

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$1.1 Million MiLEAP Grant to Assist Northwest Michigan Job Seekers

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI— A \$1.1 million grant will help northwest Michigan job seekers make the jump from education and training to employment. Northwest Michigan Works! received the Michigan Learning and Education Advancement Program (MiLEAP) grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). The grant is part of a \$17.8 million competitive grant awarded to LEO by the U.S. Department of Education to respond to the economic impact of COVID-19 in the state.

MiLEAP will provide funds to assist job seekers in transitioning from short- and mid-term education and training programs to high-skill, high-wage career pathways, resulting in industry-recognized credential attainment and reduced educational debt.

“We know that job seekers who earn a credential or certification have an edge over job seekers without such a credential, said Lisa Schut, Regional Director, Northwest Michigan Works! “MiLEAP provides the funding to assist individuals in their efforts to earn their credentials and land the job they’ve always wanted. Northwest Michigan Works! is thrilled to be able to walk alongside them throughout their journey.”

Northwest Michigan Works! is one of ten grant recipients in the state. Employers will be engaged in MiLEAP by joining multi-employer consortia to address regional workforce needs and advance existing employees through re- and upskilling. MiLEAP will intentionally target services to individuals who are dislocated, underemployed, serving as essential workers, living in distressed rural and urban communities, and economically disadvantaged.

(MORE)

Additionally, the program will fund MiLEAP Navigators who will provide job seekers with direct assistance in assessing and overcoming barriers, identifying resources and providing guidance and support. MiLEAP participants will receive individualized competency-based assessments and learning plans that include skills assessments, remote learning opportunities, industry credential attainment, and contextual learning opportunities.

Northwest Michigan Works! worked closely with Northwestern Michigan College, North Central Michigan College, and West Shore Community College, and gained wide support throughout our community from employers, employer consortiums, and other partners. Additional key grant partners include employers and employer-led collaboratives, non-profit organizations, organized labor organizations, community based organizations, and more.

More information about postsecondary opportunities in Michigan is available at Michigan.gov/Workforce. For more information about job seeker assistance offered by Northwest Michigan Works! go to NWMiWorks.org.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by emailing 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, 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 website, networksnorthwest.org

Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.