

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2024

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Local Youth Employment Program Receives Statewide Honors

NORTHERN LOWER, MI – The Northwest Jobs for Michigan's Graduates program was recently honored by Youth Solutions, a statewide youth-serving organization that provides Michigan's youth with career-focused education. In total, the local program received thirteen awards, both for individual team members and for the program as a whole.

On July 24 - 26, 2024, Youth Solutions held a conference for the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) specialists and managers across the state. The following individuals were honored:

- *Rising Star Award: Josh Todd;*
- *Living Our Values - Collaboration: Laura Quist;*
- *Living Our Values - Leadership: Tracy Beckley;*
- *Living Our Values - Excellence: Kim Benz and Cathy Schanski;*
- *JMG Influencer: Lisa Baldyga;*
- *Reaching 6 of 6 (goals) for alternative programs: Lisa Baldyga, Kim Benz, LeAnne Bush, Marc Svatora, & Josh Todd;*
- *Reaching 6 of 6 (goals) for out of school programs: Kim Benz & Tracy Beckley;*
- *Networks Northwest: 6 of 6 Affiliate Recognition (for out of school and alternative programs).*

The program also received the highly esteemed "Team of Teams" Award. The "Team of Teams" award description reads "In recognition of their agility and leadership within their own programs, and their unwavering support for one another, all in service of positively impacting the youth in their community."

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Tracy Beckley, one of the Directors of Youth Services, states, "Each person on our Youth Services Team is committed to making a positive difference in the lives of our communities' youth through career exploration, mentoring, and support. I am extremely proud of all the JMG Specialists for the work they do in helping students reach their goals. It is an honor for our team, and individual team members, to receive these accolades from Youth Solutions!"

Northwest Jobs for Michigan's Graduates is a program of Networks Northwest, in affiliation with Northwest Michigan Works!. JMG Specialists work in collaboration with schools and career tech programs to bring soft skills training, career awareness and planning, and leadership experiences to youth throughout the ten-county region. For more information about the program, see www.nwm.org/jmg.

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) 929-5075. 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.