

TALENT TALK

December 2024 | Volume 8, Issue 2



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

Advancing Employers | Enhancing Talent



REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

28.1K
Job Postings

663
Occupations

4.9K
Employers

2.7K
Locations

65%
Employed at
Exit of Training

Real-Time Intelligence Report - Online Job Ads 07/01/2023 - 10/31/2024

Active Job Ads

	# Active Job Ads
Registered Nurses	1,915
Retail Salespersons	1,272
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,191
Medical and Health Services Managers	637
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	632
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	566
Fast Food and Counter Workers	565
Social and Human Service Assistants	516
Stockers and Order Fillers	510
Physical Therapists	477
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	428
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	414
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	382
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	377
Nursing Assistants	358
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	326
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	265
Customer Service Representatives	265
Production Workers, All Other	256
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	255
Human Resources Specialists	251
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	248
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	239
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	233
Speech-Language Pathologists	229
Pharmacy Technicians	228
Medical Assistants	227
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	213
Food Preparation Workers	211
Teaching Assistants, Preschool, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School, Except Special Education	209

10,406
Page Likes

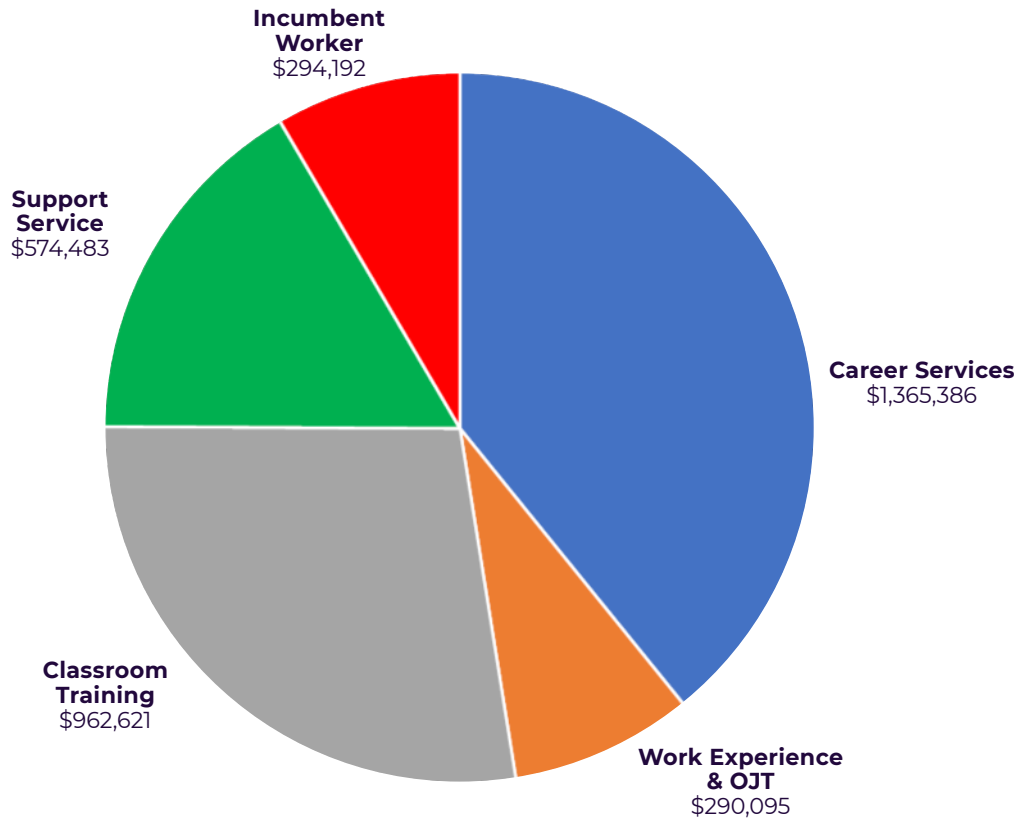
706
Followers

555
Followers

DATA ANALYSIS

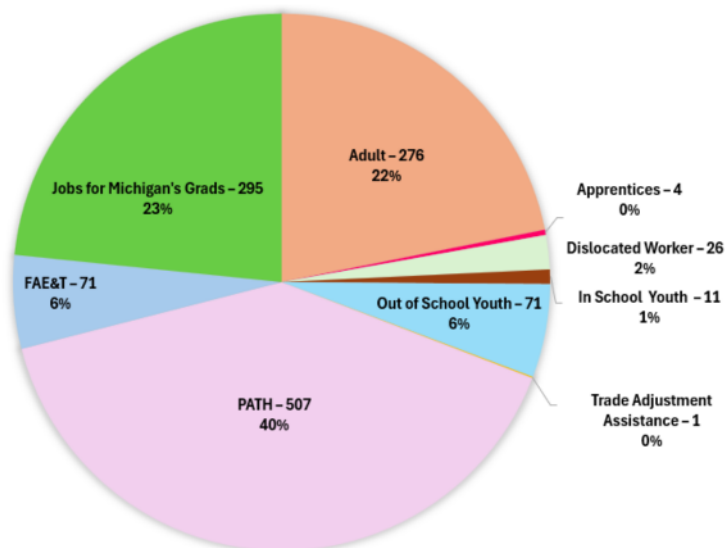
Career Services & Participant Payments

July 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024



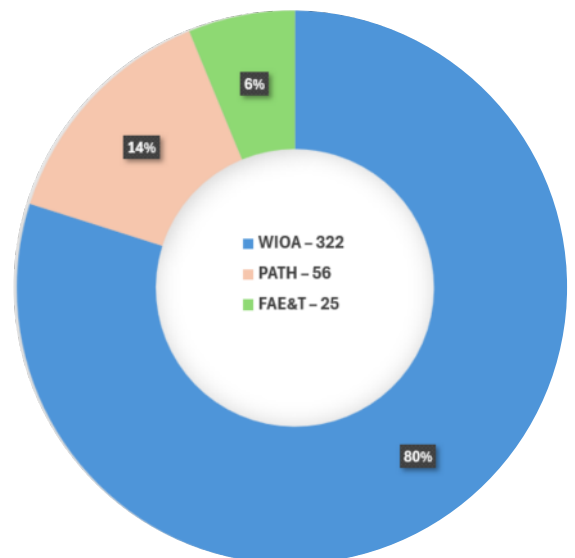
New Enrollments

July 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024



Entered Training

July 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024



EMPLOYEE SUCCESS STORIES

FROM BOOKS TO **TRUCKS**



Lapeer Co. - Kaiden is a young adult who graduated from high school less than a year ago. Eager to join the workforce, he faced the challenge of lacking credentials and having limited work experience. Previously, Kaiden worked in the food industry.

To improve his employability, Kaiden collaborated with the staff at GST Michigan Works! in Lapeer to obtain a truck driving credential through the T60 Driving Academy. He successfully earned his CDL-A certification, gaining valuable experience in the trucking industry that has opened doors to full-time employment.

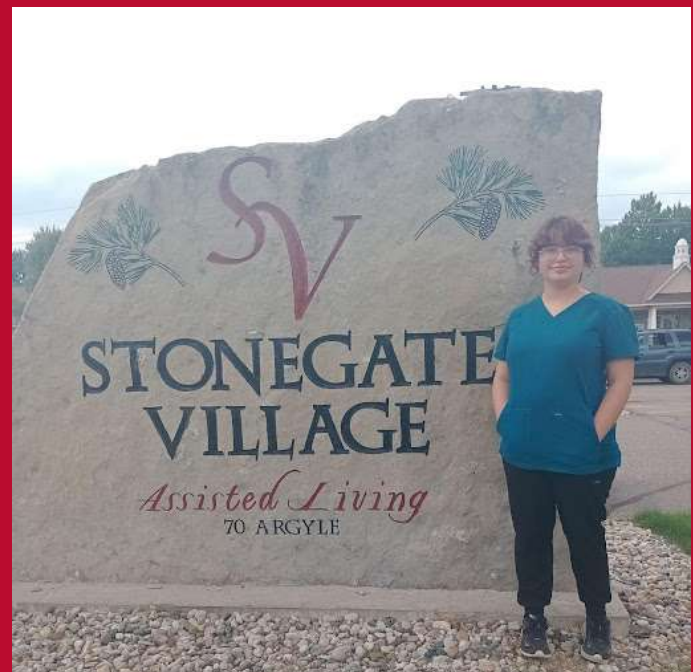
During his training, Kaiden encountered challenges related to transportation. He proactively provided GST with quotes for vehicle repairs, which allowed them to assist him in addressing these issues.

By obtaining his CDL-A certification, Kaiden became credentialed, enhancing his employability for full-time positions. This experience taught him the difficulties of securing employment in an industry where he initially had no experience. Kaiden has now transitioned to a position with Action Traffic as a truck driver/laborer, earned a significant wage increase, and has been with the company for a month.

THE ROAD TO **CAREGIVING**

Sanilac Co. - Savannah began her journey with Family Literacy to obtain her GED. After successfully achieving that goal in March of 2023, she quickly realized that a credential was necessary to enter the workforce. Determined to enhance her skills, she returned to GST Michigan Works! where she enrolled in the Medical Assistant training program at the Sanilac Career Center.

Upon completion of her training program, she quickly secured a position at Stonegate Village in Sandusky. Although her job offer was only for part-time work at the start, she is on the path to transitioning to a full-time role. This new position not only allows her to apply her skills and prove herself to her new employer but also comes with a significant increase in her hourly wage, reflecting her hard work and dedication.



WORK YOUR WAY UP!



Sanilac Co. - Over the past nineteen years, Lacey has demonstrated remarkable dedication and perseverance as she advanced through the ranks at the hospital where she began her career in 2005. Starting as an Aide, she has taken on various

roles, including Ward Clerk, ER Tech, and Student Nurse, ultimately becoming a Registered Nurse. Each position has provided her with a well-rounded perspective, equipping her with the knowledge and experience that she now applies in her current role as Emergency Department (ED) Manager.

In her managerial position, Lacey continues to grow professionally while offering assistance wherever it is needed. She actively participates in meetings at Sanilac Med Control and has also contracted with the Sanilac Intermediate School District as a School Nurse.

Balancing her full-time job with nursing school, as well as her responsibilities as a wife and mother of two daughters, has been a significant challenge. Lacey reflects,



It was difficult, and some days I felt like I just couldn't do much more."

Yet, her drive and passion have empowered her to complete her degree, teaching her that she thrives on challenges and can achieve anything she sets her mind to.

As a Nursing Manager in the emergency department, Lacey faces new challenges regularly. Her educational journey has enhanced her management skills, preparing her to tackle these situations with confidence. To support her educational pursuits, she received an Incumbent Worker Grant from GST Michigan Works!, which helped cover the costs of her studies. Lacey proudly completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Chamberlain University on June 29, 2024.



AGAINST ALL ODDS

Tuscola Co. - When Paeton and Madilyn visited GST Michigan Works!, they were both facing significant life changes. Paeton had left high school after 9th grade and Madilyn was expecting their first child when she enrolled in our program. Together, they were determined to build a strong foundation for their growing family.

Despite the challenges of pregnancy, Madilyn worked tirelessly to earn her Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) certification. Six weeks after welcoming their baby, she began her new career as a medical assistant at Hills & Dales Orthopedic Clinic. Paeton, meanwhile, took his first steps toward a stable future by enrolling in a GED program through the Family Literacy Center (FLC). He also completed his Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training through Thumb CDL.

Today, both Madilyn and Paeton are working full-time and have seen a substantial increase in their earning potential, allowing them to provide more for their family. Madilyn's role as a medical assistant offers a competitive wage at

Hills & Dales, while Paeton has begun a promising new career with Pandos Recycling, where he's focused on balancing his job and family responsibilities. He plans to continue to work on the completion of his GED in the future.

Reflecting on her experience, Madilyn shared,



GST Michigan Works! helped me and my family in so many ways. They believed in our potential and provided the support needed to turn our dreams into reality."

Their story is a testament to what can be achieved with hard work, dedication, and a strong support system.

REENTRY TAILORED FOR SUCCESS

Genesee Co. - After returning from prison, Odell found work in a production job, but it barely provided enough to make ends meet. He knew that if he remained in a low-wage role with no opportunity for skill growth or advancement, he might be forced to make difficult choices just to survive. He needed a way to build a better future.

A friend suggested he reach out to GST Michigan Works! Following this advice, Odell visited the Flint Service Center and met with a Career Coach. Together, they created a personalized career pathway designed to meet Odell's specific needs. He attended the Reemployment Week workshop to boost his chances of success in both training and future employment. He also received assistance with a Selective Service waiver and resume development, setting him up for potential funding and job opportunities. He was ready to take the next step.

Truck Driver Training became a turning point for Odell. He said, "I know this is what I want to do." However, it wasn't without challenges—Odell struggled with "testing anxiety" but he was determined to keep going, and eventually, he succeeded.

After earning his certification, Odell applied to several driving positions, but many employers cited his legal background or lack of experience as barriers. His resolve started to wane, as he reached out to his career coach for what he thought might be his last attempt at breaking into his chosen industry. With the help of his coach, he completed an application for Priority Waste.

The very next day, Odell was invited to an orientation and asked to complete some mandatory tests. He accepted and soon afterward received an offer of employment.

Today, Odell has already earned a promotion with his new employer, where he is earning a great wage and working full-time. He recently called his coach to say,



Just a shout-out to let you know I'm doing well and settling into my job. I don't ride [on] the back of the truck anymore, and I don't even drive the trash truck. I've moved up to my own designated truck and now deliver cans all around the eastern part of the state."

Odell is thriving in his new career and, for the first time in a long while, he no longer worries about putting food on the table or paying his bills.



A CAREER CHANGE AND NEW VOCATIONAL SKILLS

Lapeer Co. - Tina's journey into a rewarding new career began in late 2023 when she was laid off from her job where she had been earning \$15.00 an hour. Now receiving unemployment benefits, she faced a crossroads, contemplating her future and how best to leverage her time to create new opportunities. Her turning point came when she was referred to a RESEA orientation, designed to connect individuals with resources for re-employment and skill-building.

During the orientation, Tina learned about the various grants and support programs offered by GST Michigan Works! to help cover training costs. Intrigued, she reached out to discuss her interest in pursuing training as a Certified Nurse Aid (CNA). Tina recognized that entering the healthcare field could provide her with a stable and fulfilling career, especially given the high demand for healthcare workers in her area. She then began researching training providers, costs, and schedules, carefully considering her options.

After exploring her choices, Tina decided on a two-week CNA program through Sokol Healthcare Training, which provided the intensive training she needed in a condensed timeframe. She started the program on January 8th, 2024, and by January 19th, she had completed the course, equipped with the skills and certification to embark on her new career.

Soon after completing her training, Tina secured full-time employment as a CNA. Not only did this new role offer her the security of benefits, but it also represented a significant leap in her earning potential. She received a substantial increase that reflected the value of her new skills and commitment.

From an uncertain period of unemployment to a fulfilling job in healthcare, Tina transformed her circumstances with determination and the support of GST Michigan Works!, creating a brighter future for herself in the process.

FROM UNEMPLOYED TRAINING TO NEW CAREER

Genesee Co. - William, a resident of Genesee County, found himself unemployed after being abruptly terminated from his job as a Project Manager, where he was earning \$22 per hour. Despite his experience, which included installing swimming pools and managing projects, his job search was hindered by a previous criminal record. Determined to find a way forward, William discovered an opportunity for truck driver training and decided to pursue it.

He contacted GST Michigan Works! in Fenton and, after verifying his eligibility as a dislocated worker, was scheduled for a WIOA intake. This process included skills testing to assess his readiness for training.

Eager to start his new career path, William enrolled in CDL-A training at 160 Driving Academy. With a positive attitude and focus on his future, he dedicated himself to completing the program. His previous experience operating forklifts gave him added confidence in his ability to succeed in the trucking industry.



GST Michigan Works! provided crucial support, including reimbursement for his DOT/DT physical and drug test. William also received resume assistance to prepare him for his job search after completing his training.

Once his CDL-A training was finished, William began actively searching for jobs, utilizing the resources and guidance available at GST Michigan Works! Fenton. His hard work paid off when he secured full-time employment with Ross and Barr Inc. as a Flatbed Truck Driver.

William started his new career making more money than he had in his previous career and has already received a raise! His journey from unemployment to a rewarding career in truck driving is a testament to his consistent work ethic and the support he received from GST Michigan Works!

HEADING NORTH TO LEARN WELDING

Huron Co. - Charles, a 2024 graduate of Caseville High School, also completed the Power Technology Program at the Huron Area Technical Center. He had been working for a local fabrication company and discovered that he enjoyed welding enough to pursue it as a career.

After registering at the Industrial Arts Institute (IAI) in Onaway to earn his Comprehensive Industrial Welding & Fabrication Certificate, Charles came to GST Michigan Works! in Huron County seeking financial support, as IAI does not accept federal student aid. He qualified for funding through our Adult Program in October and began his training the following January.

At the Industrial Arts Institute, Charles excelled in his coursework, learning various welding techniques and methods. On May 17th, he graduated with a Certificate of Comprehensive Industrial Welding Completion and an

AWS Welder Qualification.

Dedicated to staying in the Thumb Area, Charles secured a position at Richmond Steel in Pigeon on August 5th, where he now earns \$2 more per hour than his previous job, with opportunities for future advancement.

Charles shared,

I really enjoyed welding school and would definitely recommend it to other students."



PEACE OF MIND



Sanilac Co. - Brandy had been working as a Nurse Practitioner at the McKenzie Rural Health Clinic since January 2009. In 2023, she decided to further her education and pursue a career change focused on mental health. She returned to Saginaw Valley State University to embark on this new journey.


In January 2024, GST Michigan Works! received a special incumbent worker grant aimed at helping healthcare workers upskill their training. Brandy learned about this grant through her employer, McKenzie Health System. She contacted GST Michigan Works! and set up an appointment to explore funding options that would help her complete her mental health certification.

As Brandy completed her training, she began planning to establish a clinic that specialized in mental health services. The rural community of Sandusky lacked such a specialty clinic in the area. When Brandy received her certificate as a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in September 2024, her plans for the clinic began to take shape.

The Peace of Mind Clinic held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 1, 2024. The clinic will be led by Brandy and will provide behavioral health evaluations, diagnoses, and medication management. She stated,

Our goal is to provide mental health services to anyone in need, especially those who are not receiving care or who are traveling for treatment."

911 DISPATCH: A 90-DAY PAID JOURNEY INTO EMERGENCY SERVICES

 **Tuscola County, Michigan 911 Central Dispatch**
Nov 12 · 🌐

Sadly, the time has come we had to say goodbye to our wonderful intern, Hannah. Over the last 90 days, she has gained a basic understanding and first hand experience of how local government functions. This included several management aspects of a 911 Dispatch Center. It included looking at how 911 is funded, policy, procedures, payroll, hazard mitigation and over and above all else, TEAMWORK.

We had such a great time working with Hannah, we wish her well on her adventures as she heads off to college. Thank you [GST Michigan Works](#) and Hannah for allowing us to be a part of your learning experience. We certainly enjoyed your positive attitude and quirky sense of humor.



Tuscola Co. - Hannah had always wanted a career that made a difference in her community. When she heard about GST Michigan Works! 90-day paid youth work program; she knew it was her chance to explore emergency services.

With the help of GST Michigan Works! Tuscola County Service Center, Hannah was placed at Tuscola County 911

Central Dispatch. It's a fast-paced, high-pressure environment that handles emergency calls and coordinates responses. On her first day, she was both excited and nervous. The responsibilities of a dispatcher seemed overwhelming, but with her supervisor's guidance and support from her colleagues, she quickly adjusted.

Her first week was spent shadowing experienced dispatchers and learning the equipment. Hannah was introduced to the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, where she logged calls and tracked emergency units in real-time. She also learned how to use the radio system to relay important information to first responders like police, firefighters, and paramedics.

One of her biggest lessons was how to prioritize calls. Not all emergencies are the same, and assessing each situation's urgency was a critical skill. Hannah found herself instructing a caller on how to perform CPR, coordinating responses to accidents, and learning to stay calm and act quickly under pressure. Throughout her time at the dispatch center, Hannah developed skills in multitasking, clear communication, and problem-solving. She learned to handle the stress of the job, gaining valuable life skills and confidence along the way.

Looking back, Hannah is grateful for the mentorship and the hands-on experience she received through GST Michigan Works!

The program gave her the tools she needed to pursue a future in emergency services. She's excited to head to college with the skills she gained and feels ready to face any challenge that comes her way.



TURNING PASSION INTO A CAREER



Shiawassee Co. -

Brionna, a recent high school graduate, faced the common challenge of not knowing which career path to pursue. However, she did know one thing: she wanted to work with children. At the time, she was employed at a local retail store but found the work

unfulfilling. That changed when an exciting opportunity arose with Owosso Public Schools (OPS) for a Paraprofessional role. As a long-standing partner of GST Michigan Works!, OPS recommended that Brionna seek career guidance from GST Michigan Works!

On August 11, 2023, Brionna visited the Shiawassee Service Center and enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Jobs for Michigan's Graduates programs. After career exploration and discussions with her career coach, it was determined that she would be an ideal candidate for the Paraprofessional position. To support her transition, GST Michigan Works! arranged an On-the-Job (OJT) training opportunity at OPS.

Brionna began her OJT on August 21, 2023, working 35 hours per week while continuing her weekend shifts in retail. She successfully completed her OJT on October 6, 2023. As her responsibilities grew, so did her enthusiasm for working directly with children. This passion motivated her to explore other career paths within the field.

In March 2024, Brionna decided to take the next step in her career journey. She transitioned from her position at OPS to accept a new role with Mercy Plus as a Behavior Technician. Starting on March 18, she began working 25-30 hours per week, earning an additional \$4.00 per hour. In her new role, Brionna discovered a deep passion for helping children with disabilities overcome daily challenges.

Over the summer, she chose to leave her retail position to fully commit to her career at Mercy Plus. During this time, she also earned certifications in CPR, Crisis Prevention

Training, and Safe Crisis Management (QBS). Now she is eager to advance further in the field and is considering pursuing certification as a Registered Behavior Technician (RBT).

Brionna's story is a testament to how passion, paired with the right opportunities and support, can lead to a fulfilling career. Her journey from uncertainty to a specialized role demonstrates the power of guidance and career development in shaping a successful future.

HOMESTRETCH TO COMPLETING A DEGREE

Lapeer Co. - Braylynn's journey into healthcare has been one of dedication and resilience, marked by her commitment to completing her nursing degree and beginning her career as a Registered Nurse. She first stepped into the medical field as a nurse intern at McLaren Hospital in Lapeer in July 2022. To support her schooling and living expenses, Braylynn also held a job at Mancino's since 2018, but as she neared the end of her studies, she knew she needed to fully dedicate herself to her training. In March 2023, she made the difficult decision to leave Mancino's and focus on her final semester.

As she approached graduation from Mott Community College, Braylynn found herself facing significant expenses associated with becoming an RN. She had worked so hard to be just one semester away, but she worried about the financial challenges that could delay her progress. It was then that a coworker recommended GST Michigan Works! Braylynn reached out and found the assistance she needed.

Through GST Michigan Works!, Braylynn received vital support that helped her cover her NCLEX testing fees, RN application fee, licensing and background check costs, tuition, and even scrubs required for clinicals. With this support, she could focus on her coursework without worrying about the heavy financial burden. Braylynn expressed immense relief and gratitude for this assistance, as it removed obstacles that otherwise could have delayed her entry into the field.

Braylynn graduated, passed her boards, and accepted a full-time RN position with McLaren Flint, where she now earns a great living, working 36 hours a week, plus benefits. Reflecting on her journey, Braylynn shared how GST Michigan Works! played a crucial role in helping her achieve her goals. Her focused approach and determination made her an ideal candidate for support, and GST Michigan Works! was thrilled to help her overcome these challenges and watch her start her career as a Registered Nurse.

FROM CHALLENGES TO TRIUMPH: AN INSPIRING JOURNEY TO BECOMING AN RN



Huron Co. - Zolene's journey with GST Michigan Works! is an inspiring story of determination, resilience, and achievement. Her journey began in August 2017 when she visited the GST Michigan Works! office in Sandusky to apply for funding to become a Certified Medical Assistant (CMA). Qualifying for assistance, Zolene enrolled in the Sanilac Technical Center, where she worked diligently to complete her training, eventually securing a job as a CMA at Huron Medical Center.

In 2019, Zolene's exceptional journey was recognized when she won the "Impact Award" from GST Michigan Works!, highlighting her determination in the face of personal challenges. The award celebrated her success in completing training, securing employment, and making continuous progress despite significant obstacles.

By December 2021, Zolene's goals had expanded further—she now aimed to obtain her Registered Nurse (RN) license. Returning to GST Michigan Works!, this time to the Huron County office, she applied for support while attending Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU). Thanks to her persistence, Zolene qualified for additional funding and continued her journey toward becoming an RN. Throughout this time, Zolene balanced her studies with part-time work, often at Emma's Coffee House, where her employers supported her class schedule. Working up to

40 hours per week, she managed to keep moving forward, all while coping with serious health issues. Despite frequent hospitalizations, Zolene's determination never faltered.

Zolene's perseverance paid off when she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree on May 24, 2024. A month later, she passed the NCLEX exam on her first try and officially became a licensed RN on June 21, 2024. Reflecting on her journey, Zolene shared, "I want to thank you for all you've done for me. I'm a nurse now, thanks to your help!"

Today, Zolene works as an RN at Harbor Beach Hospital, where she puts her skills and knowledge to use. Balancing her professional life with her ongoing health challenges, she currently works around 28 hours a week. Zolene's story embodies the power of perseverance, determination, and support, serving as an inspiration for others pursuing their own dreams.

A JOURNEY OF HOPE AND DETERMINATION

Tuscola Co. - Leagnys arrived in the United States as a refugee from Cuba, holding her young daughter's hand and carrying a heart full of dreams. Leaving behind her homeland was difficult, but she was driven by a fierce desire for a better life for both of them. She envisioned a future filled with opportunities, security, and the chance to give her daughter the life she deserved.

Upon settling in the U.S., Leagnys faced numerous challenges. The language barrier loomed large, but she was determined to overcome it. Every day, she dedicated herself to learning English, attending classes, and practicing whenever possible with the support of GST Michigan Works!

To support her family, Leagnys pursued a career in healthcare, obtaining her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification and securing a position at Tuscola Medical Care Facility. There, she not only provided compassionate care to her patients but also found a sense of belonging. Her coworkers admired her work ethic and dedication, and her patients felt the warmth of her nurturing spirit.

Despite her success, Leagnys knew her heart belonged to dentistry. She had worked in the dental field in Cuba and

longed to return to it. Inspired by her past and motivated by her future, she enrolled in a dental assisting course through Medcerts. The program reignited her passion, and she immersed herself in the material, mastering new skills while balancing her job and responsibilities as a mother. GST Michigan Works! in Caro supported her every step of the way, assisting her with mileage reimbursement, tuition costs, and encouragement throughout her journey.

Leagnys's determination was unyielding. With each lesson, she felt more empowered, envisioning herself as a dental assistant, helping others smile again. After months of hard work and preparation, she is now ready to take her dental assistant certification test—a pivotal moment in her journey.

Her dreams are no longer distant; they are tangible and within reach. She embodies the resilience of refugees, transforming her struggles into stepping stones toward success.

As she stands on the brink of this new chapter, Leagnys reflects on her journey. Each obstacle she faced only fueled her determination to succeed. With every passing day, she is proving that with hard work, courage, and an unwavering belief in oneself, dreams can come true in America.

Leagnys is not just building a new life for herself; she is laying down roots for her daughter, teaching her the values of perseverance and ambition. Together, they are a testament to the power of hope and the promise of new beginnings.

NEW ADVENTURES

Huron Co. - Laura was a familiar face at the GST Michigan Works! office in Bad Axe. After being out of work for some time, she sought a new direction. With an associate's degree in applied science, specializing in Environmental Quality, Laura had previously contributed to her family's hog farm and excavating business, giving her a solid foundation in the farming community. However, she was ready for a change—an office position that would allow

her to spend quality time with her family, especially her grandchildren.

Eager to learn and grow, Laura attended every event at GST Michigan Works! in Bad Axe that she could, including the full series of Basic Computer Skills workshops. Through her dedication, we observed significant growth in her confidence and determination.

One day, while exploring job listings in the service center, Laura noticed she hadn't had much success in securing interviews despite applying for several positions. Seeking guidance, she approached the career coach at the front desk for help with her resume. During their meeting, the coach took the time to understand Laura's previous roles, skills, achievements, education, and certifications, gathering a wealth of information to craft a compelling resume.

After completing the resume, the coach emailed Laura. With a few adjustments, her resume was polished and ready to be sent to prospective employers. The new format showcased her strengths, making a strong first impression.

The office staff at GST Michigan Works! then provided Laura with several job leads, including a position that seemed to be a perfect fit: a receptionist role at the Co-op Elevator in Pigeon, MI. The job application required a cover letter, so Laura returned to collaborate with her career coach, who helped her create a tailored letter that complemented her resume. With additional interview preparation, Laura felt ready to take the next step.

After submitting her application, Laura eagerly awaited a response. A few weeks later, she returned to the office with exciting news—a thank you note for her coach, accompanied by the joyful announcement that she had secured the job.

Laura expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the team at the Bad Axe office for their support and guidance. Thanks to the professional coordination of the GST Michigan Works! staff, Laura was equipped for success, and the Co-op Elevator in Pigeon is fortunate to have her as a valuable addition to their front office team.

EMPOWERING CONFIDENCE

Huron Co. - Collette contacted the GST Michigan Works! office in Bad Axe after we provided employment services for her son, which led to his attainment of full-time employment. Now it seemed Collette needed our employment services.

She had been employed part-time as a Clinical RN, with Huron Behavioral Health in Bad Axe, where she obtained her qualified mental health professional (QMHP) credential. However, due to budget cuts, her employer had to change Collette's position to casual (on-call). Though Collette was a highly valued employee, this change did not provide her with consistent, reliable employment that could sustain her. She made the difficult decision to leave the job she loved and the team she enjoyed working with.

When she met with a GST Michigan Works! career coach, her professional self-esteem was very low, and she didn't know what her options were in the labor market. After meeting with Collette, the career coach had a clear understanding of how to help her compose an updated resume and cover letter, and they discussed a job search strategy that would encourage Collette as she began her search. The Business Solutions Professional (BSP) in Huron County found job leads that were appropriate for Collette's skill set and experience.

Once the career coach completed and emailed the new resume to Collette, she visited the office to discuss her concerns that the resume was too polished and misrepresented her experience. With the resume in hand, the coach methodically reviewed each line of the summary, skills, and employment history with Collette. When asked about each skill, work task, and line of the summary, Collette agreed that they accurately depicted

her qualifications. At that moment, she began to see herself and her abilities in a new light. With a little encouragement from her coach, Collette started to feel much more confident applying for the jobs that the BSP had found for her, including opportunities in leadership and management.

A few weeks later, Collette returned to meet with her coach to discuss scheduled interviews from those leads and more. She had received one offer but felt it was essential to keep the remaining scheduled interviews and would review her options afterward. She sought advice from her coach regarding interview strategies, etiquette, and ethics.

A month later, Collette came to the office to inform the GST team of the new job offer she accepted. She was hired by Scheurer Health for the newly created position of RN Director of Mental Health Program, providing psychiatric medical care and senior life solutions. This is a full-time position with full benefits. We couldn't be happier for Collette and are proud of all she has accomplished in her long and continuing career of service to the community. She will undoubtedly become a great asset to the growing Scheurer Health family of healthcare providers.

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EAST MICHIGAN

MICAREER QUEST EAST 2024



2,240
students &
chaperones
registered



200+
professionals



60
exhibits



80+
occupations



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DATE

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EAST MICHIGAN

FOCUS areas:

Advanced Manufacturing • Construction Trades
Health Sciences • In-Demand Industries

EXPLORING
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INDUSTRIES**



PATHWAY TO OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Genesee Co. - Dominic, Emil, Zachery, Dezmon, and Xavier embarked on a transformative journey toward building successful futures. In collaboration with Job Corps, these young men demonstrated a shared commitment to professional growth, leading them to the Young Professionals program that began in April 2024 at GST Michigan Works! They were invited to participate in the Transfr Construction Laborer Pre-Employment Program (PEP), where the participants utilized innovative tools like VR technology and online learning, dedicating their first two weeks to the Construction Laborer PEP, which included lessons, simulations, knowledge checks, and a certificate.

Although each participant had a distinct background and encountered different challenges, they were united by their determination to succeed. With the guidance of their career coaches from the GST Michigan Works! Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program, they set personal goals and worked diligently to overcome the barriers that stood in their way. They received assistance in areas such as establishing bank accounts, obtaining necessary work clothing, acquiring industry tools, and

securing identifying documents, ensuring they had the resources needed to thrive without setbacks.

Through the Young Professionals program, the group participated in hands-on training simulations via Transfr that utilized VR headsets. This engaging method enabled them to simulate real-world job scenarios, improving their technical skills, building their confidence, and offering valuable insights into what would be expected of them in their future career. Upon completing the program, they secured work experience opportunities with Fessler & Bowman, where they applied their skills and gained firsthand knowledge of workplace operations. Their commitment and professionalism impressed their supervisors, who took notice of their hard work.

Andrea Alvarez, Fessler & Bowman's HR representative, remarked,



This is the most prepared team we have ever hosted for work experience."

Impressed by their work ethic and skills, Fessler & Bowman offered each of these young men a position within the company, along with the opportunity to join the union. This milestone marked the achievement of their hard work and the support they received throughout the program. Joining the union provided stability in the construction industry, allowing them to envision brighter futures for themselves and their families.

As they continued their journey in the skilled trades, they celebrated with a Signing Day on August 28, 2024, officially becoming apprentices in their respective unions. This significant step allows them to continue their education while working at Fessler & Bowman.

Zach, one of the program participants, reflected on his experience, saying, "Working for Fessler & Bowman has been a great experience. It aligns with my career goals and provides me with the opportunity to build a better future. This job has allowed me to get my car and will help me move into an apartment, marking an important step toward my future."



MILLER INDUSTRIES MANUFACTURING DAY

Miller Industries held its first Manufacturing Day, welcoming 50 high school and college students from the local area. As a family-owned company specializing in custom steel fabrication and HVAC solutions, the company showcased a variety of exciting career paths in modern manufacturing at the event. Students received hands-on experience in design engineering, custom fabrication, and advanced air handling systems. The goal was to highlight the innovative side of manufacturing and inspire students to consider careers in the industry. Many students left with an interest in manufacturing and a new perspective, seeing how creative and impactful a career in manufacturing can be.



“Students gained a deeper understanding of the wide range of career paths within the manufacturing sector... **This experience not only showcased the exciting opportunities within manufacturing but also helped dispel common misconceptions about careers in this field.”**

– Heather, Linden Schools



“This past Friday, we hosted our first-ever Manufacturing Day! Since 2012, this annual event has given businesses like us the opportunity to **help inspire the next generation of creators.** Thank you to all the local high school and college students who participated! We are already looking forward to next year!”

– Miller Industries, LLC.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PLANNING
YOUR OWN MANUFACTURING DAY EVENT?
**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL
GST MICHIGAN WORKS!**

WE CAN HELP!





Student SUCCESS STORIES

DEVON SUCCESS STORY



Devon is an Adult participant from the Flint Healthcare Employment Opportunities (FHEO) Program, a GST Michigan Works! service provider. Devon, a single mother of four, was supporting her family with social security benefits when she discovered the FHEO Program. Devon shared that she wanted to work in healthcare because she enjoys helping others.

Before healthcare training, Devon completed 120 hours of Life Skills and Healthcare Career Exploration training

hosted by Flint Strive. Devon shared that her time with Flint Strive was very eye opening. She stated, "My experience at Flint Strive taught me how to change. Change isn't easy and not knowing what was coming next was intense for me, but I got through it." Devon also shared that the most important thing she learned in class is the importance of creating a proper resume.

Devon entered into Health Unit Coordinator training at Mott Community College in January 2024. The FHEO Program paid for Devon's tuition, textbooks and clinical uniform which reduced the financial stress of attending training. Devon said during training she learned a lot about the healthcare field. After completing classroom training and clinical externship, Devon successfully graduated from training in April 2024.

In July 2024, Devon was offered a position at Hurley Medical Center as a Health Unit Coordinator. Devon accepted this position and has been applying her recently acquired skills to provide exceptional patient care.

Devon shared,

I feel like I am helping patients be heard."

She said that her long-term goal is to continue her healthcare career with Hurley Medical Center.



Student SUCCESS STORIES

MCKENNA SUCCESS STORY

McKenna 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. During her senior year of high school McKenna attended an information session about the FHEO Program's Summer Youth Work Experience Program at the Genesee Career Institute. McKenna who was studying exercise science at the time, was interested in a healthcare education post high school so she chose to participate in the summer program to further her skill set.

Before beginning her summer work experience, McKenna completed ten days of Life Skills and Healthcare Career Exploration training hosted by the FHEO program. This training included workplace readiness and professional development activities, entrepreneurial and career exploration, financial fitness, mental health strategies, digital literacy, and public service activities. McKenna received a \$50 financial stipend for every day she attended pre-employment training, as well as mileage reimbursement, scrubs for employment, a laptop computer and an additional \$500 financial stipend for completing digital navigator training. McKenna shared, ***"The FHEO Summer Youth Program was not only fun; it was informative. The program taught me how to be more professional with appearance tips to team building exercises. Presentations were also brought in to teach about different careers and even financial advice. I got way more than I expected through the program and I'm glad I took part in it."***

McKenna was placed at McFarlan Villages as a Universal Worker where she assisted in many tasks and provided patient care. McKenna said, ***"Working at McFarlan Villages' assisted living home was an eye-opening***

experience in what working in healthcare would be like. I learned how things are done, what the people are like and my own capabilities. Everyone I worked with was nice and I even got to eat dinner with the residents if I wasn't working".



In addition to working this summer, McKenna attended Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training at Charter Healthcare Training Center, which she completed in September. McKenna shared her positive experience in training, ***"I learned a lot at Charter, the class had informative lectures and hands-on lab experience."*** Now McKenna intends to work as a CNA while she attends Oakland University and she shared that her long-term goal is to become a Physical Therapist.

EMPLOYER SUCCESS STORIES

JOHNSON & WOOD

A LEGACY OF GROWTH & INNOVATION

Genesee Co. - Since its founding in 1971, Johnson and Wood Mechanical Contractors has built a legacy of excellence and innovation. Originally focused on educational construction retrofits, the company has expanded its expertise across diverse sectors, including healthcare, automotive, and various industrial fields. This strategic diversification has fueled the company's growth and extended its reach along the East Coast.

Central to Johnson and Wood's success is its commitment to continuous improvement and workforce development. The company offers specialized training programs in HVAC systems, Daikin Rooftop Service, and comprehensive classroom education for plumbing and pipefitting, among others. These initiatives are designed to keep their workforce at the forefront of industry standards and innovation.

A significant boost for Johnson and Wood came through their FY23 Cycle 2 Going PRO Talent Fund

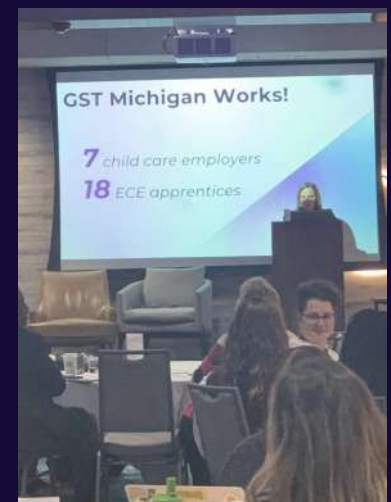


award. The company utilized \$96,700 of the award, which enabled them to upskill 40 employees, including 27 apprentices, enhancing their expertise and further solidifying Johnson and Wood's position as an industry leader.

With a solid foundation built over decades and a forward-thinking approach to employee development, Johnson and Wood Mechanical Contractors continues to adapt and thrive in a rapidly evolving market. As the company grows, it remains committed to leveraging its expertise and innovative strategies to navigate industry changes and drive future success.

EARLY CHILDHOOD INVESTMENT CORPORATION AWARD

Congratulations to GST Michigan Works! Apprenticeship Team for being awarded the Early Childhood Investment Corporation Scale UP Grant. Their dedication to creating our Early Childhood Education apprenticeship program has proven fruitful with the creation of seven new Childcare Development Specialist Programs and 18 Childcare Development Specialists.



THIRD MAN PRESSING

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES & DISTANCES



In May 2023, GST Michigan Works! was approached to assist Third Man Pressing, a Detroit-based boutique vinyl record production facility, with their Going PRO Talent Fund application. Gina Staudacher of Winthrop & Weinstine Group and the Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance Advisory Committee Representative reached out to Cindy Thornthwaite, Business Services Manager for Genesee & Shiawassee Counties and the Going PRO Key Contact, for support.

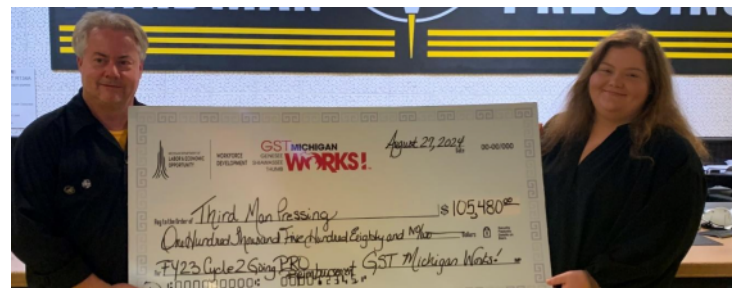
Third Man Pressing is a meticulously designed vinyl record production facility that provides a unique customer experience, including a viewing window where visitors can witness the art and intricacy of the record-making process. An investment by Third Man Records in its hometown—located in a neighborhood steeped in musical history—this space is both inspiring and highly productive. Third Man Pressing/Records is owned by Jack White of the White Stripes.

Initially, Third Man Pressing applied for a Going PRO award in early 2023 but was denied. Gina explained, “They have such a unique niche in upskilling workers who often have no manufacturing or plant experience, giving them an upward trajectory to management and supervisory roles within the company. Their workforce was largely comprised of individuals transitioning from food service or women entering the workforce for the first time.”

With only 30 vinyl record plants worldwide in 2023—and Third Man Pressing being the only one in the Eastern United States—the demand for vinyl was on the rise, yet the availability of skilled labor was limited. Third Man Pressing’s only option was to hire individuals from varied employment backgrounds and train them internally.

Like many Going PRO awards, Third Man Pressing’s award required modifications during the grant period to better align with the training they needed. Ultimately, GST Michigan Works! reimbursed Third Man Pressing a total of \$105,480 for their training expenses. Eddie commented, “Thanks for coming by and bringing good news! We certainly appreciate the support you have provided. You are all welcome anytime!”

For vinyl record enthusiasts, a visit to Third Man Pressing in Detroit is highly recommended. Eddie and Sarah provide exceptional hospitality with every visit. They are wonderful partners, and I am personally honored to have had the privilege of working with this Detroit-based company. I look forward to many more Going PRO applications in the future with Third Man Pressing.” Cindy Thornthwaite, GST Michigan Works! Business Services Manager – Genesee & Shiawassee Counties.



COMMITMENT TO QUALITY CHILDCARE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SUNNY PATCH LEARNING CENTER

Genesee Co. - Since its founding in 2009 by Annette Hughes, Sunny Patch Learning Center has become a cornerstone in the childcare sector in Flint, Michigan. Originally established as an in-home daycare, the center has expanded to two locations at G3393 Clio Rd. and 1160 Donaldson Blvd., both former Flint Board of Education sites. Over the years, Sunny Patch has adapted to meet the changing needs of families, including the addition of a free preschool program made possible by Genesee County's Great Start Readiness Program.

As Sunny Patch grew, so did the demand for qualified childcare professionals capable of maintaining high standards of care and education. With a focus on providing safe, secure, and attentive childcare, the center faced a significant challenge in recruiting, training, and retaining skilled staff who could deliver high-quality experiences for children. This challenge became even more pressing as the demand for quality childcare services increased within the community.

To address this need, Sunny Patch partnered with GST Michigan Works! to establish an apprenticeship program aimed at developing skilled Childcare Development Specialists. GST Michigan Works! provided essential resources and support to launch this initiative, connecting stakeholders committed to improving childcare standards and workforce development in Flint.

Currently, four apprentices are participating in Sunny Patch's Childcare Development Specialist Apprenticeship Program: Martha, Elisha, Shavon, and Angela. Through a combination of mentorship and hands-on training, the program ensures each apprentice receives the guidance and support needed to succeed. GST Michigan Works! has contributed \$2,000 in start-up funds, \$2,800 for mentorship, \$11,047.76 for apprentice assistance, and \$10,200 for on-the-job training. This investment has fostered a robust learning environment where apprentices gain skills while enhancing the quality of care Sunny Patch provides.

Annette Hughes and the four apprentices play key roles in this success story. The partnership with GST Michigan Works! has been instrumental, highlighting a commitment to improving childcare services in Flint while empowering individuals in their careers.



The apprenticeship program at Sunny Patch serves as a practical training ground for aspiring childcare professionals. Apprentices work closely with experienced mentors, learning the essentials of quality childcare services and supporting educational components like the preschool curriculum for four-year-olds.

Launched as part of a broader personnel development initiative in 2024, the recent program expansion equips Sunny Patch to train the next generation of childcare professionals, meeting the growing needs of Flint-area families.

Training takes place at both Flint locations, designed to provide safe, nurturing environments for children and hands-on experience for apprentices in settings that prioritize quality care and education.

This story underscores the essential role of quality childcare in early childhood development and the community as a whole. By investing in apprenticeships, Sunny Patch Learning Center is not only enhancing its service delivery but also addressing the workforce shortage in the childcare sector. With a focus on quality training, the program ensures the needs of families and children are met while contributing to the professional growth of the apprentices.

GST Michigan Works! has been crucial in providing the funding and resources needed to bring this program to life. Through this partnership, Sunny Patch has created a sustainable model for workforce development, enhancing both the quality of childcare services in Flint and the career prospects of its apprentices.

CREST MARINE



TRAINING HELPS EVERYONE

Shiawassee Co. - Crest Marine, a premier pontoon boat manufacturer in Shiawassee County, has been a significant employer in the region for many years. Recently, the company has expanded its product line, now offering a greater variety of boats and requiring a broad range of specialized skills to meet production demands. These skills include welding, industrial sewing, carpentry, and electrical work. As technology, equipment, and regulations continuously evolve, upskilling has become essential for the workforce.

To meet these training needs, Crest Marine turned to the Going PRO Talent Fund. After applying and receiving an award of \$22,425, the company was able to invest in skill development for its employees, enabling them to enhance their abilities and increase their wages. This investment has resulted in a better-trained workforce, helping Crest Marine remain competitive in today's boating market.

GREAT LAKES COMPOSITES

PADDLES IN THE WATER AND FULL STEAM AHEAD!

Shiawassee Co. - Great Lakes Composites manufactures a wide array of plastic and resin products for industries such as boat building, defense, and truck manufacturing. Among their offerings is the well-known "Paddle Wheeler", the iconic swan and dragon paddle boats that delight visitors at parks and lakes nationwide. Producing high-quality products like these requires a skilled workforce.

Great Lakes Composites applied for the Going PRO Talent Fund, Cycle 2 in 2023, recognizing a need to upskill their existing staff. This was their first application, and they were thrilled to be awarded funding.

With a grant of \$19,800, the company was able to provide training that resulted in significant growth for many employees. Each participant received a pay increase, and several earned promotions. Cara Petoskey, Human Resources Manager, highlighted one particularly notable success,



Our biggest success story is an employee who was promoted to team lead at the beginning of our training and was recently promoted again to floor supervisor. **These classes taught him and the rest of our team hands-on, practical skills, allowing them to grow in both compensation and responsibility.**



ACI PLASTICS

UTILIZING THE RIGHT RESOURCES



Genesee Co. - ACI Plastics is a leading sustainable recycler dedicated to innovative solutions in plastic recycling. By transforming waste into valuable products, ACI not only achieves substantial cost savings but also makes a significant contribution to environmental conservation. Recently, ACI Plastics took a bold step forward by securing \$218,000 through the Going Pro Training Fund to supplement its existing training budget, further enhancing employee development.

ACI Plastics obtained this essential grant with assistance from GST Michigan Works! Their expertise and support made the application process seamless, showcasing how strategic partnerships can yield substantial benefits for businesses. The resources provided by GST Michigan Works! make it easier for companies of all sizes to access crucial training funds, enabling them to invest effectively in their workforce.

The funding has enabled ACI to implement a range of training initiatives, including upskilling programs, machine safety training, cross-training for employees, and On-the-Job Training (OJT) for new hires. For example, machine safety training equips employees with the skills needed to operate equipment safely, reducing the risk of accidents and fostering a safer workplace.

Investing in human capital is central to ACI Plastics' growth strategy. The enhanced training programs not only improve operational efficiency but also foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptability. This commitment to employee development is a key factor in attracting top talent, as potential recruits are drawn to organizations that prioritize their growth. Additionally, a positive workplace culture, reinforced by ongoing training, boosts employee morale and retention, strengthening ACI's position within the competitive recycling industry.

The impact of ACI Plastics' training initiatives extends beyond the organization, benefiting Genesee County. By prioritizing workforce development, ACI contributes to the local economy by retaining and growing its workforce. A skilled, employable workforce is essential for attracting new businesses and fostering economic resilience throughout the region and state.

The dedication required to continually invest in staff development is evident at ACI Plastics. By utilizing the Going Pro Talent Fund, the company demonstrates its commitment to creating a skilled, adaptable workforce ready to meet future challenges. ACI Plastics exemplifies how investing in human capital drives company growth while fostering a thriving community, helping ensure that Genesee County remains competitive and sustainable in the evolving economic landscape.

ROLLS MECHANICAL

KOOPER'S JOURNEY WITH ROLLS MECHANICAL & GST MICHIGAN WORKS!



Genesee Co. - In June 2024, GST Michigan Works! Business Solutions Professional Roy Reynolds and Mark Bourassa, the new Corporate Recruiter & HR at Rolls Mechanical, met to discuss recruitment efforts and future opportunities with GST Michigan Works! A key topic of discussion was the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program, designed to assist employers with offsetting the costs of training someone who doesn't have the full range of skills required for hire, but could be taught on the job. During the meeting, Mark mentioned he would soon be interviewing a recent high school graduate, Kooper, who despite having no previous HVAC experience, was eager to pursue an HVAC Apprenticeship. Mark wondered if he would be eligible for the OJT program.

As luck would have it, Kooper was eligible for OJT and hired by Rolls Mechanical as one of their new HVAC Technician Apprentices. He began his training at Rolls Mechanical on July 9, 2024, transitioning from summer work in lawn care to a promising career in skilled trades. Driven to pursue his HVAC Apprenticeship, Kooper chose Rolls Mechanical because of their strong reputation as a great local employer. By September 23, 2024, he successfully completed his training and retention period.

On October 1, 2024, Roy presented a check for \$2,400 to Rolls Mechanical in recognition of their commitment to training new talent. Reflecting on his experience, Kooper shared,

GST Michigan Works! really helped me get into my HVAC Apprenticeship by purchasing me a pair of boots and even giving me a mileage reimbursement to help me afford gas for the On-the-Job Training with Rolls Mechanical. They were also very easy to reach and just great people to work with. **They want you to succeed!"**

Mark emphasized the significance of this partnership, saying, "We recently partnered with GST Michigan Works! through their On-the-Job Training Program, which aims to bring younger generations into skilled trades. Kooper has been working hard, building a great reputation for himself, and has a bright future with Rolls Mechanical!"

This collaboration underscores the importance of investing in the next generation of skilled tradespeople, paving the way for young professionals like Kooper to succeed.

ASPIRE RURAL HEALTH SYSTEM **LAUNCHES** NEW **APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM** FOR CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANTS IN MARLETTE

ASPIRE RURAL HEALTH SYSTEM

Sanilac Co. - Aspire Rural Health System is proud to announce the launch of its new one-year, competency-based apprenticeship program for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) in Marlette. Developed in collaboration with GST Michigan Works!, this initiative aims to cultivate the next generation of healthcare professionals while addressing the growing demand for skilled nursing staff.

The apprenticeship program is designed to provide aspiring healthcare workers with robust hands-on training and comprehensive classroom instruction. Participants will gain valuable experience working alongside seasoned professionals in various healthcare settings, ensuring they develop the essential skills necessary to deliver high-quality patient care. Aspire Rural Health System is actively seeking to recruit six motivated individuals to join this innovative program. The curriculum will cover vital skills such as patient care, communication techniques, and safety protocols, all centered around a competency-based approach to prepare apprentices for success in their future careers.

"We are thrilled to partner with GST Michigan Works! to implement this apprenticeship program, which represents a significant investment in our community and the future of healthcare," said Hollice Londry of Aspire Rural Health System.



*This program will not only empower individuals to embark on rewarding careers in nursing **but will also enhance the overall quality of care we provide to our patients.***

Aspire Rural Health System is a collaborative network of over 70 providers serving Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola, and Lapeer counties, dedicated to expanding access to quality rural healthcare as the trusted choice for patients and employees alike.



ROLLS MECHANICAL

ROLLS MECHANICAL LAUNCHES NEW ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Genesee Co. - Rolls Mechanical, a leading provider of mechanical contracting services, is excited to announce the launch of its new Electrician Apprenticeship Program, sponsored by GST Michigan Works! This Fenton-based company is committed to delivering high-quality services and innovative solutions and has built a reputation for excellence in the industry, grounded in teamwork and professionalism.

The new program aims to inspire the next generation of skilled electricians by selecting seven motivated individuals for a comprehensive, four-year, time-based training program. In collaboration with Penn Foster, a recognized leader in online education, the program

provides apprentices with a well-rounded curriculum that blends classroom training with hands-on experience. The program is designed to equip participants with essential skills and knowledge for a successful career in the electrical trade, helping to ensure a steady pipeline of qualified professionals in the industry.

"Investing in the training of new electricians is vital to the success of our industry and the community," said Eric Hotchkiss, CFO of Rolls Mechanical.



We are proud to offer this program and provide young individuals the opportunity to build a rewarding career in the trades."

The Electrician Apprenticeship Program launch is a testament to the commitment of Rolls Mechanical and GST Michigan Works! to workforce development. This partnership underscores the importance of skilled trades in strengthening the local economy and highlights the impactful role of apprenticeship in developing the workforce of tomorrow.

VALLEY ENTERPRISES

Huron Co. - Valley Enterprises, a leading North American supplier of interior trim components and cargo management systems, is committed to staying competitive and growing in the market. To achieve this, they need well-trained employees capable of analyzing and quickly resolving manufacturing issues. Their team must also conduct effective internal audits to identify areas of non-compliance and waste, ensuring they maintain their competitive edge.

GST Michigan Works! met with Valley Enterprises to explore whether the Going Pro Talent Fund Grant could help train their workforce effectively. Together, we identified training courses beneficial to their employees that met Going Pro's guidelines. Valley Enterprises applied for the 2023 Going PRO Talent Fund Cycle 2 grant and was awarded funding. With this grant, they were able to enroll an employee, Haley, in both 8D Problem Solving and IATF 16949 Internal Auditor Training.

Haley successfully completed both courses, earning Certificates of Completion for the IATF 16949 Internal



Auditor and 8D Problem Solving training. With these new skills, Haley can now determine the root causes of manufacturing issues, analyze them, and find effective solutions. Her auditing skills have improved significantly, enabling her to conduct thorough internal audits to identify and address non-compliance issues, ultimately reducing quality issues and waste.

With a more skilled workforce, Valley Enterprises can improve their efficiency, maintain high-quality production, and stay competitive within their industry.

BARETTE OUTDOOR LIVING

PROVIDING THE KEYS FOR SUCCESS

Genesee Co. - Barrette Outdoor Living, located in Genesee County, is a leader in the manufacturing of fencing, railing, decking, and complementary outdoor products across North America. Renowned for its custom and often patented designs, Barrette recognizes that to maintain its competitive edge, it must deliver top-tier training that is continuously updated and tailored to meet the evolving needs of its specialized clientele.

Recently, Barrette Outdoor Living leveraged the Going Pro Talent Fund to enhance its workforce development initiatives. This funding has been pivotal in supporting various specialized training programs that equip employees with skills critical for both their current roles and future careers. By emphasizing continuous improvement and adaptation, Barrette ensures that its workforce is not only skilled in producing high-quality products but also possesses transferable skills applicable across Michigan.

The partnership with GST Michigan Works! has been instrumental for Barrette, enabling the company to access a range of resources and ongoing support. For years, Barrette has worked alongside GST Michigan Works! to secure training funds, ensuring that employees receive

top-quality education. This enduring relationship highlights the importance of community partnerships in advancing workforce development.

Barrette Outdoor Living is dedicated to investing in its employees through skill-building, barrier removal strategies, and leadership programs focused on internal promotion. This commitment to employee well-being and career growth fosters a positive workplace culture that values development and inclusivity. By promoting from within and developing leadership potential, Barrette is laying a strong foundation for future success while retaining top talent.

The benefits of these investments extend beyond Barrette itself, contributing to a healthier economic landscape in Genesee County. As Barrette enhances its workforce's skills and competencies, it helps create a more employable population ready to meet the demands of the local job market and beyond.

Barrette Outdoor Living exemplifies a modern employer that recognizes the importance of investing in its people. By prioritizing training, employee well-being, and leadership development, Barrette is not only building a strong workplace culture but also ensuring its ongoing success. This commitment to continuous improvement and strategic partnerships will undoubtedly enable Barrette to thrive, positively impacting both the community and the broader Michigan workforce for years to come.



PRINT TO PROGRESS: A WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

Genesee Co. - TGI Direct is a premier provider of print, mail, and fulfillment services tailored specifically for companies operating in highly regulated industries. Established in 1964 as a print and mail house, TGI Direct has evolved into a full-service direct marketing firm serving multiple sectors, including healthcare, manufacturing, and higher education. Since July 2020, TGI Direct, Inc. has been a woman-owned company, with headquarters in Flint, Michigan. The management team has recognized a need for upskilling their workforce across various divisions within the company.

Jamie Portillo, Recruitment and Talent Management Specialist, reached out to GST Michigan Works! and connected with Erich Latham, a Certified Business Solutions Professional, with an interest in building a business partnership and leveraging our services and programs to foster workforce growth and increase capabilities. Erich met with Jamie at TGI in May 2023 to

gain more perspective on TGI Direct and explore how we could establish a productive business partnership. During that initial meeting, he introduced Jamie to the possibilities of applying for the Going PRO Talent Fund FY23 Cycle 2.

They successfully proceeded through the requirements and applied for funding. TGI Direct, Inc. was awarded \$33,048 in Cycle 2 funds. Additionally, TGI Direct forecasted hiring 10 new employees for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, with On-the-Job Training (OJT) funds helping to offset onboarding costs. Through this award, TGI Direct was able to provide critical training in Principles of Supervision and Leadership, Machine Operation, and Value Stream Mapping and Deployment. These training opportunities, combined with the OJT funds, have enabled TGI Direct to modernize and equip both new and existing employees with essential skills, fostering career growth and supporting the company's long-term development.



MI-TECH TOOL

Tuscola Co. - At Mi-Tech Tool, a company specializing in the manufacture of carbide cutting inserts for the oil and gas industry, maintaining high standards in production and quality is critical. The company recently faced a challenge: its state-of-the-art Electrical Discharge Machining (EDM) equipment required advanced operator training to maximize its capabilities and ensure that its production standards aligned with industry demands. To address this need, Mi-Tech Tool collaborated with GST Michigan Works! and applied for the Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF). They received the award and began working with EBRC Corp, a trusted training provider known for customizing training programs tailored to a company's specific needs.

The EDM machine had been programmed for optimal operation, but many operators needed support to fully understand the intricacies of its programming and functionalities. To bridge this gap, EBRC Corp designed a specialized training course aimed at equipping Mi-Tech Tool's team with advanced operational knowledge to enhance the machine's efficiency. The training was extensive, covering detailed aspects of the machine's programming, operation, and maintenance, ensuring operators could troubleshoot and adapt as needed to meet production requirements.

Colleen, a representative from Mi-Tech Tool, shared her thoughts on the program's impact:

The training we have received in the past has helped tremendously with our operators. It was beneficial for both employees' wages and Mi-Tech's profitability. This time around, the advanced training EBRC provided gave our operators new insights into quality control and productivity, directly contributing to the company's success."

Through the partnership with GST Michigan Works!, GPTF assistance and EBRC's customized training, Mi-Tech Tool's operators gained valuable knowledge and skills to operate the EDM machine at its peak. This not only improved production quality but also helped the company maintain a competitive edge in the demanding oil and gas industry.

SISCO SALON & SPA



A JOURNEY THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Genesee Co. - In the picturesque town of Flushing, SisCo Salon and Spa faced the challenge of expanding their team while staying true to their commitment to eco-friendly practices and exceptional service. Owner Kacie Fournier recognized the need for skilled apprentices who shared the salon's values and dedication to sustainability.

Through the innovative support of GST Michigan Works!, a partnership was established to develop a Hair Stylist Apprenticeship Program. This collaboration united local educators and industry experts to create a curriculum aligned with SisCo's mission. By engaging diverse partners, GST Michigan Works! showcased the power of community-driven solutions to overcome workforce challenges.

The apprenticeship program introduced a comprehensive training model that focused not only on hair styling techniques but also on sustainable beauty practices. Leveraging GST Michigan Works! resources, SisCo Salon designed an educational framework with hands-on training, eco-friendly product knowledge, and a commitment to minimizing environmental impact.

What sets SisCo Salon apart is its unwavering focus on sustainability and community engagement. By providing a unique platform for apprentices, the salon ensures that individuals are not only learning a trade but are also becoming advocates for eco-friendly beauty practices. This innovative approach benefits not only the salon but also creates a ripple effect, fostering awareness and inspiring changes in industry standards.

Thanks to the partnership with GST Michigan Works!, SisCo Salon and Spa is set to welcome its first apprentice into the newly approved program. This initiative not only addresses the salon's staffing needs but also empowers local youth to gain valuable skills in a nurturing, sustainable environment. SisCo Salon's commitment to education and community outreach continues to grow, positioning it as a beacon of beauty and sustainability in the Flushing area.

HARBOR BEACH COMM. HOSPITAL

GSTMW SUPPORTS SURGICAL TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP THROUGH GPTF



Huron Co. - Harbor Beach Community Hospital faced a significant challenge in filling its Certified Surgical Technologist opening. Leanne, an employee in the Surgical Department, was eager to assist with surgeries but lacked the necessary certification.

Recognizing this as a potential apprenticeship opportunity, GST Michigan Works! Apprenticeship Manager reached out to Tina at Harbor Beach Community Hospital. Together, they worked on establishing an apprenticeship program tailored to their needs. Additionally, discussions about the Going PRO Talent Funding led Tina to apply for a grant, which was successfully awarded for Cycle 1 of 2023. As a result, Harbor Beach Community Hospital received \$3,500 from the Going PRO Talent Fund for 2023.

The support from GST's Apprenticeship Manager was crucial in setting up the Surgical Technologist Apprenticeship Program, which gained approval on January 25, 2023. Leanne began her training shortly after, on February 3, 2023, and completed her Surgical Technologist Certification through MedCerts on November 11, 2023. She is now actively assisting with surgeries!

The funding received for this training was a game-changer for Leanne. It allowed her to pursue certification while continuing her work at the hospital. This accomplishment not only advanced her career, elevating her to a higher position with better pay but also equipped her with valuable skills that she can continue to develop.

FLINT ODYSSEY HOUSE



GPTF HELPS SUPPORT WHOLE PERSON HEALING

Genesee Co. - Flint Odyssey House (FOH) has 26 recovery housing units certified by the Michigan Association of Recovery Residences, Inc. (MARR) located in Flint, Saginaw, and Port Huron. They provide a variety of services including, but not limited to, medically monitored withdrawal management, medication-assisted treatment, high and low-intensity residential, intensive outpatient, outpatient, and various substance use and co-occurring disorders including opioid use disorders, stimulant use disorders, and various substance use disorders.

Flint Odyssey House was awarded \$100,190 in Going PRO FY23 Cycle 1 to train incumbent staff in Behavioral Health Equity Leadership, American Society of Addiction Medicine Interactive Journaling, and Health Equity Grounded Population Health. This training allows the staff to provide overall health care for each patient, which is critical in treating substance disorders.

Using the Going PRO FY23 award, Flint Odyssey House trained 97 incumbent workers in Health Equity Leadership and 11 incumbent workers in Grounded Population Health. They were able to receive a reimbursement of \$62,895.00. "FOH leadership increased their knowledge of fiscal sustainability tools and population health metrics. FOH staff increased their self-knowledge related to the intersectionality of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Both directors and staff function as interdisciplinary teams, the health equity grounded leadership training increased knowledge of organizational culture, cultural competence, cultural humility, and substance use disorder health-related disparities," stated Ronnie Tyson, Director of Programs Outpatient.

GST Michigan Works! cares deeply for our local communities and we are proud to be able to work with an organization such as Flint Odyssey House. FOH works very hard to care for the whole person when treating substance disorders to ensure each person has a successful and positive outcome.

SEPTEMBER 17TH: LAPEER MULTI-EMPLOYER JOB FAIR



Lapeer Co. - On September 17th, GST Michigan Works! in Lapeer hosted a Multi-Employer Job Fair, attracting 28 eager job seekers. The event featured seven employers representing a diverse range of industries, including manufacturing, healthcare, food service, agriculture, and military opportunities. This job fair provided a valuable opportunity for attendees to explore various career paths and connect directly with potential employers, fostering new opportunities for local talent and supporting the region's workforce development.



GST MICHIGAN
GENESSEE SHIAWASSEE THUMB **WORKS!**

**MULTI-EMPLOYER
JOB FAIR**

LAPEER SERVICE CENTER

Tues., September 17th | 11AM - 2PM



**CHECK OUT OUR
EVENTS PAGE!**



A large QR code is centered on a red background. The QR code is black and white, with a white border.



FLINT PD MEET & GREET & AUGUST 18TH FLINT JOB FAIR



MEET GST'S NOVEMBER
**EMPLOYER
SHOWCASE:**



FESSLER & BOWMAN

FESSLERBOWMAN.COM



The GST Michigan Works! Employer Showcase is an innovative campaign that is dedicated to revolutionizing the job market by providing extensive exposure for employers while simultaneously connecting job seekers with exciting career opportunities that make a significant impact in the community.

PREVIOUS EMPLOYER SHOWCASE HIGHLIGHTS:



SCAN OR VISIT [GSTMIWORKS.ORG/SHOWCASE](https://gstmiworks.org/showcase) TO WATCH ALL EMPLOYER SHOWCASE VIDEOS

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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals
with disabilities. 1-800-285-9675 TTY: 711. A proud partner of the American Job Center Network.