

News Release

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Jobs for Michigan's Graduates Program Growing in Northwest Michigan

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI – A program that pairs career specialists with middle and high school students to help them explore career and college options is expanding in districts around Northern Michigan.

The Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program has added five additional JMG specialists, hired to help students grades 6-12 overcome barriers and succeed in education, employment, and life at the 11 public school districts in the Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District. The JMG program was already available to students at East Jordan, Pellston, and at Crooked Tree High School, an alternative program in Harbor Springs. Northwest Michigan Works! coordinates the JMG program at schools around northwest Lower Michigan.

"We are excited to be expanding our partnership with Char-Em ISD to provide a JMG specialist at each of the public school districts in the Char-Em area," said Susan Ward, Youth Services Regional Director for Northwest Michigan Works!. "Just one positive adult role model can change the trajectory of a student's life, and this is what this program and our specialists do for our students each and every day."

The JMG program gives students the opportunity to participate in career development activities including: job shadows, tours, résumé building, interview skills, and paid work experiences. Students also have the opportunity to participate in leadership experiences locally, statewide, and nationally. Mentorship is a large part of the program and JMG specialists will work with and support students throughout middle and high school and up to 12 months after high school graduation.

One JMG specialist will also now coordinate the work-based learning placement program (known as co-op) for all 11 school districts. This will allow 12th grade students to attend school and also work part of the day.

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“These JMG specialists really get to know students and can help them identify their interests and possible career paths,” said Jim Rummer, Director of Career and Technical Education for Char-Em ISD. “This expansion of five additional specialists will further strengthen the ties between our next generation of workers to business, industry, and academic resources - opening up even more opportunities for our young people. I’ve never witnessed a more exciting time in the world of career and college readiness for young people than what we are experiencing today.”

“We are thrilled to help Networks Northwest inspire and connect hundreds of additional students, throughout Charlevoix and Emmet counties, to achieve a future beyond imagination,” said Kim Bordeau, Senior Manager of Program Success for Youth Solutions, Inc. “This expansion demonstrates the tremendous impact that the Networks Northwest youth team has had in northwest Michigan, and we are excited to see how it strengthens the local community in years to come.”

The funding for the expanded JMG program is provided by Youth Solutions and a Char-Em ISD Career and Technical Education millage that was passed in May 2022.

Northwest Michigan Works! is proud to partner with Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG) in serving the region’s youth. JMG is the leading program of Youth Solutions, Inc., a premier youth opportunity organization on a mission to equip young people with the skills to overcome barriers and win in education, employment, and in life. The JMG program consists of a comprehensive set of services designed to help young people achieve education and career goals. The purpose of this program is to inspire and connect youth to achieve a future beyond imagination.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution, file format, and file size. Or phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: 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!, APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC), 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 website, networksnorthwest.org. Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.