



MICHIGAN
WORKS!
ASSOCIATION®

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

www.michiganworks.org

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

from the Board Chair & CEO

In 2024, the Michigan Works! Association, in collaboration with our statewide network of Michigan Works! agencies, continued to be a driving force in workforce development, innovation, and advocacy. As Michigan's economic landscape evolves, we have remained steadfast in our mission to connect employers with skilled talent, empower job seekers, and champion policies that strengthen our workforce.

This year, we built upon the foundation laid by our strategic plan, furthering our commitment to equipping our members with the tools and resources necessary to navigate an ever changing labor market. Through innovative training programs, strengthened partnerships, and advocacy efforts at both state and federal levels, we have amplified our impact and reinforced our role as a leader in workforce development.

Our successes this year are a testament to the dedication of our board, strategic partners, and the hardworking professionals across the Michigan Works! network. Their tireless efforts have ensured job seekers find meaningful employment opportunities and businesses can access the skilled workforce they need to thrive.

As we reflect on the achievements of 2024, we look forward with optimism and determination. This annual report highlights our progress, celebrates our milestones, and sets the stage for an even stronger future. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to build a resilient and prosperous Michigan.

Best Regards,



Ryan Hundt
CEO, Michigan Works! Association



John Kaczynski
Board Chair, Michigan Works! Association



Ryan Hundt
CEO



John Kaczynski
Board Chair

STRATEGIC PROGRESS

In 2023, Michigan Works! Association members developed a comprehensive five-year strategic plan.

Our vision is a Michigan where collaborative workforce development is integral to our state's economic prosperity. We can execute this vision as the leading voice in workforce development advocacy, policy, education, and investments.

During the next three to five years, our association will focus on the achievement of the following goals and objectives:

GOAL 1: Diversify Funding

- Increase external funding by 10 percent annually over the next three to five years
- Increase fee-for-service revenue by 10 percent annually over the next three to five years
- Increase membership by 10 percent

GOAL 2: Strengthen and Increase Relationships with Partners

- Increase engagement opportunities for existing members by 5 percent annually over the next three to five years
- Identify and cultivate new partners and stakeholders ✓ **DONE**



GOAL 3: Increase Brand Awareness and Recognition

- Develop Michigan Works! Association brand standards and resources (internal and external) ✓ **DONE**
- Create a marketing and communications plan ✓ **DONE**

GOAL 4: Provide Quality Professional Development Opportunities

- Establish a Center of Excellence
- Develop Michigan Works! Association and Michigan Works! agency leadership skills
- Reimagine training and professional development to develop innovative curriculum pathways

GOAL 5: Strengthen Advocacy

- Create a comprehensive state and federal advocacy agenda ✓ **DONE**
- Identify opportunities to align advocacy efforts with partners/sectors
- Increase advocacy opportunities and effectiveness for Michigan Works! Association and members

2024 Achievements:

MICHIGAN WORKS! BACKED WORKFORCE FUNDING INCREASES IN MI | JUNE 24

The Michigan Works! Association demonstrated significant advocacy success in 2024, securing critical workforce development investments that strengthened Michigan's economic competitiveness. A cornerstone achievement was preserving the Going PRO Talent Fund at \$55 million, ensuring continued support for employer-driven training programs that has upskilled more than 220,000 workers across thousands of businesses since 2014. Building on this momentum, the Association spearheaded the creation of the MI Skills Fund, a \$1 million pilot program targeting skills gaps in high-demand sectors like advanced manufacturing and health care. Concurrently, advocacy efforts successfully reinstated \$4.8 million for Barrier Removal Employment Success initiatives, directly addressing systemic employment obstacles by expanding access to childcare assistance, transportation solutions, and digital literacy training. These strategic wins collectively advanced Michigan's workforce ecosystem by aligning worker development with industry needs while promoting equitable access to employment opportunities.

MICHIGAN WORKS! HELPED SHAPE FEDERAL WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS | JUN - DEC 2024

As the U.S. Congress discussed reauthorizing the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2024, the Michigan Works! Association was right there, supplying critical updates, data, and strategies for ensuring the best possible outcome. Through our advocacy, the bill began to advance with many strong provisions, including necessary updates and flexibility for local providers. At the same time, we pushed for removing onerous training requirements and protecting local control.

While the measure was not passed in Congress before the end of 2024, we have laid a very solid foundation for future success.



VOICE | CONTINUED

FRESH OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE | JUL 24

The Michigan Works Association partnered to develop new insights into the experiences of formerly incarcerated people in 2024, building an agenda for state-level policy changes and more robust community support. During a statewide survey and related focus groups, former prisoners re-entering society in Michigan told researchers about the most significant challenges they faced when using re-entry employment services.

With the support of this new research, the association is preparing a powerful “Reform, Resolve, Restart” agenda to help better support returning citizens in Michigan.

LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR | SEPTEMBER 2023

State Capitol

We work tirelessly throughout the year to stay in close contact with those who make the decisions that impact all our agencies throughout the state. In 2024, state Rep. Angela Witwer and state Sen. Jeff Irwin went above and beyond to advocate for investments in workforce training development programs to grow the state’s labor force. They showed commitment to policies that help give people access to high-paying, quality jobs and a well-trained workforce that attracts new business to our great state.



Because of Rep. Witwer and Sen. Irwin’s standout commitment to workforce training, they were recognized as the Michigan Works! Association Legislators of the Year for 2024. Having strong leaders like these advocating for our priorities in Lansing helps our agencies continue to improve and grow. We’re lucky to have them in Lansing!

Washington, D.C.

U.S. Congresswoman Haley Stevens was honored as the 2024 Legislator of the Year for Congress for her tremendous advocacy on behalf of Michigan’s workforce network supporting Michigan’s ‘demonstration state’ status for effective delivery of employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

The awards were presented at the 2024 Michigan Works! conference in Traverse City in September.

VOICE | CONTINUED

LEGISLATIVE DAYS

U.S. CAPITOL VISIT | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE BOARDS FORUM | MARCH 2024

Michigan Works! left an impact on Capitol Hill in March of 2024, as we visited legislative offices to discuss federal priorities, such as:

- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Re-authorization
- Pell Eligibility Expansion
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Re-authorization
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Re-authorization



MICHIGAN WORKS! HOSTS ROBUST ADVOCACY DAY | MAR 24

Michigan workforce advocates congregated in Lansing on March 13, 2024 to share their message of support for state investment in quality workforce development programs. Meeting with over 90 state lawmakers, the day-long event consisted of quality discussions with key decisionmakers and elected officials, during which the importance of budget investment in Michigan's workforce was championed.

This annual event has been essential to keep Michigan's workforce needs front and center as future policy and investment decisions are made.



KNOWLEDGE

Sharing research-based best practices, information and practical details



TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

Michigan Works! Association continued to grow and strengthen its professional development offerings for Michigan Works! staff and others in the workforce development field. In 2024 alone, nearly 1,800 individuals participated in our trainings across the Michigan Works! system.

New training offerings in 2024 included:

- Cultural Awareness
- The Power of Recognition
- Motivating A Post-Pandemic Youth Workforce
- 2 CFR 200 Changes - What You Need to Know
- TAA 101
- Communication Skills: Our Community Listens
- DISC Deep Dive
- TAA Outreach and Engagement
- Embrace Ease - A Journey Through Anxiety Management
- DEI&A Series: The Intersection of Neuroscience, Conflict and DEI
- Trauma Informed Care
- Complaint System Virtual Training
- Active Assailant & De-Escalation
- Virtual Leadership in Business – Workplace Mental Health Best Practices
- Generational Diversity
- Our Community Listens Deep Dive: Effective Confrontation and the Three Moves
- Policy Essentials for Frontline Staff
- A Better Way Forward: Helping Justice-Involved Individuals
- USDOL Apprenticeships: What you need to know!
- Standards Builder for USDOL Apprenticeship
- Women in Apprenticeship
- Early Childhood Apprenticeships
- Suicide Prevention
- HR Diversity and EO
- Taming Your Microsoft Outlook: Time & Email Management Strategies for Busy Outlook Users
- Veterans Technical Assistance Training

KNOWLEDGE | CONTINUED

TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- Continued to host cohorts of Policy Academy and Workforce & Career Development Certification.
- Supported the state's Apprenticeship Launch Network events focused on encouraging the growth of registered apprenticeship programs in Michigan.
- Entered into a partnership with the Chapman Foundation for Caring Communities to build strong, caring workplaces and communities by empowering individuals to lead with empathy and authenticity.

BSP TRAINING

The 46th and 47th cohort of the Business Solutions Professionals program began in 2024. BSP training helps strengthen the skills of workers in finding and boosting local talent. Certified BSPs bring a newfound level of knowledge, expertise and new approaches to addressing customer needs. There were 59 participants between the two cohorts and 18 new BSPs were certified across all cohorts.

IMPACT AWARDS | APRIL 2024

The 2024 Impact Awards were held on April 17, 2024 in downtown Lansing at the state Capitol. The annual event brings together state leaders, talent developers and career achievers to highlight the amazing work being done to transform Michigan's workforce. Each Michigan Works! agency nominates an employer, employee or community partner for their workforce achievements that year.

State and local talent leaders spoke at this year's Impact Awards to honor the awardees and highlighted the role Michigan Works! plays in workforce success in our state.

The event included:

- 16 employers honored
- 15 employees celebrated



KNOWLEDGE | CONTINUED

ANNUAL CONFERENCE | SEPTEMBER 2024

The 2024 Michigan Works! Annual Conference was held in Traverse City at the Grand Traverse Resort, bringing together the who's who of workforce development in Michigan. The event included:

- 881 attendees
- 34 exhibit booths
- 42 sponsors
- 51 workshop sessions

The conference included engaging and thought-provoking sessions from two amazing keynote speakers. Ben Whiting, corporate entertainer and magician, taught attendees techniques to help build trust, likability, and influence through stronger connections with colleagues and clients. Closing speaker Jacob Brown, a former NFL player turned transformational and motivational speaker, motivated attendees to eliminate the "what ifs" in their lives, embrace fear and succeed on purpose to unlock their potential.

CHALLENGE OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

This year, each of the 16 Michigan Works! agencies honored one of its own who went above and beyond, as the network's Shining Stars, while also recognizing the achievements of statewide leaders.

This year's Challenge of Excellence Awards were presented to:

- Champions of Workforce Development: Orrin Bailey, Michael Polzin and Marisue Moreau
- Employer of the Year: Duncan Aviation
- Volunteer of the Year: John Kerr
- Christine Quinn Excellence in Leadership Award: Janie McNabb, Networks Northwest
- Board of Excellence: Michigan Works! Southwest
- Legislators of the Year: U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens, State Sen. Jeff Irwin, State Rep. Angela Witwer



CONNECTION

Providing training and networking opportunities for leaders and members

BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS

With a shrinking labor pool intensifying competition for talent, the Association began the year by spearheading a coalition of regional business groups and major employers across Michigan. Together, we urged members of the Legislature and Gov. Whitmer to prioritize direct investments in Michigan's workforce. Our collective appeal to state leaders included:

+\$20M
increase in
ongoing
funding

For the Going PRO
Talent Fund

+\$10M
in FY 26
funding

For the MI
Skills Fund

+\$10M
in FY 26
funding

for youth career
exploration

Strong
budget
support

for employer-led
collaboratives

Sustainable
funding

for the Barrier Removal
Employment Success
(BRES) program

Our strong relationships with Michigan's largest chambers, business associations, and employers ensure we remain a key voice among decision-makers when critical budget decisions arise. The Association is dedicated to maintaining this influence and collaborating with partners to amplify our collective impact.

ASSOCIATION RESPONSIVENESS

Our dedicated team members address issues that arise across the entire state. This year, their work continued to be extraordinary, with nearly 4,000 phone calls and emails addressed statewide.

USER GROUPS SPOTLIGHT

We unite workforce development professionals from across Michigan who serve in similar roles, providing a space to troubleshoot challenges, share insights, and develop innovative solutions. This network offers a valuable opportunity for those often working behind the scenes to connect, collaborate, and build a supportive community.

User Groups offer a unique forum for sharing best practices and solution-based approaches to common problems.

**6X/
YEAR**

- Apprenticeship Success Coordinator Users Group
- Planners Users Group

**4X/
YEAR**

- Management Information System Users Group
- Business Services Users Group
- Fiscal Users Group
- Communications Users Group
- Human Resources Workgroup

**2X/
YEAR**

- Equal Opportunity Officers Users Group

Follow Along



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The Michigan Works! Association believes the key to advancing prosperity across the state is a skilled workforce.

As the state's primary workforce development association, our focus is to continue to move the needle on policy, education, and collaboration.

We are creating opportunity and building stronger communities by advocating and innovating together.