

ANNUAL IMPACT



AWARDS

Wednesday, April 8 2026 | Heritage Hall, Michigan State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan

ABOUT THE IMPACT AWARDS

The Michigan Works! Impact Awards honor those who strengthen Michigan's economy by creating jobs and developing talent in their communities.

The event celebrates the impact of job creation, transformative training, and strong talent pipelines across the state.



Employers recognized through the Impact Awards demonstrate leadership in workforce development by creating job opportunities, investing in talent, and partnering with Michigan Works! to strengthen their workforce.



Partnerships between employers, Michigan Works! agencies, and community organizations help connect talent with opportunity and build strong workforce pipelines across Michigan.



The Impact Awards celebrate real outcomes—new jobs created, workers trained, and communities strengthened through workforce development.



“Impact isn’t accidental. It’s built every day by people who believe in possibility—and that spirit and drive is at the heart of the Michigan Works! Impact Awards. Congratulations to all of our award winners, and thank you to the Michigan Works! staff for the hard work you do each and every day to make this impact possible.”

Kimberly Way, CXO
Michigan Works! Association

EVENT AGENDA

11:00 AM OPENING REMARKS

Ryan Hundt
CEO, Michigan Works!
Association

David Darbyshire
Co-Owner / Engineer
Cyb Llings, Inc.,
Revitalize-IT, IncUversity

U.S. Senator Peters
(video)

Stephanie Beckhorn
Deputy Director,
Employment and
Training, LEO

11:20 AM AWARD CEREMONY

12:55 PM CLOSING REMARKS

David Darbyshire

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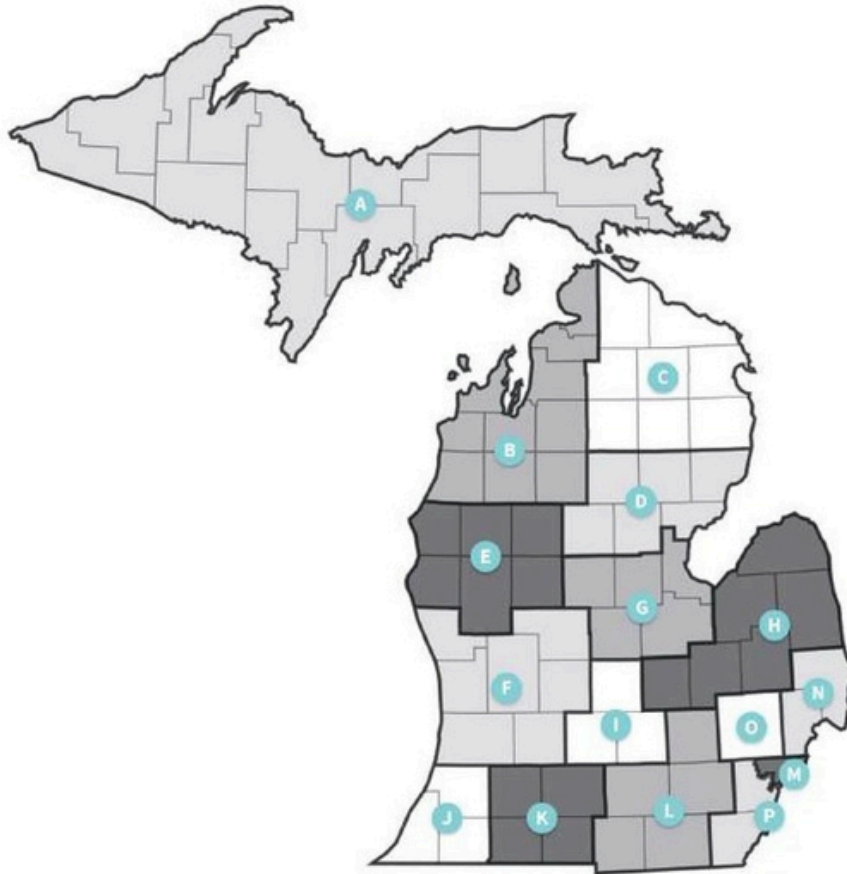
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THE MICHIGAN WORKS! NETWORK



Sixteen **multi-faceted and diverse Michigan Works! organizations** cover the state with efficient, effective tools capable of **building jobs, leveraging careers and developing core talent**. Michigan Works! is building and leading strong networks that boost community, economic, and talent development.

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Today, we gather to celebrate what happens when Michiganders invest in each other. Across every region of our state, the Michigan Works! network is at the center of a powerful story — one defined by new jobs created, skills sharpened, careers launched, and communities transformed. The Impact Awards are our moment to shine a spotlight on the people and organizations turning that story into reality.

Michigan's economy is evolving at a remarkable pace. From advanced manufacturing and mobility to healthcare, technology, and the skilled trades, new industries are rising and established sectors are reinventing themselves. Meeting this moment requires more than good intentions — it demands strategic investment in talent. That is exactly what our Michigan Works! Agencies deliver every day: career coaching that opens doors, training programs that build in-demand skills, and employer partnerships that turn workforce challenges into competitive advantages.

The honorees we recognize during our 2026 Impact Awards exemplify this mission in extraordinary ways. They have created jobs that sustain families. They have designed and championed training programs that give workers the confidence and credentials to reach higher. They have built talent pipelines that fuel growth in their communities and across the state. Behind every award is a measurable impact — and behind every statistic is a real person whose life has changed for the better.

None of this work happens in isolation. We are deeply grateful to our legislative leaders, state and local partners, and the many employers and community organizations who make Michigan's workforce system one of the strongest in the nation. Your commitment to investing in people is what makes Michigan a place where talent and opportunity meet.

To our 2026 Impact Award winners: congratulations. Your work is proof that when we develop talent, we develop Michigan. Thank you for leading the way.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Hundt".

Ryan Hundt, CEO
Michigan Works! Association



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
LANSING

SUSAN CORBIN
DIRECTOR

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity is proud to congratulate Michigan Works! and this year's well-deserving honorees for their incredible work highlighted at the annual Impact Awards. This event really shows just how much local Michigan Works! agencies, employers, workers and community partners do every day to support and uplift Michigan's workforce. Your dedication is making a real difference across our state.

Our partnership with Michigan Works! has played a huge role in our shared success expanding economic opportunity across the state. Your commitment to showing up for Michiganders and businesses — making sure they have the tools and support they need to succeed — is appreciated and recognized. We're truly grateful for everything you do to move our communities forward and help make Michigan more prosperous for everyone.

Congratulations again to all the honorees and to the entire Michigan Works! network for your incredible work. We're so grateful for the impact you've made on Michigan's growth and prosperity, and we're proud to stand alongside you in this effort. Together, we're building a future where Michigan is the best place to live, work and raise a family for generations to come.



Susan Corbin, Director
Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity



CAPITAL AREA MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Bridgewater Interiors

Bridgewater Interiors is being recognized with an Impact Award for its sustained partnership with Capital Area Michigan Works! and its commitment to expanding employment opportunities, supporting workers with barriers to employment, and investing in skill development through an employer-driven workforce strategy. Founded in 1998, Bridgewater Interiors has grown into one of the largest minority-owned automotive suppliers in the United States, providing interior manufacturing services to Ford, General Motors, Honda, and Stellantis while maintaining a strong focus on workforce inclusion and community engagement.

Bridgewater works closely with Capital Area Michigan Works! across multiple workforce programs that connect individuals to employment and support long-term retention. The company regularly participates in recruitment initiatives such as Employer of the Day hiring events, regional job fairs, and targeted outreach to expand access to career opportunities.

To support employees beyond hiring, Bridgewater participates in the Business Resource Network, providing on-site access to a workforce coach who helps employees address challenges that may impact job stability. Over the past year, the program helped retain 28 employees and delivered 354 supportive services, including assistance with transportation, housing and utility support, and financial planning.

The partnership has also produced strong recruitment results. In 2025, collaborative hiring events at the Lansing American Job Center generated more than 300 candidate interviews. Additional on-site recruitment efforts brought approximately 100 candidates in July, 50 in August, and 60 in September, with further interviews scheduled. Through the New Americans Navigator program, Bridgewater has also hired six individuals with limited English proficiency.

Training and advancement remain central to Bridgewater's workforce approach. Through its partnership with Capital Area Michigan Works!, the company utilizes the Going PRO Talent Fund to upskill both new and incumbent workers. In fiscal year 2025, training investments totaled \$60,000 at the Detroit location, \$120,000 at the Warren location, and more than \$150,000 at the Lansing facility—demonstrating how employers and the Michigan Works! system can work together to strengthen talent pipelines and expand access to stable careers.

"Bridgewater is tremendously appreciative of the support provided by the Michigan Works! organization in 2024. The financial assistance provided by the GPTF program supplements Bridgewater's own investments in people development and makes the training programs/courses like the example above possible."

—
**Sheila James, Plant Manager
Bridgewater Interiors**



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DETROIT EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS CORPORATION

AWARD WINNER:

Marriott Hotel | Dearborn Inn, Autograph Collection

Marriott International – Detroit Market is being recognized with an Impact Award for its longstanding partnership with Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation and Detroit at Work to expand access to employment opportunities and strengthen workforce participation in the Detroit community. For more than a decade, Marriott has collaborated with local workforce partners to connect residents to permanent full-time and part-time positions across a wide range of hotel operations, from housekeeping roles to professional career pathways offering competitive wages and advancement opportunities.

Marriott actively participates in workforce recruitment efforts, including career fairs across multiple locations and regularly hosted hiring events. These events provide job seekers with hands-on assistance completing online applications, interview preparation, candidate screening, and direct connections with hiring managers. Through these efforts, the partnership has resulted in more than 400 successful job placements since 2023, with average wages around \$20 per hour.

The company's hiring practices prioritize access and inclusion, creating opportunities for individuals facing employment barriers, including veterans, older adults, English language learners, and individuals with special needs. One example is associate Nakia C., who was recruited through a Detroit at Work hiring event and now contributes to hotel operations through reliability, professionalism, and strong attention to detail while continuing to build workplace skills and stability.

Marriott International's Impact Award recognizes an employer that integrates community engagement with workforce opportunity. By working closely with Detroit at Work and Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation, Marriott demonstrates how employer participation in workforce programs can remove barriers to employment, support local hiring, and provide meaningful career opportunities for Detroit residents.

"Detroit at Work has been an exceptional partner with Marriott International in providing our Detroit community an opportunity to prepare candidates with employment opportunities. Throughout the many different hiring events, candidates have an opportunity to screen, mock-interview, or even meet someone with Marriott and we are beyond grateful to continue supporting our greater Detroit community."

Kevin Bautista-Mancilla, HR Manager
Marriott (Detroit) Market



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GREAT LAKES BAY MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Corning Incorporated, Hemlock

Corning Incorporated, Hemlock is being recognized with an Impact Award for its large-scale collaboration with Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! to build a highly skilled workforce supporting advanced manufacturing and clean energy supply chains in Michigan. Corning is a global leader in materials science with more than 170 years of innovation across advanced optics, environmental technologies, and pharmaceutical applications. In 2025, the company expanded its presence in Michigan through a \$1.5 billion investment in a new manufacturing facility in Hemlock dedicated to producing U.S.-made solar components, strengthening domestic production capacity and reinforcing Michigan's role in advanced manufacturing.

Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! engaged with Corning early in the project following the selection of the Saginaw County site. Workforce professionals partnered directly with company leadership to design local recruitment and hiring strategies while the facility was under construction. The agency provided regional labor market data, recruitment planning, and candidate pipeline development to support large-scale hiring needs and ensure the company could access qualified talent as operations launched.

The partnership included customized recruitment assistance, candidate referrals, application support for job seekers, and promotion of employment opportunities through statewide talent-matching and labor exchange systems. Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! also co-hosted hiring events and provided on-the-job training opportunities for up to 500 new employees. Agency staff contributed more than 3,000 hours of coordinated outreach and recruitment services to expand the applicant pool and streamline hiring processes during the facility startup phase.

The new facility created 1,500 advanced manufacturing jobs paying wages above the regional median in Saginaw County. These positions provide stable career pathways in a high-demand industry while supporting the growth of domestic solar manufacturing. Through the collaboration, Corning was able to meet immediate workforce needs while establishing a sustainable long-term talent pipeline.

Corning's Impact Award recognizes a partnership that combines major private investment with coordinated public workforce support. By aligning employer hiring needs with recruitment, training, and workforce system resources, the company and Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! demonstrate how strategic collaboration can attract investment, strengthen regional economies, and connect Michigan residents to high-quality careers.

"Michigan Works has been a key partner in building the talented team at the new Corning Hemlock Wafer Plant. Together, we've connected skilled individuals with meaningful careers that fuel innovation and strengthen Michigan's economy. This collaboration shows what's possible when industry and community work together."

—
Carlo Scott, Business Director
Corning Incorporated, Hemlock



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GST MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Aspire Rural Health System

Aspire Rural Health System is being recognized with an Impact Award for its leadership in strengthening the rural healthcare workforce through a sustained partnership with GST Michigan Works! and a commitment to building career pathways within its local communities. Aspire is a collaborative network of more than 70 healthcare providers serving Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola, and Lapeer counties, focused on expanding access to high-quality rural healthcare while supporting employees with long-term career opportunities.

Aspire partners with GST Michigan Works! across multiple initiatives designed to address persistent rural healthcare staffing shortages. The organization participates in the Young Professionals Program, providing hands-on work experience to regional students and introducing local talent to healthcare careers. Aspire also collaborates with other healthcare employers in training initiatives, including a partnership with McKenzie Health System through a Going PRO Employer-Led Collaborative grant that supported EMT training and advancement toward paramedic licensure.

Workforce training and advancement are central to Aspire's strategy. In October 2022, the organization launched its first U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship program for Surgical Technologists and has since added two additional programs to expand its healthcare talent pipeline. These programs combine classroom instruction with on-the-job training and progressive wage advancement, an important approach in rural communities where recruitment options are limited.

GST Michigan Works! supported Aspire through training plan development, grant applications, and coordinated funding, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs, apprenticeship funding, and Going PRO Talent Fund grants. The agency also helped cover classroom instruction and guide participants through program requirements, resulting in seven apprentices completing training and entering the workforce with strengthened clinical skills.

The partnership also includes recruitment outreach, hiring events, and candidate preparation support, reaching hundreds of students and job seekers and building a pipeline of workers in high-demand healthcare occupations. Aspire's Impact Award recognizes an employer that integrates workforce development into its healthcare mission, demonstrating how rural employers can develop local talent, improve retention, and support continued access to healthcare in their communities.

"We are thrilled to partner with GST Michigan Works! to implement this apprenticeship program, which represents a significant investment in our community and the future of healthcare," said Hollice Londry of Aspire Rural Health System. "This program will not only empower individuals to embark on rewarding careers in nursing but will also enhance the overall quality of care we provide to our patients."

**Hollice Londry / HR - Employee Relations Specialist
Aspire Rural Health System**



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MACOMB/ST. CLAIR MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Power Solutions, Inc.

Power Solutions is being recognized with an Impact Award for its exceptional commitment to workforce development, safety, and training excellence through an employer-led, demand-driven approach. Founded in 2006, the company provides electrical engineering and power systems services across industrial and infrastructure sectors where skilled talent is critical to operational reliability and safety.

In response to growing workforce demand, Power Solutions launched a Registered Apprenticeship program in 2023 to build a sustainable pipeline of skilled electricians. Since its launch, the company has trained more than 30 apprentices, primarily through new hires, using a structured four-year model that combines extensive on-the-job learning, classroom instruction, and progressive skill development tied to wage advancement. The program goes beyond minimum requirements by incorporating subject-matter experts—such as building inspectors and educators—to deepen technical knowledge and reinforce real-world application.

Power Solutions partnered closely with Michigan Works! to support apprenticeship registration and long-term training costs through multiple state and federal funding sources. Michigan Works! also provided supportive services, including assistance with tools, work clothing, books, and transportation, helping reduce barriers to participation and support retention throughout the apprenticeship journey.

The quality of the company's training model is reflected in apprentice performance at the statewide level. In the company's first year of eligibility, two Power Solutions apprentices advanced to the top ten statewide out of more than 200 participants in a competitive electrical craftsmanship challenge. One Power Solutions apprentice won the statewide title following an eight-hour, judge-scored simulation and will represent Michigan at the national competition.

Safety is a cornerstone of the company's culture. Apprentices complete OSHA-10 training prior to job site placement, and all employees receive First Aid, AED, and CPR certification. This commitment to safety excellence led to Power Solutions Group being named a national finalist for a safety and electrical contracting award.

Power Solutions Group's Impact Award recognizes a comprehensive, scalable model that aligns employer demand with high-quality training, public workforce resources, and a deep investment in employee success.

Launched in 2023, Power Solutions' Registered Apprenticeship program is building a pipeline of skilled electricians through a four-year model that combines on-the-job training, classroom instruction, and progressive skill development.

Since its launch, the program has trained more than 30 apprentices and includes mentorship from industry experts to strengthen technical knowledge and real-world application.



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MICHIGAN WORKS! BERRIEN, CASS, VAN BUREN

AWARD WINNER:

Janiya Wilson, Childcare Development Specialist Apprentice
Flowers Early Learning

Flowers Early Learning is being recognized with an Impact Award for its innovative partnership with Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren to address critical workforce shortages in early childhood education while strengthening economic stability for working families in southwest Michigan. Founded in 1972, the organization has served more than 40,000 children and families across Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties and today operates classrooms in more than 20 locations, providing early learning, family support, and community services to children from birth to age five.

Facing persistent challenges recruiting and retaining qualified early childhood educators, Flowers Early Learning partnered with Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren and Southwestern Michigan College to create a U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship program for Childcare Development Specialists. The program allows participants to earn wages while completing college coursework and gaining hands-on classroom experience. By establishing a structured career pathway, the organization is building a sustainable local talent pipeline and improving retention in a traditionally hard-to-fill occupation.

Michigan Works! supported the effort by coordinating apprenticeship registration, aligning classroom instruction with on-the-job training, and connecting the organization to multiple funding sources, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs, Apprenticeship Building America, Statewide Apprenticeship Expansion, and the Going PRO Talent Fund. These investments helped cover tuition, training, and supportive services while allowing participants to remain employed and advance their skills.

The partnership has already produced measurable results. In 2025, Flowers Early Learning created 19 new jobs, including eight registered apprenticeship positions, and now employs nearly 200 individuals across the region. Apprentices benefit from progressive wage increases as they gain skills and credentials, strengthening retention and improving long-term career opportunities in early childhood education.

Flowers Early Learning's Impact Award recognizes a demand-driven model that aligns employer workforce needs with education and workforce system resources. By developing local talent, supporting working families' access to reliable childcare, and creating career pathways for residents within their own communities, the partnership demonstrates how workforce development can simultaneously strengthen businesses, families, and regional economic growth.

"Supporting Southwest Michigan working families and providing high-quality early education and child care is challenging work. We could not succeed in recruiting, training, and retaining the next generation of teachers without great partners like Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren."

**Kevin Wordelman, Chief Operations Manager
Flowers Early Learning**



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MICHIGAN WORKS! NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM

AWARD WINNER:

Delilah Santiago, Licensed Insurance Agent
Cory Budnick - State Farm Insurance Agency

The partnership between Cory Budnick State Farm Insurance Agency and Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium is a powerful example of how employer engagement and talent development can create lasting impact for individuals, businesses, and communities. Located in Rogers City, Cory Budnick State Farm Insurance Agency has served Northeast Michigan since 2012, providing insurance and financial services while remaining deeply committed to community involvement.

Through a strong partnership with Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium, Cory actively supports workforce development by participating in youth Career Expos and offering meaningful work-based learning opportunities for local students.

Delilah Santiago's journey began while she was still in high school, when she enrolled in Michigan Works!' WIOA Youth and Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) programs. With guidance from her Youth Career Advisor, Delilah received career exploration, work readiness support, and assistance overcoming transportation barriers. These services led to a paid Youth Work Experience at Cory Budnick State Farm Insurance Agency during her senior year.

What began as a few days a week quickly became something more. Delilah demonstrated strong professionalism, initiative, and a willingness to learn, impressing Cory and the entire team. At the conclusion of her work experience, Delilah was offered permanent employment. With continued support from Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium, the agency was able to utilize On-the-Job Training through the Young Professionals Plus Program, helping offset training costs as Delilah prepared for and passed her insurance licensing exam.

Today, Delilah is a licensed insurance professional and a valued member of the State Farm team. She has even come full circle—representing her employer at local Career Expos and confidently sharing her story with students considering their own career paths. This success story reflects the power of demand-driven workforce development: an employer investing in talent, a young professional building a sustainable career, and a community strengthened through partnership. Cory Budnick State Farm Insurance Agency and Delilah Santiago exemplify the impact that is possible when opportunity meets support.

"This program is designed to support individuals, as they offer resources and assistance, that can lead to significant positive change, I am please to have been involved in such a efficient program"

**Delilah Santiago,
Licensed Insurance Agent**



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MICHIGAN WORKS! REGION 7B

AWARD WINNER:

Victoria Humphrey

Clare County Road Commission

The Clare County Road Commission understands that workforce development is about more than filling positions — it's about investing in people and strengthening the talent pipeline for their community and beyond. Under the leadership of Manager Dewayne Rogers, that commitment comes to life every day through hands-on mentorship, training opportunities, and meaningful partnerships with Michigan Works! Region 7B.

Over the past year, the Clare County Road Commission has partnered with Michigan Works! Region 7B to provide real-world opportunities for multiple participants, opening doors for individuals at different stages of their career journeys. Whether welcoming students exploring career paths or supporting job seekers ready to take the next step, Dewayne and his team consistently say “yes” to opportunity.

That philosophy was especially evident in the story of Victoria Humphrey. When Victoria walked into the Michigan Works! Region 7B Clare County Service Center in July 2023, she had one clear goal in mind: to move her career forward. With determination and focus, she set her sights on earning her CDL-A license. The Michigan Works! team helped transfer her case from another county and connected her with an On-the-Job Training opportunity at the Clare County Road Commission.

"Victoria applied at the Road Commission with little experience," said Dewayne Rogers. "During her interview, she shared that it had been hard to find employment because no one would give her a chance due to her young age. What stood out to me was that there was a want in her."

Victoria embraced the opportunity and quickly proved herself through hard work, professionalism, and a commitment to learning. She successfully completed her On-the-Job Training, earned her CDL-A Truck Driver endorsement, and secured permanent employment with the Clare County Road Commission.

Today, Victoria is recognized as one of the Road Commission's strongest plow truck drivers, continuing to expand her skills and contribute to the quality of service provided to the people of Clare County. Her success reflects the broader impact of the Clare County Road Commission's investment in training, mentorship, and partnership with Michigan Works! Region 7B.

"Partnering with Michigan Works! has been a tremendous help in finding valuable employees that take pride in their work. It allows other people like Victoria, who may not have the experience to get them in the door on their own."

Dewayne Rogers, Manager
Clare County Road Commission



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MICHIGAN WORKS! SOUTHEAST

AWARD WINNER:

Carolyn Racine, VP of Continuing Education
Sam Beauford Woodworking Institute

The Sam Beauford Woodworking Institute (SBWI) stands as a powerful example of how passion, craftsmanship, and workforce innovation can come together to create lasting community impact. Founded in 2015 as an unconventional art and trade school, SBWI grew from a shared belief that skilled trades and fine arts are essential to both individual opportunity and economic vitality. Since becoming a nonprofit in 2017, the Institute has earned national and international recognition for its rigorous, college-level Wood Design program—praised as one of the finest furniture-making educations in the world and validated by a 100% employment rate for its 2023 graduates.

Located in Adrian, Michigan, SBWI is more than a school; it is a hub for workforce development, creativity, and community engagement. Students apply their skills beyond the classroom, raising timber frame pavilions in public spaces across Southeast Michigan, including parks, gardens, and schools, and collaborating annually with Virginia Military Institute cadets on charitable projects. In 2024, SBWI reached another milestone by earning full institutional and programmatic accreditation, positioning the Institute for continued growth and expanded training capacity throughout Lenawee County.

At the heart of this success is Carolyn Racine, Vice President of Continuing Education, whose journey embodies the demand-driven workforce model in action. A Michigan native with a background in creative writing, hospitality management, and performance arts, Carolyn returned home seeking meaningful work that aligned with both her skills and values. After completing SBWI's Wood Design program and further refining her craft, she stepped into a newly created leadership role supported through a partnership with Michigan Works! and on-the-job training resources.

Since hiring Carolyn, SBWI has increased organizational capacity, supported a \$16.5 million expansion effort, and strengthened its ability to serve students and staff alike. Her role has resulted in a wage increase of more than 30 percent and has allowed SBWI leadership to focus on long-term sustainability and growth.

Together, SBWI, Carolyn Racine, and Michigan Works! demonstrate how intentional investment in people, employer-driven training, and community partnerships can build strong career pathways and a resilient local workforce—making them a deserving recipient of the 2026 Impact Award.

"We so desperately needed someone who could fill this very unique role in our organization, and were very fortunate to hire Carolyn into this position. She is self-motivated, detail-oriented, and a talented craftsperson. She mindfully manages the needs of both our staff and students with genuine concern for their well-being. Carolyn has seamlessly transitioned into this role, and now it is impossible to imagine how we would operate without her."

—
Dena Koehn, Vice President of Enrollment
Sam Beauford Woodworking Institute



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MICHIGAN WORKS! SOUTHWEST

AWARD WINNER:

Essence Pye

Bronson Healthcare

Essence began her journey with the Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH) program at Michigan Works! Southwest in September 2024 as a single parent determined to advance her career in healthcare. With prior healthcare experience, Essence set a clear goal: to achieve long-term stability through career advancement.

She enrolled in Medical Assistant training at Ross Medical but faced barriers including transportation and childcare challenges. Through coordinated PATH support and consistent encouragement from her Career Coach, Essence successfully completed her training in January 2025. She graduated at the top of her class, earning a pin for excellence and being selected as class spokesperson.

Following graduation, Essence was selected for an internship at Borgess Neurology in Kalamazoo, gaining hands-on experience that strengthened her employability. Upon completion, she received job offers from both Bronson Healthcare and Ascension Borgess. She accepted a full-time Medical Assistant position at Bronson Internal Medicine, earning \$21.56 per hour.

Throughout her journey in the PATH program, MWSW provided meaningful, life-stabilizing support designed to help her succeed. Working closely with her Career Coach and in partnership with the DHHS, Essence was able to secure financial support for childcare. Essence received critical assistance through PATH funding with clothing as well as a reliable vehicle, along with registration and insurance, providing her with the freedom and security to travel to and from work. She also received Transitional Supportive Service incentives as she reached key milestones, celebrating her progress and reinforcing her commitment to building a better future.

Essence achieved self-sufficiency, resulting in her Family Independence Program case closing in May 2025 and successful PATH completion in August 2025. As of September 2025, she continues to work full-time at Bronson Internal Medicine while pursuing her nursing degree at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

"Working with Michigan Works! Southwest has been life changing. They've helped me secure reliable transportation, connect me to affordable childcare, and provided resources for every concern along the way."

—
Essence Pye
Bronson Healthcare



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MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL

AWARD WINNER:

Hunteny's Clubhouse

What began in 1995 as a small in-home daycare has grown into a trusted leader in early childhood education in West-Central Michigan. Today, Hunteny's Clubhouse operates six thriving locations throughout the region and recently expanded into the Grant Rapids area with the opening of Gro Childcare Academy in September 2025. Through every stage of growth, the organization has stayed true to its mission to provide a safe, nurturing and enriching environment where children can learn, grow and thrive.

Hunteny's Clubhouse is not only shaping young minds, but also transforming the local childcare workforce. Its commitment to professional development recently garnered the organization a \$20,338 Going PRO Talent Fund award to train 16 employees, including one USDOL registered apprentice. Trainings include project management, trauma informed care, certified infant and family educator, HVAC and HR management.

The company also has been a driving force in the development of Michigan Works! West Central's Early Childhood Education (ECE) USDOL registered apprenticeship program, which helps individuals obtain base-level credentials to start a career in childcare. Initially, Hunteny's Clubhouse received USDOL approval to train eight ECE apprentices, which was later increased to 15, and is now authorized for up to 26 apprentices. Michigan Works! West Central provides apprenticeship funding and training resources, including CPR certification, gas cards, college supplies, books, technology packages and more.

At Huntley's Clubhouse, these opportunities are paving the way for career advancement for apprentices to move into lead teacher roles and eventually site manager positions as the organization grows. Huntley's Clubhouse embraces a philosophy of increasing wages as employees gain knowledge and complete training milestones. This approach not only strengthens its workforce, but also ensures reliable quality childcare for local families. Behind these achievements is strong advocacy. Co-CEO Tyler Huntley is a passionate voice for Michigan's childcare industry and has championed these efforts in Lansing, helping shape policies that support children, families and educators.

From its humble beginnings to its leadership in workforce innovation, Huntley's Clubhouse stands as a model of what happens when vision, dedication and community come together to create brighter futures for Michigan's youngest learners and those who guide them.

"Michigan Works! West Central has played a vital role in our organization's growth by supporting our efforts to recruit high-quality staff and invest in ongoing education and professional development. Our experiences with Michigan Works! staff, along with the programs and resources they offer, have consistently been professional, supportive, and impactful. These partnerships have helped us strengthen our position as a leader in childcare and early childhood education in Michigan."

—
Tyler Huntley, Co-CEO
Huntley's Clubhouse



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NORTHWEST MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Ryan Hansen, Journeyworker/Mentor
Wolf Line Construction

Wolf Line Construction is being recognized with an Impact Award for its partnership with Northwest Michigan Works! to develop a skilled workforce supporting broadband infrastructure and rural connectivity across northern Michigan. Founded in 2016, the company has grown from six employees to more than 190 team members and partnered with Great Lakes Energy to construct one of the largest fiber-to-the-home networks in the United States, helping expand high-speed internet access in underserved rural communities.

After connecting with Northwest Michigan Works! in 2019, the company launched a U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship program for Fiber Optic Lineworkers to address the shortage of workers with specialized technical skills. The program provides structured on-the-job training, industry-recognized credentials, and competitive wages, allowing employees to build long-term careers while helping the company meet increasing demand for broadband construction. Northwest Michigan Works! supported the program through apprenticeship development, technical assistance, and funding opportunities including State Apprenticeship Expansion initiatives and Going PRO Talent Fund awards.

The partnership has strengthened Wolf Line Construction's ability to recruit, train, and retain employees in a region where specialized talent can be difficult to find. Registered apprenticeship programs created clear career pathways while supporting the company's growth. Since launching the programs, the company has installed more than 6,500 miles of fiber and connected over 30,000 homes, expanding reliable internet access across northern Michigan.

The company's workforce investment was also evident during the March 2025 ice storms, when 15 crews worked extended shifts for six weeks to restore 96 miles of damaged fiber lines and reconnect more than 1,000 households, supporting both economic stability and daily life in rural communities.

Wolf Line Construction's Impact Award recognizes an employer that aligns workforce development with critical infrastructure needs. Through mentorship, apprenticeships, and collaboration with Northwest Michigan Works!, the company is creating career opportunities while helping rural communities stay connected and competitive.

"Northwest Michigan Works! supported me a lot during this whole process...The apprenticeship program itself meant a lot to me. It gave me the ability to learn and excel in my trade and have the tools to do so. The fact that it gives people the ability to get into the program, get help from the state and give you a career is beyond amazing and helps so many people... my income increased substantially, I got married (never though that would happen) and have children, house, pets, the dream. We go on vacations, things that never would have happened with this program".

—
Ryan Hansen, Journeyworker/Mentor
Wolf Line Construction



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OAKLAND COUNTY MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Isaac Reifschneider, Mechatronics Apprentice
Eaton Steel Corporation

Eaton Steel Corporation is being recognized with an Impact Award for its long-standing partnership with Oakland County Michigan Works! to create career pathways in advanced manufacturing and support workforce development in southeast Michigan. A third-generation company headquartered in Oak Park, Eaton Steel has more than 60 years of experience producing and distributing high-quality steel bars and providing manufacturing supply chain solutions to customers across the United States.

For more than a decade, Eaton Steel has collaborated with Oakland County Michigan Works! to recruit, train, and retain workers through a variety of workforce programs. The partnership began with a targeted initiative to address regional demand for CDL-A truck drivers and expanded into ongoing workforce training and upskilling. Through On-the-Job Training placements, Individual Training Accounts, and Going PRO Talent Fund investments, participants gained industry-recognized skills while the company strengthened its workforce capacity and supported continued business growth.

The collaboration also supports youth and early-career talent. Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Out-of-School Youth and Adult programs, recent graduate Isaac Reifschneider began in an entry-level position and quickly advanced into a Mechatronics On-the-Job Training role. He is now enrolled at Oakland Community College and working toward a registered apprenticeship, creating a sustainable career pathway in advanced manufacturing.

Oakland County Michigan Works! has supported Eaton Steel through coordinated training assistance, funding resources, and career navigation services, helping the company invest in employee development across multiple locations. Over time, the partnership has leveraged several workforce programs, including the Going PRO Talent Fund and additional training assistance, to provide workers with technical skills while improving retention and advancement opportunities.

Eaton Steel Corporation's Impact Award recognizes an employer that invests in its workforce and develops local talent. By combining employer leadership with workforce system resources, Eaton Steel and Oakland County Michigan Works! demonstrate how collaborative training strategies can create career opportunities, strengthen manufacturing, and support economic growth in the region.

"Our success is a direct reflection of the incredible support we've received from Oakland County Michigan Works! Their guidance, resources, and genuine commitment to our growth have been instrumental every step of the way. Sherry Kless and Lisa Wilson have been absolutely amazing. Their dedication, responsiveness and support truly made a difference in our journey."

**Carmen Patterson, Payroll & Benefits Manager
Eaton Steel Corporation**



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SEMCA MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Brandon Rich, Senior Die Maker
Oakwood Group

Brandon Rich exemplifies the true impact of apprenticeship as a pathway to lifelong career growth, leadership, and generational connection within Michigan's skilled trades. A dedicated employee of the Oakwood Group for more than 13 years, Brandon began his career as a die helper and steadily advanced through commitment, perseverance, and a passion for learning. In 2024, he achieved a major milestone by earning his journeyman certification — a credential he will carry with him for the rest of his life.

Today, Brandon serves as a senior die maker in Oakwood's tool room, where he not only applies his advanced technical skills but also plays a vital role in developing the next generation of talent. As a trainer for current apprentices, he brings patience, real-world experience, and pride in the trade to every interaction. His journey reflects the power of structured, employer-supported apprenticeship programs to create skilled professionals who give back by mentoring others.

Brandon's story is also deeply personal. He works alongside his father in the tool room, reinforcing the family-centered culture Oakwood has built and the generational value of skilled trades. Outside of work, Brandon's passion for cars and racing mirrors the precision, problem-solving, and craftsmanship he brings to his role each day. His dedication to his craft and his workplace was powerfully captured during SEMCA's Race to Talent event in September, where he shared how apprenticeship transformed his life: "Oakwood is my home away from home. My family works here and I love that they let me grow my skilled trade skills and career here. I am now a certified journeyman, and I will have that for the rest of my life. I can't thank them enough for helping me make that happen."

Brandon Rich's career is a testament to what is possible when employers invest in people, when apprenticeships are done with intention, and when individuals are given the opportunity to grow, lead, and inspire. His impact extends beyond his own success — it lives on through the apprentices he now trains and the future of Michigan's skilled workforce he helps shape.

"Oakwood is my home away from home. My family works here and I love that. They let me grow my Skilled Trades skills and career here. I am now a Certified Journeyman and I will have that for the rest of my life. I can thank them enough for helping me make that happen."

—
Brandon Rich, Senior Die Maker
Oakwood Group



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UPPER PENINSULA MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Lindah Mavave, Owner
Ageless Home Care

Lindah arrived in the United States from Zimbabwe in 2006, carrying with her a deep hope for a brighter future. Her path to entrepreneurship was shaped by resilience, determination, and the support of agencies like Upper Peninsula Michigan Works!

Our first interaction with her was through Wagner Peyser services. At the time, she was a single mother searching for stability while facing job setbacks, childcare struggles, housing issues, surviving domestic violence, and falling behind on bills. Yet through every challenge, Lindah held firmly to her faith and belief in a better future.

"I just want a path out of being on food stamps," she told us. That desire for independence led her to seek help through her local legislator's office and UPMW programs. We supported her through Wagner-Peyser, PATH, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services, and grants that provided resume assistance, job placement, tuition support, access to laptops, and referrals to the Small Business Development Center for entrepreneurial guidance. She describes her experience with UPMW in two words: "sustainable resilience."

In 2024, Lindah turned her dream into reality by launching Ageless Home Care, with a mission to make quality care accessible to all. Today, her business serves communities across Michigan and Northern Wisconsin, providing personalized, compassionate home health care and support for family caregivers.

In 2025, when she needed employees, she returned to UPMW for help, hiring a local PATH participant as an administrative assistant and offering someone else the opportunity she once sought.

Lindah's journey proves that when resilience meets opportunity, transformation is possible. Her story is a testament to perseverance, hope, and the power of community support—showing what can happen when we invest in people and believe in their potential.

"I just want a path out of being on food stamps," Lindah Mavave, Owner of Ageless Home Care, told Upper Peninsula Michigan Works!.

That desire for independence led her to seek help through her local legislator's office and through UPMW programs.



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WEST MICHIGAN WORKS!

AWARD WINNER:

Hilite® International

Mahle Engine Components USA's R&D Tech Center in Muskegon Heights had long been a hub of engineering expertise, supporting advanced engine development for global manufacturing. In July 2024, Mahle sought support to strengthen its engineering pipeline, prompting a first meeting with West Michigan Works!. Business Solutions Representative Carla Hatton met with Kimm Karrip, Head of the Tech Center, to explore available services—from customized labor market data to apprenticeship development and key training grants.

Just weeks later, West Michigan Works! connected Mahle with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, helping the company rapidly fill critical staffing needs. But the partnership took an unexpected turn. In October 2024, Mahle announced it would close the facility by July 2025, placing 31 engineers at risk of displacement.

West Michigan Works! immediately activated Rapid Response services, coordinating with LEO, UIA, and Mahle's HR leadership to deliver onsite workshops, unemployment navigation, and a targeted job fair featuring five engineering employers. That job fair sparked a pivotal connection: Hilite International recognized the strength of Mahle's engineering team and soon entered discussions that led to the acquisition of the entire R&D Tech Center.

Hilite offered continued employment to every remaining engineer, with 90% accepting—preserving local talent, preventing layoffs, and ensuring the facility's future. Through swift action and deep collaboration, West Michigan Works! helped transform a planned closure into a powerful success story for Muskegon's workforce and economy.

"The addition of the Muskegon Technical Center is a clear example of our ongoing commitment to building a robust, future-ready global organization. Winning the West Michigan Works! Impact Award is an incredible honor and a meaningful validation of the work our teams are doing every day. We are truly grateful for our partnership with West Michigan Works—an organization whose support and collaboration have played a vital role in helping us grow, innovate, and invest in the West Michigan community."

—
Gene Hynde, Global VP HR
Hilite® International



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2026 Impact Award Nominee

Power Solutions Group

Congratulations to Power Solutions Group, honored for their commitment to building a skilled workforce through registered apprenticeships and their partnership with Macomb/St. Clair Michigan Works!



**POWER
SOLUTIONS**

**MICHIGAN
WORKS!**
MACOMB/ST. CLAIR

CONGRATULATIONS TO CORNING, OUR IMPACT AWARD WINNER



Photo above right by Nic Antaya for Barron's

- For a 170-year track record of life-changing innovations in markets ranging from advanced optics to pharmaceutical and environmental technologies.
- For investing \$1.5 billion in a new manufacturing facility in Hemlock, MI, to support increasing demand for US-made solar components.
- For creating 1,500 advanced manufacturing jobs paying significantly above the regional median wage in Saginaw County.
- For engaging with Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! early and welcoming our expertise in local talent and recruitment – resulting in more than 3,000 hours of our assistance to help expand Corning's applicant pool and streamline the hiring process.
- For considering GLBMW as a key partner connecting skilled individuals with meaningful careers that fuel innovation and strengthen Michigan's economy.
- For demonstrating what's possible when industry and community work together.

**MICHIGAN
WORKS!**
Great Lakes Bay Region

www.michiganworks.com
Bay | Gratiot | Isabella | Midland | Saginaw

Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! is an Equal Opportunity/Employer Program. Auxiliary aide services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Michigan Relay Services dial 711. Supported by the State of Michigan. A proud partner of the American Job Center Network.

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From job placement and career coaching to employer hiring support and workforce training, we help build a stronger Southeast Michigan.

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Congratulations!



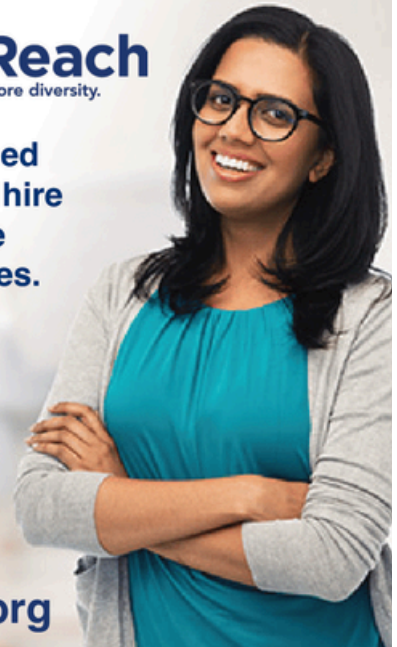
Hilite International and West Michigan Works!
2026 Impact Award Winners



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hiring to find, hire
& promote the
best candidates.

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CONGRATULATIONS

ESSENCE & BRONSON HEALTHCARE



CONGRATULATIONS

Eaton Steel and Apprentice Isaac Reifschneider

*Celebrating our collaborative relationship
to build a talented workforce!*

Eaton Steel Corporation is a third-generation enterprise with a distinguished history spanning more than 61 years. Since 2017, they have partnered with Oakland County Michigan Works! to launch a strategic initiative aimed at recruiting and training CDL-A truck drivers. Through collaborative orientations with the employer and training providers, we created a process that delivered measurable results. This partnership led to five successful On-the-Job Training placements, totaling \$15,000 and provided training for participants, totaling \$24,000. These efforts have equipped individuals and launched careers for those like Mechatronics Apprentice Isaac Reifschneider.

- Multi-Year Going PRO Talent Fund Award Recipient
- WIOA On-The-Job Training Participant
- U.S. DOL Registered Apprenticeship Program



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DAVID COULTER
OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

CONGRATULATIONS!

Michigan Works! West Central congratulates
Hunteny's Clubhouse on its 2026 Impact Award!

"Michigan Works! West Central has played a vital role in our organization's growth by supporting our efforts to recruit high-quality staff and invest in ongoing education and professional development."

— Tyler Hunteny, CEO



GST MICHIGAN
GENESEE SHIAWASSEE THUMB **WORKS!**

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Making an IMPACT in Northeast Michigan

OUR 2025 REGIONAL IMPACT



22,153

AGENCY VISITS
at our 8 service centers



19

USDOL Registered
APPRENTICES



3,904

JOBS FILLED



1,272

EMPLOYERS
SERVED



389

BARRIERS REMOVED
Barrier Removal Employment
Success Funding



296

INDIVIDUALS
TRAINED
in growth industries

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WORKS!**
NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM

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Served more than **59,000 individuals** and
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FEATURING



Lightcast

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2026 Annual Conference

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MICHIGAN WORKS! ASSOCIATION

We envision a Michigan where collaborative workforce development is an integral part of our state's economic prosperity. The Michigan Works! Association will execute this vision by serving as the leading voice in workforce development advocacy, policy, education, and investments.



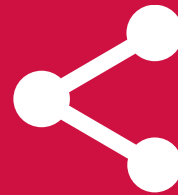
VOICE

Advancing the interests of the Michigan Works! Network through advocacy and participation in the legislative process.



KNOWLEDGE

Sharing research-based best practices, information and practical details about the Michigan Works! Network.



CONNECTION

Providing training and networking opportunities that help leaders and members connect and grow.

MEMBERS

Capital Area Michigan Works!
Detroit Employment
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GST Michigan Works!
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