

Correspondence for the  
Networks Northwest Board Meeting  
Monday, April 10, 2017  
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**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 1, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[danboss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:danboss@networksnorthwest.org)

## **Starting a Business Workshop March 1 in Cadillac**

CADILLAC, MI –Individuals in the beginning stages of starting a business, in need of accessing capital, or simply considering self-employment, will have the opportunity to attend a Starting a Business workshop Wednesday, March 1 in Cadillac. The workshop is being offered by the Northwest Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in partnership with Baker College of Cadillac and is being held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Room 209 at Baker College, 9600 East 13th Street.

The workshop will be facilitated by SBDC Certified Small Business Consultant, Joni Krolczyk, who will help aspiring entrepreneurs assess their abilities to lead and manage a company, and evaluate market and sales potential for their products or services.

This comprehensive 2.5 hour workshop also incorporates the SBDC's fundamental Writing a Business Plan workshop and fully covers topics such as determining concept feasibility, startup costs, financing options, the basics of business planning, along with other necessary resources to launch. This workshop is a requirement prior to meeting with an SBDC consultant one-on-one.

There is no charge to attend the workshop, but pre-registration is required by contacting the SBDC at [231-922-3780](tel:231-922-3780). Online registration is also available at [sbdcnorthwest.org](http://sbdcnorthwest.org).

### **About Michigan SBDC**

The Michigan Small Business Development Center (MI-SBDC) provides expert business assistance to help Michigan businesses raise capital, develop business plans and export strategies, and commercialize technologies. The Northwest Michigan Regional office is hosted by Networks Northwest and serves the ten county region including: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford counties. The Northwest Michigan SBDC's contributing partners are Baker College, North Central Michigan College, and Venture North. For more information, go to: [sbdcnorthwest.org](http://sbdcnorthwest.org). The Michigan SBDC State Headquarters is located at Grand Valley State University, Seidman College of Business in Grand Rapids. Michigan small business owners may access the Michigan SBDC services by contacting [616-331-7480](tel:616-331-7480) or [SDBCMichigan.org](http://SDBCMichigan.org).

# # #

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**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 13, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us)

## CNC Operations Training Available to Help Workers Prepare for High-Demand Jobs

PETOSKEY, MI – Job seekers will have an opportunity to gain skills for high-demand jobs at an Introduction to CNC Operations class organized by Northwest Michigan Works!. The class is being offered at North Central Michigan College in Petoskey and will be held four days a week for two weeks beginning March 13.

Employers in Northwest Michigan are looking for people with CNC Operations skills. The hands-on, short-term training at North Central Michigan College's CNC Machining Lab will prepare participants for jobs and additional training with an employer.

Tuition and required materials for the training are free to eligible Michigan Works customers. Transportation assistance to and from classes is also available.

Northwest Michigan Works! is offering the training in partnership with the Administration for Native Americans, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and North Central Michigan College Corporate and Community Education. For more information or to pre-register visit the Petoskey Northwest Michigan Works! Center at 2240 Mitchell Park Drive or call [\(231\) 347-5150](tel:2313475150).

The CNC Operations Training is part of the "Just in Time" training offered through Northwest Michigan Works!. The program offers short-term, intensive occupational training opportunities to unemployed and underemployed adults. Each "Just in Time" training session is designed to meet the immediate hiring needs of local employers; the curriculum is uniquely targeted to teach the most in-demand skills.

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**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 27, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
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[danboss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:danboss@networksnorthwest.org)

## Starting a Business Workshop March 15 in Traverse City

TRAVERSE CITY, MI –Individuals in the beginning stages of starting a business, in need of accessing capital, or simply considering self-employment, will have the opportunity to attend a Starting a Business workshop Wednesday, March 15 in Traverse City. The workshop is being offered by the Northwest Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in partnership with Northwestern Michigan College Extended Educational Services, and is being held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Parsons-Stulen Building on NMC's Aero Park Campus, 2600 Aero Park Drive.

The workshop will be facilitated by SBDC Regional Director and Small Business Consultant, Annie Olds, who will help aspiring entrepreneurs assess their abilities to lead and manage a company and evaluate market and sales potential for their products or services.

This comprehensive 2.5 hour workshop also incorporates the SBDC's fundamental *Writing a Business Plan* workshop and fully covers topics such as determining concept feasibility, startup costs, financing options, the basics of business planning, along with other necessary resources to launch. This workshop is a requirement prior to meeting with an SBDC consultant one-on-one.

There is no charge to attend the workshop, but pre-registration is required by contacting the SBDC at [231-922-3780](tel:231-922-3780). Online registration is also available at [sbdcnorthwest.org](http://sbdcnorthwest.org).

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February 27, 2017

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## Job Fair in Mackinaw City to Feature Variety of Employment Opportunities

MACKINAW CITY, MI—Over 50 employers with hundreds of open positions will be participating in a Job Fair Saturday, March 11 in Mackinaw City. The available jobs will include seasonal, full-time, and part-time positions from throughout northern Michigan. Along with job opportunities the event is also designed to help college students and other job seekers get to know local businesses and what the area can provide in careers and as a wonderful place to live. The Job Fair will run from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Mackinaw City Recreational Center, 503 West Central Avenue.

The Job Fair is open to the public. Participants should bring copies of their résumé and information needed to fill out job applications. Attendees should be prepared for on-site interviews. The Job Fair is sponsored by the Michigan Works Northeast Consortium, Upward Michigan Works, Northwest Michigan Works, North Central Michigan College, the Village of Mackinaw City, and the Mackinaw City Chamber of Commerce. For more information call, 800-285-WORK.

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600 E Front Street, Suite 104, PO Box 506  
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[traversetransportation.org](http://traversetransportation.org)

**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 28, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
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231-929-5047  
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## Meeting Set to Review Upcoming and Previous Road Construction Seasons in Traverse City Area

TRAVERSE CITY, MI – A transportation information event is being held March 22 in Traverse City to provide a recap of 2016 and preview of 2017 road construction projects in the Traverse City area. The meeting will run from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Training Room of the Grand Traverse County Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue. The meeting is being hosted by Networks Northwest and the Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI).

Representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Grand Traverse County Road Commission, and the City of Traverse City will be at the meeting to provide an introduction to programmed 2017 road construction and BATA transit projects in the Traverse City area. They will also give presentations on the successes and challenges of the 2016 road construction season, and discuss the road funding outlook.

There is no cost to attend the event but RSVPs are requested at: [nwm.org/roadupdate](http://nwm.org/roadupdate) or by calling [231-929-5000](tel:231-929-5000).

The mission of the Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI) is to provide coordinated leadership and direction for the development and conduct of the continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Traverse City urban area. TTCI is a program of Networks Northwest.

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Networks Northwest is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and service are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Michigan Relay Center callers use 711 or 1-800-649-3777.

Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative

**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 1, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us)

## Local Businesses Receive Statewide Recognition for Talent Development

TRAVERSE CITY, MI—MR Products in Copemish and Sleeping Bear Apiaries in Beulah have received Michigan Works! Association Impact Awards for their leadership in providing local employment and training opportunities. Networks Northwest and Northwest Michigan Works! nominated the businesses for the awards after each of them used a variety of programs offered through Michigan Works! to hire and train employees.

MR Products is a family-owned manufacturer of plastic chain. Michigan Works! assisted the company with Skilled Trades Training Fund applications, employee wellness development projects, and On-the-Job Training contracts. The training included employee Carol Mathias who was also recognized at the Impact Awards event.

“Since 2009, we have more than doubled the number of employees here in Copemish, and we consider Michigan Works! to be an invaluable partner contributing to our future growth,” said MR Products President, Maree Mulvoy.

Sleeping Bear Apiaries is the parent company of St. Ambrose Cellars and Sleeping Bear Farms. Michigan Works! helped the company develop a Winemaker Apprentice program. The company also received a Skilled Trades Training Fund grant, and training assistance for employees including Susan Kile who was recognized along with the company.

“The support has provided the increased workforce and skill set needed to meet the demand of our continued growth,” said Sleeping Bear owner, Kirk Jones. “We are forever grateful for all of the support we have received from Northwest Michigan Works!.”

The awards were presented during a special recognition event February 22 in Lansing which was attended by several of the region’s state legislators.

“From my perspective, these are the best kinds of economic development stories,” said Michigan Senator Darwin Booher (R-Evart). “I am sincerely proud to honor the achievements of all these individuals.”

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**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 8, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
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[danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us)

## Local Students Set to Showcase 3D Designs At Gutter Car Derby in Traverse City

TRAVERSE CITY, MI—Creative students and 3D printing will come together at a unique car race March 22 in Traverse City. The Newton's Road Gutter Car Derby will feature 3D printed cars designed by local students. The event gets its name from the plastic gutters that are used as the race track. The Gutter Car Derby will start at 6:00 p.m. at The Pathfinder School, 11930 S West Bay Shore Drive.

Along with the race the students will be judged on their designs and will also give oral presentations to the judges. Each of the cars is required to be 100 percent student designed. Prizes will be awarded for best design, fastest car, and longest distance. This event is open to all K-12 students within the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District (TBAISD). Participating schools include: TCAPS, The Pathfinder School, Bellaire High School, and more! The public is welcome to attend the event.

The Gutter Car Derby partners are: TBAISD, The Pathfinder School, RJG, Inc., Quarkmine, and Boomerang-Catapult.

Newton's Road is a program of Networks Northwest, operating in partnership with area businesses and schools, dedicated to promoting STEM education for K-12 students in Northwest Lower Michigan.

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**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 9, 2017

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Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us)

## Michigan Works Schedules Hiring Event to Help Business Staff New Office in Bellaire

BELLAIRE, MI—Northwest Michigan Works! is hosting a hiring event March 22 and 23 in Bellaire to help Crusecom staff its new office there. The hiring event will be held at the Forest Home Township Hall, 321 North Bridge Street, and will run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on March 22 and from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on March 23.

Crusecom is a call center service provider and is scheduled to open in Bellaire on May 1. The company is hiring for all positions and departments including Customer Service Representatives, Supervisors, and Quality Assurance. Job seekers attending the hiring event should bring their resumes. Applications will be available on site.

For more information go to [crusecom.com](http://crusecom.com) or call [989-739-5070](tel:989-739-5070).

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**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 17, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us)

## Employers Invited to Participate in IT Career Fair in Traverse City

TRAVERSE CITY, MI—Local employers can recruit candidates for their IT positions at the annual Information Technology Career Fair Monday, April 17 in Traverse City. The event will run from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the NMC Hagerty Center located at 715 East Front Street. Along with local employers the career fair will include information and resources for people considering IT careers.

Businesses interested in participating in the IT Career Fair should contact Sharon Gordon at: [sharon.gordon@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:sharon.gordon@networksnorthwest.org) or (231) 922-3757. There is no fee for businesses to participate in the event but the registration deadline is Thursday, April 13.

The IT Career Fair is being sponsored by Northwest Michigan Works!, Networks Northwest, and Northwestern Michigan College. More information is available at: [nwm.org/IT](http://nwm.org/IT)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Contact: Julie Pingston, TICOM Collaboration Awards Committee Chair, 517-377-1412 or  
Larisa Draves, TICOM Administrator, 231-823-0015

## “2017 Governor’s Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration Announced”

The 2017 Governor’s Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration were presented at the April Pure Michigan Governor’s Conference on Tourism in Detroit. The awards were presented by Dave Lorenz of Travel Michigan, representing the Michigan Travel Commission, and Julie Pingston, representing the Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM).

The Governor’s Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration were created by the Michigan Travel Commission, in conjunction with the Governor’s Office, to elevate the status of Michigan’s tourism industry and to promote innovative collaboration as an effective, efficient and creative operating principle for the industry. The inaugural awards were presented at the 2009 annual Tourism Conference.

In the **Experience Development & Presentation** category, “**Paddle for Pints**” was given the award. This is a collaborative of 18 businesses and organizations in the greater Traverse City area.

**Paddle for Pints** is a Brewery Pub Paddle on Traverse City's Boardman Lake & River and the West Bay. Participants meet at the Filling Station Microbrewery and, at designated times, 100 participants launch for an urban paddle through downtown Traverse City. The experience takes participants along a guided course and they visit 6 breweries along the way. Paddle for Pints has become one of Traverse City's biggest summer events drawing people from all over Michigan and 23 states. The event began in 2013 with two event dates of 60 people each. Last year, the event consisted of 27 event dates totaling 4,800 participants which sold out in 47 minutes when the dates were announced. The continued innovative collaboration between the local partners is what has sustained the growth and demand of the event and created another sellout year for 2017.

-Page 1 of 2-

**Up North Trails** won in the category of **Non-Traditional Partnerships** as a collaboration of: Top of Michigan Trails Council, Northeast Michigan Council of Governments, Networks Northwest Land Information Access Association, Traverse Area Recreational and Transportation Trails, Inc., Cheboygan County, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, Flight Path Creative, and 21 County Representatives.

The **Up North Trails Collaborative** brings together regional stakeholders to support and enhance economic development opportunities by developing a comprehensive trail marketing initiative in northern lower Michigan. The common goal of this collaborative is to promote all the trail systems in a 21-county area to create further opportunities for trail enthusiasts. A grand total of 5,358 miles of trail were identified and mapped. After the massive data collection was complete, the information was presented through a robust trail mapping website “upnorthtrails.org”. To take the initiative one step further, 5 pilot communities were chosen to undergo a Trail Town planning process to capitalize on the benefit of trail tourism. The process included consistently branded trailhead kiosk signs, trail guides, trailblazer signs and community gateway signs. The collaboration is truly a unique and geographically wide-ranging effort, resulting in a promotional effort throughout northern Michigan.

The third and final award went to **Lake Huron Discovery Tour** in the category of **Marketing Partnership**. The tour is a collaboration of Michigan Arts & Culture Northeast, Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan, Northeast Michigan Council of Governments/US 23 Heritage Route, Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Mitten Women Productions.

In 2015, a collaboration of individuals, communities, organizations, agencies and businesses contributed over 4,000 volunteer hours to plan and execute a tourism marketing project called Lake Huron Discovery Tour during the fall color season. The tour consisted of a four-day event weekend focused along the US23 Heritage Route and the shoreline of Lake Huron in northeast Michigan. The self-guided tour opportunity included a collection of natural and cultural attractions and over 100 special events for the weekend. The tour was promoted through user friendly, collaborative tools with consistent branding and messaging. This uniform marketing approach promoted this broad area as a regional destination resulting in sold out hotels and visitors being able to discover new experiences along coastal Lake Huron.

The **Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan** is comprised of more than 50 statewide tourism associations, corporations and convention and visitor bureaus whose mission is to promote Michigan’s travel and tourism industry as a vital component of economic development and quality of life through governmental advocacy, public relations, and other promotional and educational efforts.

###

**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 27, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[danboss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:danboss@networksnorthwest.org)

## Starting a Business Workshop April 20 in Cadillac

CADILLAC, MI –Individuals in the beginning stages of starting a business, in need of accessing capital, or simply considering self-employment, will have the opportunity to attend a Starting a Business workshop Thursday, April 20 in Cadillac. The workshop is being offered by the Northwest Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in partnership with Baker College of Cadillac and is being held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Room 209 at Baker College, 9600 East 13th Street.

The workshop will be facilitated by SBDC Certified Small Business Consultant, Joni Krolczyk, who will help aspiring entrepreneurs assess their abilities to lead and manage a company, and evaluate market and sales potential for their products or services.

This comprehensive 2.5 hour workshop also incorporates the SBDC's fundamental Writing a Business Plan workshop and fully covers topics such as determining concept feasibility, startup costs, financing options, the basics of business planning, along with other necessary resources to launch. This workshop is a requirement prior to meeting with an SBDC consultant one-on-one.

There is no charge to attend the workshop, but pre-registration is required by contacting the SBDC at [231-922-3780](tel:231-922-3780). Online registration is also available at [sbdcnorthwest.org](http://sbdcnorthwest.org).

### **About Michigan SBDC**

The Michigan Small Business Development Center (MI-SBDC) provides expert business assistance to help Michigan businesses raise capital, develop business plans and export strategies, and commercialize technologies. The Northwest Michigan Regional office is hosted by Networks Northwest and serves the ten county region including: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford counties. The Northwest Michigan SBDC's contributing partners are Baker College, North Central Michigan College, and Venture North. For more information, go to: [sbdcnorthwest.org](http://sbdcnorthwest.org). The Michigan SBDC State Headquarters is located at Grand Valley State University, Seidman College of Business in Grand Rapids. Michigan small business owners may access the Michigan SBDC services by contacting [616-331-7480](tel:616-331-7480) or [SDBCMichigan.org](http://SDBCMichigan.org).

# # #

NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at [dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org) and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone [\(231\) 929-5047](tel:231-929-5047). Check our online Media Room at: [networksnorthwest.org/media](http://networksnorthwest.org/media)

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our web site, [networksnorthwest.org](http://networksnorthwest.org)

**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 30, 2017

Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
231-929-5047  
[dan.boss@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:dan.boss@nwm.cog.mi.us)

## Northern Michigan Trail Promotion Project Wins Governor's Award

TRAVERSE CITY, MI – A project designed to promote trails in northern Michigan has received the Governor's Award for Innovative Tourism Collaboration. The Up North Trails Collaborative won in the category of Non-Traditional Partnerships for its [upnorthtrails.org](http://upnorthtrails.org) website and trail promotion efforts connected to the website. The Up North Trails Collaborative is a coalition of 53 organizations in northern Michigan with the goal of promoting all trail systems together for all trail users. The coalition is led by Networks Northwest and the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments.

The Up North Trails Collaborative brings together regional stakeholders to support and enhance economic development opportunities by developing a comprehensive trail marketing initiative in northern Lower Michigan. The common goal of this collaborative is to promote all the trail systems in a 21-county area to create further opportunities for trail enthusiasts. A grand total of 5,358 miles of trail were identified and mapped. After the data collection was complete, the information was presented through the trail mapping website [upnorthtrails.org](http://upnorthtrails.org). The collaboration is truly a unique and geographically wide-ranging effort, resulting in a promotional effort throughout northern Michigan.

The Governor's Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration were created by the Michigan Travel Commission, in conjunction with the Governor's Office, to elevate the status of Michigan's tourism industry and to promote innovative collaboration as an effective, efficient and creative operating principle for the industry.

# # #

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Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our web site, [networksnorthwest.org](http://networksnorthwest.org)

**SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

## Starting a Business Workshop



**Thursday, March 9, 2017  
9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.**

**North Central Michigan College  
Student and Community Resource Center – Room 536  
1515 Howard Street, Petoskey**

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:**

The Starting a Business Workshop is intended for individuals in the beginning stages of starting a business, in need of accessing capital, or simply considering self-employment.

**ABOUT THE WORKSHOP:**

Delivered in a workshop format, this introductory session helps aspiring entrepreneurs assess their abilities to lead and manage a company, as well as evaluate market and sales potential for their products/services. This comprehensive 2.5 hour workshop also incorporates the SBDC's fundamental *Writing a Business Plan* workshop and fully covers topics such as determining concept feasibility, startup costs, financing options, the basics of business planning, along with other necessary resources to launch. The workshop features instruction by a SBDC Small Business Consultant, held in partnership with North Central Michigan College, and is a pre-requisite to meeting a SBDC consultant one-on-one.

**FEES AND REGISTRATION:**

There is no charge to attend the workshop.  
Pre-registration is required at [www.SBDCNorthwest.org](http://www.SBDCNorthwest.org)  
or call 231.922.3780.










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Please RSVP.  
[ccefaq@ncmich.edu](mailto:ccefaq@ncmich.edu)  
or call [231-348-6613](tel:231-348-6613)

**Corporate & Community Education | North Central Michigan College | [231-348-6613](tel:231-348-6613) | [www.ncmich.edu/cce](http://www.ncmich.edu/cce)**

North Central Michigan College - Corporate & Community  
Education, 1515 Howard Street, Petoskey, MI 49770

SafeUnsubscribe™ [ewood@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:ewood@networksnorthwest.org)

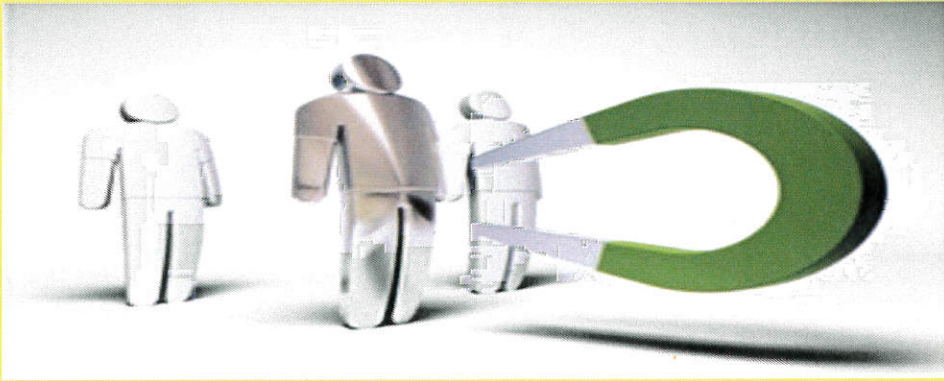
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## Attracting Talent

Thursday, March 9  
11:30 a.m. To 1:00 p.m.  
Library Conference Rooms 1&2  
North Central Michigan College

This symposium will focus on how to attract entry level employees, as well as other positions, in a very tight candidate market. We want to help you find qualified talent for your company. At the March 9 Symposium "Attracting Talent", Terry Vandercook, Director of Operations at Northwest Michigan Works!, will provide information on how apprenticeships can be used to attract preferred candidates. He will be followed by Gretchen Carroll, Associate Dean of Business and Technology, NCMC, on what businesses should be considering to attract talent, and understanding the new job seeker. These presentations will be followed up by a discussion around these topics and trust it will lead to some solutions.

We will also be serving you a wonderful hot lunch. To attend the lunch program at the college on March 9, contact North Central Michigan College's Corporate and Community Education to reserve your place at the Symposium. Simply hit reply and send, or call (231) 348-6613, or email [ccefaq@ncmich.edu](mailto:ccefaq@ncmich.edu).

This luncheon is part of a broader effort to attract candidates to Northern Michigan.

The series of supporting events follows:

- ❖ March 9, "Attracting Talent", NCMC Library, 11:30am-1:00pm
- ❖ March 11, Job Fair, Mackinaw City Recreation Center, 10:00am-2:00pm
- ❖ For *Job Seekers* – Michigan Works! will be providing Workshops on employment skills and job readiness. (Sign up directly with Michigan Works!)
- ❖ April 13, Career Fair, Gym at NCMC, 10:00am-3:00pm

**Don't miss this opportunity to gain a better understanding of current employer issues facing all our area businesses.**

These programs are sponsored by:  
Michigan Career Educator and Employers Alliance (MCEEA)  
Northwest Michigan Works!  
Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium  
North Central Michigan College



## Jobs for Vets Hiring Event

Tuesday, March 21st

2pm - 6pm

NMC Hagerty Conference Center

715 E Front Street,

Traverse City, MI

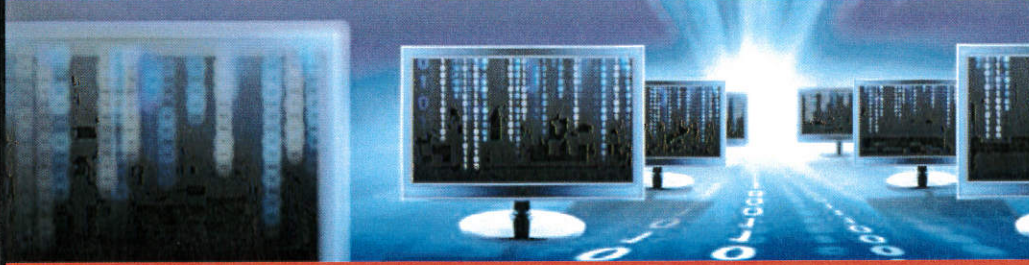
[JobsForVetsMI.com](http://JobsForVetsMI.com)



6th Annual !!!

# IT Career Fair

Careers, Jobs, and Education  
in Information Technology!



## Monday, April 17, 2017

4:00 - 6:30 p.m.

### NMC Hagerty Center

715 E. Front Street, Traverse City

### JOB SEEKERS:

Employers will be recruiting qualified candidates for these and other currently open positions:

- Network Administration
- Software Development
- PHP and Web Development
- Network Tech Support
- Quality Assurance Engineers
- Network Internship
- Support Services Internship

### PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS:



Watch our website for more!

**Pre-Register Online: [nwm.org/IT](http://nwm.org/IT)**

#### PRE-REGISTRATION BENEFITS:

- Your résumé will be previewed.
- Be among the first to see employers.
- Pre-register online at: [nwm.org/IT](http://nwm.org/IT)

All applicants should be prepared for a professional, onsite interview. See our webpage for special instructions including job search guides and how to succeed at a job fair. Visit: [nwm.org/IT](http://nwm.org/IT)

#### Considering a career in IT?

Representatives from Northwestern Michigan College and Ferris State University will be available to answer questions.

Sponsored and hosted by:



More info online: [nwm.org/IT](http://nwm.org/IT)



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## Pitch Opportunity for Tourism Based Businesses - March 15 application deadline

### Project Tourism

The Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan's Product Development Committee is focusing efforts on one of its four primary objectives, to increase access to capital for travel-related businesses. They are creating Project Tourism for April 19, 2017 where hospitality based businesses will compete at a live event for cash prizes for a special project.

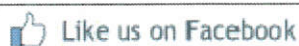
Six hospitality-based companies will be selected as finalists to compete for cash prizes- First place prize is \$7,000, second place is \$2,000 and third place is \$1,000. Judges will consist of traditional and non-traditional lenders and industry leaders. Finalists will each have five minutes to present their special project and compete for 1st, 2nd or 3rd place cash prizes to help towards that project. Finalists will be judge by a panel for 80% of the vote, 20% will come the attendees of the event.

### Want to apply?

What new project could you tackle with \$7,000 to leverage funding? Dream big about what you could do with \$7,000. The pitch should describe a tourism related capital project. How much total capital is needed? How will these funds enhance your business and therefore benefit our tourism industry? How could this be a catalyst to something bigger? Please send your pitch with no more than 250 words about how this could change your business, your community or your industry. Explain your plan or project with as much detail as you can. Ideal candidates would use the funds as leverage for loans with traditional and nontraditional funders. Deadline to apply- March 15, 2017. Click here to apply: <https://goo.gl/forms/Y6PGjHlfGY1f9Ms23>. Final contestants will receive assistance from SBDC to help prepare for Pitch Night.

### Thank you to the following sponsors:

Chemical Bank  
Grand Traverse Pie Company  
Traverse City Tourism  
The Hagerty Center at Northwestern Michigan College  
Michigan Chamber of Commerce



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- GED® Test Preparation
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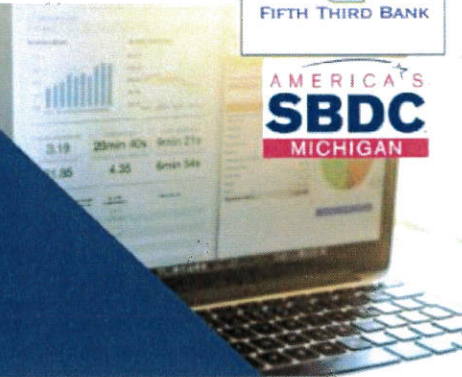
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# Know Your Numbers

Using your financial statements to better manage your business.



#### TOPICS INCLUDE

- Identify opportunities and challenges with your balance sheet & income statement
- Discuss the proven ways to increase your company's cash flow
- Apply breakeven analysis to improve decision making
- Understand and plan the working capital to support your growth
- Strengthen the partnership with your lender

#### FEES AND REGISTRATION

- \$25 – Includes workbook
- Course offered at no cost to Fifth Third customers and Veterans by calling your local SBDC office.
- Register Online at: [www.sbdcMichigan.org/training](http://www.sbdcMichigan.org/training)

"This course gave me valuable ideas on how to manage my business better through monitoring and analyzing my financials."

*Brenda Arbelaez  
Owner - Pals International*

#### WHEN:

Thursday, March 23, 2017  
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

#### WHERE:

North Central Community College  
Student and Community Resource Center, Room #550  
1515 Howard St., Petoskey, MI 49770

Register at: [www.sbdcMichigan.org/training](http://www.sbdcMichigan.org/training)  
or call 231-922-3780



Program developed by Michigan SBDC with support from Fifth Third Bank

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Michigan Small Business Development Center  
1209 S. Garfield Ave, Suite C, Traverse City, MI 49686  
[231-922-3780](tel:231-922-3780)

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# Concern over economic impact if MC Sports stores close

OTSEGO/EMMET COUNTY, Mi (WPBN/WGTU) -- MC Sports filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Tuesday and now there is some concern about the possible economic impact.

According to court document, MC Sports has 68 stores in the Midwest with some 1,300 employees.

It has locations in Traverse City, Petoskey, Gaylord, Alpena and Cadillac.

After the sporting goods chain filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, there is a chance many of the stores will close their doors for good.

"I am surprised, because they filled a niche," said Lisa McComb, the executive director of the Otsego County Economic Alliance. "Even though we have other sporting good retailers here, they do fill that niche, you know. Market is good, competition is good, but again when you're a large corporation, it's really a bottom line decision."

The company would not say how many people work in the northern Michigan stores, but McComb doesn't think they will have a very hard time finding jobs if the Gaylord store closes.

"Of course we never want to see any of the businesses in northern Michigan go out and Gaylord itself is growing so quickly that it really surprises me, but as a larger corporation it's a bottom line kind of decision and hopefully those jobs within our community are just going to be picked up in other areas, because we are seeing such a large growth," McComb said.

Also in jeopardy is the store's Petoskey location.

"Anytime a business closes, it's hard on the community," said Jane Butzier, the operations manager at Northwest Michigan Works.

Northwest Michigan Works specializes in finding people jobs.

Butzier said they will be ready to help out if the Petoskey store closes.

"These people who are doing retail positions, maybe they would want to get some training to get into something else, which we can help them with, but with so many retail positions opening," Butzier said. "We can help make easy transitions."

Neither Jane Butzier nor Lisa McComb think it would be difficult to find a new tenant to put in those locations.

"Of course the space is going to hurt, but they're in Gaylord, centrally located right there by our other big box areas," McComb said. "I actually foresee that space getting leased fairly quickly."

In a statement, the company said all of its locations are having liquidation sales to help address the immediate money issues.

# CWTA going up, not down

## New programs boosting ridership, public transit opportunities

BY RICK CHARMOLI  
CADILLAC NEWS

**CADILLAC** — It appears 2017 will be a big year for public transit in Wexford County.

With the installation of new technology, the addition of nightly and Saturday options in 2016 and a new look and new vehicles this year, it is hard for anything but a smile to cross the face of Cadillac Wexford Transit Authority Executive Director Carrie Thompson.

Things are good, and she hasn't been afraid to share that news with both the Wexford County Board of Commissioners and the Cadillac City Council.

"Our ridership is really up," she said. "(In) December, we hit an all-time high for the transit, 11,135 for ridership. That is up about 13 percent higher than the prior December."

It was a similar story in January as ridership



RICK CHARMOLI | CADILLAC NEWS

Rather than buying another bus, the Cadillac Wexford Transit Authority purchased a vehicle called an MV-1. The vehicle is built from the ground up with wheelchair users in mind.

was 10,846 for the month. While not as high as the month before, Thompson said with the schools having several snow days, that impacted ridership by about 200 each snow day.

This is all the culmination

of months of work to give the community what it wanted in public transit. The first big change to CWTA was implemented last spring.

The transit authority worked last year to introduce its new, fully auto-

ated system for ride scheduling called Ride-OnTime. The new system has allowed riders to book a specific time for pickup. The new dispatch system also allows for online bookings of rides. A ride can be scheduled up to

two weeks or at least three hours in advance. Confirmation emails also are sent after online booking is completed.

Also with the new system, if a ride is scheduled at least a day in advance, the rider will receive an automated confirmation call the night before to confirm or cancel. A new feature of the system also allows for an automated call to happen just before the bus arrives to alert the rider of that fact.

The other big change came in November when the CWTA started offering its Night Rider program as well as Saturday service. The night service is part of the CWTA's plan to improve services for riders, which was created after focus groups were held in 2015. The other parts of the plan included dependability, which is addressed with the CWTA's new dispatch system, and more coverage in rural areas.

FOR MORE, TURN TO PAGE A2

## CWTA

CONTINUED FROM A1

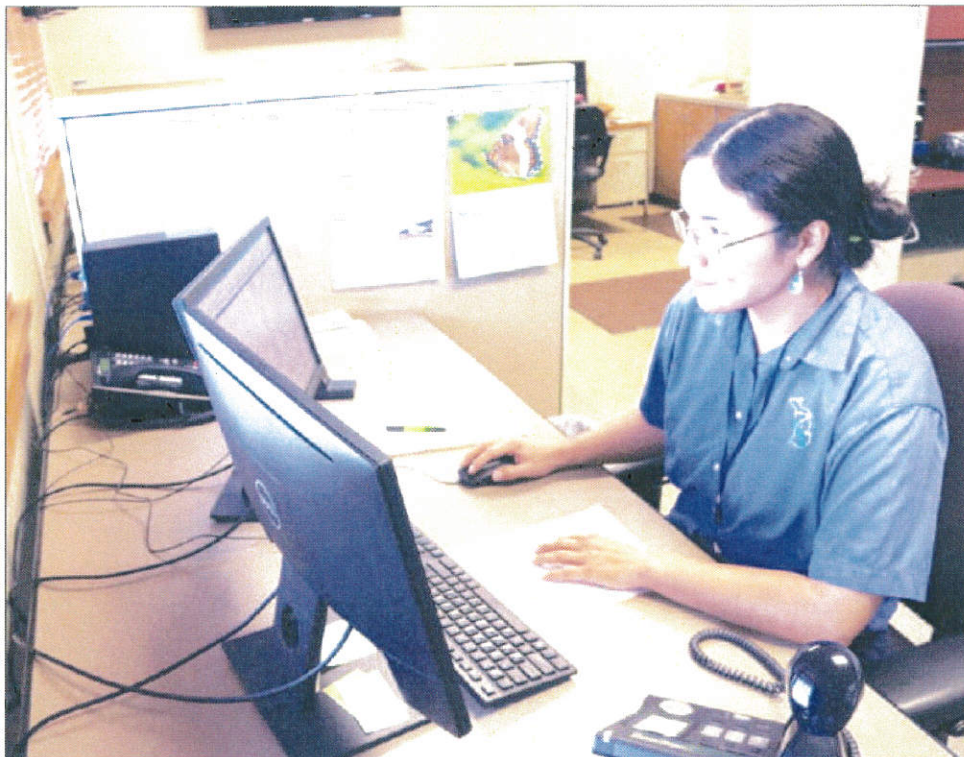
The new night and Saturday service will be available until midnight Monday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

"For December, we had 593 riders, and in January, we had 696 riders for evenings and Saturdays," she said. "What we are running into on Saturdays is we are having to turn people away because we have hit capacity."

That capacity, however, doesn't mean the buses are full but rather getting pickups and drop-offs done in a timely manner. Currently, the CWTA is looking to find a remedy to allow more riders to utilize the program but also keep the success rate of getting riders to and from their destinations in a timely manner.

That could mean getting more funding from the Michigan Department of Transportation, but that is not guaranteed, Thompson said. Thompson said with only having limited data on the new program, more time is needed to get a better feel on how riders will use the service.

"We really only have two months of service," she said. "We started at the



RICK CHARMOLI | CADILLAC NEWS

New CWTA dispatcher Vanessa Chavez gives information to a driver about where to pick up a rider recently. With the addition of new dispatch software and rider programs last year, the Cadillac Wexford Transit Authority is looking at building on that momentum in 2017.

end of November, and as you can see, the (number of riders is) going up and not down. We are looking at additional funding be-

cause the need is there in Wexford County and being more flexible in scheduling allows us to do more things. At the same time, we have

to be careful how much we adjust things when people have appointments they have to get to."

Recently, Thompson said

CWTA purchased a new vehicle. Rather than buying another bus, Thompson said they purchased a vehicle called an MV-1. The

vehicle is built from the ground up with wheelchair users in mind. Thompson said the company just started selling the vehicles to be used by public transportation and CWTA is definitely an early adopter, but she believes it will help in many ways.

"We are able to use it because of the new rider software," she said. "We are able to see how many people are on the buses and when possible we can use the MV-1 as a smaller vehicle."

The hope is it will help cut down on fuel costs when there are not as many riders and the plan is to either purchase another MV-1 or van this fall.

Finally, Thompson said CWTA will be going through a rebranding to freshen up the look of the transit authority. Although they are not changing the legal name, Thompson said they are trying to change the image they have on the buses and other vehicles.

"To do that we are going through a collaborative process. We are taking input of the employees, and the board," she said. "Once we narrow down to two or three names, we will put it out for the public to rename. It should be out by the first of March."

richarmoli@cadillacnews.com | 735 NEWS 63971



# OUT WITH THE NEW, IN WITH THE OLD

Fewer school-aged children create enrollment drought in local schools

TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE Saturday, February 18, 2017

BY KYLE KAMINSKI  
kkaminski@record-eagle.com



**T**RAVERSE CITY — Officials at local school districts are coming to terms with some startling statistics.

More than 5,000 school-age children have left northwest Michigan — including Grand Traverse, Benzie, Leelanau, Antrim and Kalkaska counties — within the past 15 years, according to a recently released Networks Northwest study.

Fewer and fewer young families are opting to live up north, but retirement-age populations are booming. More than 20,000 people between ages 55 and 74 have migrated to the region in the same time frame, the study reported.

It's an expected trend, said Traverse City Area Public Schools Superintendent Paul Soma, who requested Networks Northwest CEO Matt McCauley explain the regional demographics to his board of education earlier this month.

The student migration carries an estimated \$31.5 million cost to local schools, had the number of students remained the same, according to Record-Eagle estimates.

SEE OUT PAGE 2A

Record-Eagle photo illustration/Tessa Lighty

Left, Clarabelle Wilson, 94, and right, Nola Voyles, 5. Recent demographic research from Networks Northwest points to a shrinking number of school-aged children in northwest Michigan

## Breakdown by Age

	2001	2016	Change
Under 5	9,260	8,637	-7%
5-9	10,480	9,101	-13%
10-14	11,843	9,915	-16%
15-19	11,139	9,691	-13%
20-24	7,845	8,916	+14%
25-29	7,823	9,460	+21%
30-34	9,734	9,927	+2%
35-39	11,688	9,371	-20%
40-44	13,396	9,276	-31%
45-49	13,110	10,199	-22%
50-54	11,508	12,507	+9%
55-59	8,793	14,034	+60%
60-64	7,719	14,059	+82%
65-69	6,857	12,556	+83%
70-74	6,002	9,411	+57%
75-79	5,017	6,410	+28%
80-84	3,246	4,347	+34%
Over 85	2,795	4,607	+65%

## Population Statistics

	2001	2016	Percent Change
Northwest Michigan	158,253	172,424	+9%
Michigan	9,991,126	9,928,527	-1%
United States	284,968,955	323,772,974	+14%

Population statistics source: Networks Northwest

## OUT

Fewer school-aged children create enrollment drought in area

FROM PAGE 1A

Schools of choice is also having an impact, said TCAPS Executive Director of Finance and Operations Christine Thomas-Hill.

"It's not just the shrinking student population but it's also more choice that's a problem for us," Hill said. "It's two challenges."

Looking at the trends helps officials predict the ebbs and flows of student populations and plan accordingly, she said.

"The information is helpful as we look at enrollment projections," Thomas-Hill said. "We use it when we make our budget assumptions. We often get asked why we build a negative projection but it's because we use things like this research."

The balance between fewer youth and more seniors has led to overall population growth in the region while the state as a whole has seen a decline.

Traverse City proper has remained stagnant, McCauley said. Grand

Regional Demographics				
	NUMBER OF JOBS			BREAKDOWN BY COUNTY
	2001	2016	Percent Change	
Northwest Michigan	66,180	68,274	+3.2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grand Traverse 49,043</li> <li>• Leelanau 6,295</li> <li>• Antrim 5,084</li> <li>• Benzie 4,061</li> <li>• Kalkaska 3,790</li> </ul>
Michigan	4,476,727	4,252,527	-5%	
United States	129,637,701	141,897,876	+9.5%	

Source: Networks Northwest

Traverse County, instead, is growing from the sides. "Keep in mind that even though population growth might be outside the central city, that's where the employment opportunities are," McCauley said. "Schools may be seeking closer proximity to where employment is."

McCauley's prediction coincides with Soma's vision of creating space

near downtown Traverse City — where families want their kids to be educated, even if they live miles outside of town, Soma said.

"Whether that's dropping off their kids or if it's where they work, it's attractive to our parents to have their children educated in Traverse City," Soma contended. "It's near where they

work; it's where they live. They like the idea. Even if the population doesn't change, the demand is going to stay consistent."

Soma scouted out areas of population growth in Garfield Township near West Senior High School and in surrounding areas near Silver Lake. A new subdivision near Cherry Knoll Elementary school is boosting enrollment

there, he said. But plans are yet to be made; the demographics are purely informational.

"I don't see us having to downsize further than what we have already done for a good, long time," Soma said. "I think we've made the appropriate adjustments to our facilities as far as capacity. Now it's about finding their best use."

# Getting better all the time

Wexford Co. primary roads show improvement in road study

BY RICK CHARMOLI  
CADILLAC NEWS

**CADILLAC** — A recent study is showing primary roads in Wexford County are in pretty good shape and the hope is new state funding will help to fix problems with more local and rural roads.

The results of the annual Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating survey that inspected Wexford County roads that received federal

funding for upkeep was recently shared with the Wexford County Board of Commissioners. The purpose of the annual PASER system is to evaluate pavement data of those federally funded roads as well as to be used as a tool for project planning and programming.

Last September, data was collected on approximately 354 miles of federal-aid roads in the county. As a result, it showed 39 percent of roads were rated between 8

and 10 signifying a “good” status, which was a 26-percent improvement over the past five years. Thirty-seven percent of roads in Wexford County had a rating between 5 and 7 to receive “fair” status. The remaining 24 percent of county roads were given ratings between 1 and 4 to receive a “poor” status, which was a slight improvement over the previous year’s evaluation.

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE A2



CADILLAC NEWS FILE PHOTO

A recent study is showing primary roads in Wexford County are in pretty good shape and the hope is new state funding will help to fix issues with more local and rural roads.

## ROAD STUDY

FROM PAGE A1

In comparison, the 10 counties in northwest lower Michigan including Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee and Wexford counties, showed 68 percent of federal-aid roads were rated in either the “good” or “fair” categories. The remaining 32 percent were in the “poor” category.

It is a systematic process of inventory, scenario evaluation, and action that results in selecting the best method for identifying, prioritizing, and implementing road construction projects to make the most efficient use of public resources for the purposes of improving road infrastructure in a community.

Networks Northwest Regional Planner Tad Erickson said the ratings are done statewide and help give a snapshot of the federal-aid roads at the county, regional and state levels. He also said when it comes to the condition of those federal-aid roads in Wexford County, it is important to remember it is a combination of city/municipal, county and state.

Wexford County Road Commission Manager Alan Cooper said the inspection focuses on the primary road system, which is eligible for federal funding. Examples of such roads include Boon Road, 13th Street, 16 Road, 29 Road and 31 Road, Cooper said.

“We have been aggressively trying to bring up our primary road system to a fair or good rating. We have been able to use the federal funding and urban funding to address our primary roads,” Cooper said. “We have a rural system that needs work but we are hoping the new money coming from the gas tax and registration fees will allow us to be more aggressive on our



CADILLAC NEWS FILE PHOTO

A recent study is showing primary roads in Wexford County are in pretty good shape and the hope is new state funding will help to fix issues with more local and rural roads.

rural system.”

Gov. Rick Snyder signed a series of bills in November 2015 as part of a \$1.2-billion road funding package. The plan raises an additional \$600 million annually in taxes for transportation purposes by increasing annual vehicle registration costs for passenger vehicles and commercial trucks. The increase is about 20 percent. It also increases the state gas tax by 7.3 cents. Owners of hybrid and all-electric vehicles will pay even more.

The vehicle registration fees will account for about \$200 million annually in increased revenue. As a result of the state’s fiscal year starting in October, the total plan will only generate an estimated \$450 million for the

fiscal year 2017.

The fuel tax will account for \$400 million in additional revenue annually. Both diesel fuel and gasoline will have an applied 26.3-cent tax starting Jan. 1, in addition to Michigan’s 6 percent sales tax. The fuel tax will continue to increase by 5 percent annually, or by the inflation rate.

The majority — 61 percent of dollars — will go to local road agencies in communities across the state while 39 percent will be dedicated to state highways. Local agencies will be permitted to use up to 10 percent of funding for mass transit, with the exception of Detroit, which may use up to 20 percent.

General Fund dollars allocated for roads will be a 5-year phase-

in period to allow adjustments over time, beginning with \$150 million in Fiscal Year 2019, \$325 million in FY 20 and \$600 million in FY 21. When all the components of the phased-in funding plan are added together, it results in the investment of the \$1.2 billion to fix Michigan’s roads and bridges.

“We hope to spend more on secondary roads that are paved, but if we do total reconstruction we will need assistance from the townships,” Cooper said. “We will be a lot more aggressive on our local system in 2018. The amount of money coming in will be significant enough to start focusing on local pavement.”

Whether it is the federal-aid

roads or secondary roads, Cooper said the key is having good preventative maintenance. He added that while it is inevitable that road surfaces will deteriorate over time, preventative maintenance like crack sealing can help to prolong a road’s rating in the good or fair category.

That is something Cooper said he plans to continue moving forward with the goal of having all federal-aid roads in either in the “good” or “fair” categories.

“We have done close to 200 miles of crack sealing over the last three years,” he said. “The crack and chip sealings are what brings us up into the fair and good category.”

# Get ready for great opportunities

If you are ready to find the right job/career, now is the time.

I tell people a simple truth, "not every job leads to a career, but every career starts with a job." So how do you know the difference? It is a personal knowing of what you want from a job.



Jim Tisdel

Looking just to make some money? That is a job. Looking to grow in an occupation that you find interesting? That is a career. Cynical about working and what it can do for your life? That is a job. Want to discover what you are capable of accomplishing? That is a career.

Businesses in our region offer both types of positions to those who have a desire to work. Looking for just a job? They are out there. Want more from your work and have it support you in building a career? The positions are out there. Knowing what you want and

For more information on these workshops, call the Michigan Works! office in Petoskey.

All this activity will end in a Career Fair April 13 in the gym at North Central. Businesses will be on campus to speak to those interested in knowing what a career might look like at their company. Attendees to the career fair will have the opportunity to speak to several different companies in many different industries; healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, technology, agriculture and others.

If you want to make some money or find that career, now is the best time as employers are looking to find the right person for their company. Right now, in the last 30 days, there are more than 8,000 jobs available in Northern Michigan as reported by Labor Insights, Burning Glass.

So, what skills do you need to work on to get the perfect position, the one you really want to achieve? The following are the skills employers are looking for. No, they aren't technical skills,

getting yourself ready is your responsibility, nobody else's.

North Central Michigan College along with the Michigan Career Educator and Employer Alliance and Michigan Works! (including the branches serving northwest and northeast Michigan), are working together to bring several events to this area for both the employers and potential employees.

First, on March 9, North Central will hold a business symposium on "Attracting Talent" to Northern Michigan with discussions on apprenticeships and what businesses need to do to attract and understand the new generation of employees.

Following this event, Michigan Works! will hold a job fair for summer employment March 11 in Mackinaw City. This job fair is targeted to people who want to discover what it would be like to work in a specific type of business or industry, as well as the possibility of working on Mackinac Island for the summer. An overall great array of jobs and to learn what it may be like to live, work, and play in Northern Michigan.

Then, Michigan Works! will be hosting workshops for employment readiness through March and April. These workshops will feature how to prepare written materials, that is, your resumé and introduction letter, to gain a job, and how to prepare for an interview by improving your verbal skills.

but the personal skills of a great employee. This is what the businesses in our area are looking for as reported by Labor Insights:

- Communication skills
- Writing
- Problem-solving
- Organizational skills
- Physical demand
- Planning
- Detail-oriented
- Teamwork/collaboration
- Computer skills
- Mathematics
- Building effective relationships
- Research
- Troubleshooting
- Multi-tasking
- Time management
- Creativity

So, prepare yourself and learn what businesses are currently looking for and what kind of employee. Whether you want a job or a career, the opportunities in our area are there for you.

Want more information on the events mentioned above? Call (231) 348-6613 or email [CCE-faq@ncmich.edu](mailto:CCE-faq@ncmich.edu).

Education provides choices. Inform yourself and create a rewarding life.

Send me your comments and questions.

Jim Tisdel is director of Corporate and Community Education at North Central Michigan College. He is involved with several businesses as a member of the board of directors and operates a fly fishing guide service. His columns appear the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month on the Business pages. Tisdel can be reached at [jtisdel@ncmich.edu](mailto:jtisdel@ncmich.edu).

TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE Wednesday, March 1, 2017

# Great careers in technical fields available

BY TERRY VANDERCOOK

The landscape of Career Technical Education looks different now than it did 10 or even 5 years ago.

In addition to preparing students for those careers thought of as “traditional” skilled trades — construction, mechanical and tool and die — CTE now includes programs focused on health sciences, business administration, information technology and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). With more than 107,000 CTE students — nearly equal numbers of males and females — Michigan’s CTE programs are preparing youth and adults for a wide range of high-paying, high-skill and high-demand careers.

Skilled technical jobs employ more than 200,000 people across Michigan. As a true “maker” state, the demand for a highly skilled workforce has been, and will continue to be, a driving force in our economy. This demand places Michigan eighth on

the nation’s list of skilled trades workforce states. Michigan has responded to this unwavering and often growing demand with innovative education and workforce development opportunities.

High school students across our region benefit from the foundation of award-winning CTE programs offered through our local intermediate school districts. These programs are not only the conveyor of the technical education — they also provide students with career pathway and educational exploration opportunities. Students in CTE programs also benefit from job placement services, early college programs and career preparation assistance. Students often have job offers before graduating from employers that recognize the value of this full life cycle of CTE programming and education.

With a statewide graduation rate of 96.6 percent, many CTE students are interested in continuing

their education at the post-secondary level. On average, 41 percent of these students continue on to a 2-year college program and 52 percent enter four-year universities. Many of these students pursue their advanced education while deploying the skills they already have obtained. That allows them to gain valuable workplace experience and enhance career advancement opportunities.

CTE providers work closely with Northwest Michigan Works and have become an invaluable component in meeting the supply side of the skilled trades workforce equation. The demand comes from the employers. The demand is real and growing.

On any given day, the State of Michigan’s official labor exchange website, [www.mitalent.org](http://www.mitalent.org), has 15,000 or more skilled trades job postings. Our CTE providers, at both the high school and post-secondary level,

are forever innovative and responsive, offering CTE that is in regional and statewide demand. As the lead workforce development agency for our region, Northwest Michigan Works effectively serves both employer and job seeker.

By providing interest and skills assessments Northwest Michigan Works can assist job seekers by identifying employment areas of interest and assessing each individual’s aptitude and skill level.

The assessments then can be used to develop customized education and training opportunities necessary to prepare the job seeker for his or her desired career choice. The Northwest Michigan Works Business Services Team assists employers in meeting their needs for skilled talent. Services offered include identifying and screening potential candidates, resumé searches, collecting job applications, individualized employer hiring

events and coordinating training opportunities for eligible employees and new hires.

Michigan has, as a state, responded to the demand side of the equation.

Governor Snyder’s Skilled Trades Training Fund provides competitive awards for employer-responsive training that enhances the talent, productivity and skill level of employees in skilled trade positions. In 2016, the fund made 388 employer awards that totaled more than \$13 million for employee training.

Additionally, the Michigan Advanced Technician Training Program is an industry-driven approach to career technical education.

The program was developed to combine theory, practice and work to train a globally competitive workforce in machining and mechatronics. Similar apprenticeship approaches are being developed in many other technical fields

throughout healthcare, construction, information technology and others, where students alternate between classroom instruction and on-the-job training, gaining hands-on skills and real-world experiences.

It’s important for parents and students to know that many fulfilling careers exist in technical fields that do not require a traditional college pathway, and in most cases cost far less. These technical occupations pay well and are in high demand.

The time to start considering these options is early — preferably in middle school or early high school at the latest. Visits to the local TBA Career Tech Center and Northwestern Michigan College’s programs at its Aeropark Campus are great starting points to raise awareness about these great career opportunities.

**Terry Vandercook is director of operations at Northwest Michigan Works.**

# 'It's an employee's market now'

Companies are struggling to hire, leaving employees with big bargaining chips

BY NICK GREEN  
CADILLAC NEWS

**A**lmost 10 years after the Great Recession started wreaking havoc on U.S. families, Americans are now finding themselves in an employee's world.

Between 2007 and 2010, employers' inability to find workers to fill jobs dropped by 27 percent — from 41 percent to 14 percent — according to a Manpower U.S. talent shortage survey. Prospective employees were lining up outside hiring agencies and businesses to claw themselves out of financial hardship.

In 2010, U.S. employers reached a 10-year high of struggling to find employees, with over half not being able to fill positions. That number slowly crept down to 32 percent in 2015. However, in 2016, that number jumped back up to 46 percent and is expected to rise in 2017, according to Ginger Mattos, a regional manager for Manpower.

"It's an employee's market now, not an employer's," Mattos said at a Cadillac Area Manufacturers Association meeting in February. "Employees



CADILLAC NEWS FILE PHOTO

There is no better time to be a prospective employee than right now. Employers are struggling to fill positions, and as a result, have had to start changing business and hiring practices, giving those looking for work the ability to shop around.

are now able to shop for what jobs are going to fit their lifestyle."

In 2008, employees were taking whatever was available and were adapting, Mattos said.

"Now, prospective em-

ployees are looking for opportunities to grow with a company, the ability to up-skill and higher salary packages," Mattos said. "Also, they want paid time off for situations that arise in life."

The hardest jobs to fill, according to the survey, are skilled trades, and this has been the case for seven years running.

The survey cites talent shortage within the applicant pool as a reason

almost 25 percent of employers can't fill positions. Almost 20 percent cited lack of experience and 16 percent said applicants lacked technical competencies.

STORY CONTINUE ON PAGE A2

## EMPLOYEE'S MARKET

FROM PAGE A1

Employers have also started to relax their hiring standards, Mattos said.

"We are seeing requirements of a GED, diploma or clean background go out the window in some cases," Mattos said. "If employees have the hard skills a company needs, the employers are sometimes willing to change their policy to fill positions."

Nationally, employers have become creative with strategies to up employment numbers. Almost half have started to offer training and development to existing staff; while another 44 percent are recruiting outside of the talent pool. About 20 percent said they are also offering higher salary packages to recruits.

Absenteeism is a battle local industries also face, said industry representatives at the CAMA meet-

ing. Manpower conducted a local survey that found the No. 1 reason its clients missed work was because they felt they were not being treated properly. The No. 2 reason was that employees felt that they were set up for failure.

"These clients may be calling in sick or citing other reasons for missing work, but we find the ultimate reason to be the environment," Mattos said.

Although employers prefer hiring people with the hard skills they need, like welding or machining, they are starting to hire and train people with a good set of soft skills, like timeliness, work ethic, competence, etc., Mattos said.

"It goes a long way if an employee can show some initiative and willingness to learn new tasks," Mattos

said. "The applicant pool just isn't as talented right now, but if employers can get someone with soft skills then they can mold them into the hard skills needed."

Mattos said Manpower has jobs available everyday. Her company's biggest struggle is placing people in the jobs they qualify for.

rgreen@cadillacnews.com | 775-NEWS (6397)

# CTC graduates are finding jobs or continuing education with almost 100 percent success

BY NICK GREEN  
CADILLAC NEWS

CADILLAC — Almost 100 percent of Cadillac's Career Technical Center graduates are finding employment or continuing their education.

February was Career and Technical Education month, and this year, the Michigan Department of Education's focus is on opportunities and achievements provided to CTE students.

Statewide, 96.6 percent of students are graduating in their respective CTE programs, surpassing, for the third straight year, the federal benchmark of 95 percent.

Locally, the CTC had 169 students that graduated and com-

pleted their CTE program in 2015. About 55 percent of those students are employed, just less than 45 percent are continuing their education.

Of the 93 employed, their average hourly rate for working in a field related to their CTC program is \$10.55 per hour, while those who are not working in their CTC field are averaging \$8.67 hourly.

CTC Superintendent Dave Cox said placement numbers provide the administration with accountability.

"It justifies our programs as far as what we are offering and what we are doing to address business and industry needs," Cox said.

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE A1



COURTESY PHOTO

Career Technical Center students display the variety of fields they receive hands-on training in to prepare them for life after high school.

## CTC GRADUATES

FROM PAGE A1

"These graduates are entering high-demand, high-paying jobs or moving on to post-secondary education."

State Superintendent Brian Whiston said the ultimate goal is to get Michigan into the top 10 states for education.

"These are excellent results that demonstrate the impact and importance of CTE programs," Whiston said. "CTE offers educational strategies that meet the needs of students and employers and gets us closer to the goal of being a top 10 education state in 10 years."

Director of the Office of Career and Technical Education Patty Cantú said

CTC programs are the perfect opportunity to get hands-on training in a wide variety of fields.

"CTE allows students to see the relevance of core academic skills within the workplace," Cantú said. "CTE students also learn valuable critical thinking, employability and job-related technical skills."

Wexford-Missaukee ISD offers 14 programs at the CTC and includes seven public schools and two parochial schools. Students have the opportunity to learn skills for high-wage jobs or to further enter post-secondary education.

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# Career and Technical Education for a strong economy

The following is a guest commentary submitted by Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District Superintendent Jeff Crouse.

**W**e have all seen them – Help Wanted! Hiring Now! Machinists Needed!

Apply Here for Medical Jobs! So what are our schools doing to address the needs of our regional high-growth industries? The answer is: Plenty!

Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District (Char-Em ISD) and our 11 public school districts are focusing their Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs on equipping students with technical and life skills to help them become productive citizens.

Regionally, a large portion of our manufacturers report that talent shortages are affecting their ability to meet customer demand. CTE plays a vital role in helping these businesses close the skills gap by building a competitive workforce for the 21st century. Now more than ever, CTE programs help ensure the strength of our workforce, global competitiveness, and the economic health of our northern Michigan region.

Here are a few facts about CTE and our students:

— The more students participate in CTE, the higher their academic motivation, academic engagement, grades, career self-efficacy, college aspirations, and employability skills. Within Char-Em ISD, 82% of CTE students enroll in post-secondary education.

— CTE students are significantly more likely than their non-CTE counterparts to develop skill sets in problem-solving, project completion,



Crouse

research, math, college application, work-related, communication, time management, and critical-thinking.

— Work-based learning helps students apply and extend classroom learning, explore careers and develop critical understanding of the work environment.

— Participation in CTE increases wages and earnings, raises consistency of employment and leads to work in higher-quality jobs.

— Through the generosity of our local voters in Charlevoix, Emmet and northern Antrim counties, a multi-county millage (in effect since 1996), allows the ISD to help fund some 40 locally-operated CTE programs, and helps schools with their technology infrastructure including servers, network resources, internet connectivity, K-12 College and Career Readiness activities, and guidance counseling programs.

CTE has always evolved in response to economic needs in our communities. Moreover, exploring a career can never start too early.

At the elementary level, it is all about awareness with students visiting their hometown businesses and industries, hearing from business leader guest speakers, and attending the popular summer College for Kids. As students enter middle school, they focus on exploration to learn what careers may interest them, and as important, what careers do not interest them. Students are exposed to science, tech-

nology and math or STEM careers, attend career days, and visit businesses and college campuses for their first

taste of career fields or post-secondary study opportunities. Once in high school, preparation is the key theme. Student visit post-secondary institutions – universities, community colleges, and trade schools – and attend career and job fairs to hear firsthand from people working in their fields of interest.

Over the past few years, the ISD and local districts are helping our communities bridge the employment gap by:

— Starting a Machine Tool Technology CTE program at Charlevoix high school;

— Adding Welding, Brazing, and Soldering CTE programs at Pellston and East Jordan high schools;

— Expanding the number of Health Occupations CTE classes in the region in response to health providers need for qualified employees as our area continues to see an increase in our aging population;

— Starting an innovative CTE program in Aviation Science and Technology involving students from Alanson, Harbor Springs and Pellston high schools, in cooperation with Emmet County, Pellston Regional Airport, and Northwestern Michigan College.

As we look to the future of CTE in Char-Em ISD, we will continue to focus on working with area businesses and manufacturers to provide them with high-skilled employees to meet demanding careers. To put it quite simply, CTE has never looked brighter for students – and employers – in our region.

## NCMC offers CNC information sessions

North Central Michigan College is offering several CNC (Computer Numerical Controls) information sessions starting in March. These sessions will be in the Technology Building, Room 230 on the Petoskey campus unless otherwise noted.

Industry jobs offer exciting, fast-paced careers with room for advancement. Today, careers in manufacturing require creativity, precision, logistics and

problem-solving. North Central and its industry partners have developed the courses you need in CNC (Computer Numerical Controls) programming, CAM (Computer Aided Manufacturing) software and CAD (Computer Aided Design). With these skills as your foundation, you can learn to make anything and go anywhere.

The sessions will be on:

- Thursday, March 23,  
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

- Monday, April 3, 2 p.m. –  
3 p.m. Straits Area Educa-  
tion Center in Cheboygan

- Tuesday, April 11, 10  
a.m. – 11 a.m.

- Wednesday, May 17, 6  
p.m. – 7 p.m.

Reservations are appreci-  
ated but not required. Call  
231-439-6265 or email  
[aross@ncmich.edu](mailto:aross@ncmich.edu).

North Central, in part-  
nership with Northwest  
Michigan Works, will be of-  
fering another Just in Time  
Training introduction to

CNC operations from  
March 13 – 24 on the  
Petoskey campus. This  
class is hands-on, short-  
term and will prepare stu-  
dents for a career in the  
high-demand occupation of  
CNC Machining. Classes  
are Mondays, Tuesdays,  
Wednesdays and Fridays  
from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Pre-  
register at Northwest  
Michigan Works! Center at  
2240 Mitchell Park Drive, or  
call 231-347-5150.



# 30-40 well-paying jobs likely to land in Cadillac soon

## Michigan Rubber's expansion announced last August was finalized with a Missouri plant closure

BY NICK GREEN  
CADILLAC NEWS

**CADILLAC** — Michigan Rubber's expansion announced last August has finally culminated with 45 added jobs since November and another 30 to 40 expected by the year's end.

Buckhorn Rubber, a subsidiary of Anhui Zhongding Sealing Parts Co., Ltd., was chosen for closure as a part of

Michigan Rubber's, also a Zhongding subsidiary, expansion.

The Hannibal, Missouri plant officially announced the closing of its doors Feb. 21.

"I don't think there was enormous surprise," said Todd Kendall, manager of Buckhorn Rubber. "We've been moving some business to that facility in (Cadillac) Michigan for a while now, so I don't think

there was a huge shock."

Kendall said the move is an effort to consolidate its operations.

When asked why the Cadillac plant won out over the Hannibal plant, Kendall responded:

"I don't know all of the details in that. The Cadillac facility is closer to our corporate headquarters and the other Zhongding facilities."

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE A2



CADILLAC NEWS FILE PHOTO

Michigan Rubber's expansion was finalized Feb. 21 when another company owned by Anhui Zhongding Sealing Parts Co. announced its official closure in response to the corporate office deciding that Cadillac would be better suited for expansion.

### MICHIGAN RUBBER EXPANSION

FROM PAGE A1

"The markets that they serve are more in line with the company's target customers and strategic customers more so than this facility."

As of now, the plans are to end manufacturing at the Missouri plant by the end of 2017, possibly around December,

Kendall said.

Michigan Rubber General Manager Butch Bruce said Kendall will be joining the Cadillac team as a technical director. Five or six other employees of the Missouri plant are expected to visit the area and see if they are interested in making the move.

The Cadillac plant has been

ramping up its production since November, Bruce said.

"The process is still kind of fluid," Bruce said. "We are still working out the logistics of what jobs will be moved, what equipment will be moved and so on. Some of the equipment just doesn't make sense monetarily to move — we will be putting a production stop on some of those products."

As a result of the expansion,

Michigan Rubber has been awarded a \$600,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant.

"Zhongding USA's expansion in Michigan rather than another state means well-paying jobs for Michigan residents and underscores the strength of the talent in the state's automotive sector," said Steve Arwood, CEO of the Michigan

Economic Development Corporation. "This decision by Zhongding to invest here offers further evidence of Michigan's leadership in the automotive industry and our commitment to helping companies grow and generate new jobs for our residents."

Total, the expansion could mean 85 new jobs in the area since last November.

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SOCIAL ISSUES

# Connecting policy with people



Record-Eagle/Tessa Lightly  
Sarah Lucas, community development director at Networks Northwest, works in her office.

*Networks Northwest launches health, safety, welfare guide for officials*

BY DANIELLE WOODWARD  
dwoodward@record-eagle.com

TRAVERSE CITY — Tina Allen has noticed that social issues like homelessness, poverty and addiction seem to suffer a disconnect from local policy.

Allen, a coordinator of North-

west Michigan Continuum of Care and former planning commissioner, sees the relationship from both sides. Local officials don't see how their decisions affect homelessness, and social service workers don't realize that they can educate local government to impact those decisions, she said.

"You have to tell people very specifically what you want from them," Allen said.

But a checklist that spells it out for all involved is one possible solution.

Allen is among several non-profit and local officials that joined Networks Northwest in creating a Health, Safety and Welfare guide that aligns local policies with the social issues they impact.

"The purpose of local governments by the law is to protect public health, safety and welfare," said Networks Northwest Community Development Director Sarah Lucas. "They do have a responsibility to engage in these questions."

**SEE POLICY PAGE 2A**

## POLICY

FROM PAGE 1A

Addiction, homelessness and poverty all fall into that category, she said, but their relationship to local policy isn't always obvious.

"The links between public policy and social issues aren't always clear," Lucas said. "One of the biggest barriers is just understanding what those links are."

For example, local governments can press developers and nonprofits to create more low-income housing for homeless populations but zoning laws may also need review — as restrictions on addiction treatment centers can force people to go without treatment or jeopardize their recovery progress, Lucas said.

"We know there's a huge shortage of affordable housing in northern Michigan, but we don't



Record-Eagle/  
Tessa Lightly

**Lucas is one of several nonprofit and local officials working on a health, safety and welfare guide for Networks Northwest communities.**

hear about the vulnerable families who've gone through addiction and are forced into risky situations because they can't find affordable housing."

The guide works both ways — it gives local officials a checklist of what they can do to improve policy and best practices for social service agencies working to change them, Lucas said.

Networks Northwest is slated to release it in June as the latest chapter of Framework for Our Future, its regional prosperity plan for northwest Michigan. Lucas is optimistic about its potential to change public policy after a similar chapter in the plan on housing saw success, she said.

The trick will be getting the guide into the hands

that need them, she said.

An estimated 1,800 local officials in Networks Northwest's 10-county region, combined with the job's high turnover rate, makes tracking changes difficult, she said.

"We have to continually stay in front of these issues to make sure they know what's available and what resources they can access," Lucas said.



Courtesy photo

MR Products in Copemish received a Michigan Works! Association Impact Award for its leadership in providing local employment and training opportunities. Pictured (from left to right) are Dennis Stacey, vice president, MR Products; state Sen. Darwin Booher; Carol Mathias, human resources manager, MR Products; Kathy Taylor, operations manager, Northwest Michigan Works!; Maree Mulvoy, president, MR Products; Ron Heffelfinger, business liaison, Northwest Michigan Works!; state Rep. Curt VanderWall; Terry Vandercook, director of operations, Northwest Michigan Works!; Elaine Wood, CEO, Networks Northwest; and state Sen. Wayne Schmidt.

## Local businesses receive statewide recognition

### FROM STAFF REPORTS

TRAVERSE CITY — MR Products in Copemish and Sleeping Bear Apiaries in Beulah have received Michigan Works!

Association Impact Awards for their leadership in providing local employment and training opportunities.

Networks Northwest and Northwest Michigan Works! nominated the businesses for the awards after each of them used a variety of programs offered through Michigan Works! to hire and train employees.

MR Products is a family-owned manufacturer of plastic chain. Michigan Works! assisted the company with Skilled Trades Training Fund applications, employee wellness development projects, and On-the-Job Training contracts. The training included employee Carol Mathias, who was also recognized at the Impact Awards event.

"Since 2009, we have more than doubled the



Courtesy photo

Sleeping Bear Apiaries in Beulah received a Michigan Works! Association Impact Award for its leadership in providing local employment and training opportunities. Pictured (from left to right) are state Sen. Darwin Booher; Kathy Taylor, operations manager, Northwest Michigan Works!; Susan Kile, CFO, Sleeping Bear Apiaries; Ron Heffelfinger, business liaison, Northwest Michigan Works!; state Rep. Curt VanderWall; Terry Vandercook, director of operations, Northwest Michigan Works!; Elaine Wood, CEO, Networks Northwest; state Sen. Wayne Schmidt.

number of employees here in Copemish, and we consider Michigan Works! to be an invaluable partner contributing to our future growth," said MR Products President Maree Mulvoy.

Sleeping Bear Apiaries is the parent company of St. Ambrose Cellars and Sleeping Bear Farms. Michigan Works! helped the company develop a Winemaker Apprentice program.

The company also re-

ceived a Skilled Trades Training Fund grant, and training assistance for employees including Susan Kile, who was recognized along with the company.

"The support has provided the increased workforce and skill set needed to meet the demand of our continued growth," said Sleeping Bear owner, Kirk Jones. "We are forever grateful for all of the support we have received from Northwest

Michigan Works!."

The awards were presented during a special recognition event on Feb. 22 in Lansing which was attended by several of the region's state legislators.

"From my perspective, these are the best kinds of economic development stories," said Michigan Sen. Darwin Booher (R-Evart). "I am sincerely proud to honor the achievements of all these individuals."

# Council to hear presentation on housing needs

RYAN BENTLEY

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PETOSKEY — A presentation on workforce housing concerns in the area will be part of the Petoskey City Council's agenda for today, Monday, March 6.

A regular council meeting begins at 7 p.m. today at city hall, 101 E. Lake St.

Sarah Lucas of Networks Northwest will make the housing presentation during the meeting. Formerly known as the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, Networks Northwest handles programs and services in workforce development, business and economic development and community development for a 10-county area.

The Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce is one local organization that sees a lack of workforce housing as a major impediment for businesses'

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See HOUSING on PAGE A6

## HOUSING FROM A1

recruitment of qualified and talented workers. In particular, business owners have noted a need for "missing middle" housing — which broadly would include homes for sale in the \$150,000 range or rentals priced at \$800-1,000 per month.

Plans call for Lucas' presentation to include details on approaches other communities have taken with workforce housing issues.

Also on Monday, the council will give further consid-

eration to High Five Spirits' request for a small distillery license, which would allow the business to re-distill bulk spirits into vodka at 330 W. Mitchell St.

The Michigan Liquor Control Commission seeks local government input as part of the licensing process. At its Feb. 20 meeting, the council postponed taking a stance on the request to allow for input by churches and a preschool near High Five's proposed site, as well as from others in the community.

# Petoskey looks to increase "workforce

by Connor Hansen | Monday, March 6th 2017

Video Link <http://upnorthlive.com/news/local/discussion-over-workforce-housing-at-petoskey-city-hall>

EMMET COUNTY, Mi (WPBN/WGTU) -- It's a problem all over northern Michigan, and Monday night the city of Petoskey will hear from Networks Northwest about the lack of housing in the area.

They are going to talk about what they call "workforce housing."

It's not necessarily low-income housing, but affordable for average middle class workers in the community.

"Trying to find housing units for people who are doing the working and living and playing in our communities and there's a profound shortage," said Carlin Smith, the president of the Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce.

That shortage makes it hard for local businesses to bring in workers.

"It is a business recruitment issue," Smith said. "We're having trouble getting people to come to our area. Maybe the job is there, but they can't find the housing to match it. We've had that problem crop up more than once in the last year or two and it's something we need to address."

According to a market study done by Networks Northwest, there is a high demand for housing in the Petoskey area.

According to the study, in 2015 there was demand for up to 445 multi-family homes to own and up to 303 rental units.

McLaren Northern Michigan is one of the biggest employers in the area with about 2,000 employees in northern Michigan, about 1,700 on the Petoskey campus.

"For us, in terms of moving prospective candidates and candidates to our region, it's a challenge," said Gene Kaminski, the vice president of human resources at McLaren Northern Michigan. "They end up having to move farther and farther outside our city boundaries in terms of trying to find housing which then creates other challenges."

Kaminski thinks to solve the problem, local leaders will have to get on board.

"We're going to have to really, strategically integrate our county leaders, our city leaders, our business leaders, take a look at where property might exist that could be developed into that kind of a housing market availability," Kaminski said. "Then, working with developers, working with the politicians relative to if there can be any type of tax abatement opportunities to make it much more affordable, not only for the developer, but then the contractors that come in."

Sarah Lucas from Networks Northwest will be talking about some action local government in Petoskey can take to help solve the housing problem.

## **'Know Your Numbers' workshop planned**

PETOSKEY — Business owners can learn how to improve their fiscal fitness at a financial tools workshop 9 a.m.-noon Thursday, March 23, at the North Central Michigan College Student and Community Resource Center in Petoskey.

“Know Your Numbers: Using Your Financial Statements to Better Manage Your Business,” is designed for small business owners and key staff who want to have a better understanding of how to use their financial statements to manage their business.

The workshop is being offered by Northwest Michigan Small Business Development Center, in partnership with North Central Michigan College, Venture North, Baker College and Fifth Third Bank. Small Business Development Center growth specialist Mike Gay will serve as facilitator.

The workshop will cost \$25 per participant and will include a workbook and refreshments. Advance registration is required, and can be completed at [sbdcmichigan.org/training](http://sbdcmichigan.org/training). Fifth Third customers and veterans can contact the Small Business Development Center at [sbdc@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:sbdc@networksnorthwest.org) or 231-922-3780 to register for the workshop at no cost.

## College to host 'attracting talent' symposium

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**PETOSKEY** — A symposium focused on attracting talented entry level employees will be available 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, March 9, at North Central Michigan College.

The symposium is sponsored through the college's Corporate and Community Education program and will feature Terry Vandercook, director of operations

at Northwest Michigan Works!, speaking about how apprenticeships can be used to attract preferred candidates. Gretchen Carroll, associate dean of business and technology at North Central Michigan College, will also speak on what businesses should consider to attract new talent, and understand new job seekers.

An open discussion around these topics will follow to help lead attendees to solutions.

Lunch will be pro-

vided at the event. To apply, contact the college's Corporate and Community Education at (231) 348-6613 or email [ccefaq@ncmich.edu](mailto:ccefaq@ncmich.edu) to reserve a seat at the symposium.

H O N O R S

# Two businesses in the area earn Impact awards

## *MR Products, Sleeping Bear Apiaries honored*

BY MARK URBAN  
[murban@record-eagle.com](mailto:murban@record-eagle.com)

TRAVERSE CITY — Two area companies have received Michigan Works! Impact Awards for leadership in providing employment and training opportunities.

MR Products of Copemish and Sleeping Bear Apiaries of Beulah were presented with their awards at a special recognition event in Lansing.

Networks Northwest and

Northwest Michigan Works! nominated the businesses after each of them used a variety of Michigan Works! programs to hire and train employees.

MR Products is a family-owned manufacturer of plastic chain. MR used Michigan Works! assistance for skilled trades training fund applications, employee wellness development projects and on-the-job training contracts.

"I feel like we are the ones that benefit and they keep giving us awards," MR products president Maree Mulvoy said.

The on-the-job training grants at MR Products were used for human resources manager Carol Mathias and salesman

Duane Rybicki.

Both were hired last year after working for other area companies. Mathias came over when Antolin in Benzonia closed while Rybicki came to MR Products after working for Cadillac Rubber for more than 20 years.

Mulvoy said MR Products added six other former Antolin employees thanks to the connection with Mathias.

"I was thrilled because we needed people badly last summer," Mulvoy said. "That was really helpful."

Mulvoy said seven employees are attending classes at Northwestern Michigan College for lean manufacturing and are

eligible for tuition reimbursement.

The employee wellness development at MR Products was a grant that went toward construction of an on-site outside pavilion and barbecue pit. Mulvoy said the pavilion also has a cornhole court, horseshoe pit and will feature a basketball court "when the snow melts."

Sleeping Bear Apiaries is the parent company of Sleeping Bear Farms and St. Ambrose Cellars. Michigan Works! helped the company develop a winemaker apprentice program in addition to utilizing a Skilled Trades Training Fund grant and training assistance for employees.



### Nonprofit News

The **Grand Traverse Area Literacy Council** is moving under the umbrella of Northwest Michigan Works! in order to expand its “reach to more people in the community wishing to improve their literacy skills.” The Literacy Council will be run in partnership with the Adult Education Learning Labs as a Northwest Michigan Works! program. The Literacy Council office will be open limited hours every week at the Traverse City Michigan Works! Center at 1209 South Garfield Avenue (appointments available at [231-922-6940](tel:231-922-6940)). A tutor training session – including updates on the new Literacy Council changes – is scheduled for this Saturday, March 11 from 10am to 3pm.

## Skills gap tricky for area employers

Team effort needed to bridge workforce skills shortfalls, observers say

PETOSKEY — Even when thousands are out of work in northwest Michigan, a simple “help wanted” ad often isn’t enough to resolve employers’ personnel needs. Business operators, along with some working at the region’s career and economic development agencies and educational institutions, point to a “skills gap” with implications for several of the area’s industries — such as construction, manufacturing and health care.

As part of this, employers sometimes find available applicants lacking specialized abilities required in a posted job. In some cases, they may also see candidates falling short on “soft skills,” basic traits such as punctuality and communications, which are sought in a wide range of work environments.

At one point in early 2015, online postings showed 2,364 jobs going unfilled in a 10-county region of northwest Michigan — at a time when 9,027 people in the region were unemployed.

Observers see numerous factors aggravating the situation. With four-year college degrees widely touted as pathways to fulfilling careers, some believe other relevant educational or vocational training paths may be overlooked. Some observers see northwest Michigan’s

population trends — with growth concentrated among retirement-age adults — adding to the challenges for businesses’ staffing needs. And for younger people trying to get established in careers, some point to the tight supply of budget friendly housing in the region and pay scales that may not be as appealing as those elsewhere.

At the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, a regional economic development agency serving four counties, president Andy Hayes sees the multifaceted skills gap issue as something that will take a team effort to address. “It can’t be solved by a local government (alone), or just one company or just the human resources people,” he said.

### Lack of candidates

The building industry is one sector that has faced a tight supply of skilled job candidates locally in recent years. While her Berry Nice Kitchens business is a solo operation, licensed builder Robin Hissong Berry has seen her subcontractors grappling with the challenges. She also has gained perspective on these through her involvement in the Home Builders Association of Northern Michigan, where she’s a builder licensing instructor and former board member. The late-2000s recession — accompanied by a sharp slowdown in local construction activity — drove many skilled workers in construction and related fields to seek opportunities in other parts of the country, Berry noted. While the demand for construction and remodeling services has since been on the rebound, she added that some contractors have found it difficult to rebuild their staffing levels accordingly. In some cases, companies that operated with crews of 16-20 before the recession now are working with four or five, Berry noted. “They’re all saying they can’t find young people willing to work,” she said.

Eric Leister, executive officer with the local Home Builders Association, noted concern in the local construction trades about drawing in younger workers. When the association hosted one recent cohort for a builder’s license renewal course, he noted that there were no participants younger than 40.

Manufacturing is another sector facing challenges lining up workers with in-demand skills.

“We see a shortage in skilled tradespeople for the next decade, or perhaps two decades,” said Tom Moran, founder and chief executive officer of Onaway-based Moran Iron Works, a steel fabricating company. While manufacturing has its own need for personnel with bachelor’s degrees — in engineering and project management positions, for example — Moran sees decreased emphasis on skilled trades as career paths in the 1990s and 2000s challenging the field, and his company is branching into education itself to help address the gap.



RYAN BENTLEY/NEWS-REVIEW James Thompson of New Buffalo practices welding technique at the Industrial Arts Institute, a skilled trades school in Onaway. Moran Iron Works launched the for-profit school to help fill industry needs for skilled welders, and now hosts education for several construction-related trades as well.

Population patterns factor in

Jim Tisdell, who keeps tabs on local workplace talent needs as North Central Michigan College's Director of Corporate and Community Education, sees the region's population projections presenting additional challenges for filling in-demand jobs. Tisdell has cited numbers from the University of Michigan's Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations to help illustrate these. While the 10-county northwest region is expected to see 8 percent population growth overall during the 2015-2025 period, the working adult age group (18-55) is projected to grow by just 2 percent — with the 18-34 cohort that traditionally fills entry-level positions actually expected to shrink by 10 percent. Meanwhile, the often-retired 65-84 age group is expected to show some of the strongest growth in the northwest region, with numbers expected to increase by 37 percent. With demand for health care services tending to be high among older adults, some observers see potential challenges for that industry in meeting staffing needs.

"We see our young adults leaving the area for employment within the urban cities," said Gene Kaminski, vice president of human resources at McLaren Northern Michigan hospital in Petoskey. "We do see that once they get married, they are interested in returning to the area to raise a family within our region."

Harold (Buck) Love, business services coordinator with the regional Northwest Michigan Works! workforce services agency, sees the population trend having implications for other industries as well.

"Those kinds of shifts have led to employers having a much shallower pool in which to cast their nets," he said.

Getting them trained

Tisdell, who writes a regular column on workforce and career trends and opportunities for the News-Review, frequently points out the value of postsecondary education and training for career success — but also notes that it can take forms other than a four-year degree.

While continuing to offer certificate and associate degree programs with relevance for local sectors such as manufacturing and health care, Tisdell noted that North Central keeps tabs on emerging industries and is developing coursework in other potential growth areas such as winemaking, craft beverage production and other forms of value-added agriculture.

Jim Rummer, director of career and technical education with Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District, sees roles for K-12 educators to play in addressing the skills gap, as well. For example, he said the intermediate school district has arranged tours of area businesses to get local school counselors acquainted with workforce needs, and monitors local business trends to see that its dozens of vocational education programs — offered at many local high schools with funding support from a voter-approved millage — remain relevant.

"We certainly are always looking at the job market," Rummer said. "We don't want to create interest from kids when there's no light at the end of the tunnel."

An aviation program — arranged in partnership with the Pellston, Alanson and Harbor Springs school district — is one of the most recent additions to the area's voc-ed lineup. With demand on a strong path for pilots and aviation mechanics, Rummer said this program is designed to help start interested students down a path toward such positions.

Rummer sees increased outreach to parents as a next step when it comes to some career opportunities.

Manufacturing is one field where traditional perceptions might not mesh with opportunities currently available, Rummer said. Rather than the "dirty old sweatshop" stereotype sometimes associated with factories, modern manufacturing sites often have cleaner surroundings and a greater emphasis on technology-related skills than in the past, such as using the computer numeric control (CNC) type of automation that now drives many production machines.

In recent years, North Central teamed up with private- and public-sector partners to develop a mobile lab which can help impart CNC skills. Known as the "Fab Lab" for short, it's intended in part to bring the training to vocational programs at area high schools and to employers seeking to enhance their workers' skills. North Central and Baker College also have permanent local labs devoted to manufacturing technology.

Moran, whose steel fabricating business has locations in Onaway, Cheboygan and Rogers City, said the company has long taken it upon itself to equip workers with relevant skills. About 50 of the company's 100 jobs require the ability to weld, and Moran said doing business in a somewhat isolated corner of Northern Michigan has long required something of a home-grown approach.

In recent years, though, Moran's company has recognized a need for skilled trades training beyond its own ranks, and set up a division designed to respond to it. Along with basic and ornamental welding classes, the Industrial Arts Institute offers a more comprehensive industrial welding program with a 16-week "fast-track" schedule.

"It's a boot camp," Moran said, noting that students spend eight hours a day, five days a week on the program.

Since 2014, some 107 students have gone through the program in eight cohorts. Tammi Ward, operations manager for the school, noted a completion rate of 97 percent and a job-placement rate of about 87 percent — with average starting pay in the \$14-\$17 range. Participants so far have ranged in age from their late teens to late 40s.

"It's for a person who is looking to better themselves in a new career," she said. The program, with students spending about 80 percent of their time getting practical experience and 20 percent on classroom learning, covers skills such as blueprint reading and industrial fabrication — and also sets work-ethic expectations such as being on time. Staff note that the welding skills can be relevant for a variety of career paths, from construction to manufacturing to shipbuilding to auto body repair, and a new option allows welding studies at the Onaway school — housed in the former Brewbaker's/Art Van furniture store — to be combined with academic work at North Central Michigan College toward an associate degree.

"Our goal here, our mission here is to create a noble workforce," Industrial Arts Institute Executive Director Mark Dombrowski said. "We're hoping we create a skill set for teamwork and work ethic, and what it takes to have a successful career."

Industrial Arts Institute recently expanded its focus to include construction trades, and now houses a Northern Michigan campus for the Greater Michigan Construction Academy with programs including carpentry, plumbing, electrical and heating/ventilation/air conditioning.

Even with multiple programs in the region to equip students for construction-related jobs — at the trade school as well as in community colleges and high-school-level vocational programs — local builder Robin Hissong Berry sees more awareness needing to be built when it comes to opportunities in the field.

"We've got to convince parents and educators that there's all these occupations that (pay well)," she said. Even if jobs in the field sometimes involve "getting dirty," Berry believes the sense of fulfillment that accompanies a finished hands-on project is something that can help sell students on the building trades. "What other experience in school gives them that kind of pride and self-respect?" she asked.

Beyond skill sets

Aside from getting employers' needs to mesh with workers' skills and interests, workforce observers see other considerations for local communities in resolving the skills gap.

Housing is one.

Networks Northwest, a regional agency operating Michigan Works! program as well as business and economic development and community development initiatives, noted that the 10-county area's median rent stood at \$727 monthly as of 2014. While that rate would be considered manageable for a renter with a \$29,080 yearly income, the agency noted that the region's median income for renters fell a bit short at \$26,793. Some businesses have also pointed to a short supply of lower- to middle-priced homes available for purchase. With competition stiff for health care workers in many locales — and a limited share of them interested in moving to the "Up North" setting — McLaren Northern Michigan's Kaminski noted that the tight housing supply poses challenges for filling health system jobs even when willing candidates are available.

"When we do find candidates, they are faced with the lack of workforce housing opportunities, thus creating another challenge for all businesses within this region," he said. Resolving the housing challenges may involve working past the "not-in-my-backyard" mentality that often meets housing developments geared toward working people's budgets, Love noted.

"It will take a very concerted effort from those in the local governments, downtown development authorities, (chambers of commerce), economic development," he said.

At the same time, builders might need some type of incentive to refocus their efforts from pricier resort and second homes to this sort of project, Love added. Child care availability can present additional challenges for workers trying to get established in the region, Love said — noting that the range of providers shrinks considerably for parents working outside the traditional daytime shift. Even if outdoor recreation opportunities and other local quality-of-life advantages sometimes offset them, North Central's Tisdell noted that pay rates lower than those in Michigan's more metropolitan areas persist in turning younger workers off from some local job types.

"Until industry up here begins to realize that wages and compensation packages up here are not competitive, you're going to see that (young-adult) age group leave," he said.

[http://m.petoskeynews.com/featured-pnr/a-tricky-gap-to-fill/article\\_848af558-813f-5447-9c46-d69857002fe8.html](http://m.petoskeynews.com/featured-pnr/a-tricky-gap-to-fill/article_848af558-813f-5447-9c46-d69857002fe8.html)

# CTC students take part in Legislative Day



Students in the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates program at two Northern Michigan Career Technical Centers participated in the JMG Legislative Day on Feb. 14 in Lansing. Three students from the Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center and three students from the Traverse Bay Area ISD Career-Tech Center attended the event along with about 70 other JMG students from around the state. The Wexford-Missaukee CTC students who attended the event were Elizabeth Eaton (Manton High School), Olivia Emond (Lake City High School) and Jessy Taylor (Lake City High School). All three students are enrolled in the Hospitality, Retailing, and Entrepreneurship program. While they were in Lansing, the students met with Senators Darwin Booher and Wayne Schmidt as well as Representatives Michele Hoytenga and Larry Inman to discuss the JMG program. The students also had the opportunity to tour the State Capitol Building.

COURTESY PHOTO

O U R V I E W

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# Cheers

■ To MR Products, of Copemish, and Sleeping Bear Apiaries, of Beulah. The two area companies have received Michigan Works Impact Awards for leadership in providing employment and training opportunities. MR Products is a family-owned manufacturer of plastic chain that used Michigan Works assistance for skilled trades training fund applications, employee wellness development projects and on-the-job training contracts.

Sleeping Bear Apiaries is the parent company of Sleeping Bear Farms and St. Ambrose Cellars. Michigan Works helped the company develop a winemaker apprentice program in addition to utilizing a Skilled Trades Training Fund grant and training assistance for employees.

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I N B R I E F

From staff reports

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## **Michigan Works hiring event slated**

**BELLAIRE** — Northwest Michigan Works! will host a hiring event in Bellaire March 22-23 to help Crusecom staff its new office.

Crusecom is a call center service provider scheduled to open in Bellaire on May 1. The hiring event at the Forest Home Township Hall at 321 North Bridge Street will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 22 and 2-7 p.m. on March 23.

Job seekers should bring their resume; applications will

be available on site. For more information, go to [crusecom.com](http://crusecom.com) or call (989) 739-5070.

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I N B R I E F

From staff reports

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**TRAVERSE CITY** — The Newton's Road Gutter Car Derby, featuring 3D-printed cars designed by local students, will be held March 22 at 6 p.m. at The Pathfinder School at 11930 SW Bayshore Drive.

Along with the race using plastic gutters as a track, students will be judged on their designs and oral presentations. Prizes will be awarded for the best design, fastest car and longest distance. The event is open to all K-12 students within the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District.

The Gutter Car Derby partners are TBAISD, The Pathfinder School, RJG, Inc., Quarkmine and Boomerang-Catapult. Newton's Road is a program of Networks Northwest operating in partnership with area businesses and schools to promote STEM education.



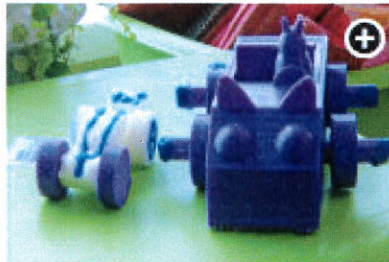


Posted: Mar 22, 2017 6:01 AM EDT

Video Link

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox?compose=15b003b5cdcbcc90>

## Traverse City Elementary Students Gain Hands-On Experience With 3D Printing



3D printing is new cutting edge technology and some local students are getting some hands on experience with it.

3D printing and education came together as some Traverse City area students race cars they designed with 3D printers.

9&10's Sarah Grimmer gives us a closer look at the process behind the student's engineering masterpieces.

"I think this is a form of art, says Willow Hill Elementary Student, Cameron Keillor. "Know how to do this because it takes a lot of time and patience.

Cameron Keillor is one of many Traverse City students learning to use 3D printers and the process to get that final plastic product starts on paper.

"First we kinda sketched out what we wanted to in our engineering logs, and then we made it on the computer, and then our teacher printed it for us and then we had it," says Willow Hill Elementary student, Kate Bosley.

"It's pretty much just a big box with some moving parts up in the top, and then there's a little box that has a nozzle, and then all you do is type something up on the computer, you turn the 3D printer on and then it builds it," says Keillor.

For this project, students made 3D printed cars of their own design.

On Wednesday night the students are racing the plastic automobiles in Newton's Gutter Car Derby.

"You have to make a car that fits in a gutter and it goes down the gutter and there's 3 different categories that the judges are judging for - best design, farthest distance and fastest," explains Bosley.

To qualify for one of the awards there are certain rules.

"You gotta follow the rules," says Keillor. "You have to have your car a certain how long, a certain height, a certain diameter, and then it has to have a certain fill level."

The entire project is a fun and engaging way to get student's thinking towards the future, in a 3D way.

"You have to work a lot with dimensions," adds Keillor. "You have to know all of your dimensions which will really help you later in school. You know all that stuff and you're working with that daily."

Wednesday night's race will start at 6:00 p.m. at Traverse City's Pathfinder School.

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## Gutter Derby



Record-Eagle/Tessa Lighty

Students watch as their cars shoot down the racetrack during the Gutter Derby at the Pathfinder School in Traverse City. The 3-D printed cars were judged on fastest time, longest distance and best design.

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**Today's News**

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## Local Company Lands Statewide Recognition

March 28, 2017



Traverse City-based Press On Juice is one of twelve companies statewide to earn the Best Small Business Award from the Michigan Small Business Development Center. The company, which produces a line of cold-pressed, unpasteurized juice blends from a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, was selected from among the more than 5,500 small businesses the Michigan SBDC provided with confidential counseling in 2016.

The only other honoree from northern Michigan was Blarney Stone Broadcasting Inc., based in Grayling, which also owns Traverse City radio station WKLT and Petoskey's WKLZ.

The Best Small Business award recipients were identified based on their success in creating jobs, increasing sales, improving their business strategy and their involvement with the Michigan SBDC.

Press On Juice produces all of its products at its facility on Eighth Street in Traverse City. Its expanding menu includes fresh, raw food items such as salads, sandwiches and snacks.

BEST SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

# Michigan SBDC honors Press On Juice

*Blarney Stone Broadcasting also among 12 companies awarded*

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

TRAVERSE CITY — Press On Juice is one of 12 companies to receive the Best Small Business Award from among the 5,500 operations that were provided confidential counseling from the Michigan Small Business Development Center in 2016.

Award recipients were chosen for their success in creating jobs, increasing sales, improving small business strategy and involvement in the center, according to a release.

Press On Juice makes cold-pressed, unpasteurized juice

blends from fresh fruits and vegetables. The company says the pasteurization process — which involves heating a liquid to destroy certain microorganisms — can alter or destroy enzymes, antioxidants, minerals and vitamins that exist in raw produce.

The Small Business Development Center was an important partner in the development of the Press On Juice company, owner Kris Rockwood stated in the release.

The company makes all its products at a facility on 8th Street in Traverse City. Its menu has expanded to include fresh raw food items including salads, sandwiches and snacks. More information is available at [www.pressonjuice.com](http://www.pressonjuice.com).

Blarney Stone Broadcasting, Inc., based in Grayling, also was among the 12 awarded compa-

nies. It was founded in 2012 by Gaylord residents Sheryl and Jerry Coyne.

The company owns and operates WQON (FM), licensed to Grayling; WGRY (FM), licensed to Roscommon and WMQU (AM), licensed to Grayling. It recently entered into a purchase agreement with Northern Broadcast, Inc., that will increase its coverage by adding stations licensed to Honor, Kalkaska, Leland and other northern Michigan communities.

The 12 recipients will be honored at the May 4 Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards Gala in Lansing.

Other award recipients are: All Dogs Can (Lapeer), Balance Massage Therapy (Ann Arbor), Bon Bon Bon (Hamtramck), Cheryl Stevens Studio (Sault Ste. Marie), Chiquitos Bilingual Montessori (Utica), Morris



Lawn Care and Snow Removal (Stanton), Piper & Gold Public Relations (Lansing), Roz's Diner (Rosebush), Sandlot Sports (Saginaw) and Soil Friends Farm, LLC (Galesburg).

The Michigan Small Business Development Center provides counseling, business education, information-based planning and technology commercialization services to new business ventures, existing small businesses, growing businesses and innovators. More information is available at [www.SBDCMichigan.org](http://www.SBDCMichigan.org).

# Four area businesses among 50 Companies to Watch

*Awards ceremony May 4 in Lansing*

BY MARK URBAN  
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TRAVERSE CITY — Michigan is taking notice of small business in the Traverse City region.

Four area businesses were among the 2017 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch list. Companies will be honored at an awards ceremony May 4 during the 13th annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business gala in Lansing.

Among the 50 companies on the Watch List were Image360, Safety Net Inc. and Stone House Bread, all based in Traverse City, and Kalkaska Screw Products.

The list of four firms in northwest Lower Michigan is the largest number of area companies to receive the recognition since six made the top 50 list in 2013.

Kalkaska Screw Products makes components that become part of air bag units, seat belt assemblies, fuel systems, brake systems, and engine management systems in the automotive, aerospace, recreational vehicle and other industries.

KSP President and CEO Kevin Schlueter said the company blossomed from 19 employees in 2010 — a couple of years after the recession hit — to 110 today.

“Out in the industry, there was a lack of capacity because a lot of companies couldn’t make it through (the recession),” Schlueter said. “We recognized that and made the strategic decision to go (deeper) into the auto industry. We just executed. We did a good job.”

Automakers consumed about 8 percent of KSP’s production in 2010, but the company’s efforts since have resulted in the auto industry buying about 98 percent of the company’s current production. And the company still is growing. Schlueter expects KSP to employ 125 by the end of the year.

Companies making it to the watch list are second-stage companies headquartered in Michigan. According to the Michigan Celebrates Small Business web site, the 50 companies to watch must also:

- Be a privately-held commercial enterprise.

- Be past the startup stage and facing issues of growth.

- Employ between six and 99 full-time equivalent W-2 employees, including the owner.

- Have between \$750,000 and \$50 million in annual revenue or working capital from investors or grants.

- Demonstrate the intent and capacity to grow based on employee or sales growth, exceptional entrepreneurial leadership, sustainable competitive advantage or other notable successes.

Winners must also have not won the award previously. Michigan-based judges from banking, economic development, entrepreneurship development and venture capital communities select the 50 companies.

More information on Michigan Celebrates Small Business can be found at [www.MichiganCelebrates.biz](http://www.MichiganCelebrates.biz).

## If you go

**What:** The 2017 Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards Ceremony

**When:** Thursday, May 4

**Where:** The Lansing Center, 333 E Michigan Ave., Lansing

**Cost:** \$135 for an individual ticket

**More information:**

Visit [http://www.](http://www.michigancelebrates.biz/)

[michigancelebrates.biz/](http://www.michigancelebrates.biz/)

## Today's News



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## Two Local Groups Land Governors Tourism Awards

March 30, 2017



**UP NORTH  
TRAILS .ORG**

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TC-based Paddle for Pints won the first-ever Governor's Award for Innovative Tourism Collaboration in the Experience Development & Presentation category. Paddle for Pints takes participants along a guided course on Boardman Lake, Boardman River and West Bay, where they visit six breweries along the way. Last year, it consisted of 27 event dates with 18 collaborating partners and 4,800 participants.

Also winning an award was Up North Trails, a collaboration of several entities, including Networks Northwest Land Information Access Association, Traverse Area Recreational and Transportation Trails, Inc., and Flight Path Creative of Traverse City. It won in

the category of Non-Traditional Partnerships. Up North Trails brings together regional stakeholders to support and enhance economic development opportunities by developing a comprehensive trail marketing initiative in a 21-county area of northern Michigan.

The Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan is comprised of more than 50 statewide tourism associations, corporations and convention and visitor bureaus whose mission is to promote Michigan's travel and tourism industry.

# Up North Trails nabs Governor's Award

Local collaboration recognized for promoting state's tourism industry

BY KYLE KAMINSKI [kkaminski@record-eagle.com](mailto:kkaminski@record-eagle.com) 1 hr ago



TRAVERSE CITY — A local coalition designed to promote trail systems in northern Michigan is the latest recipient of the Governor's Award for Innovative Tourism Collaboration.

The Up North Trails Collaborative — representing a team of 53 different organizations — won in the category of non-traditional partnerships for its website [upnorthtrails.org](http://upnorthtrails.org) and the trail promotion efforts connected to the website.

"We're proud of the collaborative and the ability to provide a product that both our visitors and residents can use," said Mathias McCauley, chief operating officer at Networks Northwest. "It's a one-stop shop for all things trails and that's an intuitive asset that our community has never had before."

The coalition — led by Networks Northwest, the Northeast and Northwest Michigan Councils of Governments and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, among others — brings together regional stakeholders to market various trails in the northern Lower Peninsula.

The common goal: promote all the trail systems in a 21-county area to create more opportunities for trail enthusiasts. A total of 5,358 miles of trails were identified, mapped and made available online.

The award recognizes the collaborative for elevating the state's tourism industry.

"Recreation is important," McCauley said. "It's a direct and indirect driver of our economy and it manifests itself in a variety of ways. ... Even those who felt they were in the know didn't know about some of these assets in our community."



## Lifelong learning a fact of modern work

**D**id you know that the average community newspaper is written at the eighth-grade reading level?

Most people can read the newspaper, but does that also mean they can be employed successfully ... meaning long term, with wage progression ... at jobs beyond those with the lowest skill levels and lowest wages?

Perhaps the answer was "yes" in the 20th century economy. But not today. Now family-sustaining employment requires a much higher skill level. Advanced reading and language skills, math at the algebra and sometimes trigonometry level, significant computer skills, information processing and analytical skills are needed for nearly all careers now, including those that do not require a Bachelor's Degree but instead involve an Associate's Degree or other credentialing after high school completion.

"Lifelong Learning" is a term we hear regularly, but what does it really mean? Here are some varied examples of why it is so significant in today's economy. These stories are not unique — they are common and pervasive throughout the nation.

Jane started her career as a Certified Nurse Aid and later desired to have some career progression. She went to a community college at age 35 to become a Registered Nurse, and later sought some management credentials in order to get supervisory-level jobs.

Bob successfully did maintenance and repairs on mechanical equipment for years, but found that he needed to learn some computer programming in order to keep up with the latest machines he was seeing in manufacturing companies.

Alice was a secretary for 20 years, and then her employer required her to acquire database development skills.

Sandy did not get her dream job because her grammar wasn't up to standard on the writing test she was given at the interview.

John thought he had all the math skills he needed for his work in the construction trades — until he discovered that he was being relegated to the more menial tasks because he couldn't handle the formulas that were being used in the trade.

It's a fact of modern life that people must learn new skills and upgrade their employability on a regular basis. We often think of "new skills" as being technical or manual, but more often they are academic.

Perhaps the most admirable efforts we see in this vein are the adults who waited a little too long to keep up or never had the educational opportunities of others, only to find themselves considerably behind the competitive curve in the labor market. Every day at Northwest Michigan Works!, our Adult Education Learning Labs see people diligently doing their catch-up work, each with his or her own individualized learning plan that is oriented toward an occupational goal.

This can range all the way from learning to speak, read and write English as a second language to upgrading reading skills from fifth to 12th grade level, to understanding fractions and decimals, to touching a keyboard and mouse for the first time, or to getting a GED high-school-

Adults typically need flexible, individual approaches to their learning — for a variety of reasons. They are juggling the demands of a job and/or home life. They may have been out of school for a long time and feel a little intimidated about returning to a learning environment.

## WOOD

*Lifelong learning a fact of modern work*

FROM PAGE 1D

equivalency certificate years after dropping out of high school.

It also involves employers who have hard-working, dedicated employees they want to keep, but need them to achieve higher ability levels. They send them to the Northwest Michigan Works! Learning Labs to target a specific academic gap.

And it means building Learning Lab time into job-training curriculums for those who need remedial work before they can succeed in a post-secondary program.

Adults typically need flexible, individual approaches to their learning — for a variety of reasons. They are juggling the demands of a job and/or home life. They may have been out of school for a long time and feel a little intimidated about returning to a learning environment.

And many of our learning materials now are software-based — which can add a level of complication for those who are not yet computer literate.

The Northwest Michigan Works! Learning Labs are well accustomed to adapting each learning plan and methods to the particular person.

Many of us are educated to the point that, at least on paper, we could do whatever is needed of us at work. But if my job required me tomorrow to use an algebra equation to solve a financial or logistical problem, I

would be hard pressed to succeed. My first stop would be a Northwest Michigan Works! Learning Lab.

They can be found at the Michigan Works Centers in Traverse City, Cadillac, Kalkaska, Manistee and Petoskey, as well as at Northwestern Michigan College and Benzie Area Christian Neighbors (BACN). Distance learning is also readily available.

Learning never stops ... and that's a big part of what keeps our families and businesses going strong.

Elaine Wood is CEO of Networks Northwest and Northwest Michigan Works, Inc.



EDUCATION

# Officials mull '10 Cents'

*Recent report details impact of produce-focused pilot program in local schools*

BY KYLE KAMINSKI  
[kkaminski@record-eagle.com](mailto:kkaminski@record-eagle.com)

TRAVERSE CITY — State lawmakers will soon determine the fate of a pilot program designed to connect students with nearby farms, encourage local produce consumption and support local farmers.

The Michigan Department of Education — with the help of dozens of local nonprofits — this week submitted a report to lawmakers to gauge the effectiveness of 10 Cents a Meal. The pilot program launched three years ago in pockets of northwest Michigan and has since spread to several schools downstate.

Local agricultural activists and government officials want to see the program continue to grow.

“At the end of the day, 10 Cents a Meal is good for kids because it gives them nutritious meals, teaches where they come from and allows local farmers to better market their products and reduce transportation costs,” said Matt McCauley, chief operating officer at Networks Northwest.

SEE 10 CENTS PAGE 2A

## 10 CENTS

### *Officials mull '10 Cents'*

FROM PAGE 1A

The program provides local school districts with a 10-cent, state-funded match for introducing fresh, locally-grown produce into their cafeteria menus. It also offers a financial cushion for food service directors trying new things on increasingly tight budgets, officials said.

Sixteen districts — including schools in Glen Lake, Traverse City, Leland, Frankfort and Northport — participated in the program this year. 10 Cents also catalyzed sales for 86 different farms in 28 counties and 16 additional businesses like processors and distributors, accord-

ing to the report.

Heather Ratliff, the farm-to-institution coordinator at Cherry Capital Foods, works directly with local school districts across the state. Her sales have skyrocketed since the program began, and local kids are reaping the benefits as well, she said.

“There’s an increased variety in what people are buying and what they’re willing to try and it’s helped all the way down the supply chain in our region,” Ratliff said. “Farmers and processors have felt the impact and so have we as distributors.”

The pilot includes \$210,000 in match incentive reimbursements to the schools, which translates to at least \$420,000 injected into the state’s economy and doubles the initial investment of taxpayer dollars, according to the report.

But you can’t put a price

on expanding nutritional offerings for local kids, officials said.

Ratliff said students in Manistee Public Schools were so unfamiliar with plums that they were asking kitchen staff about where they found “giant grapes” to complement their lunches. Many students at Traverse City Area Public Schools were raised on canned peaches and didn’t recognize the fresh variety.

“There are just all these great impacts in terms of an expanded market for local foods, education activities and sharing these ideas across the state,” said Diane Connors, senior policy specialist at the Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities.

State Rep. Larry Inman recognized the benefits as well but faces an uphill battle to convince his fellow lawmakers of the

program’s merits, he said. The state’s Senate included \$250,000 in next year’s budget for the program but the House omitted the item from its future budgetary plans.

“It’s been really successful in promoting the healthy eating of local fruits and vegetables and it provides for a really reasonable cost model up here in our market,” Inman said. “It’s proven successful and it might be time to launch it out for the rest of the state.”

The budget still needs to move through a committee structure in the Senate before it eventually heads to the House. A conference committee will be able to hash out the differences between the two proposed budgets before a May revenue estimating conference, Inman said.

Visit [groundworkcenter.org](http://groundworkcenter.org) to view the complete report.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Evelyn Szpliet** <[evelyn.szpliet@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:evelyn.szpliet@networksnorthwest.org)>

Date: Wed, Mar 1, 2017 at 3:36 PM

Subject: Ricc Ricciardi

To: Elaine Wood <[elaine.wood@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:elaine.wood@networksnorthwest.org)>, Terry Vandercook <[terry.vandercook@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:terry.vandercook@networksnorthwest.org)>

Hello!

Ricc is the gentleman that lost his wife just before he was dislocated from the Pugsley closure. I just sent a follow-up email to Ricc about his training status. Here is his response:

*great, week 3., actually sitting in a tractor right now waiting for air pressure to go up for the air brakes. scheduled road test for next week. This has been a Godsend. I am out with people in a routine, learning and really enjoying it. I have had 3 trucking companies call me and have had 2 phone interviews. Thank you Evelyn. I should have been keeping you posted. I passed my written tests 1st time my first Friday. I did it on my own time in Manistee to catch up. This is a great place. you have my vote for state employee of the year. I worked for the state for 25 years practically and I can count on one hand the very good employees I ran across. you can be proud. thanks again.*

His progress was made possible through a well-coordinated team effort, including Tina Holden and our partners at Pinnacle.

I am so proud of Ricc. He is working on a brand new career path and has a bright future with a fresh outlook. It has been amazing working with the SAG customers and now on the new apprenticeship project. Thank you!

Respectfully,

*Evelyn*

**Evelyn Szpliet**

Apprenticeship Success Coordinator

1660 US 31 South, Manistee, Michigan 49660

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[evelyn.szpliet@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:evelyn.szpliet@networksnorthwest.org)

Monday

Tues

Dear Leanne, Olivia, Jessy & Elizabeth -  
You young ladies were the  
highlight of my day. I thoroughly  
enjoyed visiting with you & chatting  
about your goals. If there is  
ever anything I can do to help you  
along your career paths, please  
don't hesitate to reach out to me.  
I will be watching to see you gals  
do some great things!

Your friend,

Michèle Hotenga, State Rep.  
(231) 878-3888

JMG State Legislative Day, Feb. 2017