

**MICHIGAN**  
**WORKS!**<sup>®</sup>  
**Southwest**

Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo & St. Joseph Counties

**2023**  
Annual Report

# Letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues,

As Michigan Works! Southwest enters its 50th year of service, progress continues to be made in meeting the current and emerging needs of both job seekers and employers. Through fostering partnerships and empowering a compassionate, respectful, and knowledgeable team dedicated to continuous improvement, Michigan Works! Southwest improved efficiency in delivering equitable services while maintaining a customer-centered approach over the last year. Through collaboration with community partners, Michigan Works! Southwest remains committed to identifying innovative solutions focusing on job quality and breaking down barriers to employment.

Although there were numerous accomplishments, I would like to highlight just a few.

- Michigan Works! Southwest continued to develop the capacity to support companies in Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph counties with local employers receiving a record amount of Going PRO Talent Fund dollars for workforce training during Fiscal Year 2023.
- Alongside local employers and community organizations, Michigan Works! Southwest supported two MiCareerQuest™ events, investing in the future workforce by inviting local students to engage in career exploration and grow awareness of opportunities available in their own communities.
- As one of only 16 entities across the country selected, Michigan Works! Southwest, Pulse, and the Employer Resource Network® participated in the U.S. Department of Labor's Job Quality Academy to begin the work of addressing job quality and developing an understanding of the challenges and vulnerabilities within the childcare sector.

As I reflect upon the past year, I know Michigan Works! Southwest would not have been able to achieve results without strong partnerships. I want to express my gratitude to the Workforce Development Board members, Michigan Works! Southwest staff, workforce partners, employers, and job seeking customers for their dedication and support of Michigan Works! Southwest. I attribute this year's success to the collaboration and support demonstrated by partners, the employers who have trusted Michigan Works! Southwest with hiring and improving the skills of their employees, the guidance and direction given by the Workforce Development Board, and the job seekers who Michigan Works! Southwest assists in preparing, empowering, and transforming their lives for a better future.

I look forward to continuing to advance Michigan Works! Southwest's mission with a holistic service delivery model to meet the current and emerging needs of both job seekers and employers.

Sincerely,



**Jakki  
Bungart-Bibb**

Director  
Michigan Works!  
Southwest



# Customers Served

October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023

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**266 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult Customers**

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

**106 WIOA Dislocated Worker Customers**

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

**257 WIOA Youth Customers**

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

**12,629 Wagner-Peyser Customers**

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

**20 Trade Adjustment Assistance Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

**318 Learn, Earn, and Provide (LEAP) Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

**751 Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH) Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

**169 Jobs for Michigan Graduates Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

**483 Neighborhood Employment HUBs Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

**14 Food Assistance Employment & Training (FAE&T) Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023

**216 Barrier Removal Employment Success (BRES) Customers**

October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023



# Employer Resource Network<sup>®</sup> (ERN<sup>®</sup>)

October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023



## Jannus Cottrell

Team Member Relations Manager, **FireKeepers Casino Hotel**

*Many of our FireKeepers Casino Hotel team members have consistently utilized the resources that our ERN<sup>®</sup> Success Coach has offered. ERN<sup>®</sup> has been a regular and consistent fixture here at the casino since 2020, and the Success Coach's presence continues to be warm, welcoming, and engaging throughout visits. Our ERN<sup>®</sup> Success Coach serves as an excellent example of what our company looks for in a professional relationship with our vendors; welcoming, engaging, enthusiastic, and appreciative (WEEA - our company culture). ERN<sup>®</sup> continues to be a necessary and relevant conduit between what we can offer as a company to our team members and what is also available in the community for help and assistance.*



## Chad Cutler

Operations Supervisor, **Snackwerks**

*Our ERN<sup>®</sup> Success Coach, April, has been an outstanding resource to the team here at Snackwerks since day one. Her knowledge and expertise have improved the quality of life for a significant number of team members and even myself. She is always available to speak to our team and gives them her undivided attention as she problem solves and finds the resources that best fit their situation. April is available to our leadership team via text or email if there is a crisis that needs immediate attention on a day that she isn't in the building. We are thankful for all April does for Snackwerks; she is a true asset to our company.*

**2,761**

total services to employees

**27**

number of active employers

**1,168**

distinct employees served

**767% ROI**

(Based on retention, turnover costs = \$4,129 per employee)

# Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF)

Fiscal Year 2023

**\$4,654,101**  
awarded to companies

**348**  
planned apprentices

**69**  
companies awarded GPTF

**784**  
anticipated new hires

**2,670**  
individuals to be trained



**Karla Meeks**

Human Resources, **Stewart Sutherland, Inc.**

*On behalf of Stewart Sutherland, thank you to Michigan Works! Southwest for not only providing the necessary training and information to apply for FY2023 Going PRO Talent funding, but for the assistance given in completing the application process successfully. The funding will enable us to train our employees on a larger scale which allows for greater employee confidence in the role they play within our company. We greatly appreciate Michigan Works! Southwest and look forward to our continued partnership.*

# Awards

## Impact Award Winner: Bleistahl and Michael Coyle



Bleistahl and Michael Coyle were recognized by the Michigan Works! Association with the 2023 Impact Award for Michigan Works! Southwest. The Impact Award acknowledges Bleistahl's long-standing relationship with Michigan Works! Southwest and the impact this partnership has made in providing Battle Creek residents with the opportunity to grow and thrive. Sharon MacPherson, Human Resources Manager for Bleistahl, indicates, "The strong reciprocal relationship between Bleistahl and Michigan Works! Southwest has allowed us to give opportunities to those in the Battle Creek area. More importantly, this partnership has led to the successful placement of talented individuals into our growing workforce and community. Bleistahl highly values our refined partnership with Michigan Works! Southwest and looks forward to a long-lasting relationship as we continue improving our workforce and community."

In May 2022, Michael Coyle's workplace shut down. He found it challenging to return to work and turned to Michigan Works! Southwest. Through the support provided by Michigan Works! Southwest, Michael became equipped to continue looking for employment. With this newfound determination and confidence, Michael applied at Bleistahl. Within a few days of his interview, he received a job offer, which he promptly accepted. Michael loves his role as a Compact Technician at Bleistahl and is grateful for the support he received from Michigan Works! Southwest, which empowered him and helped to identify his transferable skills to assist him in obtaining employment.

## Christine Quinn Excellence in Leadership Award: Jakki Bungart-Bibb



Jakki Bungart-Bibb, Director of Michigan Works! Southwest, was recognized with the Christine Quinn Excellence in Leadership Award at the Michigan Works! Annual Conference in September 2023. The Christine Quinn Excellence in Leadership Award honors leaders in the Michigan Works! system who go above and beyond to benefit workforce development in Michigan. The award is named in honor of Christine Quinn, who was one of Michigan's workforce champions in the U.S. Department of Labor and was a strong advocate for the system for decades.

Jakki's extensive career in workforce development began in November of 1996 as a result of her engagement with the Michigan Works! system as a job seeker. She began working for the W.E. Upjohn Institute in 2014 and has served in her current position as director of Michigan Works! Southwest since 2021.

As director, Jakki has continued to scale the success of Michigan Works! Southwest. Her tenure has included building innovative solutions with a customer-centered design that focus on breaking down barriers to employment. Under her leadership, the Neighborhood Employment HUBS, which provide employment and training support for job seekers in Battle Creek neighborhoods, has grown, resulting in great impact. Jakki embodies the spirit and collaboration required for effective partnership, following along the path of many successful workforce development leaders that have come before her, such as Christine Quinn.



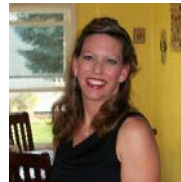
# Michigan Works! Southwest Shining Star Award Winners



**Barbara Travis**



**Michelle Fowler**



**April Gordon**



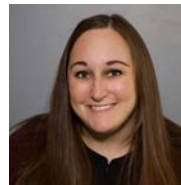
**Danielle Sommers**



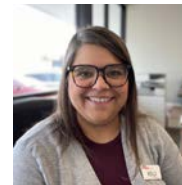
**Geovany Ulario**



**Devon Ivy**



**Betsy Sanchez**



**Kelli Jenkins**



**Laura Schafer**



**April Hamilton**



**Jeana Hamilton**



**Debbie Horn**

The Shining Star Award celebrates Michigan Works! Southwest front line staff who, through dedication and outstanding contributions to workforce development, personify the Michigan Works! mission.

In addition to the local monthly Shining Star Award winners, **Barbara Travis**, Michigan Works! Southwest Calhoun County Site Manager, was recognized at the 2023 Annual Conference as the Michigan Works! Association's 2023 Shining Star Award recipient from Michigan Works! Southwest. Barb has been the Calhoun County Site Manager since July 1, 2023. Prior to serving in this capacity, Barb spent over five years as a career coach and lead career coach in Battle Creek's Neighborhood Employment HUBs program, which provides neighborhood-based workforce development services including community service placement, job placement, employability skills building, and connections to training opportunities.

Barb is passionate about customer service and assisting underserved populations to achieve their goals. Her thoughtfulness and attentiveness to customers far exceeds expectations, resulting in customers continually experiencing positive outcomes. Barb is consistently described by customers and co-workers alike as committed, personable, welcoming, empathetic, helpful, kind, committed to excellence, and hard working. Her contagious positivity, exemplary communication skills, and graceful handling of all kinds of situations make Michigan Works! Southwest proud to recognize Barb as the Michigan Works! Association's 2023 Annual Shining Star Award recipient.

# Job Quality Academy

Michigan Works! Southwest, in partnership with Pulse and ERN®, was one of 16 teams selected nationwide to participate in the U.S. Department of Labor’s first Job Quality Academy. The academy brings teams led by workforce boards and agencies from across the country together to share expertise and develop plans to enhance good jobs and opportunities for workers. In June and September, the team attended both of the academy’s in-person summits in Washington, D.C., where teams developed job quality action plans for their communities with feedback from other teams and assistance from academy coaches.

The Michigan Works! Southwest team drew on the expertise of its multidisciplinary approach to childcare to focus on the quality of jobs in that sector. The team focused on principles of a good job, as defined by the Departments of Labor and Commerce, including pay; benefits; diversity, equity, inclusion, and access; and empowerment and representation. Building on the time spent at the Job Quality Academy, the team continues to strategize on the implementation of the developed plans.



**Kathy Szenda Wilson**

Co-Executive Director, **Pulse**

*Participating in the Job Quality Academy has provided our Pulse team an opportunity to lift up the challenges facing those in the early learning and care workforce in ways that will have profound impact. We’re able to increase our internal Michigan Works partners’ awareness of the issues facing the early learning and care workforce in ways that will improve our ability to work together strategically. And, as the only team in the country focused on this particular sector, we’re also able to bring attention to the four-alarm fire that is occurring within the sector to other teams as well as our partners at the Department of Labor. The Pulse team is grateful for the opportunity and looks forward to how we work together to improve job conditions for some of our most vulnerable workforce.*





# MiCareerQuest™

## October 2022 and May 2023

- October 2022: Over 40 local employers hosted more than 5,000 eighth graders from Kalamazoo and Calhoun counties.
- May 2023: Over 40 local employers and training partners hosted over 650 eighth and ninth graders from St. Joseph County.

At MiCareerQuest™ Southwest, students experience an interactive, informational, inspiring, and hands-on career and college readiness event unlike any other. During this unique experience, students explore careers directly from the professionals who perform these jobs every day. Employers for industry areas such as engineering and manufacturing, health sciences, natural sciences, construction trades, and information technology work together to brainstorm and produce exciting and interactive exhibits without a “Do Not Touch” sign in sight. As a result, eighth graders were able to explore industries and career pathways through CNC machines, CPR dummies, robots, surgical saws, brick laying, and climbing into a police cruiser, tractor, food truck, or MDOT’s road repair equipment.



**Niki McGruder**

PHR, Director of Human Resources, **Clark Logic**

*Clark Logic is pleased to have participated in the MiCareerQuest™ event in St. Joseph County this past spring. We were able to bring a semi-truck to the event and had a fun time allowing kids to climb into the cab, pull the air horn, and get a feel for the trucking experience as well as the need for mechanics to keep the trucks rolling. The kids seemed to enjoy it and saw a lot of opportunities the industry has to offer.*



# Talent Tours

July 2022 through June 2023

Michigan Works! Southwest partnered with Kellogg Community College: Regional Manufacturing Technology Center, Newell Brands, Public Media Network: Crescendo Academy of Music, and Stryker Medical to introduce young adults to available in-demand career paths in industries such as agriculture, construction, energy, healthcare, information technology and media, and manufacturing. 78 young adults participated in Talent Tours from July 2022 through June 2023 and received real-time information regarding employer, education, and training requirements necessary to secure employment.



# Workforce Development Board (WDB)

July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023

## REPRESENTING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Ms. Jessica Eyster, HR Manager, IAC Group (St. Joseph)

Ms. Lisa Godfrey, WDB Chair, Owner, Lisa A. Godfrey Attorney at Law (Kalamazoo)

Mr. Randall Hazelbaker, Owner, Hazelbaker Antiques (Branch BOC)

Mr. Jeff Heppler, Police Chief, Village of Augusta; and Owner, Hit-Em Here (Kalamazoo BOC)

Mr. Jared Hoffmaster, Assistant Vice President and Investment Officer at Century Bank and Trust (St. Joseph BOC)

Mr. Alan Ives, Vice President of Operations, Kadant Johnson LLC (St. Joseph)

Mr. Derek King, Owner, King Jewelers (Calhoun BOC)

Mr. David Maurer, President, Humphrey Products, Inc. (Kalamazoo)

Ms. Karla Meeks, Human Resource Director, Stewart Sutherland, Inc. (Kalamazoo)

Ms. Jacquelyn Murray, WDB Vice Chair, Director of Human Resources, Marshall Excelsior Company (Calhoun)

Mr. Brian O'Donnell, Project Executive, Hi-Tech Electric (Kalamazoo)

Ms. Sabrina Radenovic, HR Business Partner, Stryker (Kalamazoo)

Mr. David Sutherland, Manager, Human Resources, Asama Coldwater Manufacturing, Inc. (Branch)

Mr. Frank Tecumseh, CEO, FireKeepers Casino Hotel (Calhoun)

Ms. Elizabeth Van Dussen, HR Manager, Duncan Aviation (Calhoun)

## REPRESENTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Jill Bland, CEEd, Managing Partner, Southwest Michigan First (Kalamazoo)

## REPRESENTING COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Jose Luis Orozco, Jr., Executive Director, Voces (Calhoun)

Mr. Charles Rose (Alternate for Orozco), Capacity Builder, Voces (Calhoun)

## REPRESENTING EDUCATION

Dr. Paul Watson II, President, Kellogg Community College (Calhoun)

Ms. Kris Jenkins, Superintendent, Branch ISD Educational Service Agency (Branch)

Mr. Dustin Scharer (Alternate for Jenkins), Assistant Superintendent of CTE, Branch Intermediate School District (Branch)

## REPRESENTING ORGANIZED LABOR

Mr. Morris Applebey, Business Manager & Financial Secretary, IBEW Local 131 (Kalamazoo)

Ms. Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Steward, AFSCME Local 1668; and President, AFL-CIO Labor Council (Kalamazoo)

Mr. David Pawloski, Financial Secretary-Treasurer, S. Central MI AFL-CIO Labor Council; Labor Liaison, United Way S. Central MI; and Member, UAW Local 2093 (Calhoun)

Mr. Ken Willcutt, Business Rep, Plumbers, Pipefitters and HVACR Local Union No. 357 (Kalamazoo)

## REPRESENTING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

Ms. Karen Doubleday, Assistance Payments Program Manager, Michigan Dept of Health & Human Services - Calhoun County Office (Calhoun)

## REPRESENTING REHABILITATION AGENCIES

Mr. John Fiore, District Manager, Southwest District, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (Kalamazoo)

Ms. Rebecca Hill (Alternate for MRS), Site Manager, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (Kalamazoo)

## REPRESENTING MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS / OTHER

Ms. Lisa Johansen, Parole / Probation Supervisor, Michigan Department of Corrections, Kalamazoo Office (Kalamazoo-At-Large)

## REPRESENTING AT-LARGE / OTHER

Ms. Windy Rea, Admissions Counselor for Michigan Job Corps, Human Learning Systems (At-Large)

**MICHIGAN**  
**WORKS!**® **Southwest**

Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo & St. Joseph Counties

A proud partner of the American **Job**Center network

Michigan Works! Southwest is an equal opportunity employer / program supported by the State of Michigan. 1-800-285-WORK (9675). Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request. Dial 711 for Relay Center and TTY. Supported in part with state and/or federal funds.