over the past two decades, despite growing employer demand for skilled workers.

! Investing in **WIOA**, **TAA**, and **TANF** will strengthen economic mobility, create career pathways, and build a competitive workforce for Michigan and the nation.

WIOA

The **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** drives Michigan's workforce development, connecting businesses with skilled workers. Congress must restore funding, expand apprenticeships and training, and protect local control for tailored workforce solutions.

TAA

Since **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)** expired, over 5,000 displaced Michigan workers have been left without support. Congress must restore benefits, expand eligibility to cover supply chain disruptions and new industries, and incentivize businesses to upskill workers.

TANF

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) must evolve to support long-term employment. Congress must expand training access, provide childcare and transportation support, and strengthen employer partnerships to remove job barriers.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION NEEDED

- ✓ Fully fund **WIOA** to provide job seekers and businesses with critical workforce services.
- ✓ Reauthorize **TAA** to support workers impacted by trade disruptions.
- ✓ Strengthen **TANF** to create sustainable career pathways for individuals and families.



Contact Us

Scan QR Code
or visit
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Setting the Standard in Workforce Development

Why it WORKS! We are a locally controlled, demand-driven, and adaptable workforce development system that drives economic growth and strengthens communities. Every year, our services reach nearly **ONE MILLION** business and community members.

Michigan is the standard.

Local Control

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), nominated by Chambers of Commerce and appointed by local elected officials, govern the system—ensuring responsiveness to regional needs.

Economic

Development Partner

Business leaders on local boards define the strategic vision of the system and promote its value. Michigan Works! also facilitates business involvement in educational reform.



Comprehensive Services

Over 100 Michigan Works! Service Centers provide accessible services to employers and job seekers. Core services include job/career information, training, and access to job banks. Supplemental services are incorporated at the local level.

Adaptable System

Michigan Works! continuously adapts to the changing economic climate and local needs. It also operates under a stringent conflict of interest policy.

Talent. Opportunity. Impact.

Supporting Business Growth: Connecting talent with opportunity to boost economic expansion.

Workforce Empowerment: Guiding individuals to meaningful careers and stronger communities.

Educational Advancement: Bridging business and education for a thriving talent pipeline.

KEY PARTNERS

Local
Chambers of
Commerce

Local
Elected Officials

Community
Colleges &
Educational
Institutions

Community
Organizations

State and Federal
Government
Agencies