

TALENT TALK

March 2023 | Volume 6, Issue 3



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

Advancing Employers | Enhancing Talent



REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

574
Occupations

3.2K
Employers

1.4K
Locations

Real Time Intelligence - Job Postings 10/1/2022 - 12/31/2022

Active Job Ads

Registered Nurses	1,027
Retail Salespersons	959
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	940
Stockers and Order Fillers	607
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	550
Fast Food and Counter Workers	484
Nursing Assistants	390
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	336
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	329
Medical and Health Services Managers	303
Driver/Sales Workers	279
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	273
Social and Human Service Assistants	246
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	242
Customer Service Representatives	234
Production Workers, All Other	224
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	221
Speech-Language Pathologists	219
Sales Representatives of Services	214
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	211
Cashiers	199
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	197
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	194
Personal Care Aides	173
Food Preparation Workers	165
Medical Assistants	158

 **9,669**
Page Likes

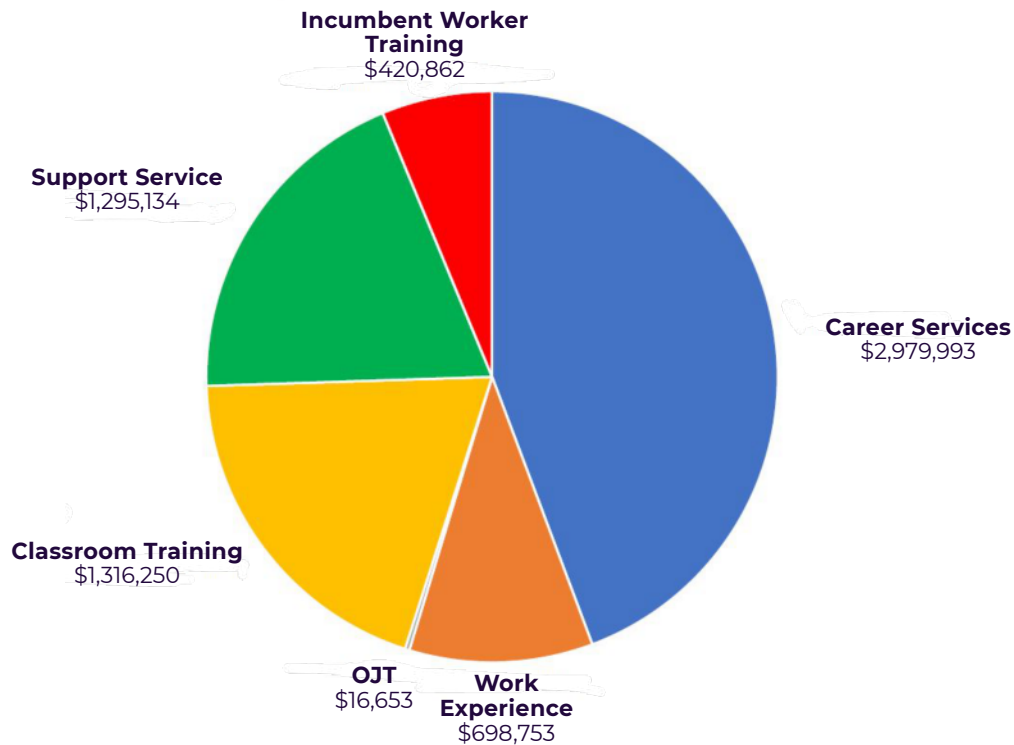
 **693**
Followers

 **447**
Followers

DATA ANALYSIS

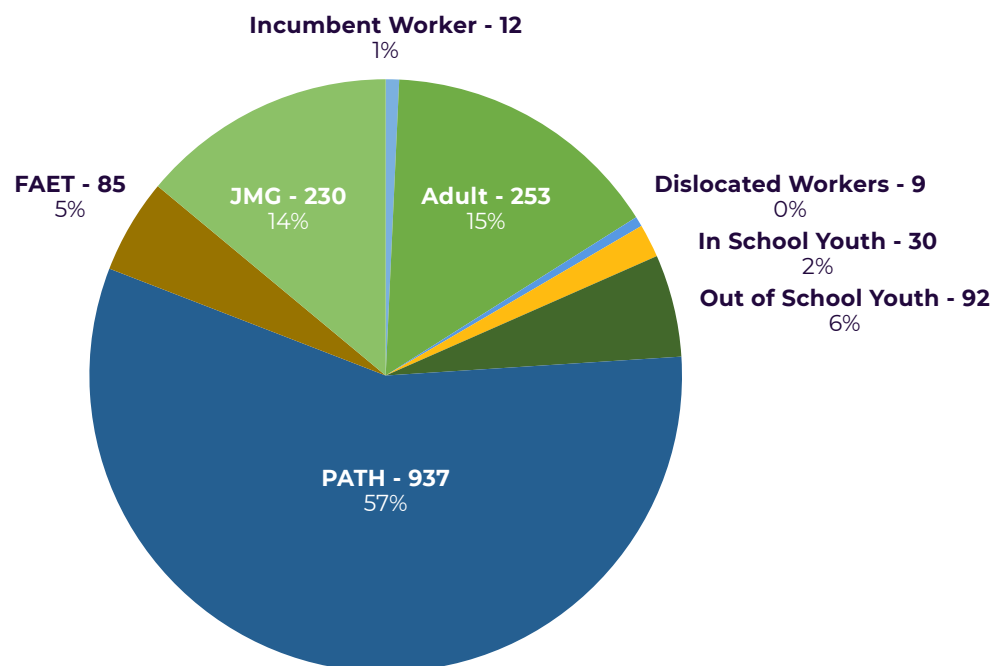
Career Services & Participant Payments

July 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022



New Enrollments

July 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022



EMPLOYEE SUCCESS STORIES

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GRANT



Huron - D'Carlos Sageman was referred to the Huron County GST Michigan Works! Service Center by the City of Bad Axe. The city wanted to hire D'Carlos for their Summer Recreation Program as a Camp Counselor and heard that we may be able to sponsor D'Carlos as a "Young Professional". The Young Professionals grant allows GST Michigan Works! to sponsor youth for employment over the summer by reimbursing the employer for their wages.

D'Carlos qualified for the program and began working for the City of Bad Axe in June of 2022. He did a great job as a Camp Counselor and received excellent evaluations throughout his time with the city!

He completed with the City of Bad Axe in August and started looking for the next step in his young career. He applied at S & S Family Childcare Center. Because of his prior experience working with kids through summer rec., the daycare hired him as a Daycare Assistant. He works approximately 20 hours per week and is looking into going back to school so he can work in the Bad Axe School system as a Para-pro.

Lapeer - Alvis came to GST Michigan Works! in Lapeer during December 2021 due to a layoff. He was assisted in the Resource Room with completing his unemployment. While working with a Career Coach, Alvis mentioned that he was not certified and therefore ineligible for a raise. He was currently making \$15/hr. as a Welder at IDF in Lapeer. He learned about WIOA and training opportunities available to him through GST. With this knowledge, Alvis decided to start training with Lapeer ISD for their Welding course during his layoff. He participated in the training, never missing a class, even after returning to work!

GST Michigan Works! was able to provide financial support to Alvis through tuition payments and the purchase of a welding hood along with steel-toed boots!

During the course of this training, Lapeer ISD ran into some challenges, including: changing teachers, lack of supplies and low funding. Everyone was still able to complete the training and feel prepared to enter the workforce despite these hurdles! Alvis also completed all three parts of the training and finished the course on December 19th. He is now making \$23/hr. with IDF.

"THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP. YOU ARE MORE APPRECIATED THAN YOU KNOW!", SAID ALVIS

MOVING ON UP!

Genesee - After being laid off for the second time as a Leak Surveyor, Nygel decided it was time to acquire a career where layoffs weren't as common. On September 24, 2021, Nygel met with a Career Coach to discuss the path to becoming a CDL-A Driver. After completing the Workplace Excellence workshops and CASAS assessment, Nygel was enrolled in the WIOA program as a Dislocated Worker.

Nygel started CDL-A training at 160 Driving Academy in Flint on November 22, 2021. Since Nygel was training during the winter months and spent a lot of time outside, he needed winter gear to keep warm. He reached out to his Career Coach and was able to get a pair of boots, a coat, insulated pants, and other cold weather accessories.

Though it took longer than anticipated, Nygel graduated from 160 Driving Academy and received his CDL-A license on June 15, 2022. He was very diligent in applying for employment and secured an interview with Coca-Cola within a week after receiving his license. On August 22, 2022, Nygel started at Coca-Cola as a CDL-A Driver making \$24.98/hr with benefits.



Nygel stated,

|| I really appreciate how GST Michigan Works! helped me with a career change. I am now in a new tax bracket. It took a lot of trying to get there, but now **I AM IN THE BIG LEAGUE AND GETTING MY TURN AT BAT.**"



CREDENTIAL LEADS TO CAREER FOR LOW-INCOME YOUTH

Sanilac - Collyn Terry came to GST Michigan Works! in Sandusky to receive assistance obtaining a CDL. As a low-income youth, he was eligible for WIOA funding. He was working as a groundskeeper for a local lawn care business making \$12.00 per hour. He wanted to get his CDL to give him more career opportunities that would provide him with a stable income.

With the help of Maier Driver Education School, Collyn soon gained his credential. A month later he landed a full-time job with Xtreme Utility Equipment as an Equipment Operator. He is now making \$28.00 per hour with benefits and has a bright future ahead!

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A DRIVING FORCE!

Genesee - Jameisha Shelton is another success story for GST MI Works! WIOA program. Jameisha was a young adult and single parent surviving on her meager wages, working diligently full-time as a Direct Care professional. She tried over the years to advance in business operations and complete the Business Management program at Baker College. However, because of her minimal earnings and the responsibility of caring for her young child, Jameisha was not able to finish the courses.

Jameisha came to GSTMW to inquire about short-term, high demand training that wouldn't detain her by long classroom hours or take her away from her full-time employment; not to mention the cost of childcare she would have to come up with. After several meetings with her Career Coach, Danita Horcha, she concluded that she would pursue training in CDL-A Truck Driving. This wasn't a natural choice, but it was the logical one for her. She came from a family that has several truck drivers who made careers out of this profession. She knew what it entailed, and that the financial reward was something she could raise her family on. Jameisha knew that if she completed training, she would start a business with her own truck one day.

The journey was hard, and Jameisha needed a helping hand to make it over the finish line. That's where GST Michigan Works! was able to help her get out of the poverty many single parents face today. Not only was Jameisha's tuition paid for by the WIOA grant, but she was also awarded support assistance that provided enough to get her to a successful completion. Jameisha passed CDL-A training, obtained employment, and was awarded tools, including: a truck driver's GPS, headphone set, winter gear, as well as vehicle repairs and mileage reimbursement.

Jameisha started at the bottom, accepting employment with a landscaping company in the community. However, she didn't stay there long. Jameisha worked hard, and her journey took her to exactly where she wanted to be - a business owner! Today, Jameisha is the owner of MT3 Logistics, she is making upwards of \$5,000/week and continues to work hard.

Jameisha graduated CDL-A training in November 2021 and by October 2022, she had started her own business, is a proud owner of her semi and has goals of buying many more. Now, Jameisha is giving back and accepts resumes of other newly graduated CDL-A drivers. Jameisha Shelton has self-determination that is second to none!

DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

Genesee - Dustin Gunn entered GST Michigan Works! Knowing exactly what he wanted to do for a career. He wanted to drive a commercial tractor trailer as a certified CDL-A driver. He was introduced to his Career Coach then they discussed his barriers and the details of the journey that would follow. They created a coaching strategy that would result in meeting his goal successfully.

Success did not come easy. While Dustin soared through the workshops and the eligibility process, it seemed he had met his match while attempting to achieve the required CASAS score for entry into training. He nearly gave up. Then, he used the services of the Talent Development Center to sharpen his skills! He also continued to work regularly with his Career

Coach and even used some additional barrier-removing resources from the PATH program. Fortified with support, he moved forward.

He soon passed the assessment and entered CDL-A training at 160 Driving Academy in Flint, MI. Mr. Gunn's increased skill level, and continued support from GSTMW, helped him move quickly and confidently through his training. He earned his CDL-A endorsement!

He said, "I almost didn't come back to finish, but I'm so glad I did because now I have a career. I would still have nothing if I didn't finish." Dustin is currently working as a certified CDL-A truck driver for Freedom Dumpsters. His title is Roll-off Dumpster Delivery Driver. He is earning \$20 per hour and has wage reviews every six-months.

WATCHING DREAMS TAKE FLIGHT

Genesee - Christopher's journey towards success began when he enrolled with Flint Genesee Job Corps Center in 2019. Christopher's goals for himself were to obtain his high school diploma, graduate with a trade, and go into the Air Force. Christopher stayed on top of his schoolwork and made sure he maintained his grades.

In 2021, Christopher was referred to GST Michigan Works!, where he met his JMG Specialist, Dominique Clay. He was in the Homeland Security field, which fit in perfectly with his goals by teaching him the skills necessary to be successful in the military. While Christopher was at Job Corps his Specialist would meet him at the Job Corps campus and encourage him to continue to move forward. The effort Christopher was putting in was recognized and he was offered paid work experience to gain the employment skills he needed while completing his education. During his time working with GSTMW Christopher was able to obtain his high school diploma, complete paid work experience and gain his certificate in Homeland Security.

In December of 2021, Ms. Clay was informed that Christopher was preparing to leave Job Corps and was on his way to joining the Air Force. Christopher informed his Specialist that he scored an 82 on his ASVAB and all he had left to do was get clearance from a doctor stating that he was all set to join up.



Unfortunately, Christopher did not get cleared, but because he did such an excellent job at Job Corps and was an upstanding student, the facility welcomed him back until he was able to go into the Air Force. Together with Job Corps, the support of JMG and WIOA Out of School Youth programming, Christopher was able to push through these setbacks, keeping a determined eye on his dream of joining the military.

Finally, the day came when Christopher was able to join the Air Force. He signed his papers in October of 2022 as an Air Force Networking Systems Operating Assistant. He currently makes \$18.88 an hour working 40 hours a week full-time. When his Specialist asked what kept him going, he had this to say, "I never lost focus of what I wanted and where I wanted to be in life. I come from a military family background, and I just wanted to make them and myself proud." We couldn't be any more proud of Christopher and look forward to now watching him live out his dreams!



FROM CASHIER TO LICENSED CAREGIVER

Lapeer - When MaryEllen came to GST Michigan Works! she was working part-time at Menard's as a cashier while attending Mott Community College for her Nursing degree. MaryEllen already had over \$5,000 in student loan debt!

GST Michigan Works! was able to assist MaryEllen with tuition, mileage, and the cost of her NCLEX, fingerprints, as well as Nursing License. MaryEllen completed her classes with high marks!

After graduating with her Associates in Nursing and completing her externship at McLaren Flint, she was offered a job working 36 hours per week and earning \$30 per hour plus benefits!

A MERRY CHRISTMAS FOR JOHN NELSON

Genesee - Heather Green of the "God's Love Foundation" in Linden reached out to Roy Reynolds, a BSP at GST Michigan Works! of Fenton on October 17th, 2022, regarding a gentleman by the name of John Nelson.

John Nelson and his family had been through a lot over the holiday season. The family fell on hard times and was struggling to make much needed repairs to their home. "I got into a situation, and I was struggling," John Nelson said. "I have always been the type of guy that sucks it up and gets it done. That's what I was trying to do." When home living conditions started affecting the kids at school, a school resource officer reached out and connected the Nelson family with FARR -- Fenton Area Resources and Referral Network. "They were going to condemn the house," said Executive Director Dawn Placek. "The city worked with us, and all kinds of organizations stepped up. There are so many people out there who want to help. That is what community is about."

The entire house was renovated. Donations and volunteers stepped up to make all of this happen. John Nelson is thankful and grateful that his family have a safe place to live. The family stayed at a hotel while renovations were being completed.

Email from Heather Green regarding John Nelson:

I am working with an amazing, hardworking family with 7 kids in Fenton. They only have one car, and the dad drives to Lake Orion every day. He is the Culinary Service Director at a company over a series of nursing homes, I believe. I met a woman today that is building the new facility in Linden that said she could help me but asked for his resume. I am pretty sure he would need help building a good resume asap. Is this something you guys could help with? He doesn't get home until 5:00 each night so I'm not sure what your hours are but hoping someone could work with him to get this done and maybe even chat with him about jobs closer if you know of any.

*Thank you for your help, have a great day!
Heather Green*



Roy Reynolds and his team in Fenton invited John Nelson into the office to start coaching and working with him immediately. GST Michigan Works! Career Coaches, Sue Hughes and Veronica Crespo, helped John build a resume that would promote himself better, while trying to find an employer closer to home.

The next step was trying to find the right employer for John. John wanted to stay in a Dietary/Food Director position with a nursing home community where he could grow and build new relationships with an employer that would ideally be as close to home as possible.

On December 7th, Roy Reynolds stopped into Vicinia Gardens, one of the largest nursing home communities in Fenton. He left John Nelson's resume for Diane Luft who is the Organizational Development Manager at Vicinia and said, "If you're looking for a Dietary/Food Director, John Nelson would be a great candidate."

A few days later John received a call from Diane at Vicinia Gardens regarding his resume and the Dietary/Food Director position that they had available. Vicinia scheduled an interview with John for December 14th. On Friday December 16th, John received word from Diane Luft that he was being offered the position. John accepted the position with Vicinia and was thrilled he would be working as the Dietary/Food Director for a great nursing community only a few miles from his home!

GST Michigan Works! in Fenton went one step further for John after hearing he had accepted the position at Vicinia. When starting a new job, who doesn't love to have some new clothes to wear to work? Using resources that GST Michigan Works! can offer, the team was able to help John purchase some new work clothes for when he started at Vicinia Gardens on January 2nd of 2023.

John is very grateful for the team at GST Michigan Works! and everything they did to help him get to this opportunity and closer to home!

DOUBLING WAGES WITH GST

Tuscola - Aletta Samborn came to the Tuscola GST Michigan Works! Service Center in October of 2021. She was a 3rd year nursing student at Saginaw Valley State University interested in tuition assistance. One thing Aletta wanted us to know about was her dedication. While trying to earn her degree, she was also caring for COVID patients at Covenant Health Care. GST Michigan Works! was so impressed with Aletta's drive that we were more than happy to aid her in meeting her education and career goals.

Aletta continued to work and go to school. GST Michigan Works! was able to lessen the financial stressors for her by helping with tuition assistance as well as paying for her state NCLEX testing. "Throughout my training, I have faced financial challenges. GST Michigan Works! has helped me by offering support to cover my tuition the last year of schooling. I found the financial support to be very helpful and it was really nice having someone to check in with.

We are happy to say Aletta graduated with her BSN in nursing from Saginaw Valley State University on December 22, 2022. She graduated Magna Cum Laude and applied for an internal job posting at Covenant. She happily accepted a position in the Labor & Delivery unit as a graduate nurse. Aletta went from earning \$14.45/hr. to \$37.00/hr.

Aletta has a bright future and we couldn't be prouder of all she has accomplished!

"Thank you, Michigan Works, for your help throughout this journey."



BRIGHT FUTURES REQUIRE GREAT STARTS

Sanilac - Makayla Kirkland attends Sandusky High School and the Sanilac Career Center. Makayla is currently attending the BIO Tech program. When originally interviewed by our Youth Staff, Makayla was a Junior in High School. Her only work history was at McDonalds. However, Makayla was interested in learning more about agriculture.

After her interview, Eldon Preston, Business Services Representative, contacted Elk River Hops in Applegate and asked them to interview Makayla for a Summer Youth Work position. Makayla went for her interview and was hired on the same day! She started her Summer Youth position on 06/13/2022 and her work program lasted until 09/03/2022. Makayla earned \$12.00 per hour working part-time in a career that she has an interest in. She learned a skill that she may not have without our assistance and the partnership with Elk River Hops.

During her short-term employment, Makayla was evaluated at the midpoint and at the end. For both evaluations, Makayla received the highest marks. The employer stated that she was a star employee. Makayla always had a great attitude and work ethic.

At the end of the summer Makayla returned to Sandusky High School to start her Senior year. Her case may have closed, but the working relationship has not. Makayla recently was in the office getting help from the Literacy Tutor with some homework that was proving to be a challenge. Makayla knows that we are a one-stop-shop. The one place she can fall back on for help when she needs it. This is just the beginning of our story with Makayla.

This relationship shows how GST Michigan Works! strives to be part of the community and works to assist the next generation of the workforce entering the job market.

DEBT FREE IN 2023

Tuscola - Malia had big plans for her near future. Not only did she plan to get married in July of 2022, but also complete her Nursing degree in December with the least amount of debt as possible. Malia heard about the grant from a SVSU faculty member and immediately contacted GST Michigan Works! in Caro to learn more. Malia came to the service center in October of 2021 and realized that she qualified for WIOA funding due to never having a full-time job for more than a year and working part-time for Grub Hub without benefits.

"I began nursing school during COVID. Everything was shut down, and I was completing all my face-to-face classes virtually. With everything being shut down, I was no longer able to work at the job I had at the time. Although it was helpful to have extra time to focus just on school, my school bills just kept coming despite my inability to work. I had saved a good amount of funds to get through the next semester but was unsure of how I would pay for anything beyond that. My goal was always to complete college without any debt, so I worked hard all summer and throughout the school year to achieve that goal. It no longer looked possible after being unable to work during COVID. I received an email from a faculty member letting me know about the scholarship through GST MI Works! and I contacted them. GST Michigan Works! was amazing! If it was not for GST, I would not have been able to pay for my degree or my NCLEX. I am forever grateful for the funds they provided so I could pursue my dream of being a Registered Nurse!"

"Going to SVSU for my nursing degree was the best decision I could have made. I am thankful to all the staff and faculty there who have given me excellent teaching and clinical experience to feel prepared for this new role as a Registered Nurse. Starting nursing school during COVID added extra challenges, but the staff did well to adapt to the pandemic and still provide us with the best academic experience possible."

"Networking with GST Michigan Works! was amazing and very helpful. As I was looking for a job during the pandemic, GSTMW provided me with multiple contacts and resources for finding a job and even reached out to some of the contacts to notify them I would be inquiring.

This was not only helpful for me as I looked for a job, but benefits local employers in building their workforce. While I was completing my degree, a GST employee would check in with me just to see how I was doing, how my classes were going and would offer any additional support I needed. Having someone who cared and was invested in me as a student and future RN was so meaningful."

Malia was placed at MyMichigan Health in Midland for her leadership experience and was offered a day-shift RN position in the Medical Oncology unit. She began working at MyMichigan Health in Midland on January 9th, 2023, as an RN and will be making \$33.44/hour after completing her NCLEX exam on January 21st. She not only accomplished her goal of becoming a Nurse but did so without the burden of student loan debt!



Thank you GST MI Works! from the bottom of my heart for the financial help, support, and encouragement. It was the biggest blessing [throughout] my Nursing degree."

– Malia

LO DIFÍCIL NO ES LLEGAR A LA CIMA, SINO JAMÁS DEJAR DE SUBIR.

THE DIFFICULT THING IS NOT TO REACH THE TOP, BUT NEVER STOP CLIMBING.

Genesee - Jose Lopez came to GST Michigan Works! via the PATH program to overcome several barriers, most of which he thought he would not be able to get past. The core of his work experience was in the food service and restaurant industry. Though he worked hard, he was never scheduled enough hours to sustain his family. Jose was attempting to juggle both work and the load of being a single father of two. Both roles require a lot of his time and attention.

Jose knew overcoming his barriers would be a challenge, but he was up for the task, committed to being a great employee and most importantly a great Dad! With the help of Career Coach Chavon Miller, Jose created a plan to remove his immediate barriers. This started with his commitment to successfully complete the AEP process. In addition to barrier removal, he was able to complete both CASAS testing and develop a polished resume.

Jose was determined to do whatever was necessary to move his family forward, so he was enrolled in the Workplace Excellence Training provided by GST Michigan Works! to enhance his job readiness skills. Following the completion of Workplace Excellence Training, Jose felt even more equipped to land the right job.

Jose, Chavon, and the PATH team worked together to find a suitable and promising subsidized employment opportunity. His skills were an excellent match for a position at the LatinX Technology & Community Center in Flint. During this time, GSTMW! was able to assist Jose with supportive services such as work attire and transportation assistance throughout his paid work experience. Feeling confident, Jose took on another big endeavor by deciding to go back and obtain his GED!



As his work experience was coming to an end, Jose expressed some concerns about the future. He continued to do his best, and on the very last day of his employment assignment Jose was offered a full-time position with LatinX Technology & Community Center. Today,

Jose is utilizing his bilingual skills and recent work experience to assist customers faced with language barriers. He continues to work toward the completion of his GED while employed full-time.

DRIVING OVER THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

Huron - We met Danny Bambach when he came to our Service Center asking about tutoring services and help getting a GED. Danny was a single father and a small business owner, but due to the economic downturn in 2021/2022, he had to sell his business at a total loss. Understanding the importance of education and training, Danny reached out to GST Michigan Works! in Bad Axe to see if he might be eligible for assistance in reaching his goals. He began working diligently on his homework and faithfully met with his GED tutor weekly. Once he obtained his GED, he completed the applications for the Industry Infinity Grant and WIOA and began preparing to enter training for a CDL at Thumb CDL in Deckerville, MI.

Danny remained laser focused and faithful to his goal of

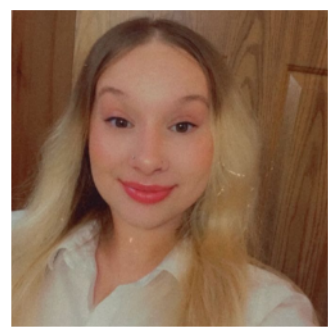
obtaining his credential, working with his Career Coach at each step. Just after Christmas in 2022, he completed and passed his road test. Danny couldn't wait to tell his father that he had passed and obtained his CDL! Completion of his GED and obtaining his CDL credential bolstered his self-confidence to leap forward into the workforce as a CDL Class A Driver. That evening he shared his resume and credentials on Facebook. Within 24 hours he received multiple job offers!

The year 2022 began with vocational and economic instability for Danny and his family. With the support of GST Michigan Works! and encouragement of family and friends, he is beginning 2023 on the road to success, stability, and a very bright future.



Student SUCCESS STORIES

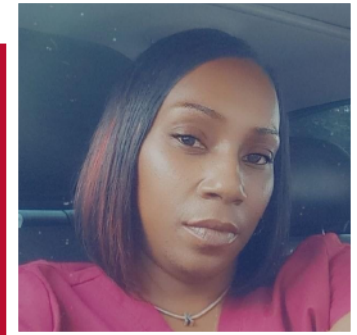
Flint - Kearsten is an Out of School Youth participant from the FHEO Program. Kearsten completed Certified Nurse Assistant training with Charter Healthcare Training Center. After training, Kearsten secured employment with Monark as a Certified Nurse Assistant.



Kearsten shared that,

“ I enjoy taking care of people and seeing their world light up when they know someone cares for them.”

Flint - Krokeshia is an Adult participant from the FHEO Program. Krokeshia was working at Home Manager when she heard a radio advertisement for the FHEO Program and decided it was time to expand her healthcare career. Krokeshia completed Phlebotomy training with Mott Community College in August 2022 and shortly after secured employment with Hurley Medical Center as a Laboratory Assistant. Krokeshia shared that she enjoys her new career in Phlebotomy and enjoys helping and caring for others the most.



FHEO Quarterly EMPLOYER & COMMUNITY PARTNERS



CONGRATULATIONS, COHORT 51!

SUPPORTING GROWTH IN OUR REGION

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.



Check Out Our EVENTS PAGE:

[GSTMIWORKS.ORG/EVENTS](https://gstmiworks.org/events)

EMPLOYER SUCCESS STORIES

RASSINI BRAKES



Genesee - Rassini Brakes LLC is a tier one manufacturer of OEM braking systems for the automotive industry. Rassini Brakes LLC is the first brake division of Rassini International established in the United States. Established in Flint, Michigan in mid-2013, they began with approximately 30 full-time employees.

Gary Harrison has been working with Amanda Walter – Human Resource Manager at Rassini Brakes for almost five years offering various programs through GST Michigan Works! As they continue to grow with the market demand, GST will continue to support Rassini Brakes. Rassini has taken advantage of several programs offered through GST Michigan Works!

including the Incumbent Worker Program and The Going Pro Talent Fund. Rassini Brakes was awarded the Going Pro Talent Fund in 2021 and successfully trained new and existing employees with the award. Rassini Brakes was also awarded the Going Pro Talent Fund in 2022 and hired and trained 22 new employees.

Rassini Brakes made a large investment in 2019-20 with the addition of 57,000 square feet on the main building. Amanda Walter said the Going Pro Talent Fund 2022 award allowed them to meet the new business demands by training new and existing employees in specific skills and tasks including Assembly Operations and Lean Manufacturing. She mentioned the need for employees will continue to increase. Rassini Brakes has taken the steps to hire people with little or no experience in the machining field to assist those that want to work in a full-time, long-term position. With these hiring decisions, the need for effective training has and will continue to grow, but the reward in helping the community is worth the cost.

Rassini Brakes completed all trainings for the Going Pro Talent Fund in 2022 and BSP, Gary Harrison was able to deliver Rassini Brakes a check for \$33,000.00.

Huron - GST Michigan Works! completed a Fact Finding with Gemini Plastics and determined they would be a good candidate for a Going Pro Talent Fund Application. Denise researched training options and submitted the application for Basic Electrical Troubleshooting training for two employees, classes for a Tool & Die Maker Apprentice, as well as On the Job Training for some new operators. Gemini Plastics was awarded the Going Pro Grant and were able to utilize \$7,300.00 in grant funding to assist them with training costs.

It is always a challenge in a rural area to find new employees, so it is important to train those that you have and spend extra time with new employees. When you spend the extra resources on your staff, they will be more comfortable in the tasks that they are being asked to do. Some of their current employees needed to obtain electrical training so they would be able to keep machines up and running.

A new operator has moved into a Process Technician Apprenticeship. Another employee who completed the Electrical Troubleshooting training increased his knowledge and can keep machines running through third shift. A couple of these employees were able to receive pay increases because of their dedication to the training and taking on increased responsibilities.

GEMINI PLASTICS

DOMICO MED-DEVICE

Genesee - Domico Med-Device is a medical device manufacturer with over 40 years of history in Genesee County. The company was founded in 1974 and has since gone through several owners. The new owner, Mike Czop, is a local Fenton resident and has been with the company for over twenty-five years. By purchasing the company, Mr. Czop was able to save 83 local jobs, as to the alternative of closing the facility. Domico Med-Device is located in Fenton with over 75,000 square feet of manufacturing space. They currently have nearly 100 employees. Domico Med-Device's primary customers at this time are OEM's who sell their products around the globe. They are currently working towards having more Domico Med-Device branded products to increase profits in order to put funds back into the business and into Michigan's economy.

A big impact from Domico Med-Device divesting from the larger business is a lack of training funds to support the personal and career growth of their employees. Being a newer business, cash on hand is often needed to fund things more directly related to the running of the business.

Additionally, the financial strain that COVID-19 has put on the business has made it practically impossible to afford paying for their own training in 2020 and 2021. LEAN training is especially important to help streamline the business practices and become more efficient, having less direct labor and overhead costs.

Training is also critical to the business continuing to succeed due to the age of the current workforce. Over 30% of the current workforce is above the age of 55. Therefore, ensuring that the younger workforce is sufficiently trained to step in due to retirements is important. Having gaps in knowledge or skillsets due to retirements can put a strain on the business operations running smoothly, getting products delivered timely, and keeping positive relationships with the customers. Being able to have employees internally step up and fill a need due to the high number of anticipated retirements in the next 5-10 years is essential to success and future growth.

The reimbursement from the Going Pro Talent Fund will allow the business to grow its employees' skill set and allow the continuous improvement of their employees. With the extreme labor shortage suffered in 2021, it is more important than ever that Domico continue to engage current staff, grow their skill sets to keep them from leaving the company and allow their attained knowledge to help the business grow. Employers cannot afford the high rates of turnover to continue in production, and do not want to see "the great resignation" impact other key areas of the business. By investing in employees, they will hopefully choose to stay working for the company. The reimbursement funds will help Domico work on the business, rather than solely in the business.

On January 19th, GST Michigan Works! Business Solutions Professionals, Gary Harrison and Roy Reynolds, delivered a Going Pro Talent Fund Check in the amount of \$42,977.82 directly to Erin Hoffman, Human Resource Manager. A photo was taken that includes Erin Hoffman, Roy Rogers, Gary Harrison, and owner of Domico Med-Device, Mike Czop.



BOOSTING CONFIDENCE THROUGH TRAINING



Lapeer - Davison Heating & Cooling is a small business that is committed to creating and increasing their value to customers, communities, and their own dedicated workforce. Staying up to date in the HVAC industry is critical for safety reasons and maintaining/attracting the customer base. The need to upskill and cross-train individuals knowing they have employees retiring in the very near future, launched their efforts to a top priority status; asking what, who, how and next steps to take.

Through discussions, GST Michigan Works! was able to determine that the GPTF FY22 award was a good fit to go after for their training needs. Without the ability to upskill employees, their business would be adversely limited as to the amount and types of services provided to customers. They also needed more employees to be able to work independently,

therefore, servicing more clients daily. We worked together on clear justifications for each class, determined the trainees, and were able to submit the GPTF Application for a hopeful approval. Ultimately, Davison Heating & Cooling was awarded the GPTF and was reimbursed \$12,595.00 in training costs!

“Demonstrated trainees’ knowledge, skills and abilities have improved and boosted confidence in their overall capabilities”, Trish said.

Trish also stated, “Collectively the guys really liked the training. The increases due to training completions will and have enabled us to move some of the current employees to repair and service and open us up to hire for installations and maintenance. We have job opportunities for rewarding careers here and appreciate the Going Pro Talent Fund’s assistance with some of the training costs!”



SAFETY IS KEY

Tuscola - Kappen Tree Service (KTS) is the largest Michigan based tree service that works for three utilities all within Michigan. They built a state-of-the-art training facility to keep their employees safe and stay on the “cutting edge”. Employees go through a 3-year apprenticeship program and having access to the facility helps them move forward with more ease through their apprenticeship. They take great pride in keeping all employees safe and making them the best of the best in the industry!

Jason stated, “The number one thing training has helped us with is SAFETY! Along

with safety follows productivity, efficiency and higher morale that transfers to customer and utility satisfactory experiences.” He also said, “In our industry, there has been a ton of new gear employees are using. It can get a little crazy because people try to learn how to use it by watching YouTube videos. That’s great and all but NOT how anyone should learn to use a life supporting or rescue device!”

KTS partnered with GSTMW! to apply for the Going Pro Talent Fund FY22 and was awarded \$120,000 toward the training expense of a total of 40 apprentices. They were successful in training 25 new and 15 current employees. Jason said,

“WORKING WITH GST MICHIGAN WORKS! AND GETTING THE GOING PRO TALENT FUND HAS HELPED US AND OUR EMPLOYEES IN A BIG WAY. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK AS YOU CONTINUE TO MAKE THE WORKFORCE IN MICHIGAN SAFER AND MORE SECURE!”

CENTURY TOOL - WEATHERING THE "NEW NORMAL" STORM

Genesee - 2021 started as a year filled with optimism for most of us. The storm that had covered the entire globe was showing signs of letting up. However, we would face new challenges and hurdles as we all tried to return our lives back to some sort of normalcy. Unfortunately, we were faced with this "New Normal", not only within our personal lives but within our professional vocations as well. Employees were faced with rising costs, concerns, and a new workforce culture. While employers were faced with supply chain shortages, shrinking talent pipelines, and pressure to raise wages. However, our resilience would not allow for another shutdown or closing of businesses which meant employers had to find new solutions, new best practices, while facing rising costs within every direction.

Established in 1974, Century Tool & Gage is a Fenton-based company that designs and manufactures high-quality compression molds for the automotive, heavy truck, aerospace, and personal watercraft industries. At Century Tool & Gage, employees use a variety of machinery and new team members are often trained by those in more senior positions. With rising costs looming, talent pipeline shrinkage, and global supply chain shortages, it would be safe to assume, like many companies, that Century Tool & Gage would also experience a dip in productivity, hiring shortages, and demand bottlenecks. However, by taking advantage of the Michigan Going Pro Talent Fund, Century Tool & Gage would not experience any drops in profit and productivity!

The Michigan Going Pro Talent Fund is a competitive training grant awarded to Michigan employers for upskilling and hiring. Winning this award is what aided Century Tool & Gage with the continuation of their investment into their employees and business. This would also place them in the right direction to become

an "Employer of Choice" within Michigan. The Michigan Going Pro Talent Fund awarded the company \$49,500.00, and with a better trained workforce, Century Tool & Gage will now better service their clients, current and future needs.



FERNCO - GOING PRO VICTORIOUS!

Genesee - Erich Latham, Business Solutions Professional, reached out to Vicki West, Director of Enterprise Development at Fernco, with the intention of building a business partnership with Fernco. After speaking with Vicki, it was clear that Going PRO Talent Fund would be a great fit. Erich completed the required fact-finding virtually in October of 2022. Vicki then attended the in-person information session. The next step was for Vicki to complete the Going PRO application. With the assistance of MMTC, Fernco was approved and awarded \$35,690.00 for upskilling their current and new workforce talent.

Vicki West was able to secure training for Supervisory Skills, Industry 4.0 Technologies along with CNC Lathe and Mills. They were able to forecast new hires and were able to receive a total reimbursement of \$31,065.

Fernco applied again in 2023 and were approved for a total of \$69,879.00. Vicki will be able to ensure their current and incoming new talent are trained and ready!



MERSINO DEWATERING GETS LEANER AMIDST GROWTH

Genesee - Mersino Dewatering received an Incumbent Worker Training award in PY 2021 for Lean Manufacturing training. After seeing the results from their training, they applied and obtained a GPTF 2022 award. The training plan that was awarded was to continue their Lean Manufacturing program. A total of 15 employees completed the classes. Conrad Payne, Supervisor, accepted the award and stated, "This was very helpful because we have a newer management team, we are growing, and production is up. This continuation of training was very valuable, and we need to continue with classes so we can maintain our production schedules and continue to upskill our employees."

S&S FAMILY - CONTINUED EDUCATION IN CHILDCARE

Huron - S&S Family Childcare Center of Huron County will be better able to meet the growing demand for skilled workers thanks to a new registered Child Development Specialist apprenticeship program.

The new apprenticeship program was developed through a partnership between S&S Family Childcare Center and GST Michigan Works! The program is registered with the United States Department of Labor. This is S&S Family Childcare Center's first apprenticeship program. The program was registered on October 7, 2022, and apprentice Rebecca Ruth officially started her two-year training program.



According to a statement by S&S Family Childcare Centers Director, Sarah Brooks, "Our childcare center is looking forward to offering our employees this great training. Our apprentice will receive on-the-job training and related education through

this program, which will prepare her to become a Lead Teacher." Brooks goes on to say, "We are bringing recognition to a rewarding industry by providing our employees the opportunity to grow and advance, which will lead to long term success."

Registered apprenticeships are high-quality work-based learning and post-secondary earn-and-learn programs that meet national standards for registration with the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprenticeships combine learning in the classroom with hands-on job training, which is supervised by a journey-level craftsperson or trade professional.

GST Michigan Works! registered standards in December 2021 and currently provides intermediary services for 14 employers.

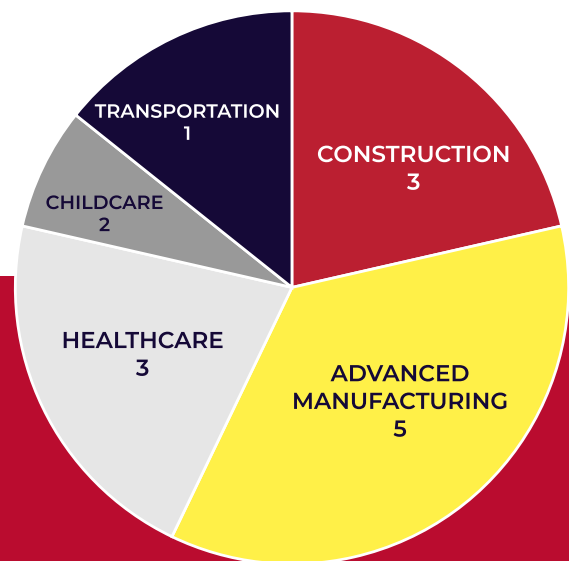


From left to right: Serrenna Sengstock, S & S Family Childcare Centers Owner; Rebecca Ruth, Child Development Specialist Apprentice; Sarah Brooks, the Director of S & S.

Apprentices in the Childcare Development Specialist program will receive 300 hours of technical instruction from Mott Community College while working towards an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. In addition, any apprentice going through the program will work a minimum of 4000 hours on-the-job at S&S Family Childcare Center's Bad Axe location.

When the new apprentice was asked what she is looking forward to in this new chapter of her professional career, she responded by saying that she is excited about continuing her education while working in a career she loves.

GST Michigan Works! is a registered apprenticeship intermediary and sponsor approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and provides free intermediary services to any employer interested in starting a program. Employers who want to expand their current program can also take advantage of services. Visit gstmiworks.org/employers/registered-apprenticeship for further information or to schedule a meeting.



MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE

GIVING UP IS NOT AN OPTION!

Shiawassee - As a Business Solutions Professional, the job is to engage with employers and promote the various opportunities open to them and their employees through GST Michigan Works! That is sometimes easier said than done. This was the case with Memorial Healthcare in Owosso.

Memorial Healthcare (Hospital) is the largest employer in Shiawassee County and has footprints in several counties employing over 1500 people. GSTMW Owosso Office has worked with the hospital for five years promoting programs offered through GST Michigan Works! without much success. Although the relationship has always been good, there was never much movement on the program front. GSTMW would post jobs on PMTC (The Pure Michigan Talent Connect), and Memorial would come to job fairs.

Finally, after many meetings and presentations, GSTMW was able to start training to upskill

some of the qualifying current employees to get their CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) certifications. After seeing the success and ease of working with this program, we were able to start talking about USDOL (United States Department of Labor) Apprenticeship programs and have since started the OJT (On-the-Job) program.

These programs not only help the hospital but greatly assist the new hires with supportive services, training, and stability by having another source for assistance. The hospital is able to train the new people to be the exact fit for their new positions and recoup some of those costs.

Memorial Healthcare is now using and working with most of the programs available to them and couldn't be more pleased with the outcomes. The only question they have is "Why did we wait so long?"



UPSKILLING MICHIGAN'S WORKFORCE

Lapeer - LOC Performance in Lapeer has grown into one of the premier manufacturing companies for military and heavy construction applications. They have grown exponentially over the last year, adding more than 30% to their full-time staff. They applied for the Going Pro Talent Fund FY22 to invest in their growing workforce to sustain growth and reduce performance weaknesses. LOC Performance trained 6 current and 4 new employees and were reimbursed \$9,535 for their award.

All the employees who attended the training were either new to the company, new in their role or even new to manufacturing. The training allowed them the opportunity to increase skill levels and oftentimes Allyson said, "...bring that knowledge back home to teach their peers!"

After the completion of training they stated it was clear that a positive impact was made! New machinists were interpreting blueprints and quality checking their own parts, newly promoted supervisors were more effectively managing their teams and programmers were implementing new processes on the production floor. Allyson commented,

"OUR TEAM AND OUR COMPANY OVERALL SAW IMPROVED EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE, JOB SATISFACTION, AND IMPROVED QUALITY AFTER ATTENDING THE TRAININGS."

IMPROVEMENTS FELT

ACROSS THE BOARD



Genesee - Miller Industries specializes in custom steel fabrication, air supply systems and sales. There are several positions at Miller Industries that require a lot of training for their new and current employees to excel and grow in their industry. Miller is investing a great deal in their facilities, but Chad Miller, owner of Miller Industries, also knows how important it is to invest in their employees.

On October 21, 2021, Miller Industries first registered to view the Going PRO 2022 webinar. GST Michigan Works! Business Solutions Professionals assisted Miller Industries with their 2022 Going PRO Award application. After the announcement that Miller Industries was awarded a total of \$46,320.00, GST Michigan Works! continued to follow up and assist Miller throughout the 2022 Going PRO award cycle.

This was the first time Miller Industries applied for the Going PRO Talent Fund. The training implemented not only helped Miller Industries Engineers and Project Management employees, but also their Production employees, including the Welding and Electrical apprentices.

Miller Industries began a Welding apprenticeship program two years ago to help develop the trade and skill set within the company. One specific apprentice,

Spencer, started with the company one year ago as an entry-level apprentice making \$16.00 per hour. Spencer attended the Blueprint Reading Training course in 2022 under the Going Pro Award. Spencer has quickly excelled and is now running a one-million-dollar piece of equipment that is critical to operations. Spencer is also currently completing his last required class of his apprenticeship and has advanced to making \$20.00 per hour.

Miller Industries was awarded a total of \$46,320 in the 2022 Michigan Going PRO Talent Fund for trainings of their new and current employees. They were able to complete and be reimbursed for a total of \$21,865 in trainings. The trainings included current and new employees, as well as apprentices.

The additional Blueprint Reading Training allowed Miller's employees to cross train on equipment critical to operations. This is beneficial to the company because it provides additional employees with the skill set to operate Miller Industries equipment/machinery, therefore reducing down time.

SUPPORTING CRAFTSMANSHIP THROUGH THE YEARS



Sanilac - Jay & Kay Manufacturing is a very successful producer of handcrafted aftermarket parts for the boating industry, such as radar arches or hard tops. They have been a crucial part of the local economy for decades and have been a valued partner with GST Michigan Works! for much of that time. Through various changes in Jay & Kay's leadership and management, Sanilac County's BSP has maintained a strong working relationship with them for fifteen years!

No other manufacturer in the region utilizes the same process as Jay & Kay; so hiring experienced workers is not an option for them. GST assists them with their recruitment and on-the-job training whenever possible. Jay & Kay's first OJT was with military veteran James Essad, who has advanced to the role of President and CEO. Through his leadership, Jay & Kay retains the USDOL Platinum Award as a Military Veteran friendly business. Another early OJT trainee has recently reached retirement.

GST has assisted them with their recruitment and on the job training, through WIOA adult/dislocated worker, the Step into Work and Young Professionals youth work experience programs, and most recently, through the Going Pro Talent Fund. Through the Young Professionals program, Jay & Kay recently gave an opportunity to a group of young people on the autism spectrum. Many of them were successful in their training, and some retain employment to this day. Jay & Kay has also hired a group of ten OJT trainees through the FY2022 Going Pro Talent Fund. Most of them have reached their 90-day retention period and are currently employed. The monetary value of their most recent OJT



project is \$14,250.00, but the value to Jay & Kay and to the community extends far beyond that. Many people in the community have mastered a craft that they can learn nowhere else, and Jay & Kay has been able to maintain a stable workforce, without an experienced workforce to recruit from.

Human Resource Manager Karen Vanderhoff said, "Jay & Kay Mfg., LLC has utilized GST MI Works! programs for at least ten years. We have had over 25 new hires go through these programs, saving the company tens of thousands of dollars. And, we have had all ages in the program. Recently one recipient just retired, after working with us for 9 years. We also have used the Step Into Work, the Young Professionals, and the Going Pro Talent Fund. Utilizing these resources has allowed us to [increase] our training by hiring individuals with no experience, as well as to increase employee numbers. Our positions require extreme craftsmanship, and these skills must be taught on the job which takes years to develop."

The ability to develop a productive workforce from within has given Jay & Kay Manufacturing the opportunity to increase their market share in the aftermarket boating industry, and to explore new and related opportunities for business growth. They are finishing an addition to their facility, which will approximately double their manufacturing/warehouse space. This will give them the ability to take advantage of their unused capacity in CNC machining and allow them to expand into additional markets. GST stands ready to assist them through this transition!

MAKING MOVES WITH GOING PRO

Genesee - Automation Movers International, Inc. specializes in mechanical & electrical installation, decommissioning and integration of automation machinery and robotic equipment. The company provides industry proven subject matter expertise including project management, mechanical, electrical, pipefitting, controls integration, installation and decommissioning for diverse clients and industries with over 100 years of combined automation experience.

GST Michigan Works! Business Solutions Professional, Gary Harrison, has been working with Melissa Smith, Human Resource Manager at Automation Movers, for several years. Automation Movers has utilized various programs through GST Michigan Works!, including the Incumbent Worker Program and the Going Pro Talent Fund.

Automation Movers International, Inc. (AMI) has continued moving forward with purpose during these challenging times.

Melissa Smith said,

COVID-19 has created a lasting impact on the industry and AMI directly with delays in projects derived from supply chain issues, travel restrictions, and lack of available skilled manpower.

AMI has also increased their marketing/advertising efforts to attract new talent including radio ads, updated signage on their building, and mobile signage.



Melissa Smith stated the Going Pro Talent Fund 2022 award allowed AMI to meet the new business demands by training new and existing employees on specific skills and tasks. She said the cross training of their workforce would allow for pay increases based on improved performance and ability while allowing AMI to diversify their client and opportunity base which will generate additional revenue streams and jobs.

The training chosen from Dale Carnegie, Client Focused Training Package, is crucial during these times of uncertainty to allow their team to upskill their marketing, sales, and customer service skills in order to obtain new and diverse clients. The technical skills training chosen, such as Rigging and Heavy Equipment Operations, benefit their project employees by staying up to date with the demand of the industry. In return, AMI workers increase their employability by adding more "tools" to their "toolbox" and becoming more versatile in their field, assisting in keeping unemployment numbers down.

OSHA 10 & OSHA 30 trainings will allow AMI to provide their employees with necessary training for the safety skills certifications required by their clients.

Automation Movers completed several trainings for the Going Pro Talent Fund in 2022 and GST Michigan Works! Business Solutions Professional, Gary Harrison, was able to deliver a check to Melissa Smith and the CEO of Automation Movers in the total amount of \$890.00.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GRANT - 19 EMPLOYERS

Huron - GST Michigan Works! was awarded a Young Professionals Grant. This grant was to assist Young Professionals in work experience that could lead to full-time employment, or employment in a field that they may be interested in pursuing a future career in. We were able to assist young adults that were still in school (college or high school), as well as those that had already completed school.

GST Michigan Works! was able to assist employers with the payment of wages for the young adults' first 90-days of employment. We were also able to assist young adults in learning skills along with obtaining valuable work experience.

The Huron Area Technical Center was an excellent partner in finding these participants.

We worked with 19 individual Huron County employers and placed 20 young adults in employment. Seven returned to school after working for the summer, one position was a summer only position and seven of the young adults were hired permanently by local employers. Five participants ended up leaving employment due to different circumstances.

In total Huron County businesses were given \$116,600.00 in wages for these young adults!

Overall employers were very excited to have the opportunity to work with the young adults in our county to give them real life work experience and earn valuable skills.



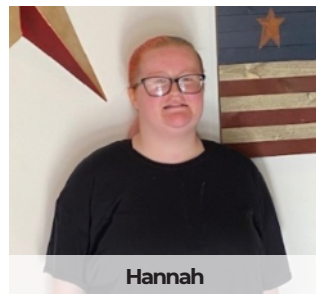
Isiaha



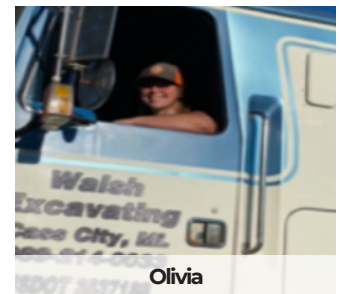
Dillon



Bethanee



Hannah



Olivia



Corey



D'Carlos



Jeremiah



Logan

GST MI Works! is awarded \$3.1 million of the State of Michigan's Going PRO Talent Fund

With an investment of \$9,288,154, GST has assisted 253 employers with their Going PRO Talent needs since 2014.

Employers receive competitive awards through the Going PRO Talent Fund to assist in training, developing, and retaining their employees. As a result, Michigan's employers can compete and grow, and individuals are equipped with the skills they need for in-demand jobs. Training supported by the Going PRO Talent Fund expands and improves employees' skills and enhances their opportunities for advancement within the company and for economic advancement.

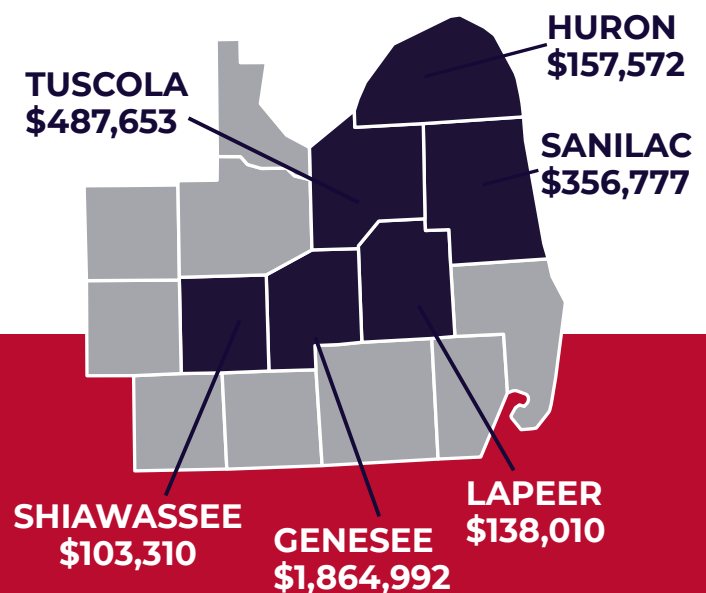
Since 2014, employers have only had one chance per year to apply for the Going PRO Talent Fund. If employers were not lucky enough to be awarded, they had to wait an entire year to reapply. The State of Michigan scores all Going PRO applications to determine who will be awarded. Previously, employers' scores were unknown, but starting in 2023, they will be included in the application.

"GST Michigan Works! Business Services Department works directly with our local employers to assist them with applying for the Going PRO Talent Fund and the overall management and oversight of the fund," said Cindy Thornthwaite, GST MI Works! Business Services Manager. "In previous years, employers had one shot each year to apply and with any luck, receive a Going PRO Talent Fund award. We are so excited to announce that in 2023, employers have the unprecedented opportunity to apply again in Cycle 2!! This opportunity has never been available to our local employers before! If an employer completed a Cycle 1 application and were not awarded, or they simply were not ready to apply, they can now apply again in Cycle 2. Cycle 2 application period opens on May 1st and closes on May 22nd. Employers

must register to attend an upcoming information session in April to learn about the program and the steps to apply." Employers are encouraged to apply for the Cycle 2 Going PRO Talent Fund by visiting gstmiworks.org/goingproinfo.

The GST MI Works! region received 52 awards in Cycle 1 (2023), which were issued as follows: Genesee County: awarded 22 awards totaling \$1,864,992, Huron County: awarded six awards totaling \$157,572; Sanilac County received eight awards totaling \$356,777; Lapeer County received five awards totaling \$138,010, Shiawassee County received eight awards totaling \$103,310 and Tuscola County received four awards totaling \$487,653.

"With the current climate, it's important for our local employers to focus on retaining their current workforce, while enticing those new employees to stay," said Thornthwaite. "A perfect way to showcase your commitment to your employees, both current and new, is to invest in their training! Through the Going PRO Talent Fund Awards, employers receive reimbursement for each approved and completed Going PRO Talent Fund training. GST Michigan Works! Business Services is ready to assist all local employers and walk them through the process to make applying easy!"



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DYNA Sales and Service, LLC

Impact Award Nomination 2023

DYNA Sales & Service, LLC. is being selected for the 2023 Impact Award because they are an outstanding employer and member of their community.

DYNA started their business in Evert, MI, producing equipment for sawmills and making log furniture. Due to a downslide in the economy in 2008 the need to shift in a different direction was necessary. DYNA's next product line would include a mid-size firewood processor. The market called for a quality, value-driven machine, and the need would increase due to the rising cost of energy. There are approximately 15 manufacturers of the Firewood Processor worldwide, and DYNA would be the only one in the state of Michigan. With the rising trend, there was a need to increase their production line. For this to occur, it became evident that they would need to relocate to a bigger facility. Contact was made with the Tuscola County EDC in 2017, a building in Millington, MI was purchased, and the move would begin in 2018. "DYNA has rejuvenated old buildings, created revenue and brought new business to the community. They are great to work with and communicate well with the village." Kaylene Long, Village Clerk for Millington. In 2019 DYNA became fully operational producing the Firewood Processors. With 29 employees on their assembly line, production was good, and sales would continue to grow. This increase led DYNA to the point of being an industry leader and the largest producer in the country. With the demand for their product and a lack of obtaining skilled talent, the need for upgrading their current employees became a necessity.

The Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF) was introduced to DYNA in the fall of 2019. Productivity had increased by 40% since their move and needed to continue to increase, a purchase of \$1,000,000 in new manufacturing equipment and making additional products that corresponded to the Firewood Processor were planned.

It was determined that a Lean Manufacturing training program would be a great benefit to the company. The GPTF 2020 application was submitted. This training would be used for increasing the quality of their product, timeliness of production and would enable them to add to their current staff.

COVID-19 would halt the issuance of the GPTF 2020 awards statewide, and it also halted DYNA's plan to begin exporting their product due to the increased cost of shipping. Another training grant would be discussed and applied for. DYNA would be awarded the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) grant in June 2020 and started their Lean Manufacturing classes with Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC). After three weeks of a complete shutdown and cycles of department closures due to COVID-19, four employees completed the Lean Manufacturing classes successfully and DYNA was able to increase their employee base by ten new workers. However, the effects of COVID-19 instilled the need to look at diversifying their product line. DYNA purchased additional equipment; the main piece of this would be the BLM Plate Laser. Final installation was completed in December 2020. The laser alone would increase the tube cutting time by 800%. In 2022 DYNA expanded their diversification efforts and invested in a new BLM Tube Laser. However, a programmer was needed. This programmer training was offered to a select employee, Curtis Smith, utilizing an IWT award. Curtis was currently an operator who showed he had the potential for the training. After the training, Curtis was promoted to Research & Design.



With the introduction of a Lean Manufacturing System in 2020, it showed that following through with the systems design was needed so progress could continue. DYNA applied for the GPTF 2021 award. They received the award and successfully completed the additional Lean Manufacturing System classes in December 2022. Now at least 50% of their employees were trained in the Lean System! During this period, they also expanded their building size. This expansion project allowed them to bring their paint department in-house. Now, production of the Firewood Processor and the numerous other pieces of equipment and parts that they are producing are all under one roof!

Recently, GST MI Works! asked DYNA to engage/train a youth that was part of the Young Professionals Program. This young man, Zachary Strickland, was a high school drop-out who was currently working with a Family Literacy Tutoring Coach with the goal of obtaining his GED. DYNA would provide a work experience setting for him on a part-time basis as a General Laborer. During his 90 days he had showed signs of being an asset to their company. After his work experience program was complete, DYNA offered him part-time employment in the same role and six weeks later he was offered a full-time position with benefits. Zach is currently employed as a Welder and very anxious to begin a training program that will assist him to become a Certified Welder. Zach has also completed three of his GED tests and has one test remaining. DYNA has been awarded the GPTF 2023 award! With this award, Zach will

be able to return to the tutoring program that will prepare him to take his final test and allow him to take part in the Welding classes. This will give Zach skills and knowledge that will assist him in preparing for his Welding Certifications.

DYNA worked with the Tuscola County Re-Entry Program, hired in, and have retained a local, returning citizen.

What has DYNA accomplished in their four years of being housed in Tuscola County?

- They sell and rent their equipment
- They export various models of the Firewood Processors and Log Splitters to Japan
- They now make four different sizes and have built over 2000 Firewood Processors
- They have developed and produced conveyors, bundlers, and tumblers as add-ons for the Firewood Processors
- They have built log splitters that are sold in numerous dealers around the country
- They are producing parts that have been contracted to the Service and Manufacturing Industries
- They have doubled their full-time employee base
- They attempt to work/hire individuals who have barriers and assist them with removing those barriers

Each visit to DYNA brings to light a new adventure they are embarking on! GSTMW is proud to partner with DYNA and looks forward to continuing to support their success.



Curtis Smith (DYNA) - Operator

Tuscola - DYNA Sales & Service, LLC purchased a BLM Laser that became operational in April 2022. The set back for DYNA was a need for someone to program the Laser. After selecting their employee, Curtis Smith, who they felt would be able to complete the class successfully, DYNA was able to start contracting out products that were totally out of their normal industry. DYNA's main product(s) relate to the Ag Industry, making Wood Processors. With the introduction of the BLM Laser, they are able to produce parts for the Service and Manufacturing Industries. Curtis has since been promoted to the Research & Design department and continues to program the laser with each order they receive.

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