

**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Media Contact: Dan Boss  
Communication Specialist  
231-929-5047  
dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org

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## **Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency Launches New Childcare Apprenticeships**

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI — Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA), in partnership with Northwest Michigan Works!, has launched two new US Department of Labor registered apprenticeship programs for Childcare Development Specialist and Childcare Educator. This is the first early childhood apprenticeship initiative in the area to offer customized training in this in-demand career field.

Registered under the Northwest Michigan Works! U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Standards of Apprenticeship, NMCAA is providing apprentices with a minimum of 12 months of on-the-job training along with a minimum of 144 hours of related educational instruction. The related coursework is provided through a variety of educational partners including Northwestern Michigan College and North Central Michigan College. The courses complement the hands-on learning while providing an innovative, robust curriculum to launch career pathways for the apprentices.

“NMCAA is proud to offer this innovative training program in collaboration with Northwest Michigan Works,” said Shannon Phelps, NMCAA Child and Family Development Director. “The need for high quality early care and learning educators is extreme and we are committed to providing our team members with a variety of avenues to meet their professional goals. The first cohort includes three very engaged, dedicated apprentices, and we are excited to watch their talents grow through this unique opportunity. We believe that the benefits of apprenticeship completion will extend beyond the individual and the agency, as the skills acquired through the program are put into practice caring for the youngest members of our community.

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PO Box 506 • Traverse City, MI 49685-0506 • Phone (231) 929-5000 • Fax (231) 929-5012 [networksnorthwest.org](http://networksnorthwest.org)

Northwest Michigan Works! is a registered USDOL apprenticeship intermediary and sponsor. Northwest Michigan Works! helps employers develop, implement, and manage registered apprenticeships specific to their industry. Registered Apprenticeship is a proven training method for businesses to build a talent pipeline of highly skilled, educated workers.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by emailing Dan Boss at [dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto: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](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, 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](http://networksnorthwest.org). Networks Northwest's member counties are Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.