

TALENT TALK

December 2022 | Volume 6, Issue 2



GST MICHIGAN
GENESEE
SHIAWASSEE
THUMB **WORKS!**™

Advancing Employers | Enhancing Talent



REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

303
Entered
Training

69%
Exited to
Employment

January through November 2022
our Business Services Team
provided services to over

1435
EMPLOYEES

Real Time Intelligence - Job Postings 7/1/2022 - 9/30/2022 # Active Job Ads

Registered Nurses	3,782
Retail Salespersons	3,744
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	3,402
Stockers and Order Fillers	2,561
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,236
Fast Food and Counter Workers	1,659
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	1,428
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,393
Customer Service Representatives	1,354
Nursing Assistants	1,302
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,215
Driver/Sales Workers	1,148
Social and Human Service Assistants	1,092
Production Workers, All Other	1,092
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,089
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	1,017
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	939
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	917
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	782
Personal Care Aides	776
Cashiers	761
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	683
Speech-Language Pathologists	650
Medical Assistants	610
Home Health Aides	597
Food Preparation Workers	586
Pharmacy Technicians	582
Computer User Support Specialists	574
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	569
First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	547
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	521
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	520
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	493
Teaching Assistants, Special Education	489
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	487
Human Resources Specialists	474
Cooks, Restaurant	463
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	463
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	437

 **8,932**
Page Likes

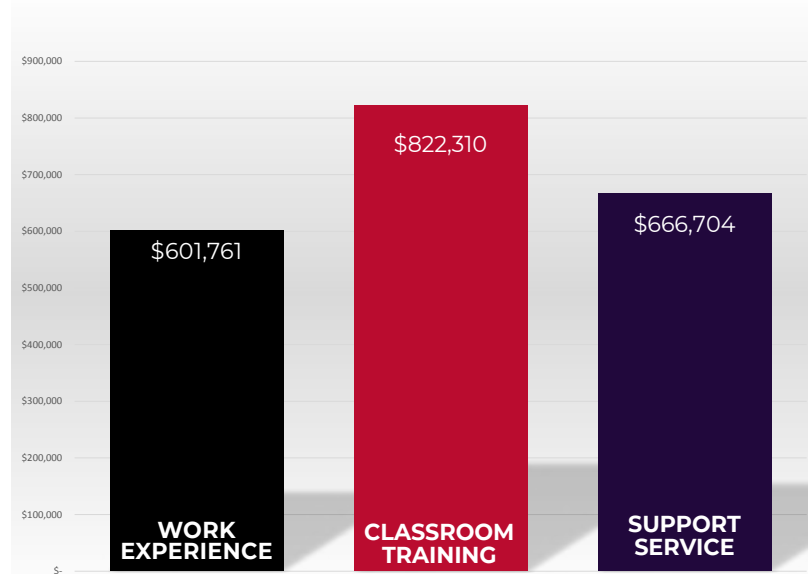
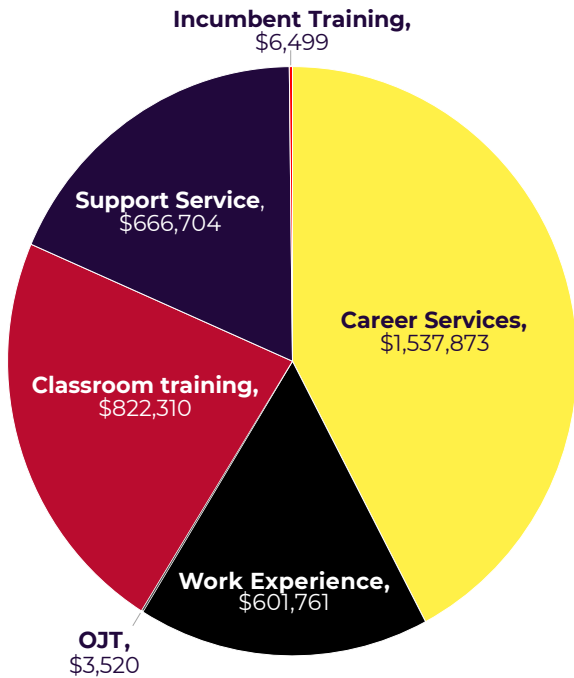
 **688**
Followers

 **429**
Followers

DATA ANALYSIS

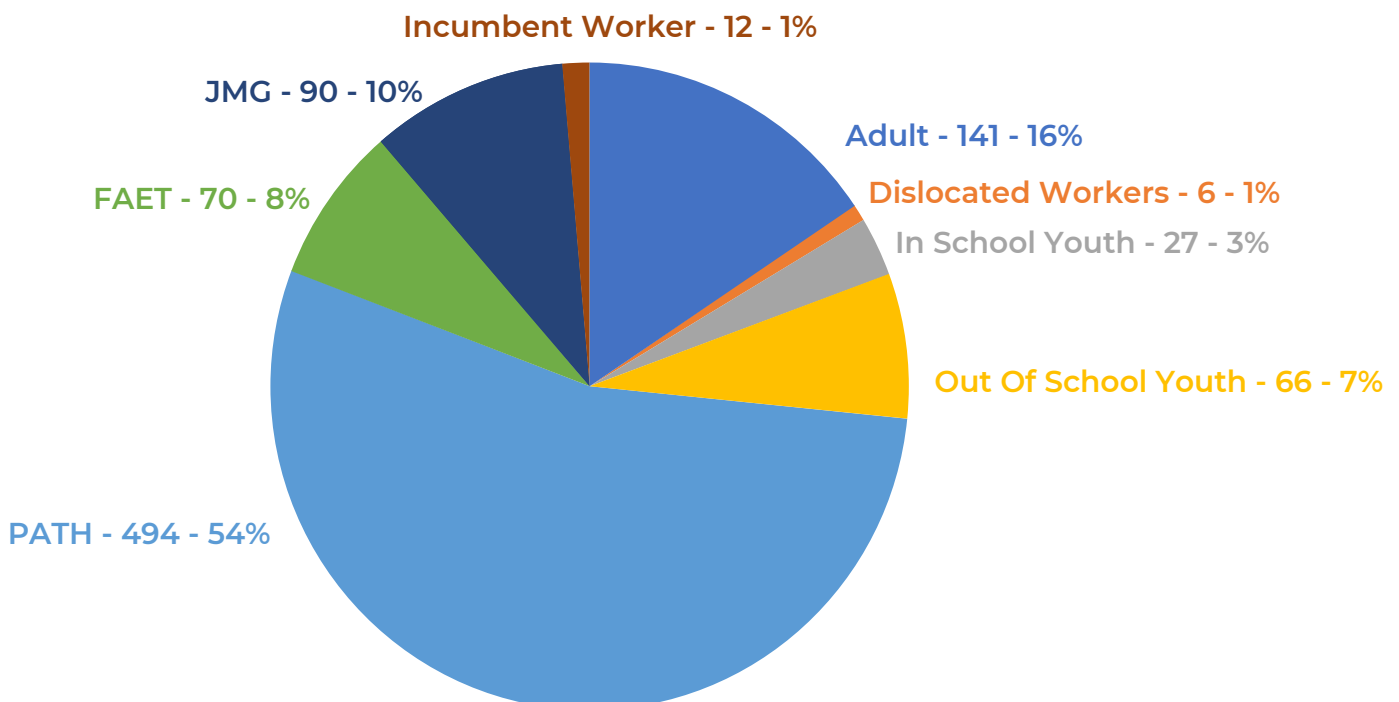
Career Services & Participant Payments

July 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022



New Enrollments

July 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022



EMPLOYEE SUCCESS STORIES

RELOCATED TALENT COACHED TO SUCCESS



Owosso - Allison (Paige) Crawford came into the Shiawassee Service Center in May of 2022 after recently relocating from Florida and losing her job of 11 years.

After two months of job searching on her own, she became frustrated at the lack of response from employers, and therefore sought out assistance from GST Michigan Works! employers, and therefore sought out assistance from GST Michigan Works!

Connecting with a Career Coach for guidance, Paige made some adjustments to her resume and developed a better job search strategy, which quickly led to a full-time job offer from Capital Asphalt as a Payroll/HR Admin earning well above the median wage in Shiawassee County!

Paige commented, **“Connecting with [GST] Michigan Works! to help me was the best decision I made for myself. Everyone was very helpful with assistance when needed, suggestions on places to**

check for jobs, skills testing and training if needed and the best part are the Career Coaches. The Career Coaches take the time to understand you as an individual and your unique situation.”

GST Michigan Works was able to provide Paige with supportive services to help her get started with her new employment due to the hardship she experienced from the gap of employment, and she has worked there successfully for sixth months already.

Paige adds,
“ My experience with [GST] MICHIGAN WORKS! WAS BEYOND HELPFUL! ”

Bad Axe - When Jeremiah came to the Bad Axe Service Center, he didn't have a home to call his own. He had been staying with various friends, working 2-3 jobs in local restaurants trying to make ends meet and maintain his transportation. He needed some guidance in settling on a career. He had long term goals but needed some assistance in taking the small steps on the path to his ultimate goal in advanced welding.

With the support of his Career Coach, Jeremiah applied for and enrolled in training in Basic Welding at Mid-Michigan College, Bad Axe Campus. Upon completion of training, Jeremiah

received a Certificate and promptly entered the GST Michigan Works! Young Professional work experience program.

Placed at Legendary Fabrication and Welding, Jeremiah excelled, receiving excellent employer reviews. At the end of the 90-day program, Legendary offered Jeremiah a full-time permanent position as a welder! This opportunity provided Jeremiah the job he was looking for, and a career he can continue to grow into. Through the course of this experience, Jeremiah was able to rent an apartment. He now has a place to call home and a good start on his career.

FINDING A HOME

TRADE CERTIFICATION HELPS A FATHER "CATCH UP"

Flint - Unemployed and expecting a newborn, 21-year-old Jalen was experiencing some anxiety. His lengthy gap in employment, and minimal skill-set, were starting to make him feel like he would not be able to “catch up” in time to have the job security and wages necessary to support his new family.

Time and money were in short supply, so a lengthy commitment to a traditional degree was not an option. But a short-term trade certification seemed like a good solution. Jalen connected with GST Michigan Works and was introduced to his career coach in Career Services. He researched several training options and settled on CDL-A training. He researched the industry requirements and commitments. It appeared to be exactly what he was looking for.

Shortly after he started his CDL-A training, with 160 Driving Academy, he discovered he needed repairs to his car. The Support Services team reacted quickly to his request for assistance. Jalen was able to successfully complete his training and begin his job search.



A stellar training record led him to employment almost immediately. Universal Logistics snatched him from the applicant pool and offered him a full-time driving job that would have him home every day. He said, **“I was prepared to go over-the-road, because it was what I had to do for my family. This is better than I could have hoped for.”**

Jalen no longer has the same concerns that he had just a few short months ago. He’s earning a great wage, gets to be with his family every day, and has an industry recognized credential for a job that he loves. Now, his biggest concern is what to buy for his little one’s birthday.



FROM UIA TO CDL

Fenton - Hunter came into the Fenton GST Michigan Works! to register for work as part of his unemployment requirement. After speaking with the staff and learning about the WIOA program he decided he would like to seek a career change that would support him and his family.

He now has the opportunity to receive training. His desire is to become a CDL A truck driver. Hunter started CDL A training January 17, 2022, with 160 Driving Academy a 4-week training program. Using the support of funding for training, mileage reimbursement and work clothing reimbursement, he successfully completed his

training on February 16, 2022. He also informed his Career Coach that he furthered his skills by obtaining additional endorsements for his truck driving. Hunter quickly began seeking out new employment opportunities. He received a referral from a friend regarding an opportunity to haul heavy equipment, with R & R Asphalt.



OVERTON OVERCOMES **OBSTACLES**

Flint - Ms. Andrea Overton met with a Career Coach in early June 2022. During the coaching session, Andrea spoke passionately about wanting to work. However, she realized that she was facing barriers in pursuit of her goal. Andrea, a single mother of three had been unemployed for five long months.

Shortly after meeting with her Career Coach, Andrea secured employment at Frito Lay as a Forklift Operator making a good, competitive wage. To sustain employment, Andrea required some assistance obtaining vehicle insurance, renewing her vehicle registration, and some additional support with transportation. With a commitment to working hard, and a little support from GST Michigan Works!, Andrea has been able to successfully sustain employment.



My needs were met without hesitation and by my needs being met it helped me sustain a solid position within the workplace.

I was directed to many resources that were helpful for me. Had I not attended the program I wouldn't have been able to keep my job as long as I have. I've been able to continue to provide for my family.

At that time in my life, I hit a hard spot and the road was rocky but after joining the program things turned around very fast for me. I like the fact that there are employees like Karia and Angel that really listened to me and made me feel like I had a voice and provided me with resolutions, direction, and resources.

I am grateful to have had them in my life at that time and to have successfully completed this program. It is truly an honor. I am now pursuing a career in a field that better meets the needs of my family and lifestyle due to the program and the kind employees that keep the program thriving

Thank You.

– Andrea Overton

NEW TALENT **IN RURAL HEALTHCARE**



Caro - Mandy Czekai came into the Tuscola Service Center in late December of 2021, seeking assistance getting her Medical Administrative Assisting Certification. Mandy was looking to gain skills in a career field she was already familiar with, and

GST Michigan Works! was happy to assist her in meeting her employment goals.

Mandy promptly started classes at the Sanilac Career Center, and successfully completed training in June, 2022, becoming a Certified Medical Administrative Assistant.

Upon completion of training, Mandy worked with her Career Coach to take the next step into employment. Through the Young Professionals work experience program, Mandy was placed at Northwood Meadows. This experience allowed Mandy to put all she learned in her training into action and achieve valuable paid work experience on the job.

After completing 90 days of work experience, Mandy was offered employment at Northwood Meadows as a Receptionist/Care Companion. Shortly after, Mandy accepted a position at Hills & Dales Hospital, earning well above the local median wage. Mandy's hard work and dedication to achieving a career in healthcare has paid off!

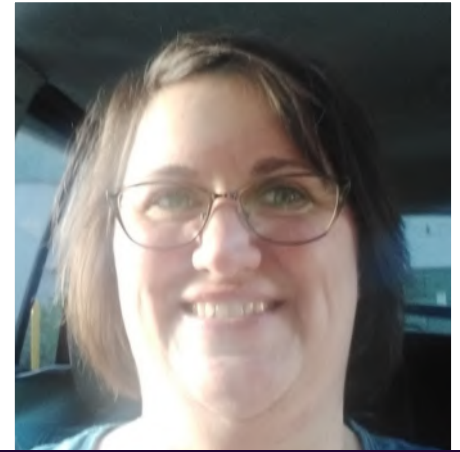
NEW CAREER DIRECTION PAYS OFF

Owosso - Amy came into GST Michigan Works! Shiawassee Service Center in October of 2021 looking for a career change. Amy had 20 years of experience in the childcare industry and was frustrated by the lack of advancement available but had no idea where to start. She was paired with a Career Coach who provided her with personality, interest, and skill assessments to develop a suitable career direction in Customer Service.

Amy was encouraged by her Career Coach to begin networking to find available local opportunities suited for her career direction as part of her successful job search strategy. Being with her previous employer for 15 years, Amy had built strong relationships with her children's parents whom she cared for, including one parent who suggested applying for

the company she worked at. In addition to developing a job-targeted resume and practicing strong interviewing skills, she built up the confidence to apply. Amy states "change is good, sometimes you just have to rip off that band aid."

In March of 2022, she was offered a full-time position with Precision Electric Motor Sales in Corunna, as a Customer Service Representative making nearly \$2/hr. more than what she was making after 20 years in the childcare industry. GST Michigan Works! was able to help provide supportive services for Amy to purchase clothing appropriate for her new work environment. As of November of 2022, Amy is still gainfully employed full-time with Precision Electric Motor Sales and looks forward to building her new career for years to come.



**Change is good,
sometimes you just have
to rip off that band aid."**

- Amy



Lapeer - Michelle Voss came to the Lapeer Service Center as a Dislocated Worker, drawing UIA benefits. Due to her employer permanently closing, she was also TAA – Trade Adjustment Assistance certified. A single parent, Michelle had worked the past 10 years in a production setting, but now found herself unemployed having a difficult time finding work at a wage comparable with her previous position.

After meeting with a Career Coach, Michelle indicated she was interested in exploring other industries and occupations, moving away from manufacturing. After doing some career exploration, Michelle decided she would like to take advantage of the training benefit through Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Michelle chose to enroll in training for Medical Insurance Billing and Office Administration at Ross Medical Education Center and began training in November 2021. She was able to participate in hybrid courses to get her certification, taking her classes very seriously.

Michelle received her certificate in June 2022, increasing her employability as she acquired a vocational skill to be competitive in the local labor market. Michelle worked diligently on her resume and was immediately seeking full-time employment upon course completion. In early September 2022, Michelle obtained full time employment with MI Eye Institute. Today Michelle earning a higher wage than her previous job as a successful Patient Service Representative in a growing field.

VISIONS OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE

OJT + CDL = **NEW DRIVING CAREER**



Owosso - Heather found she hadn't quite bounced back from losing her job as a Loan Clerk Manager in 2020. She was making ends meet with as a Clerk at a local business but had taken a significant pay cut. Heather decided to make the daunting task of building a new career when she found an opportunity with Indian Trails in Owosso.

Indian Trails offers daily scheduled bus routes throughout Michigan and the Midwest and were looking to hire and train new Bus Drivers. As the position requires a Commercial Drivers License (CDL), that she did not have, an investment needed to be made by either her or the employer to accomplish this.

Heather qualified for On-The-Job Training through the WIOA program, and GST Michigan Works! was able to reimburse a portion of her wages to Indian Trails during her training period to help cover the cost of this training requirement.

Heather started her OJT with Indian Trails on 11/29/21 working full-time, and completed her On-The-Job Training plan on 2/2/2022. After earning her CDL her wage was increased over \$2/hr. As of November 2022, Heather confirmed she is still with Indian Trails and enjoying her new career.

"I honestly found my dream job when I was hired into Indian Trails," Heather states. "I never pictured myself ever driving a bus, it was very intimidating! I have made multiple trips to St. Ignace going across the Mackinaw Bridge. I learned the route we have that goes to Milwaukee and seen so many amazing things along the way! If you love to drive this is definitely the job for you."

Flint - Tyler Taylor is a 23-year-old single parent with 2 small children. Tyler felt trapped in a low paying job that offered no opportunity for growth. Even while working full-time at a low paying job, he was forced to sell his plasma to support himself and his children. Tyler was reaching his breaking point. He reached out to GST Michigan Works! for help finding employment that would pay him a living wage. After several meetings with his Career Coach, it was determined that he would pursue training in CDL-A to become a truck driver.

There were times when it seemed like Tyler was losing focus on his goal, due to daily stress and anxiety, but thanks to support from friends and family he was able to stay on track. Tyler successfully completed training in less than 8 weeks and obtained employment with a local company

with a designated route earning well above the median wage in Genesee County. Tyler is proud of his accomplishments and is grateful for the tuition assistance and support he received from GST Michigan Works!



**ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS
AS A FATHER & A CAREER**

THE PATH OF EXCELLENCE WITH JMG

Flint - Shameka Fisher began working with GST Michigan Works in April of 2019 after applying for the PATH (Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope) program. As a single mother of three, she had dropped out of high school and was struggling to obtain meaningful employment. Shameka wanted to earn her high school diploma and develop the skills needed to achieve a successful career. After learning about the Jobs for Michigan Graduates (JMG) program, she enrolled and began working with her JMG specialist to explore her career goals and educational opportunities. Shameka decided to enroll in Mount Morris Center for Education so she could earn her diploma.

While pursuing her diploma, Shameka actively participated with JMG to develop her employability, leadership, and interpersonal skills. She attended various workshops including JMG sessions, Interview Review, Resume Workshop, and Workplace Excellence. She received study assistance from Talent Development Center and worked with PATH to resolve barriers including mileage funds, auto repairs, and interview attire.

Through JMG, Shameka developed a support system of professionals and peers to assist her along her career pathway. A few months after receiving her diploma in May of 2021, Shameka enrolled in the Ross Medical Education Center's Medical Assistant program in Flint, MI in July 2021. In April 2022, she graduated with her Medical Assistant certificate.

With the support of JMG, PATH, and GST Michigan Works! and her family, Shameka obtained her high school diploma and certificate as a Medical Assistant. She has now obtained employment with Obstetrics and Gynecology of Greater Flint working 32+ hours weekly as a Medical Assistant. Shameka has stated that she “loves being a Medical Assistant”. Shameka has been an inspiration to her peers and her JMG Specialist as she continues to develop in her career, set new goals, and achieve success.



According to Shameka, she found the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates program to be very *positive*. She was *inspired, motivated, and strengthened* by the people around her.





SUCCESS STORIES



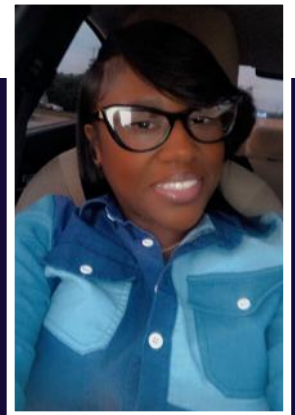
Flint- Davon Hawkins is an Out of School Youth participant from the Greater Flint Health Coalition's Flint Healthcare Employment Opportunities (FHEO) program, a GST Michigan Works! service provider. Davon first heard about the FHEO program when he received a flyer in the mail. He was a student at University of Michigan-Flint and working in retail at Nike. At the time he was not working in a health-related field, but was interested in pursuing a career in health care and helping others in need.

While enrolled in the program, Davon completed 120 hours of Life Skills and Healthcare Career Exploration training hosted by Flint Strive. Davon shared that his experience while at Flint Strive was amazing, challenging, eye opening, and empowering. Davon then began Dental Assistant training at Ross Medical Education

in September 2021. The FHEO program covered the cost of tuition and required classroom materials such as textbooks and scrubs for Davon. Davon stated, "I learned a lot from there and they really prepare the students for what it's like in the real world."

Once completed with his training, he began working full time as a Dental Assistant for Dental Care Team in Grand Blanc, MI earning \$15.00 per hour. Davon is most excited about applying his newly acquired skills in his role while learning more on-the-job skills. Davon shared that his future goals are to "continue my undergraduate education and attend medical school to become a Dentist." Davon offers this piece of advice for anyone looking to begin their career, "your portrayal and character is very important. It is important because you must present the best image of yourself to the world so that the positive spotlight and opportunities are always pointed in your direction."

Flint - Erricka Mayfield is an adult participant from the Greater Flint Health Coalition's Flint Healthcare Employment Opportunities (FHEO) program, a GST Michigan Works! service provider. Erricka heard about the FHEO program from a friend of her family and decided to call in and get more details. She attended one of the FHEO Program information sessions on Zoom and knew it would be a great opportunity. Erricka has always had a passion for the healthcare field and worked as a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) prior to entering the FHEO program. She loves that the healthcare field offers job stability since there is always work available. After working as a CNA, she was ready for a different healthcare environment and found interest in Phlebotomy.



While enrolled in the FHEO program Erricka completed 120 hours of Life Skills and Healthcare Career Exploration training hosted by Flint Strive. She describes her experience as "very deep, personal, and very rewarding. The most important thing I learned was to be professional at all times and to never get comfortable in your position." Lifelong friends were made and the experience was nothing but positive.

After completing Life Skills training, Erricka went on to Serenity Health Training Institute for Phlebotomy training. The FHEO Program covered the cost of tuition and all classroom materials needed for successful completion of the program. She loved that it was a hands-on training, which allowed her the opportunity to get a feel for what being a Phlebotomist will entail. Erricka graduated from Serenity on August 4, 2022.






Once she completed Phlebotomy training, Erricka was immediately offered a position at McLaren-Flint. She works as a Laboratory Technical Assistant in the Hematology department. Erricka plans to continue growing and learning in the healthcare field with the goal of continually moving up.

CONGRATULATIONS, DAVON & ERRICKA AS YOU REACH YOUR HEALTHCARE GOALS!

APPRENTICESHIP READINESS TRAINING

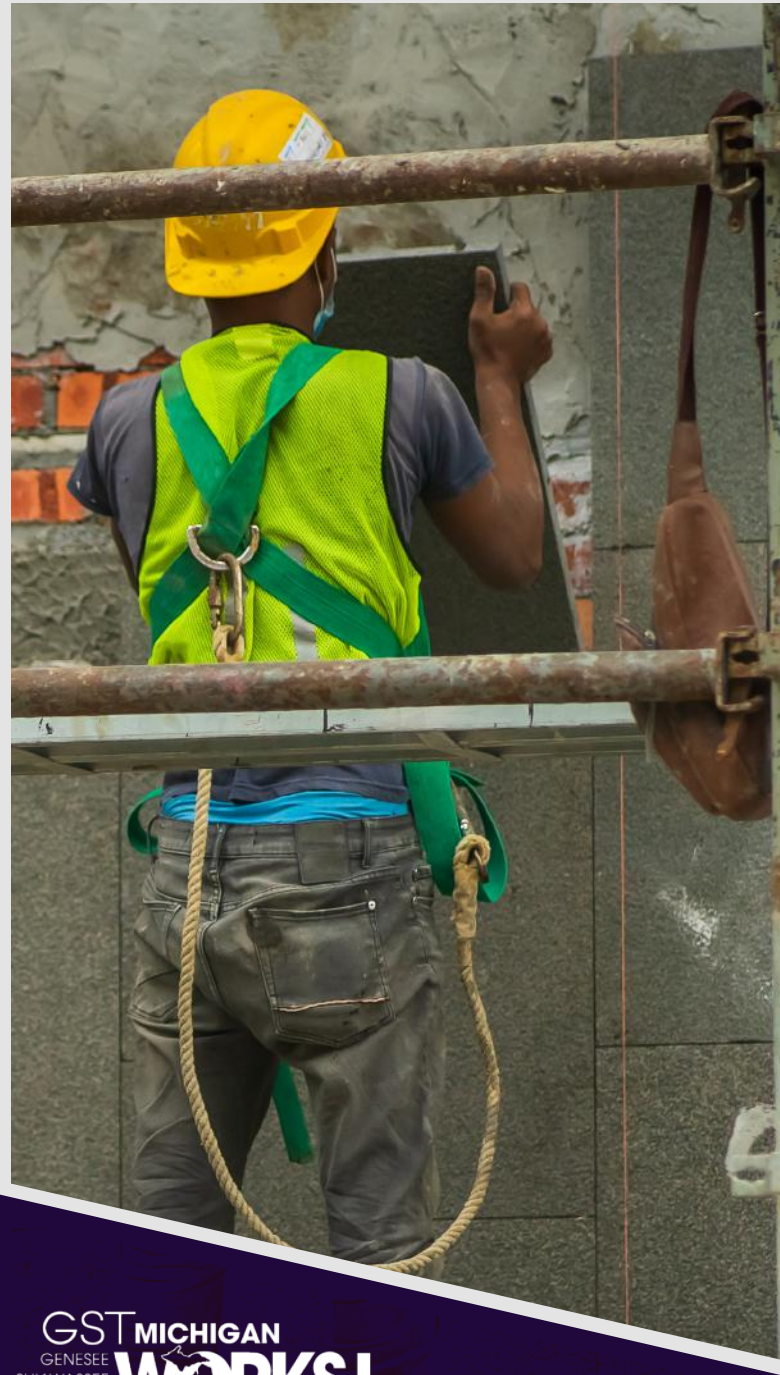
If you're looking to get into a Construction Trades Union, we have the perfect opportunity for you! We are recruiting participants for our Apprenticeship Readiness Training Program. Participants will have a chance to receive FREE training and be connected with possible apprenticeship opportunities in the building trades unions upon completing the 11-week training program. The training and experience acquired from the training will prepare class participants to enter a Construction Trades Union with confidence and the knowledge to succeed!

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS REQUIREMENTS:

-  Be at least 18 years of age
-  Be able to pass random drug tests
-  Have a valid driver's license
-  Have their own vehicle
(per building trade unions requirements)
-  Commit to 11 weeks of training

QUESTIONS?

Don't hesitate to email any questions you have to Wanda Bigelow at WBIGELOW@GSTMWORKS.ORG



GST MICHIGAN
GENESEE SHIAWASSEE THUMB
WORKS!

**REGISTER OR
LEARN MORE**
[GSTMWORKS.ORG/
ApprenticeshipReadiness](https://GSTMWORKS.ORG/ApprenticeshipReadiness)



**CLASSES BEGIN
JANUARY 17, 2023**

EMPLOYER SUCCESS STORIES

"HEY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU DID THAT!"

Owosso - Maurer Heating and Cooling has been a long-standing business in Owosso working in the HVAC industry selling, installing, and servicing commercial and residential products. Over the years GST Michigan Works! has been in touch with Maurer many times, keeping the lines of communication open should they need assistance.

In September 2022, a follow up interaction and general conversation presented an opportunity for GSTMW to assist with On-The-Job training. GSTMW discussed the OJT procedure, put the master agreement in place and worked with the participant to start the process which included supportive services. After seeing how smoothly the process went the discussion changed to the Going Pro Talent Fund. Kevin Maurer attended the information session which was followed by the fact finding and an application will be done. We are now discussing the possibility of paid work experiences and USDOL apprenticeships.

All these programs have been brought up over the years and have never "stuck" because there wasn't a need at the time. Due to the labor shortage, there is now and all the information sounds like it's being heard for the first time. Chris Schueler, Business Solutions Professional in Owosso said, *"The response I got is 'Hey, I didn't know you did that!' Maurer is not the first or the only business with that response. The information becomes important when the **NEED** the is there, the important thing on our end is to continue to offer the information and **BE THERE** when the need arises. To keep informing and saying, "Hey, **WE DO THAT!**"*



Lapeer - Ryan Reamer, Plant Manager for H & H Tool of Lapeer was a participant in a career exploration session as part of a Jobs for Michigan's Graduates activity designed to expose local students from Quest High School to careers in manufacturing. The career exploration session was such a success that a follow-up plant tour was attended by students looking at H & H Tool employment opportunities.

One of the students, Max Kozlowski, was so interested in the possibility of employment with H & H Tool he became a youth participant in our Youth Employment Program. As an employer host through the GST Michigan Works! Young Professionals work experience program, H & H Tool employed Max, a high school junior for 90 days. This allowed Max valuable experience and exposure to a career in a real manufacturing environment. Max went back to Quest High School for his senior year and with the continued support of H & H Tool Max is now working at H & H Tool through Co-op as part of his high school completion.

Thanks to the dedication and mentorship of partners like Ryan Reamer and H & H Tool, students are learning that local manufacturing opportunities are a viable career path.

JOBS *for* MICHIGAN'S
GRADUATES

MENTORING IN MANUFACTURING

ACTIVE MEDICAL YOUNG PROFESSIONAL



Lapeer - Active Home Medical in Lapeer has been in the role of a vendor for supplying our Medical Occupation Students uniforms and required medical equipment for customers enrolled in training via GST Michigan Works! for several years. When the Young Professionals work experience initiative opportunity opened, local Lapeer youth participant seemed like she may be a good fit for placement. Sarah was enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program at Mott Community College and was wanting to be placed with a health-related employer. Due to Sarah just starting her program, a match in a dental practice was unable to be secured.

The GSTMW! team set a goal to locate an employer in a health-related field that could still expose Sarah to a meaningful work experience that would align with her career goals. Active Home Medical Supply was approached due to our past positive relationship as a vendor and being a health and medical business.

Active Home Medical Supply has been in business in Lapeer for over 30 years but recently has acquired a new owner, Stacey Fike. Stacey was more than willing to work with our program and designed a work plan that would expose Sarah to protocol and standard medical ethics that would be transferable to any medical practice.

Sarah Rodgers successfully completed the duration of the 90-day work experience opportunity at Active Home Medical. Though Sarah could have remained as an employee, she is focusing on her studies and complete her training, grateful to have this valuable work experience under her belt.

Active Home Medical has such a positive experience, they have taken on a second youth for Young Professional work experience, continuing to mentor and empower our upcoming workforce.



DOING WHAT IT TAKES TO HELP TRAIN EMPLOYEES



Owosso - While working on the 2022 Going Pro Talent Fund, GST Michigan Works! in Shiawassee County was contacted by AmeriChem Sales Company for assistance with the Talent Fund application. AmeriChem Sales Company produces and sells industrial lubricants is located in Mason in Ingham County which is serviced by Capital Area Michigan Works! The company however wanted to work with GSTMW! The okay to do so was given by CAMW! and we proceeded.

It became clear that AmeriChem had never worked with Michigan Works! and was unfamiliar with the vast array of services available to both the company and its employees aside from the Going Pro Talent Fund. The initial in-person meeting lasted well over an hour at which Michigan Works! was discussed in detail along with the Talent Fund and its application process.

Upon completion of the application AmeriChem was awarded \$19,665. A change in class scheduling and higher than expected employee retention changed some of the training and hiring needs which meant the company didn't need the full award. In the end, they were awarded \$6120.

AmeriChem Sales Company and its employees liked the program and were able to train key employees in hazardous material safety and other related topics. As a result, they are now applying for the 2023 Talent Fund.

Being able to assist a company outside of the GST Michigan Works! area and to introduce and promote the organization has been a rewarding experience. The company is pleased with the service, the outcomes, and the other products available through Michigan Works and will now continue to work with our neighboring CAMW!



FLYING INTO THE AGRICULTURAL FUTURE

Huron - Cooperative Elevator takes pride in being on the leading edge of Technology, so when they learned that drones were being used in agricultural settings, they wanted more information. Upon meeting with Rantizo, an industry leader in Drone Spraying Equipment, the company concluded that drones would be useful in applying fungicides on crops in which the fields were too wet to take their ground equipment into. The company decided to invest in two new drones. During a meeting with Cooperative Elevator, Carl Osentoski of Huron County Economic Corporation identified a potential opportunity for GST Michigan Works! to help.

With the company's recent investment in drone technology, specialized training was a priority. Deb Nowicki, Business Solutions Professional with GSTMW in Huron County was able to assist Cooperative Elevator with an Incumbent Worker Grant in the amount of \$3,000 upskill current employees through Rantizo.

Evan Medvec, Advanced Agronomy Manager and Josh Leppeck successfully completed the Applications Services Pilot Drone Training Program. Each obtained Remote Pilot Licenses from the Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration, as well as their Commercial Pesticide Applicator license through Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

With these drones Evan and Josh are able to spot treat fields, get into smaller fields/areas where the larger equipment can't reach, apply product in fields that are too wet to get the bigger rigs in, and apply treatment in fields with visual or physical obstructions. The drones weigh about 200 pounds and hold 8 gallons of liquid. They are able to cover about 60 acres in one hour. Evan and Josh have to file a flight plan with the FAA to get clearance each time they fly the drones. The future of agriculture is alive and well in the Thumb of Michigan!

GROWING LOCAL BUSINESS & TALENT

Sandusky - Ben Kendra started Kendra IT as a “side gig” when he was a sophomore in high school. He went on to begin a successful career as an IT Manager for a public school district, but eventually decided to devote his full attention to Kendra IT. He was making more income from his part-time high school business, than the average American’s salary at the time. Kendra IT is now a full-service IT company, employing several people. They provide end-to-end services, including physical installation and integration, network design, managed services, and cyber security.

GSTMW! began working with Kendra IT in May of 2022, when they signed to the Young Professionals work experience program and provided Ethan Maier an opportunity to work and learn from the business first-hand. Ethan successfully completed his work experience in August, and is now in his freshman year at Delta College, completing a degree in Computer Science & Information Technology.

Through this work, GSTMW! learned that Kendra IT needed advanced training to remain competitive in their industry and continue to grow. Through the Industry Infinity grant, we were able to assist Ben Kendra with training in Penetration Testing, and Certified Ethical Hacking. This is at the cutting edge of Cyber Security and will help Kendra IT to advance in this area. Kendra IT is committed to providing outstanding service, and to continue their growth and employment in Sandusky Michigan.

There were two tiers/facets of success with Kendra IT. First, they were able to provide 90 days of relevant work experience for a youth about to begin his college program in Computer Science & Information Technology. And secondly, Kendra IT was able to enhance their internal skillset, to remain competitive and to grow their business in the Cyber Security arena.

Ethan Maier will be “ahead of the game” as he begins his program of study at Delta College and will likely become highly successful in his chosen career field. Likewise, as Kendra IT continues to enhance their internal skillset, they will continue to grow and expand their service offerings. In the long term, this will allow Kendra IT to provide additional employment within their community, and to provide internships and relevant work experience for local youth.



IMAGE: **BEN KENDRA**

LEARN & EARN

DECEMBER 2022 | VOL. 21 ISSUE 3

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Megan Roggow, Director of Early Childhood Services for New Lothrop Schools, has a long standing relationship with the WIOA program. She participated in the WIOA program when she was a student at New Lothrop High School. Megan worked at the Baker College Early Learning Center, which is now Elite Early Learning Center in Corunna. Megan recalls her experience with the WIOA program as follows, "I vividly remember walking with high hopes and a racing heart through the SRES D doors to meet with my WIOA caseworker. I had my notebook in hand, a smile on my face and butterflies in my stomach. I sat down at a long table filled with paperwork waiting for me to read through and sign. I worried I was not ready for a job in a 'big town'. I worried other members of my soon to be work team may not like me. I worried about all the things a teenager joining the workforce for the first time worries about. What do I wear? How will I know everything I need to do? My caseworker reassured me this was all part of the journey and she would help me along the way. During my time with the WIOA program, I gained valuable experience and learned so much about the childcare industry and myself. Kendra Nichols, the director, helped me gain the skill set and knowledge needed to build successful relationships with the children in the center. Watching her love for the staff, children and the center as whole provided me with a goal; I wanted to be in a career working with children someday." "Fast forward over twenty years (now 2022) I once again sat at a long table going over paperwork in a SRES D building. I walked through the doors without butterflies and not as a WIOA employee, but as the Director of Early Childhood Services for New Lothrop Schools. As the meeting began, a fellow director sat next to me at the table. I wondered if the woman next to me was Kendra Nichols (the director from the childcare center I was assigned to twenty years ago) as she looked familiar. I asked her if she had worked at Baker College Early Learning Center and she responded, "yes." I explained to her the role she played in helping me choose my career. The same big smile that put me at ease on my first day as a WIOA worker at the daycare flashed across her face. As she smiled, I was reminded how important the simplicity of a smile can be to a young WIOA worker and vow to share a big smile with all of the WIOA workers that participate as part of our Early Childhood Team at New Lothrop."



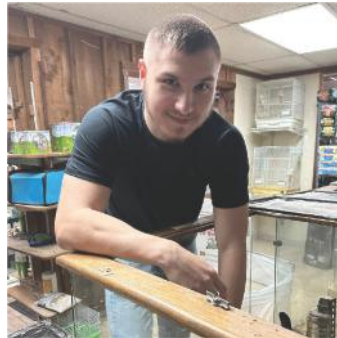
Kendra Nichols, director of Elite Early Learning Center in Corunna, still participates in the WIOA program and has mentored many high school students through the years. When asked about her recent meeting with Megan she said, "I am so proud of Megan and all that she has accomplished and that she is hosting her own WIOA student as the Director of New Lothrop Elementary Latchkey! Even though a lot has changed for all of us, one thing that will never change is my desire and heart for this field and the impact you can make on others! Seeing and hearing of her accomplishments brought me to instant tears of joy and forever filled my heart. I'm proud of you Megan and all that you have become and will continue to offer tomorrow's future leaders!

CONGRATULATIONS MEGAN!

STUDENTS AT WORK



Maylea Edwards (Corunna)
caring for animals at the Shiawassee
County Humane Society.



Bailey Miller (Owosso)
feeding the animals at
Fairview Pet Center.



Nolan Carmody (Corunna)
stacking feed at Family,
Farm and Home.



Xavier Anderson (Corunna)
assisting customers at
Gilberts Hardware.



Paige Brown (New Lothrop)
working with the children at
the New Lothrop Latchkey.

As we begin the holiday season, remember to let your employer know that you are off for Holiday break from **December 21st -January 3rd** . If you are interested in working over the holidays, please see your case manager.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE WIOA STAFF!



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We are excited that businesses are seeing the attraction of the Genesee, Shiawassee & Thumb regions both from a talent perspective as well as an economic growth opportunity and to help support this growth, we have several on-site job fairs planned to recruit the talent that these organizations will need.



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