

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Northwest Michigan Employers Secure Over \$1.3 Million to Train and Upskill 695 Employees

NORTHWEST, MI— Northwest Michigan employers are celebrating a transformative boost for workforce development, with over \$1.3 million awarded through the first round of 2025 Going PRO Talent Fund grants. This funding will provide critical training opportunities for 695 employees, including on-the-job and classroom training for 178 apprentices across the region.

The grants will benefit a wide range of industries, including manufacturing, agriculture, construction, automotive, healthcare, energy, hospitality, education, and nonprofits. These investments underscore the commitment of local businesses to workforce development and innovation.

“During this first round of 2025, our team collaborated with several new employers eager to upskill their workforce,” said Rob Dickinson, Regional Director of Business Services at Northwest Michigan Works!. “While \$1.3 million has been awarded to our region, local companies are matching that with an additional \$8 million investment in their employees. This dedication is inspiring. The Going PRO Talent Fund has truly transformed lives—empowering individuals and strengthening businesses across our region. We’re thrilled to continue helping employers leverage this incredible program.”

In this cycle, 42 employers in northwest Michigan received funding, with awards averaging \$31,337. Individual grants ranged from under \$2,000 to over \$200,000, showcasing the program’s flexibility to meet diverse business needs.

Statewide, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) has distributed \$42.7 million in Going PRO Talent Fund grants to 697 businesses. The funding will train 8,089 new hires and enhance the skills of 14,692 current employees beginning in January 2025.

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Northwest Michigan Works! is supported by the State of Michigan and is a proud partner of the American Job Center Network. This project may have been funded, in portion or in whole, with authorized and appropriate federal funds. Contact Networks Northwest to request a specific dollar figure, as funding levels change frequently. Equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and service are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Individuals with speech or hearing impairments may call the Michigan Relay Center by dialing 711.



Chief Elected Official: **Chris Christensen**
Board Chair: **Nicole Sulak**
Chief Executive Officer: **Janie McNabb**



About the Going PRO Talent Fund

The Going PRO Talent Fund supports Michigan businesses in developing the highly skilled talent needed for success. Through strategic investments in training, the program bridges skill gaps, enhances employee retention, and fosters business growth.

For more information on workforce development initiatives and opportunities, contact your Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services Representative by visiting nwm.org/businessservices.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by emailing Dana O'Dell at dana.odell@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 community development 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.

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