

**Workforce Development Board**  
**Annual Meeting Quarterly Meeting Minutes**  
**February 15, 2024 -corrected -**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Workforce Development Board Chair, Jackie Murray, called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Individuals attending in-person and virtually were introduced.

**WDB Members Present:**

Morris Applebey (Labor)	Jared Hoffmaster (PS)	David Pawloski (Labor)
Kathi Cain-Babbitt (Labor)	Al Ives (PS)	Charles Rose (CBO) <sup>V</sup>
Lisa Godfrey (PS)*	Kris Jenkins (Educ)*	alternate for Orozco
Randall Hazelbaker (PS)* <sup>V</sup>	David Maurer (PS)*	Frank Tecumseh (PS)*
Jeff Heppler (PS)	Jackie Murray (PS)*	
Rebecca Hill (MRS)	Brian O'Donnell (PS)*	* Exec Committee
alternate for Fiore	Jose Orozco (CBO) <sup>V</sup>	

**WDB Members Absent**

Jill Bland (Econ Dev)	Derek King (PS)	Sabrina Radenovic (PS)
Karen Doubleday (DHHS)	David Sutherland (PS)	Windy Rea (Job Corps)
Jessica Eyster (PS)	Elizabeth VanDussen (PS)	Dr. Paul Watson (Educ)
Lisa Johansen (DOC)	Karla Meeks (PS)	Ken Willcutt (Labor)

**Center for Workforce Innovation and Solutions / Michigan Works! Southwest Staff Present:**

Kelli Adams (ERN)	Ashley Iovieno (MWSW)	Lynn Page (MWSW)
Jakki Bungart-Bibb (MWSW)	Adrienne Johnson (MWSW)	Amanda Rosenberg (MWSW)
Shannon Crosby (MWSW)	Kathy Olsen (MWSW)	Shelby Springett (MWSW)
Shawn DeYoung (MWSW)	Lisa Ouder Kirk (MWSW) <sup>V</sup>	Barb Wise (ERN)

**Guests**

Jim Benton (KRESA) <sup>V</sup>	Kylee Johnson <sup>V</sup>	Connie Spealman (Micro LAM, Inc.)
Paige Daniels (KRESA)	(for Rep Julie Rogers)	Kristine Stevens (GOCC)
Mike Horrigan (Upjohn) <sup>V</sup>	Ben Olds (Micro LAM, Inc.)	Amanda Sutherland (KRESA) <sup>V</sup>

**RECOGNITIONS**

**November Shining Star** – Barb Wise was recognized as the ~~September~~ **November** Shining Star. Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported Barb Wise goes above and beyond for ERN<sup>®</sup> employers and their staff. This was demonstrated by her willingness to often meet with employees outside of her normal scheduled hours to address the needs of individuals who are facing unexpected challenges. She is eager and able to jump in and help her fellow ERN<sup>®</sup> teammates any time they need assistance. Barb is often referred to as a shining star and someone who employees look forward to seeing each week. Employers have shared that Barb is an amazing addition to their companies. In the month of November, Barb successfully onboarded one of her ERN<sup>®</sup> companies as a Tri-Share participant and she offered guidance and expertise to start an Employee in Crisis fund to further assist employees in need. Introducing programs such as these impacts and strengthens the value of an employer, which demonstrates their investment in the overall wellbeing of their workforce. Barb also coordinated multiple management and community partner meetings to make this come to fruition.

**December Shining Star** – Shawn DeYoung was recognized as the ~~September~~ **December** Shining Star. Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported Shawn DeYoung is a strong advocate in the community for Michigan Works! Southwest and is dedicated to building deep relationships with local employers. Through heartfelt and meaningful actions, Shawn continually goes above and beyond to serve employer customers. Shawn is thoughtful in all the work he does as a member of the Business Solutions Team and always strives to make others feel welcome, which was recently reflected in his efforts to support the onboarding of new Business Solutions staff as they learn their new roles. Upon announcement of Shawn receiving this award, WDB Chair, Jackie Murray, stated that she is blessed to have Shawn's support and partnership with all of Marshall Excelsior Company's workforce development needs, specifically over this last year through training, apprenticeship development, and job fairs. Jackie also stated that Shawn's approach in supporting employers and their team members embodies the true spirit of Michigan Works! Southwest.

**January Shining Star** – Lynn Page was recognized as the January Shining Star. Jakki Bungart-Bibb reported Lynn Page has hit the ground running in 2024. Through doing incredible research into how employers and job seekers can utilize the MiREACH grant, she has identified ways to connect them to this resource. She has also taken on several speaking engagements representing Michigan Works! Southwest, to inform individuals of available services. Lynn's nominator described her as a team player who is eager to assist customers and noted that Lynn cares greatly about the work she does, always strives to do her best, is a hard worker, and a go-getter for anything thrown her way. Ms. Bibb stated that Michigan Works! Southwest is lucky to have someone with Lynn's skillset on staff.

## **PUBLIC TIME**

None.

## **TRANSPARENCY & INTEGRITY OF WDB DECISIONS**

Kathy Olsen asked members present if there were any items on the agenda for which a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest exists; and if so, the conflict should be declared at this time. There were none.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Exhibit A)**

**Motion made by Jared Hoffmaster and supported by Kathy Cain-Babbitt to approve the December 6, 2024, Workforce Development Board annual meeting minutes. Motion carried.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No reports.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Plans**

Amanda Rosenberg requested Board consideration and approval of two workforce development plans.

**CY2024 Michigan Works! System Plan (Exhibit B1)** – Amanda Rosenberg reported the first plan to be considered is the Michigan Works! System Plan for Calendar Year 2024 which includes a series of certifications, assurances, stipulations, and administrative procedures applicable for all programs funded through the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity. This is a non-financial plan, released annually in alignment with the calendar year. The required administrative procedures are included in the plan document and include the identification of board leadership, the one-stop operator, and the service providers for the Michigan Works! Southwest system. For this plan, there are no changes from last year's requirements.

**FY2024 Going PRO Talent Fund Program Administration Cycle 1 for the period of January 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024 (Exhibit B2)**- Amanda Rosenberg reported the second plan for the Board to consider is for Cycle 1 of the Fiscal Year 2024 Going PRO Talent Fund which provides opportunities through competitive awards to employers to assist in training and retaining new and current employees. Training funded by the Talent Fund

must fill a demonstrated need experienced by an eligible employer. Awards are based on the total number of company applications approved for funding. The allocation for this cycle totals \$1,871,723, reflecting the training of 933 residents at 29 companies. Allowable training is provided on the plan document. In responding to questions from Board members, staff reported that the grant amount for administration services provided by staff for the GPTF grants is limited to 7% of the training funds that are spent by the employers, rather than the grant amount.

**Motion made by Lisa Godfrey and supported by Jeff Heppler to approve the CY2024 Michigan Works! System Plan and the FY2024 Going PRO Talent Fund Program Administration Cycle 1 for the period of January 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024 . Motion carried.**

## STAFF REPORTS

### **Business Services Update and Dashboard** (*Exhibit C*)

Ashley Iovieno provided an update on the Business Services Dashboard (Exhibit C) that included information regarding the current unemployment rates, job demand, the Going PRO Talent Fund, employers served, labor market newsletter, National Entrepreneurship Week, and Race to Talent Apprenticeship event.

**Unemployment Rates** – Updated unemployment rates for December 2023 were displayed on the second page of the Dashboard. The Michigan Unemployment rate was reported to be 4.1%, with the national rate at 3.9% and the rates for the four counties in the Michigan Works! Southwest service area ranged from 3.2% to 4%. St Joseph County was at 3.8%, Kalamazoo County was at 3.2%, Branch County was at 3.4% and Calhoun County was at 4%. On this same page of the dashboard, she noted an increase in the number of registered apprentices as progress is being made towards meeting the State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) grant goal.

**Job Demand** - The third page of the dashboard included details of the job demand in the Michigan Works! Southwest area. Registered Nurses had the highest demand, with Retail Salespersons coming in second. This data was based on 12,925 ads, which was a 3.1% increase from the previous month. Employers with the most openings continue to align closely with the occupations with the most openings. She noted that Pizza Hut and Dollar General have moved into the top five businesses that are hiring.

**Going PRO Talent Fund** - Going PRO Talent Fund awards were announced in late December for Cycle 1 of FY24 and the dashboard data was refreshed to only reflect numbers for FY24. There were 29 companies in the MWSW area that were awarded approximately \$1.7 million to train 933 individuals with 194 as apprentices and 297 new hires. Not included were two additional employers that were awarded pending tax obligations and notice was received yesterday that one of those companies will be receiving an award while the other hopes to meet the State's deadline. Looking ahead, Industry Led Collaborative (ILC) applications which will now be called Employer Led Collaboratives (ELC) will be opening sometime in March. Additionally, Cycle 2 for FY24 Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF) grant applications are on track to open in the spring, sometime in April. New this month for the dashboard, is a GPTF employer impact story which appears on page 5. The story is about Fibre Converters, a round-the-clock manufacturer located in St. Joseph County. As a result of receiving a GPTF grant, Fibre Converters was able to train multiple team members and everyone who participated in the training saw increased wages once their training was complete. A few examples of the training courses were Practical Approach to Project Management and Total Productive Maintenance. A short excerpt of Jessica Wagner's quote reads "Prior to the FY 2023 Going Pro Talent Fund grant, problem-solving exercises were led predominantly by a group of 2-3 people. Due to issues with scheduling such a small group, the response time for customer issues was significantly delayed. We have now trained 13 employees, across 6 different work areas, in 8D problem solving. Many of them have since successfully led 8D team meetings, thus improving our responsiveness to customers."

**Employers Served** - The last page of the dashboard highlights the number of employers served and services provided, this data is for the period July 1, 2023 through January, 31, 2024.

**Labor Market Newsletter** - The January edition of the Labor Market Newsletter has been released and the electronic link to the publication will be sent to Board members following the meeting. This month the publication

features the Michigan Works! West Central region and focuses on the poverty rate by educational attainment in the area. The map of the month features Poverty Rates by Michigan County in 2022. All four counties in the Michigan Works! Southwest area fell into the 12% to 15.9% poverty rate. She also noted that on January 1, 2024, the Michigan hourly minimum wage increased from \$10.10 to \$10.33.

**National Entrepreneurship Week** – Ms. Iovieno announced that this is National Entrepreneurship Week and to celebrate she highlighted a partner in the area that specializes in working with entrepreneurs. MWSW staff, Ben Hoger, conducted an interview with Room 35, a Kalamazoo based organization that assists budding entrepreneurs with a variety of services. The full spotlight is available for reading on the MWSW website, social media and in this month’s employer newsletter, Business Solutions Buzz.

**Race to Talent with Apprenticeship Event** – Ms. Iovieno further reported that in the early part of December, the State of Michigan reached out to MWSW and said they were about to go into a meeting with the Governor’s office to discuss the possibility of holding an apprenticeship event in Battle Creek, in December. MWSW was asked about partnerships with employers in the area that currently have an apprenticeship program and a few ideas were shared with the State. This resulted in a *Race to Talent with Registered Apprenticeships* event that came together in a matter of a couple of weeks. At this event there was a panel featuring four local Battle Creek employers which included Duncan Aviation, Denso, Grace Health, and TC Transcontinental. Also on the panel was representation from Kellogg Community College, the Workforce Development Institute, the Michigan Manufacturer’s Association, the local USDOL Apprenticeship Representative, Deputy Director Beckhorn, and Director Corbin. Ben Damerow, the Upjohn Institute’s CWIS Director, served as the moderator. This roundtable discussion was to help raise awareness around apprenticeships. Local employers, partners and interested individuals were invited to attend. The event was held at Kellogg Community College’s (KCC) Regional Manufacturing Technology Center (RMTC) with Dr. Watson welcoming the group. After a roundtable discussion, each employer was recognized for their leadership and commitment to registered apprenticeships by receiving a glass plaque from the State. Three apprentices were also in attendance, and each had a chance to speak about their apprenticeship experience. Ms. Iovieno extended recognition to Amy Meyers for her outstanding efforts in helping to plan the event. Everything came together in a short amount of time. State staff were quite impressed and the event is viewed as a best practice.

Jakki Bungart-Bibb extended gratitude to the staff who helped plan and hold the December apprenticeship event. She reported that staff exceeded the State’s expectation, and that State staff were so impressed that they are creating a playbook to follow as they hold similar events around the State.

WDB member and Kalamazoo County Commissioner, Jeff Hepler commented that he appreciated the thorough report and positive news. He added that many departments, such as police, fire, and water service within Kalamazoo County government, as well as in cities like Augusta, need trained employees. Ms. Bibb reported MWSW can assist with hiring events such as one recently held in partnership with the City of Kalamazoo.

### **Operations Update and Dashboard** (*Exhibit D*)

Ashley Iovieno reported on MWSW operations dashboard (Exhibit D) that was included in the agenda package. The data on page 2 of the dashboard is for the PATH program, which operates on an October fiscal year, and is reflective of just over one quarter. The local work participation rate noted at the bottom of this page indicates that MWSW has exceeded the state goal of 50% for the past couple of months. On page 3 of the dashboard, she highlighted the employment rate of over 63% for LEAP (Learn, Earn and Provide) customers and explained that LEAP is a pilot program that serves noncustodial parents, who are either referred for services or self-refer for assistance in gaining and maintaining employment. This program also operates on an October fiscal year. The BRES (Barrier Removal Employment Success) program has allowed MWSW to provide supportive services to the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) population and is less restrictive than most of the funding MWSW receives. BRES funding has been a valuable tool and as reflected in the data which is also on page 3 of the Dashboard. Since October 1, 2023, 117 individuals have received support with this funding for support services that includes housing assistance. WIOA performance data displayed on page 4 of the dashboard is reflective of quarter two performance outcomes for the local WIOA and Wagner Peysner performance measures.



For easy reference, the definitions of the performance measures are described on pages 6 and 7 of the dashboard. She noted that the MSG (Measurable Skills Gain) is not an exit-based measure, and this number will often increase at the end of a semester or a school year. This is similar to the credential rate. Although the credential rate is exit based, an increase is often seen at the end of a semester or a school year, with attainment of degrees, diplomas, etc. The Employer Resource Network® (ERN®) currently has 25 active member companies and during the first four months of the fiscal year, 334 employees of member companies have received services.

### **Director's Report** (*Exhibit E*)

**State Update** – Ms. Bibb reported Governor Whitmer released her executive recommended budget on February 7, 2024. The Administration has posted several documents to the state budget office website, and members can find additional information at <https://www.michigan.gov/budget>.

**Federal Update** - Ms. Bibb also reported that in November 2023, the House Education and Workforce Committee voted in favor of the Stronger Workforce for America Act which is a significant step in the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). She noted that while this bipartisan legislation introduces several positive provisions aimed at enhancing the flexibility and effectiveness of local workforce development efforts, there are critical aspects that must be addressed to ensure continued success in serving Michigan's unique community needs. She highlighted commendable provisions of the proposed legislation as well as areas of concern. She reported that Michigan Works! is advocating for changes to address the areas of concern and an advocacy link will be emailed to Board members following the meeting, along with a link to the full Director's Report.

### **PROGRAM / PRESENTATIONS**

**Employer highlight – Micro LAM, Inc.** - Ben Olds, CFO, and Connie Spealman, Administrative Assistant, at Micro LAM provided a presentation on the company's history, products, current markets, as well as customer and employee training. Mr. Olds reported Micro LAM was founded in 2012 and has since purchased additional companies to improve the level of precision offered. The company participates in the ultra-precision optics market by supporting the manufacturing of ultra precision optics and manufacturing capital equipment. The acquisitions have also supported the ability to start manufacturing diamond tools and optics. Mr. Olds shared information about current construction at the company's Portage, Michigan location, where they will be able to accommodate growth, scale up on precision optics manufacturing and ultra-precision diamond tools manufacturing, as well as have a world class customer training and experience center. Mr. Olds further reported that the company has been able to provide many trainings to scale up employee skills as a result of receiving Going PRO Talent Fund training grants. Following the meeting, a link to the presentation was emailed to Board members.

**Economic Update** – Mike Horrigan, President of the Upjohn Institute, shared highlights of a PowerPoint presentation that included research on recent national trends in real GDP and inflation; payroll employment, employment-population ratios, and labor force participation rates; labor shortages by industry; who is being left behind in the current economic expansion; and long-run demographic and labor market trends that support the need for workforce training. Following the meeting, a link to the presentation was emailed to Board members.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **PUBLIC TIME**

Kristine Stevens from Glen Oaks Community College reported that Glen Oaks now has eighteen (18) training programs that have been approved on the State of Michigan Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The college will be bringing Eric Richardson to the campus for a speaking engagement. They also are looking to lead a Going PRO Employer Led Collaborative (ELC) focused on sales and leadership. Funding from the Michigan New Jobs Training Program is also available for training new hires. Lastly, Glen Oaks will be offering classes in the near future for Microsoft Excel.

**MEMBERS' TIME**

Jose' Orozco reported that on Friday, February 23, 2024 from 5:30-7:30 pm there will be an event focused on college financial information and assistance. The event will be held at Voces Community Hall, 1346 W. Columbia Avenue, Battle Creek, MI 49015. Representatives will be available to provide information and assist with completing forms for college applications, financial aid, summer internships, scholarships, and FAFSA. Refreshments will be served. The event is co-sponsored by Voces, Kalamazoo RESA, Battle Creek College Access Network and Kellogg Community College. The flyer with additional information will be emailed to members following the meeting.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Jackie Murray referred members to the list of upcoming WDB meetings that were listed on the agenda.

- The next Executive Committee meeting is Thursday, March 21, 2024 from 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- The next Monitoring and Evaluation Committee is Tuesday, February 27, 2024 from 8:00-9:30 a.m.
- The next Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) meeting is Tuesday, February 27, 2024 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- The next Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) meeting is Monday, March 18, 2024 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- The next Full Workforce Development Board meeting is Thursday, May 16, 2024 from 9:00-10:30 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other reports or business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Olsen Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jackie Murray Date

**APPROVED**

These minutes were approved on \_\_\_\_\_