

# FOCUS

THE MONTHLY BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

APRIL 2025



## Smoother Road Ahead

MICHIGAN AVENUE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT  
PROJECT IN FINAL STRETCH

### IN THIS ISSUE

MSU & Henry Ford Health Strengthen Partnership

Demphna Krikorian Named LRCC Ambassador of the Year

LRCC Receives 5-Star Reaccreditation from U.S. Chamber of Commerce



*We believe you deserve the perfect home.*

**DANA COSTELLO**

REALTOR®

Global Luxury Specialist

517-712-6624

**BEN MAGSIG**

Branch Office Broker

517-896-2679

Let us simplify this exciting milestone. Our team will guide you through the selling and buying process with pert advice and professional service. Give us a call today, and get one step closer to owning your perfect home.



1493 Haslett Rd.  
Haslett, MI 48840

LANSING **REGIONAL** CHAMBER  
CONTENTS



*feature*

**SMOOTHER ROAD AHEAD: MICHIGAN AVENUE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN FINAL STRETCH**

- 07** MSU and Henry Ford Health Strengthen Partnership
- 08** Fostering ATHENA Women's Interest Network (WIN) Participation: It's a Win-Win
- 09** Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year: Demphna Krikorian
- 11** Tariffs Policies Cause Economic Uncertainty
- 18** Introducing New Municipal Leaders Across the Region
- 20** U.S. Chamber of Commerce Awards Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce with 5-Star Reaccreditation



*monthly features*

- 05** Message from the Chamber
- 06** Thank You Renewing Members
- 06** Chamber Milestones
- 06** Welcome New Members
- 19** Members on the Move
- 22** Chamber in Action



# 2025 Board of Directors

## Officers

*Board Chair*

**Amy Scoby / The Christman Company**

*Past Chair*

**Lisa O'Connor / Publicom**

*Chair-Elect*

**Kelly Preston / Capital Steel & Wire**

*Legal Counsel*

**Mark Burzych / Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC**

*Treasurer*

**Luke Terry / Rehmann**

*President*

**Tim Daman / Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce**

## Division Directors

*Marketing Communications*

**Mike Zamiara / Niowave**

*Member Services*

**Michelle Massey / TechSmith**

*Regional Initiatives*

**Kirk Ray / McLaren  
Greater Lansing**

*Government Relations*

**Kwafo Adarkwa /  
ITC Holdings Corp.**

## At-Large

**Paul Anderson /  
Granger Waste Services**

**Jeff Metts /  
Dowding Industries**

**Troy Comiskey /  
General Motors**

**Eric Musser / Auto-Owners  
Insurance Co.**

**Rebecca DeVooght /  
Michigan State University**

**Beth Pellerito / Granger  
Construction Company**

**Margaret Dimond /  
University of  
Michigan Health**

**Tom Ruis / PNC**

**Lisa Webb Sharpe /  
Peckham**

**Sara Dolan / MSUFCU**

**Lisa Ellen Smith /  
InVerve Marketing**

**Jim Farrell / Dart**

**Roger Graff /  
Farm Bureau Insurance Co.**

**Todd Surline /  
Hiring Solutions**

**Robyn Howell / LAFCU**

**Kevin Zielke / AF Group**

**David Lewis / AT&T**

## FOCUS

*Editor*

**Kelsey Teribery**

*Design*

**Tandem Studios**

*Print and  
Mailing Services*  
**BRD Printing  
Incorporated**

*Feature Writer*  
**Jennifer McEntee**

*Cover Photography*  
**Hanna VonAchen**



## JOIN THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Leadership Circle investors are proven business and community leaders. We value their commitment to strengthen our region through their leadership and appreciate the important role they play in advancing the Lansing Regional Chamber's mission.

Stay Connected. Stay Social.

[facebook.com/LansingChamber](https://facebook.com/LansingChamber)

[x.com/LansingChamber](https://x.com/LansingChamber)

[Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce](https://www.youtube.com/LansingRegionalChamber)

[@LansingRegionalChamber](https://www.instagram.com/LansingRegionalChamber)

[Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce](https://www.linkedin.com/company/LansingRegionalChamber)





**TIM DAMAN**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
LANSING REGIONAL  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



**“**  
**Achieving 5-star reaccreditation is a powerful endorsement of the value we bring to our members and communities. This distinction reflects the strength of our businesses and our commitment to economic growth, advocacy, and regional collaboration.**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAMBER

# Lansing Regional Chamber Earns Prestigious 5-Star Reaccreditation from U.S. Chamber of Commerce

**L**ast month, we were honored to receive the prestigious 5-Star accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. This significant achievement reflects our organization's commitment to sound policies, effective governance, and positive impact on the local business community. The Chamber first received 5-Star accreditation in 2018.



Nationwide, only 187 chambers are accredited, with just four in Michigan, with the distinguished 5-Star rating. This designation is the highest level of recognition awarded by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, underscoring the strength of the business community in the Lansing region.

Achieving 5-star reaccreditation is a powerful endorsement of the value we bring to our members and communities. This distinction reflects the strength of our businesses and our commitment to economic growth, advocacy, and regional collaboration. It also underscores our dedication to creating and delivering value to our members by providing resources, programs, and opportunities that support business success and economic prosperity.

The U.S. Chamber's Accreditation Program recognizes excellence in the chamber industry in promoting a pro-business environment. Accreditation is awarded by a panel of peer chambers and U.S. Chamber board members, and to receive accreditation, a chamber must meet standards in organizational governance, government affairs, communications, and technology.

We are proud to be a part of a coalition of Chambers of commerce nationwide and the role that we all play in our communities every day. This reaccreditation highlights the strong leadership of our team in offering businesses valuable tools, connections, and programs.

Thank you to our members and partners for being part of this remarkable accomplishment. Together, we will continue to build a thriving business environment throughout our region. ●

### Stay connected and grow with the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce!



Our event calendar is packed with opportunities to network, learn, and elevate your business. From professional development workshops to community gatherings, there's something for everyone.

Explore the full calendar and get involved today at [lansingchamber.org](https://lansingchamber.org).



# Thank You Renewing Members

Accident Fund Holdings (AF Group)	Kolt Communications, Inc.
ACD.net	Lake State Landscaping & Snow Removal LLC
APEX Accelerator of South Central MI (Formerly PTAC of South Central Michigan)	Lakewood Apartments - Monarch Investment
Bellwether Public Relations (formerly Martin Waymire)	Lansing Junk Removal
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan	Lighthouse Limousine
BMC-Business Machines Company	M3 Group
Boys & Girls Club of Lansing	Meijer Inc.
Brookshire Townhomes (Abrico, Ltd)	Michigan State University Foundation
Buddy's Pizza - Okemos	Mid Michigan Medicare
Capital Area MICHIGAN WORKS!	MSU Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU)
Capital Insurance Services, Corp.	Northwestern Mutual of East Lansing (JD General Agency LLC)
Capital Steel & Wire, Inc.	Oasis Senior Advisors of Mid-Michigan
Christman Company	Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists, P.C.
Cohl, Stoker & Toskey, P.C.	PADNOS
DeLau Fire & Safety, Inc.	Potter Park Zoological Society
Draft House	Red Cedar Lodge
Fifth Third Bank	Robert Half International
Fraser Trebilcock Davis & Dunlap P.C.	Romanow Building Services
Fuerstenau Agency - Farm Bureau Insurance	S & S Die Co.
Gillespie Company, LLC	The Salvation Army - Lansing Capitol Area
Gorsline-Runciman Funeral Homes	Sapura
Grand Traverse Pie Co. - Okemos	Spare Time Entertainment Center and Escapology Lansing
Guy Hurley Insurance & Surety Services	SpringHill Suites by Marriott
H&R Electrical Contractors	Sunrise Cleaning And Construction Services
Harrison Roadhouse	Superior Services RSH Inc.
Harvest Creative Services	Triterra
Horizon Bank	Union Bank
	Zeeb Animal Hospital

## Chamber Milestones

**Tri-County Regional Planning Commission**  
45 Years

**NAI Mid-Michigan**  
35 Years

**Jackson National Life Insurance Co.**  
30 Years

**Capital City Market**  
5 Years

*We'd like to offer a special salute to these great organizations who reached milestone anniversaries as Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce members this month. Thank you for your continued support throughout the years!*

**Capitol View Apartments**  
5 Years

**Courtyard by Marriott Lansing Downtown**  
5 Years

**Redhead Creative Consultancy**  
5 Years

# Welcome New Members

**7 Brew**  
(321) 451-0308  
[www.7brew.com](http://www.7brew.com)  
6026 S. Cedar St.  
Lansing, MI 48911

**Caterpillar Corner Childcare Center**  
(517) 889-5348  
[www.caterpillarcornercc.com](http://www.caterpillarcornercc.com)  
2168 N. Cedar St.  
Delhi Charter Township, MI 48842

**Clinton County RESA**  
(989) 224-6831  
[www.ccrea.org](http://www.ccrea.org)  
1013 S. U.S. Hwy. 27  
St. Johns, MI 48879

**County National Bank**  
(888) 322-1088  
[www.cnbb.bank](http://www.cnbb.bank)  
1 S. Howell St.  
Hillsdale, MI 49242

**Dave & Buster's**  
(517) 318-5700  
[www.daveandbusters.com](http://www.daveandbusters.com)  
3200 Preyde Blvd.  
Lansing, MI 48912

**Elevate Outdoor Living**  
(517) 996-6464  
[www.elevate-mi.com](http://www.elevate-mi.com)  
P.O. Box 330  
Williamston, MI 48895

**HAP CareSource**  
(248) 496-9109  
[www.hapcaresource.com](http://www.hapcaresource.com)

**HR Collaborative, LLC**  
(616) 965-7860  
[www.hrcollaborative.com](http://www.hrcollaborative.com)  
678 Front St. NW, Ste. 265  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

**Lansing Lavender Company, LLC**  
(517) 202-0003  
[www.lansinglavendercompany.com](http://www.lansinglavendercompany.com)  
3129 N. Cambridge Rd.  
Lansing, MI 48911

**Legendary Homes Inc.**  
(517) 515-1114  
[www.LegendaryHomesInc.com](http://www.LegendaryHomesInc.com)  
10197 S. Meridian Rd. U.S. 127  
Clarklake, MI 49234

**Mango Cannabis**  
(405) 906-3000  
[www.mangocannabis.com](http://www.mangocannabis.com)  
5620 S. Cedar St.  
Lansing, MI 48911

**New Vision Lansing, LLC**  
(517) 371-3230  
[www.gentilozzi.com/new-vision](http://www.gentilozzi.com/new-vision)

**Well PlantEd, LLC**  
(517) 202-0003  
[www.wellplantedyard.com](http://www.wellplantedyard.com)  
3129 N. Cambridge Rd.  
Lansing, MI 48911



# MSU and Henry Ford Health Strengthen Partnership

**M**ichigan State University and Henry Ford Health have a new master services agreement, effective Jan. 1, as part of its 30-year partnership. The latest agreement is another step toward integrating clinical services to expand the scope of healthcare, technology, and innovation Michigan residents can access.

Norm Hubbard, president of the Henry Ford Health + Michigan State University Health Sciences partnership, said the collaboration is built on three pillars of health outcomes: medical research, education, and care.

"We'll still have the MSU Health Care brand that's got trust and credibility in mid-Michigan and beyond, but we can begin to bring in pieces of Henry Ford which allows us to elevate the level of practice," Hubbard said.

The Henry Ford Medical Group, with more than 2,700 providers, provides operational and financial expertise to the partnership. MSU Health Care, the university's faculty-led clinical practice with more than 600 faculty and affiliate providers, will adopt Henry Ford Health's established systems and access its vendor networks.

The institutions have had an official partnership in place since 2021. Specifics of the newly inked agreement include joint recruitment efforts for specialized care, future improvements in pharmacies and laboratories, and more investment in MSU Health Care research, innovation, and teaching. MSU Health Care will also join Henry Ford's new Clinical Integrated Network of healthcare providers and switch to its electronic health records system in Jan. 2026.

Hubbard said Greater Lansing patients will most likely notice that their healthcare services transfer more seamlessly from one facility to the next. For instance, if a patient gets a bone marrow transplant at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, they can come home to have follow-up appointments at Lansing-area hospitals with continued access to their relevant medical records.

"So the ethic is more care, better care, closer to home," Hubbard explained. "If you have to leave the community to get treatment, that's a much more carefully coordinated handoff."

Hubbard said it's important to note that MSU Health Care continues to have enduring partnerships with other healthcare institutions in the region, including McLaren Health Care and Corewell Health.

"One of the really exciting things about the partnership with Ford — and they're unique in the state in this regard — is their historical commitment to all kinds of research," he said.

As an aligned research organization, MSU and Henry Ford partnership researchers have submitted more than 670 National Institutes of Health grant proposals totaling nearly \$1.3 billion. The partnership is also building a \$335 million biomedical research facility in Detroit set to open in 2027.



*Henry Ford + MSU Health Sciences officials recently gathered to celebrate the four-year anniversary of the joint academic partnership. Pictured left to right: board chair Adnan Munkarah, chief administrative officer Teri Grieb, MSU mascot Sparty, and president Norman Hubbard. (Courtesy Michigan State University Health Sciences)*

Hubbard said local employers will benefit from greater healthcare offerings for their employees, more local research and innovation, and a local economy boosted by facility construction.

"I think for their employees and their families, we'll be adding to the strength and breadth of the medical care that people can receive here in Lansing close to home," he said. "There's also an economic development piece to this. We will be building things and bringing more physicians and nurses to the community. That's not a 'big bang' thing, but that'll be something over time that we begin to see. I'm excited." ♦



# Fostering ATHENA Women's Interest Network (WIN) Participation: It's a Win-Win

By Linda Toomey, ATHENA WIN Board Member & Vice President, Marketing and Business Development, McLaren Health Care

**F**or me, ATHENA WIN is a vibrant community of women coming together to learn, support one another, and grow together.

By fostering these relationships, we not only enrich our own lives but also create a ripple effect that can help solve challenges, spark new ideas, and strengthen our bonds.

Organizations with an Ignite Membership (\$500) can have up to five women join ATHENA WIN, receiving invitations to exclusive member-only events, access to networking and educational events, and more.



Toomey

employee is not already a member, they are simply added to the membership.

The variety of events offered appeals to a large range of women in varying stages of their careers. From professional development and growth to social events to the Aspiring Leaders mentorship program, there is always an opportunity to feel welcomed into membership.

I look forward to sharing with you, making connections, and leveraging knowledge to achieve our goals. You can learn more about ATHENA WIN programs and membership benefits at [lansingchamber.org/athenawin](http://lansingchamber.org/athenawin). ♦

**“** For me, ATHENA WIN is a vibrant community of women coming together to learn, support one another, and grow together. **”**

For larger organizations, participation may look a little different. The Illuminate Membership (\$1,250), designed for medium-large organizations, extends member benefits to all women in the organization. But how does a large organization leverage membership and foster participation?

McLaren Greater Lansing has been a proud member of the ATHENA WIN program for three years. It all began when a small group of women routinely attended events and suggested membership to the organization. McLaren Greater Lansing immediately recognized that ATHENA WIN is perfect for those looking to collaborate, learn, and be part of a supportive community.

At McLaren Greater Lansing, all women are invited to join ATHENA WIN quarterly through the employee newsletter. Our regular invitation to join reaches even the newest members of our team. As an ATHENA WIN member, regular communications and invitations to activities and events are sent directly from the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. Our team members who attend events throughout the year invite others within the organization to join them. If a fellow



**CASE Credit Union offers a variety of services to help businesses achieve success.**

**Business Membership features:**

- Various business checking and savings accounts
- Business Solutions support for cash management and ACH
- Business loan and credit card options
- Convenient local offices to provide personalized service
- Variable Rate Business Money Market Account

**Business Membership benefits:**

- Free ACH access for the first year
- Complimentary first check order up to \$100 maximum
- Mobile deposit capture
- Credit card rewards program

Call **517.393.7710** or email [BusinessSolutions@CASECU.org](mailto:BusinessSolutions@CASECU.org) to learn more.

Subject to change at any time.  
Federally Insured by NCUA. Equal Opportunity Lender.





# Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year: Demphna Krikorian

**D**emphna Krikorian admits that she's an extrovert but doesn't think that's a prerequisite to serving on the Ambassador Committee for the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce.

"Everybody has their own gifts and graces. I think what you need is to have a heart for what the Chamber stands for," Krikorian said. "I see the Chamber as more than just businesses. It's the people behind the businesses."

Krikorian was named the Ambassador of the Year at this year's Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner in February. She said she was honored to be nominated by her peers for the distinction.

“

*A huge part of what we do is trying to help these businesses make the most out of what the Chamber offers.*

"I'm just really grateful, and I'm humbled by it," Krikorian said.

As senior director of development for Lansing-based nonprofit Child and Family Charities, Krikorian joined the Chamber's all-volunteer Ambassador Committee in 2020. She appreciates that LRCC welcomes businesses of all sizes, including nonprofit organizations such as hers.

Child and Family Charities provides supportive services to an estimated 15,000 children and their families throughout Michigan.

As an LRCC Ambassador, Krikorian reaches out to current and prospective Chamber members to help them find the tools, resources, and relationships that come with membership.

That outreach can include greeting members and making introductions at a Chamber mixer, connecting



professionals with complementary needs, or even identifying and contacting businesses that haven't recently tapped into available Chamber resources.

"We've all gone to events where we're by ourselves, and we're like, 'Wow, what am I doing here? I don't know anybody,'" Krikorian said. "A huge part of what we do is trying to help these businesses make the most out of what the Chamber offers."

Krikorian said she takes her Ambassador role very seriously and makes an effort to attend as many mixers, ribbon-cuttings, and major Chamber events as she can.

The Ambassador of the Year award was a surprise, Krikorian said, one that she values as a nice recognition of her volunteer work.

"It does encourage you to continue doing the work that you do. It's a great tradition," she said. ♦



## CHECK OUT THE LANSING JOB BOARD!

It's a one-stop shop for job opportunities in the Lansing region and allows LRCC members with the ability to post their job openings.

Learn more at [lansingchamber.org](https://lansingchamber.org)





**Value-driven plans. Innovative solutions.  
Better business benefits. Ready to help.**

**READY  
TO HELP**



At Blue Cross, we know you want the best for your employees. That's why we're ready to help with plans designed to fit any budget, and innovative solutions that improve care for your employees. From diabetes and hypertension to maternity and menopause, we offer whole health coverage and solutions that you and your team can trust.

Attracting better talent starts with having better benefits,  
and we're ready to help.

[bcbsm.com/employers/improved-care](https://bcbsm.com/employers/improved-care)

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

W015118



# Tariffs Policies Cause Economic Uncertainty

By Cristina Benton & Lisa Wootton Booth, Anderson Economic Group

**A**s President Trump pursues tariffs on Canada, Mexico, China, and possibly other countries, it's important to understand what tariffs are, why the administration wants them, and the potential repercussions for the U.S. and for Michigan.

## The What and Why of Tariffs

Tariffs are a tax on imported goods. When a foreign product arrives at an American port, the company that ordered that product pays a percentage of the cost of that good as a tariff.

President Trump campaigned on promises to impose aggressive tariffs that would gain concessions to combat illegal immigration and fentanyl trafficking. He has also proposed that tariffs would incentivize manufacturers to move production to the U.S.

## Benefits and Dangers

Countries implement tariffs to make a foreign product more expensive, thus giving domestic products a price advantage. Tariffs can also be used to apply pressure in negotiations, gaining concessions in exchange for reducing or eliminating the tariffs.

However, tariffs often result in escalating reciprocal actions. China, for example, has imposed an additional 15% tariff on U.S. chicken, wheat, and corn, and an additional 10% tariff on other agricultural products. Canada, Mexico, and the European Union have also implemented or promised to implement tariffs on U.S. products in retaliation (see the timeline below for details).

We will not be immune in Michigan, where tariffs will heavily impact the automotive industry. This is partly because steel and aluminum are critical for producing key components, and partly because of complex, integrated supply chains. Further, auto parts cross North American borders many times. In 2024, the U.S. imported 3.6 million vehicles from Canada and Mexico – about 22% of new vehicles sold in the country that year. Canada and Mexico also represent the state's largest trading partners by far, with \$119.8 billion in imports and \$42.8 billion in exports annually.

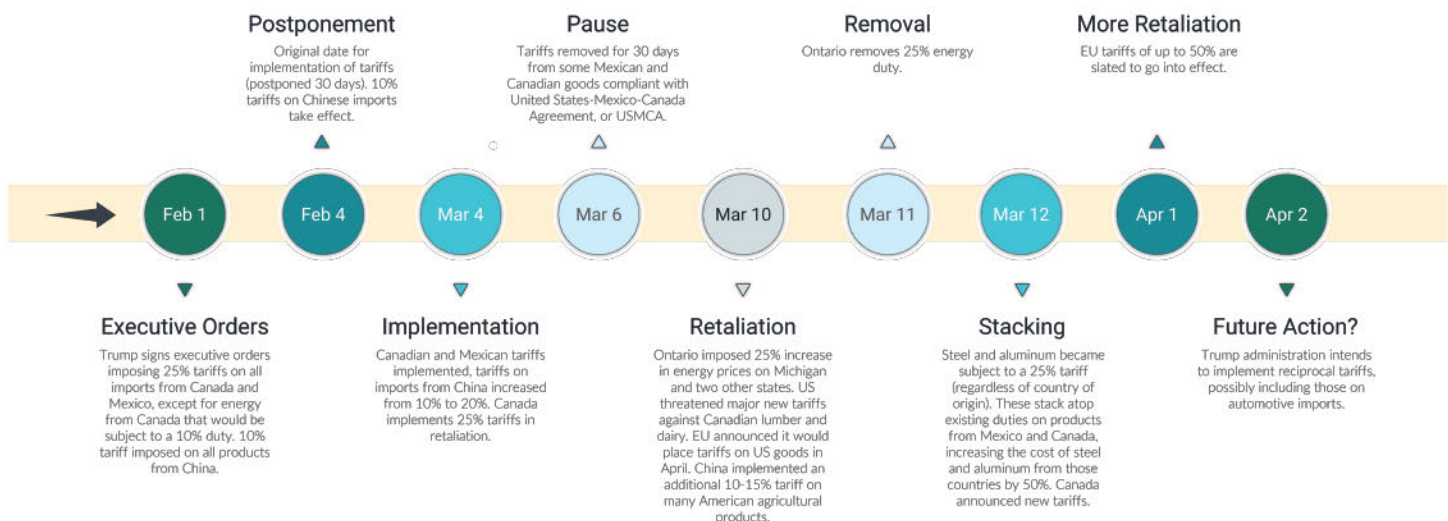
Tariffs and retaliatory tariffs will result in significant disruptions to vehicle and parts production, along with higher consumer prices. A recent analysis by Anderson Economic Group found that the cost of many North American vehicles could rise between \$4,000 and \$12,000 due to the tariffs placed on Canada and Mexico. In all, the likely result of these tariffs is higher prices for food, consumer goods, and vehicles.

While the situation appears potentially dire for Michigan, much is still unknown. Threats and counter-threats may not come to pass. Those that do will need to be implemented and there are many details to work out.

It's also unclear how long the tariffs will be in place, how long they will remain at their current or promised levels. This makes planning a challenge for Michigan, the auto industry, and consumers. ♦

## TARIFF TIMELINE

An abbreviated list of 2025 trade actions





flylansing.com

**LAND** ANYWHERE  
Fast. Close. Hassle-free.



American Airlines 

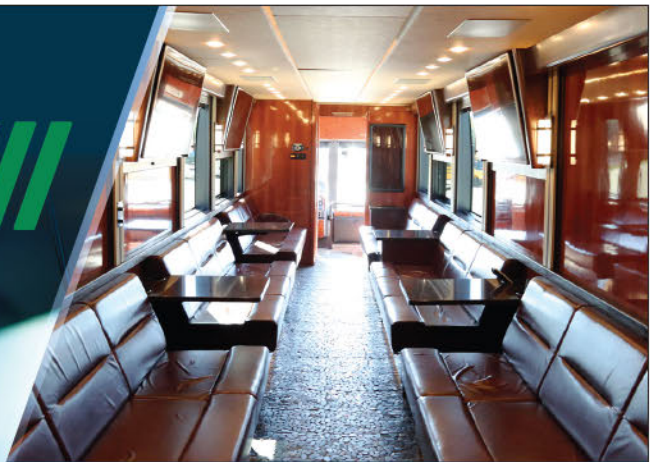
 DELTA

 **APPLE VACATIONS.**

 **Breeze**

Take Your Teambuilding

**ON THE ROAD**



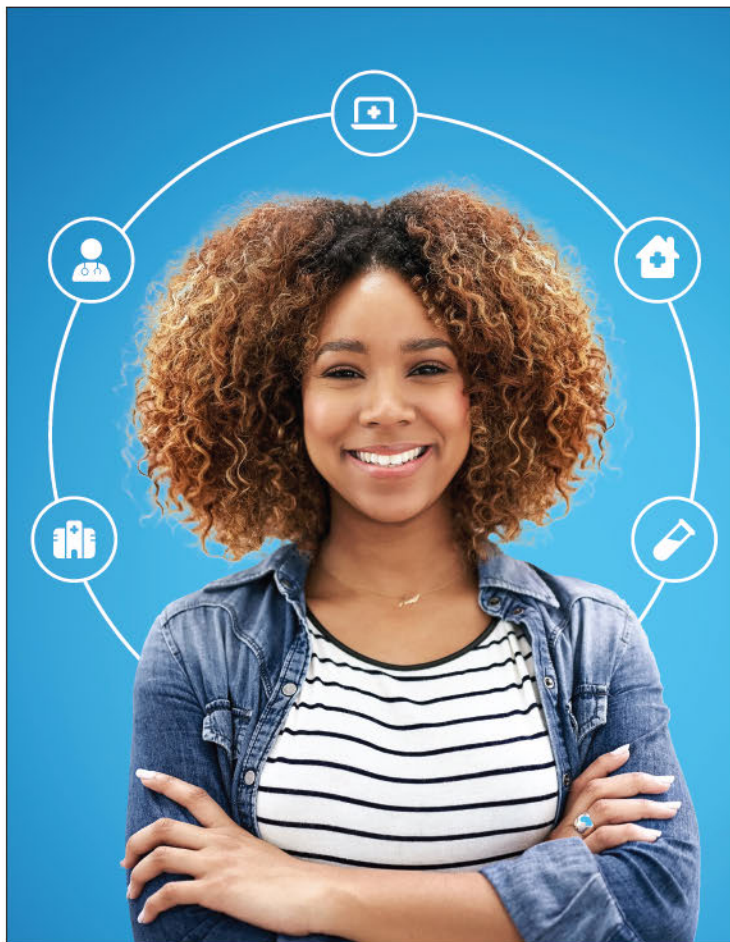
**RIDE IN STYLE AND  
COMFORT WITH DEAN**

Dean Trailways has a variety of motor coaches for all occasions, equipped with amenities to meet your needs. Browse our options, take a virtual tour and reserve yours today!

**DEAN**  
TRAILWAYS

[deantrailways.com](http://deantrailways.com)





# WE'RE MAKING IT BETTER FOR YOU

Better access means better care. That's why we're making it easier to find the care you need, when you need it. With our growing network of providers, we've enhanced your access to care, with features like online scheduling, virtual visits, online ER check-in, and more. Because at McLaren, your care is our commitment.

Find the care you need at [mclaren.org](https://mclaren.org)



## Michigan's Future Workforce On Display at the Capitol

You're Invited! Take a stroll through the Capitol Showcase and experience firsthand how Career & Technical Education (CTE) is shaping Michigan's next generation of professionals. This event brings together CTE students from across the state to showcase their skills through hands-on demonstrations and engaging conversations.

No registration, no cost—just an opportunity to see how these programs provide the academic, technical and work-based skills that prepare students for success in college, careers and beyond. Hear directly from students about the impact of CTE and how business and industry partnerships help create a seamless transition into the workforce. See the future of Michigan's workforce—up close and in action!



**APRIL 29, 2025**

**9:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**Heritage Hall  
Capitol Visitor Center  
323 West Ottawa Street  
Lansing, MI**

### MEET LOCAL STUDENTS

**Ingham ISD Wilson Talent Center  
Criminal Justice**

**Clinton County RESA Career Connections  
Allied Health**

**Eaton RESA Career Prep Center  
Aviation Careers**



**Ingham Intermediate  
School District**



**CLINTON COUNTY  
RESA**  
Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency



**EATON**  
REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY



# Smoother Road Ahead

## MICHIGAN AVENUE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN FINAL STRETCH

By Jennifer McEntee

**C**apital Imaging has been printing custom displays, banners, and signage from its corner building on East Michigan Avenue for 26 years. Owner Bo Noles said his customers are often from Michigan State University or other businesses along the Michigan Avenue corridor.

The roadway just outside his shop hasn't changed much in those years, until recently. The Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Project, a \$14.1 million Lansing initiative entering its second and final year, promises resurfaced roads, new traffic signals and bike lanes, better sidewalks, upgraded utilities, and spruced-up landscaping. Though 100 trees were removed amid the construction, they'll be replaced by 170 trees better suited to the urban locale.

Noles said he looks forward to a completed corridor — estimated by October 2025 — when his storefront will be more visible to passing pedestrians and commuters.

"I see it as very positive," Noles said of the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Project. "It's something that will create a good vibe and good energy. Hopefully, everyone benefits from it. I'm sure they will."

Noles plans to reach out to his neighboring businesses along East Michigan Avenue to offer his services for new banners and storefront signs once road construction is further along. He'll be replacing the signage awning at



Noles

Capital Imaging since the green fabric sustained storm damage.

"I'm very excited to see how (Michigan Avenue) turns out," Noles said, noting construction crews and city staff have been helpful and accommodating amid the process. "So I have nothing but good things to say about it."

The Michigan Avenue Corridor has long been an important economic conduit between the Michigan State Capitol, the City of Lansing, East Lansing, and Michigan State University. Along its approximately three-mile stretch, intersecting with more than a dozen side streets, East Michigan Avenue offers a varied mix of small and large businesses, residences, government offices, higher education, healthcare, religious institutions, and entertainment facilities.

Tim Daman, president and CEO of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) and a Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority member, said Michigan Avenue's role as a business artery dates back to at least 1905. That's when the Lansing Business Men's Association, the predecessor to LRCC, was instrumental in paving the road between the Capitol building and the Michigan Agricultural College, now known as MSU.





"It just resonates with us that in 1905, our business leaders at that time recognized the importance of connecting the state Capitol to the college," Daman said. "You had two landmarks in our community and they recognized the need to

connect that for future economic opportunities."

In the 120 years since Michigan Avenue was first paved, the road has accumulated more landmarks that draw visitors to the region, including Jackson Field and the Lansing Convention Center. Daman said the various businesses that have set up shop along the avenue make it a microcosm of the Greater Lansing region.



Daman

"When we look at our regional economy, it all intersects on Michigan Avenue," he said. "That's why I think this rebuild is so critically important."

Revitalization efforts in other Lansing communities, including REO Town, Trowbridge, Red Cedar, and Old Town Lansing, prove that if you build it, they will come.

"I firmly believe that infrastructure investment leads to economic growth and talent attraction," Daman said. "When you start putting that all together, you have more than the foundation along the corridor to continue that economic growth."

## SHORT-TERM PAIN FOR LONG-TERM GAIN

While most agree infrastructure improvements along the corridor were long overdue, the inevitable hassles

of construction work and road closures have tested the patience of people who live and work along the corridor.



Grossmann

Matt Grossmann, who owns Hooked bookstore in the Gateway Lofts Lansing apartment building on East Michigan Avenue, has had a front-row seat to one form of construction or another for the entire three years of his business' existence, including residential construction, drainage work, and US-127 roadwork.

"It was to the point where our most popular social media posts were just maps of how to get around the construction," Grossmann said, noting he wished the various government entities would better coordinate their construction schedules.

Grossmann and his business partner, Sarah Reckhow, picked the shop's retail space based on its central location and the neighborhood's potential for growth.

Hooked has a steady clientele of students, healthcare workers, and retirement community members who travel by car and foot from surrounding buildings. Grossmann hopes the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Project will make the road more usable.

"It's a primary corridor in the region and one that we want to be improved and vibrant. The actual road right in front of us has been a disaster of potholes for all the time we've been open," Grossmann said. "It's comically bad, so definitely there's a long-term need for improvement."

Local residential and commercial developer Scott Gillespie, CEO of Gillespie Company on East Michigan Avenue, has five completed projects within the Michigan Avenue Corridor development area. He began buying properties along East Michigan Avenue in 2007 with an eye toward redevelopment.





Gillespie

"Growing up here, seeing when it was bustling, and there were food options, and there was activity, I wanted to play a part in stabilizing the avenue after seeing it fall down a little bit," Gillespie said of his investment along the corridor. "I wanted to play a part in building it back up. It's been a lot of fun playing a small part in the growth, stability, and growing vibrancy of the Michigan Avenue corridor."

Gillespie looks forward to the calming effect of reducing East Michigan Avenue by one lane of traffic. The city's rehabilitation project includes reconfiguring the thoroughfare from five lanes to four, with two westbound traffic lanes, a center turn lane, and one eastbound traffic lane.

"I think we will have a little bit slower traffic. It will be safer for pedestrians, for bikers, and drivers will be more apt to see what offerings there are, whether it be a restaurant or insurance office or a coffee shop. They'll be able to see those businesses because they're not going so fast."

Gillespie acknowledges that road closures and construction noise have inconvenienced people who live and work along East Michigan Avenue over the past year. Still, they are starting to see the fruits of that labor: wider, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, safer driving conditions, and a more aesthetically appealing avenue that will ideally draw more investment, business tenants, customers, and residents.

"I think it gives us a better feeling of pride in the area and in our businesses and in our buildings," he said.

### LOOKING DOWN THE ROAD



Lum

Jonathan Lum, chair of the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority and owner of Exit Realty Home Partners, was born and raised on the east side of Lansing.

"I've been along that corridor most of my life," he said.

Now raising his family in the area and with neighbors and real estate clients to consider, he's been pleased to see much-needed progress along Michigan Avenue.

"We have to attract redevelopment, and I think that's really the key because the corridor — I love it because it feels like home to me — looks a little bit edgy," he said.

Lum joined the MACIA board in June of 2012. The eight-member Lansing City Council-approved authority is tasked with providing economic resources to improve public infrastructure along the corridor, correcting and preventing deterioration, and helping the neighborhood better align for economic growth.

"We work to try to ensure that the communication is there and clear," Lum said. "The focus is to ensure that the businesses are aware when construction is happening, especially when one phase is moving on to the next."

The authority has helped organize informational meetings for businesses and the public about the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Project, facilitated interactions with the City of Lansing Public Works Department, and helped provide road signage to indicate businesses along the corridor are still open during construction.

**"It's a primary corridor in the region and one that we want to be improved and vibrant."**

**—Matt Grossmann, owner of Hooked bookstore**

The authority also created a website — Do the Avenue, at [www.dotheavenue.com](http://www.dotheavenue.com) — to give Eastside visitors a comprehensive listing and map of businesses along Michigan Avenue, properties for sale and rent, and tips on navigating the road detours.

Future efforts for the MACIA will include encouraging storefront façade improvements and promoting entertainment options along the Michigan Avenue corridor.

Meanwhile, the return value on the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Project won't be known until the last excavator has left and the final tree is planted.

"I think that the true testimony will be measuring the direction that the avenue goes in," Lum said. "We currently do have a number of vacant storefronts. I know that there are businesses that I've shown properties to along the corridor that ultimately felt like it wasn't the right space for them, partially because of some of the aesthetics along the corridor and the number of vacant places. Cleaning up the aesthetics and making it more accessible and pedestrian- and bike-friendly is going to be more attractive for a lot of businesses." ♦



# READY TO LAUNCH YOUR NEW BRAND?

Seeking a subtle update or a bold new logo and identity? We're here to craft your vision and launch it into the stratosphere.

**FUELING YOUR BRAND'S  
NEXT BIG BREAKTHROUGH**

**TANDEM**  
517.449.1330 | [gotandem.biz](http://gotandem.biz)



## AFSCME MICHIGAN: LIT UP WITH SAVINGS

BWL's Hometown Energy Savers® small business program covered the full labor and equipment costs for AFSCME's Lansing headquarters to replace their fluorescent lighting with efficient LEDs.

*"Now, our new workspace looks and feels even better than before, and we did not have a single out of pocket expense... it was a fantastic building improvement without being a cost to our members."*

-Gino Carbenia, Executive Director of AFSCME Michigan



Lighting • Refrigeration • HVAC • Food Service • And More

**Scan the QR code above or contact us:**  
(800) 573-3503 • [lbwl.com/energysavers](http://lbwl.com/energysavers)







Brewer



Belleman



Dempsey



Montemayor



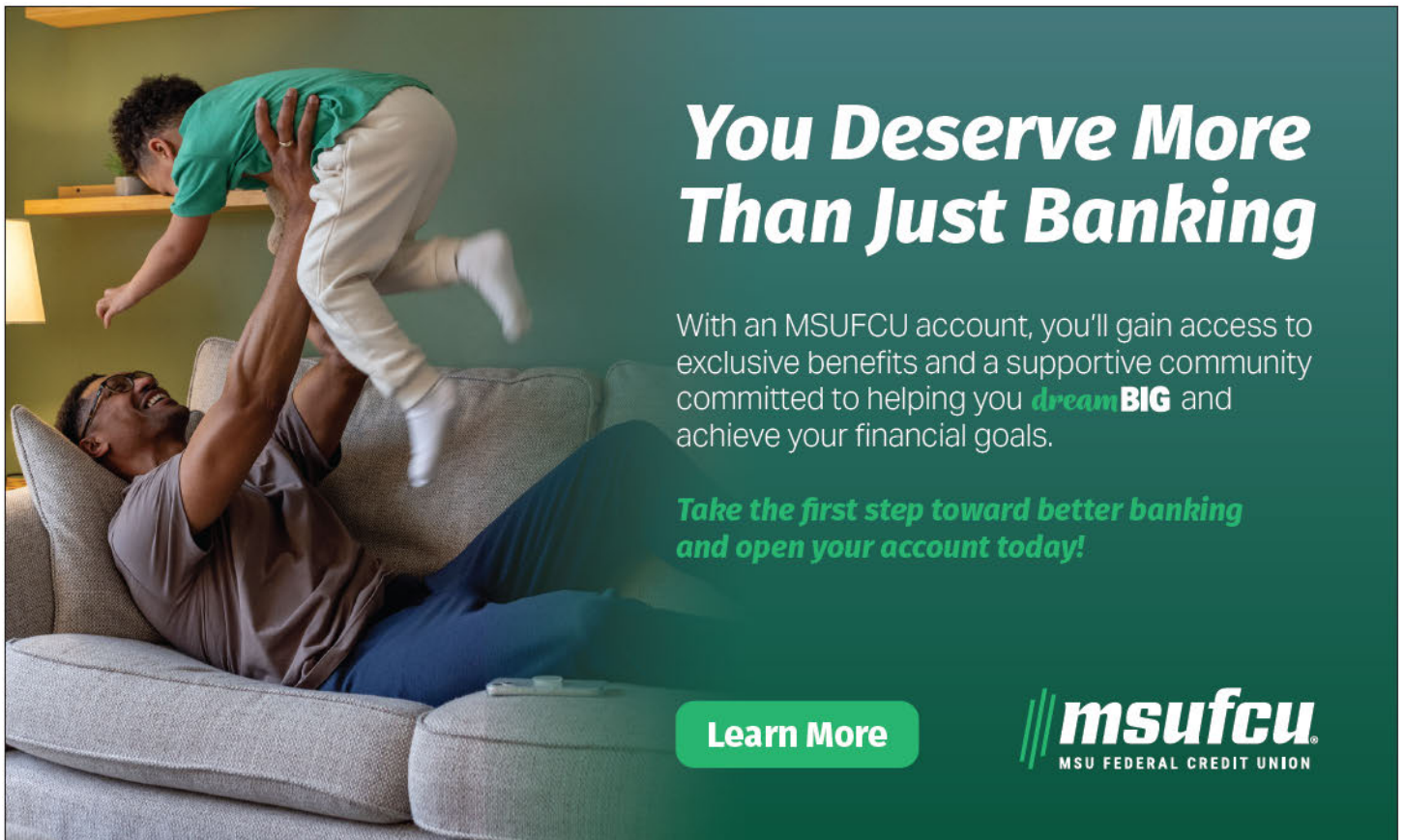
Dzurka

## Introducing New Municipal Leaders Across the Region

**A**s our communities continue to grow and evolve, strong leadership at the municipal level plays a crucial role in fostering economic development, business-friendly policies, and regional collaboration. In this edition of *FOCUS Magazine*, we are pleased to introduce newly appointed and elected municipal leaders who will shape the future of our region:

- Fonda Brewer, Supervisor, Delta Township
- Robert Belleman, City Manager, East Lansing
- Tim Dempsey, Township Manager, Meridian Township
- Eddie Montemayor, Supervisor, Delhi Township
- Scott Dzurka, Mayor, City of St. Johns

These leaders bring a wealth of experience and fresh perspectives to their respective roles. We look forward to working with them to strengthen the Greater Lansing region's business climate and community engagement. ♦



## You Deserve More Than Just Banking

With an MSUFCU account, you'll gain access to exclusive benefits and a supportive community committed to helping you **dreamBIG** and achieve your financial goals.

**Take the first step toward better banking and open your account today!**

[Learn More](#)

**msufcu**  
MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



# Chamber in Action



The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, along with its ambassadors, congratulated **Asahi Kasei Plastics North America** in Fowlerville on their ribbon-cutting ceremony. Asahi Kasei specializes in developing innovative, high-performance engineering plastics and offers customized solutions.



Congratulations to **The Dinner Detectives** on their ribbon-cutting at the AC Hotel Lansing University Area! The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce and its ambassadors joined in celebrating this exciting addition, known as North America's largest interactive comedic true crime murder mystery dinner show.



The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, along with its ambassadors, congratulates **Liberty Tax Lansing** on their grand opening! Located at 401 N. Clippert St. in Lansing, Liberty Tax offers tax preparation services and can assist you with specific issues related to your taxes. They can address your unique situation.



Congratulations to **UniFirst** on their ribbon-cutting celebrating their arrival in Lansing! The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce along with its ambassadors, were excited to welcome one of North America's top uniform rental and facility service providers that delivers high-quality workwear, protective gear, and custom corporate apparel, along with essential facility service programs.



The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, along with their ambassadors, Choose Lansing, and city officials, congratulated **7 Brew Coffee** during their ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the grand opening! Located at 6026 South Cedar Street, across from Meijer in Lansing, 7 Brew Coffee offers a variety of lemonades, coffees, and teas through their drive-thru.



# U.S. Chamber of Commerce Awards Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce with 5-Star Reaccreditation

**T**he U.S. Chamber of Commerce has awarded the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) a 5-Star reaccreditation for its sound policies, effective procedures, and positive community impact. Nationwide, only 187 chambers are accredited, with just four in Michigan. Local chambers are rated as Accredited, 3-Stars, 4-Stars, or 5-Stars. State chambers are recognized as either Accredited State Chamber or Accredited State Chamber with Distinction.

“Chambers of commerce nationwide play a vital role in their communities every day,” said Raymond P. Towle, Vice President, Federation Relations and Coalition Partnerships at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. “From connecting business owners with needed resources, to advocating on behalf of their region with lawmakers, these chambers convene thought leaders to strengthen the collective voices of their members. Achieving Accreditation is a mark of excellence for the organization, its staff, and its leadership. This designation recognizes the positive impact these organizations have on their communities and honors their ongoing commitment to serving local businesses.”

**“This prestigious reaccreditation further emphasizes LRCC’s ongoing dedication to enhancing the region’s business landscape.”**

The U.S. Chamber’s Accreditation Program promotes excellence in the chamber industry and fosters a pro-business environment across America. Accreditation is awarded by a panel of peer chambers and U.S. Chamber board members, and to receive Accreditation, a chamber must meet standards in governance, government affairs, communications, and technology.

“Achieving 5-star reaccreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a powerful endorsement of the value we bring to our members and the Lansing

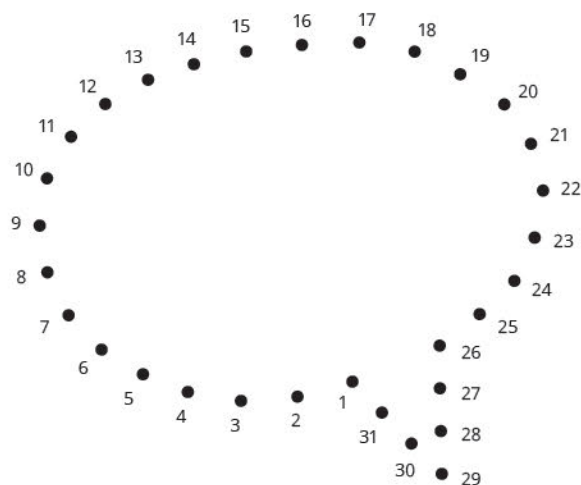


region. This distinction reflects the strength of our business community and our commitment to driving growth, advocacy, and regional collaboration,” said Tim Daman, president and CEO, LRCC. “It also underscores our dedication

to creating and delivering value to our members by providing resources, programs, and opportunities that support business success and economic prosperity.”

This prestigious reaccreditation further emphasizes LRCC’s ongoing dedication to enhancing the region’s business landscape. The recognition highlights the LRCC’s proactive efforts to offer businesses a wide array of valuable tools, connections, and programs. By continuously adapting to the needs of local employers, LRCC plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth, improving business engagement, and supporting the long-term success of the Lansing community. ♦

## Does your community feel scattered?



Connect the dots with strategic storytelling

**LET’S TELL YOUR STORY.**

Community-Building Creative MessageMakers.com



# 50<sup>th</sup>

**ANNIVERSARY**  
Est. 1974

Since 1974, the Eaton RESA Career Preparation Center (CPC) has provided hands-on career and technical education for high school students in Eaton County.

Through partnerships with Davenport University, Lansing Community College, and the University of Olivet, the CPC offers programs across six career pathways, equipping students with industry-relevant skills and leadership opportunities.

In honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, you are invited to join in the celebration!

**Thursday, April 24**  
4:00-6:00 p.m.

Eaton RESA Career Preparation Center  
Lansing Community College West Campus  
5708 Cornerstone Drive, Lansing



A comic book style advertisement for BRD Printing. It features a superhero character with a beard and glasses, wearing a purple suit with a "BRD PRINTING" logo on the chest. The background is a green and black pattern. A large pink speech bubble at the top contains the text "YOUR JOB. DONE RIGHT." in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the character, the text "FROM PRE-PRESS TO GRAPHIC DESIGN, PRINTING TO BINDERY &amp; MAILING" is written in a yellow, stylized font. Below that, the text "— YOUR PROJECT IS IN-HOUSE &amp; UNDER CONTROL." is written in a white, stylized font. At the bottom left is a Facebook icon and the text "BRDPrinting.com". At the bottom right are the phone and fax numbers: "TEL 517.372.0268 | FAX 517.372.4922" and the address: "912 W. SAINT JOSEPH | LANSING, MI 48915".

A professional advertisement for TriTerra. The top half shows a woman, Meredith Crane, smiling, with a circular frame around her head. Behind her is a landscape with trees and water. The text "CREATING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES" is at the top in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the woman's name and title, "Meredith Crane Director | Natural Resource Services", is a line of text: "FROM DELINEATION TO RESTORATION—YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER IN WETLAND MANAGEMENT". Below this, the services "BROWNFIELD DEVELOPMENT", "ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING", and "NATURAL RESOURCES" are listed in white, bold, sans-serif font. A QR code is on the right, with the text "triterr.us" and "517.702.0470" below it. The TriTerra logo is at the bottom right.



# Members on the Move

## NEW HIRES



Larson

**Fraser Trebilcock** has hired attorney **Dakota Larson**, who will work primarily in the firm's Lansing office. Larson focuses on insurance defense and business matters.

She has experience handling complex liability, coverage, and bad faith claims in multiple lines of insurance and jurisdictions. Before joining Fraser Trebilcock, Larson worked as a research attorney at the Michigan Court of Appeals and in-house at a national insurance company.



Reamer

**Barbara Reamer** has returned to **Horizon Bank** as vice president and mortgage loan originator. Reamer brings a wealth of experience in mortgage lending. She's

also a member of the Capital Area Health Alliance, supporting local health initiatives. Horizon Bancorp, Inc. is the bank holding company for Horizon Bank, which serves customers across the Midwest.



Kilchermann

**Joanie Kilchermann** has joined **Midwest Communications** as an account executive. Kilchermann brings extensive experience in business development

and strategic partnerships, most recently serving as the director of business development at Royal Scot Golf & Bowl. In her new position, Kilchermann will focus on helping businesses and organizations

develop effective advertising and marketing strategies through Midwest Communications' media solutions, including radio, digital, and event marketing.



Wilk

**Choose Lansing** has added **Jessica Wilk** to its sales and services team as sales manager. As sales manager, Wilk will work with the state association market to

bring association meetings and conferences to the Greater Lansing area. Wilk joins Choose Lansing with previous experience as a sales manager in the Lansing market. She is a graduate of Northern Michigan University.



Kemp

**Mike Kemp** has joined **Horizon Bank** as branch manager at the Okemos location. With 13 years of banking experience, Kemp began his career as a personal banker

and has spent the last 11 years as a branch manager, including as a multi-site manager. In Kemp's new position, he will oversee daily branch operations, coach and develop his team, and build brand awareness through community engagement and networking. He will also collaborate with partners in commercial banking, merchant services, wealth management, and mortgage lending.

**Triterra** has welcomed **Mary Napier** as the newest member of its team of environmental professionals. Based in Brighton, Napier will serve as the director of remediation services and regional director, leading the expansion of Triterra's operations in southeast Michigan. Napier has more



Napier

Michigan and the Great Lakes region.



Kuhnert

than 20 years of experience scoping, budgeting, and executing large-scale site investigations, remediation efforts, and compliance projects across Michigan and the Great Lakes region.

**Michigan Farm Bureau** has hired **Kristine Kuhnert** as its new executive director of the Michigan Foundation for Agriculture. Kuhnert will collaborate

closely with Farm Bureau leadership to support the foundation's mission, focusing on strengthening partnerships with donors to support Michigan agriculture further. Kuhnert's career has centered around nutrition and education, with roles at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center and the Mayo Clinic. Most recently, she served as director at Ele's Place, a nonprofit that helps grieving youth.



Byle

**Amelia Byle** has joined **Triterra** as an environmental scientist in the commercial due diligence group in Grand Rapids. Byle's role focuses on Phase I Environmental

Site Assessments, where she assists clients in identifying potential environmental risks associated with their properties. With a strong understanding of regulatory requirements and environmental due diligence considerations, Byle plays a key role in supporting clients' decision-making.





Goris

**LAFCU** has strengthened its finance team with the addition of **Samantha Goris** as finance manager and **Amy Vitale** as financial analyst. As finance manager, Goris oversees the daily operations of the finance department and supervises finance personnel. She manages the preparation of reports, including annual plans and operating budgets, ensuring the accuracy and timeliness of financial records. Meanwhile, Vitale supports financial decision-making by analyzing financial data related to investments, loan portfolios, and overall financial health.



Vitale



Sieffert

**Custom Built** recently hired **Carrie Sieffert** as a lead designer. Her role will include transforming client needs into functional, stylish designs as she handles everything from site measurements to finish selections. With expertise in kitchen and bath design, corporate offices, and aging-in-place solutions, Sieffert brings creativity and problem-solving to every project.

## PROMOTIONS

**Public Sector Consultants** has promoted **Kelly Rogers** to senior vice president of client services. In this new role, Rogers will lead PSC's client services team and oversee project management, team resource management, and client satisfaction. She served as the



Rogers

vice president of talent and economic development. She led a team focused on advancing initiatives that support Michigan's workforce and economic growth. Before that, Rogers applied her technology background and project management expertise to program implementation as the director of Catamaran. Since 2005, PSC has provided technical and staffing support to Catamaran, the Michigan Department of Education's reporting system used to promote positive outcomes and ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education.

**Linda Toomey** has been promoted to corporate vice president, marketing

# SEASONS CHANGE, OPPORTUNITIES GROW

NAI Mid-Michigan's extensive understanding of the local real estate market and dedication to supporting businesses ensures you capitalize on every new opportunity when change comes.

We're NAI Mid-Michigan.  
Your best choice for commercial real estate.

naimidmichigan.com • 517.487.9222

**NAI**Mid-Michigan





Toomey

and business development at **McLaren Health Care**. She joined McLaren Greater Lansing in 2017 and has held various leadership positions. In her new capacity,

Toomey drives initiatives, develops tools to unify marketing teams across 12 hospitals, and supports marketing and branding efforts. Toomey brings over 30 years of experience in marketing and business development spanning multiple industries.

## APPOINTMENTS

### Triterra CEO Don McNabb

has been appointed chair of the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) board for the 2025 executive committee. The announcement was made during LEAP's annual meeting. McNabb's



McNabb

environmental consulting firm specializing in brownfield development, environmental consulting, and natural resource management services.

## AWARDS

The Michigan Association of Airport Executives has honored **Nicole Noll-Williams**, president and CEO of the **Capital Region Airport Authority**, with the 2024 Airport Manager of the Year Award. The award recognizes Noll-Williams' leadership and contributions to Michigan's aviation industry. Recipients are selected based on their

appointment as LEAP board chair reflects his commitment to fostering a prosperous and sustainable future for the Lansing region. Triterra is a professional

commitment to safety, operational efficiency, and community involvement. The Capital Region Airport Authority owns and operates the Capital Region International Airport, Mason Jewett Field Airport, and Port Lansing, a global logistics center that's mid-Michigan's only U.S. Port of Entry.



Burgee

**Fraser Trebilcock** attorney **Robert Burgee** has been selected for inclusion in Michigan Lawyers Weekly's "Michigan's Go To Lawyers Powers

List." The list recognized top lawyers around the state in a given practice area. Burgee was selected as a 2024 "Michigan Go to Lawyer" for business transactions. He serves as co-chair of Fraser Trebilcock's business and tax department.

Plan On Something **Greater**

# LANSiNG

## MICHIGAN

Need to coordinate your organization's next meeting or conference? Work with the experts at Choose Lansing. They will help you find the perfect venue, book hotel room blocks and increase attendance. Choose Lansing and plan on something Greater.

**Choose LANSING**  
Lansing.org | 517.487.0077

Scan this QR Code to unlock the keys to your meeting's success!



## MICHIGAN PREMIER EVENTS

CORPORATE, ASSOCIATION & COMMUNITY EVENT MANAGEMENT COMPANY

www.MichiganPremierEvents.com  
517.220.4628

SAME NAME.  
SAME SERVICES.  
**NEW LOCATION.**

114 West Allegan Street Lansing, Michigan 48933  
(Downtown Lansing)



**Fit Leaders  
ACADEMY**

**On-Demand Leadership  
Training for On-The-Go  
Leaders**

Starting  
**October 1**

Coaches  
Susan Combs, MBA, PCC  
Ross Woodstock



Register Now

www.fitleadersacademy.com



### Publicom, Inc.

won four national awards in the 22nd Annual Service Industry Advertising Awards competition, showcasing excellence in creative marketing campaigns and design. The recognized clients

and projects are:

- Logo/Letterhead Design: Aging with Dignity, Assisted Suicide Watch Logo
- Integrated Marketing Campaign: LAFCU, Shields Up! Phase Two
- Integrated Marketing Campaign: Smile America Partners, Compliance Week Educational Promotion
- Integrated Marketing Campaign: Smile America Partners, SDF Education Campaign

The competition honors advertising excellence in the service industry, with entries evaluated by a national panel of judges on execution, creativity, quality, consumer appeal, and overall impact. This year's competition drew more than 1,000 entries from across the country.

**Inetta Smith** is the recent recipient of the Community Outreach and Engagement award for her work for the **Lansing Area Veterans Coalition**. Smith chairs the nonprofit, which assists with connecting the community to veterans and veterans to the community. The award was presented by the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, and the National Guard Association of Michigan at the fourth annual Michigan Military and Veterans Gala in Grand Rapids. The event honors both those who have served and those who advocate on their behalf.

**DBI** has been named a "2025 Best In Class" dealer by Haworth, a globally recognized leader in office furniture and workplace design. This marks the 14th consecutive year that DBI has earned this distinction for its commitment to excellence in market development, sales, and customer

experience. Out of hundreds of Haworth dealers, DBI remains one of the few in the country to receive this honor every year since the award's inception.



**LAFCU** has won a national award in the 22nd Annual Service Industry Advertising Awards competition for the second phase of

its Shields Up! campaign, which educated employees about fraud and loss prevention. The campaign was recognized for excellence in marketing and communication. Phase Two of the campaign featured LAFCU's own Fraud Fighters in weekly e-blasts and videos, with information about loss prevention and fraud topics to help employees identify and combat fraudulent activity. The winning entry was created in partnership with marketing communications firm Publicom, Inc.

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Michigan recently named **Spicer Group, Inc.** as its 2025 member "Firm of the Year." The award was presented at the Engineering & Surveying Excellence Awards Gala in Portage on Mar. 8th. Spicer plays a vital role in the council, with **Eric Barden** serving on the board of directors and **Phil Westmoreland**, **Jen Garza**, and **Darrin Wilson** leading key committees. Spicer has had several employees complete the Emerging Leaders Program and regularly submits projects into the Engineering & Surveying Excellence program.

East Lansing's **TechSmith** has been recognized in G2's "2025 Best Software Awards," securing the #56 spot among the Top 100 Global Software Companies. This achievement places TechSmith among the world's most highly regarded software vendors. Technology marketplace G2



ranks software companies and products based on user reviews and market presence.

## COMPANY NEWS



*Akiem Harshman holds a \$1,000 donation check for Judson Baptist Church, provided by Quality Dairy and LAFCU for winning his second annual pączki eating contest. Harshman is joined by representatives from LAFCU and QD, along with Laff-e the Cow.*

**Quality Dairy** hosted its second annual pączki eating contest on Feb. 13th at the REO Town Clubhouse in Lansing. The event challenged participants to eat as many pączki as possible within three minutes while raising funds for charitable organizations. For the second year, credit union LAFCU partnered with Quality Dairy and matched the first-place winner's prize donation, doubling the contribution to the winning contestant's chosen charity.

**Akiem Harshman** successfully defended his title as the first-place winner, eating three pączki and securing a \$1,000 donation for Judson Baptist Church, along with a \$250 QD Cash Card. Second place went to **Robert Howell**, who earned a \$300 donation for Ducks Unlimited Red Cedar Chapter. **John Mullin** placed third, winning \$200 for Advent House Ministries, and **Shannon Spainhower** secured fourth place, earning a \$100 donation for the Capitol Area Humane Society Spay and Neuter Clinic.

**Choose Lansing** held its annual meeting on Mar. 5th, sharing updates on the local tourism and hospitality industry and the economic impact of visitors in 2024, while celebrating the Certified Tourism Ambassadors Star of the Year and longstanding businesses



in the community. Among the updates: more than 1.1 million hotel rooms were rented in 2024, with a hotel occupancy rate of 54.2 percent. The Greater Lansing hospitality and tourism industry supports 9,500 local jobs and welcomes 6.7 million visitors each year, generating \$732 million in economic impact for the region. Choose Lansing named **Jeff Magnuson** as the CTA Star of the Year. The 2024 Choose Lansing annual report is available online at [lansing.org/about-us/annual-report-and-meeting/](https://lansing.org/about-us/annual-report-and-meeting/).




*Donnelly*

*Faussié*

**Fraser Trebilcock** attorneys **Michael Donnelly** and **Laura Faussié** successfully represented a fiber optic company before the Michigan Supreme Court. On Jan. 24th, the court denied an application for leave to appeal in a case involving the firm's client, effectively upholding the lower court's decisions in the client's favor. The case addressed whether a fiber optic or other telecommunication company was required to obtain permission from, and pay large fees to, a railroad company before installing fiber optic cables under their tracks located at public crossings. In a 5-1 decision, with one justice not participating, the Supreme Court left in place the Michigan Court of Appeals' ruling that the fiber optic company could proceed with installing underground cables

beneath railroad tracks at public road crossings after obtaining necessary municipal permits, without requiring additional permission from or fees to the railroad company.

The **Capital Area Transportation Authority** is now licensed through the National Safe Place Network to operate Safe Place, a national outreach and prevention program for vulnerable youth. With this designation, CATA's vehicles and facilities will serve as safe places for individuals under the age of 18 who are experiencing crisis. CATA has partnered with the National Safe Place Network, law enforcement, and local service agencies to connect youths to resources such as Gateway Youth Services Division through Child and Family Charities. Safe Place locations are now available on all CATA vehicles, at the downtown CATA Transportation Center and the Capital Area Multimodal Gateway, each marked with signage for quick identification. Individuals can board a CATA vehicle free of charge by letting the driver know they need assistance. ♦



**SHARE YOUR  
COMPANY  
NEWS**

LRCC members can submit a press release and photo about new hires, promotions, company recognitions or awards at [lansingchamber.org/contactus](https://lansingchamber.org/contactus) and we will share it in our popular Members on the Move section.



# LOCAL PEOPLE LEGENDARY PROJECTS

---

**WIELAND**

EXCELLENCE IN CONSTRUCTION | [WIELANDBUILDS.COM](http://WIELANDBUILDS.COM)



EAST LANSING, MI





The Stadium District

500 East Michigan Ave., Suite 200 | Lansing, MI 48912

517.487.6340 | [lansingchamber.org](http://lansingchamber.org)

*Change Service Requested*

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
LANSING, MI  
PERMIT NO. 689

# Your Asset. Our Priority.

## *Property Management*



## Our Trusted Experts

# *Maximize*

## Your Investment!

# Martin

[martincommercial.com](http://martincommercial.com) | East Lansing | Grand Rapids | Tampa