

# TALENT TALK

March 2026 | Volume 9, Issue 3



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

Advancing Employers | Enhancing Talent



# REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

**19.2K**  
Job Postings

**555**  
Occupations

**3.3K**  
Employers

**1.9K**  
Locations

Real-Time Intelligence Report – Online Job Ads 7/1/2025 – 12/31/2025

# Active Job Ads

	# Active Job Ads
Registered Nurses	1,793
Retail Salespersons	946
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	612
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	558
Fast Food and Counter Workers	509
Medical and Health Services Managers	476
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	435
Stockers and Order Fillers	394
Social and Human Service Assistants	370
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	339
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	289
Nursing Assistants	278
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	268
Food Preparation Workers	238
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	228
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	198
Respiratory Therapists	194
Physical Therapists	184
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	177
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	176
Speech-Language Pathologists	173
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	171
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	165
Medical Assistants	163
Personal Care Aides	161
Production Workers, All Other	159

 **10,694**  
Page Likes

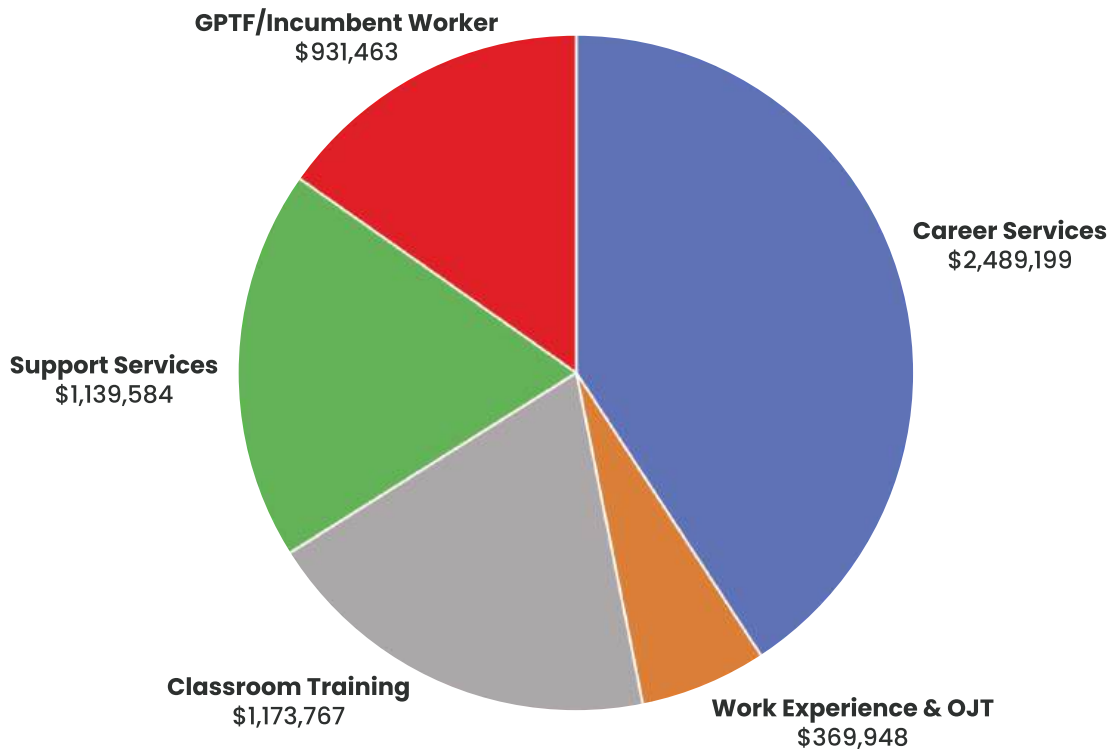
 **668**  
Followers

 **699**  
Followers

# REGIONAL ANALYSIS

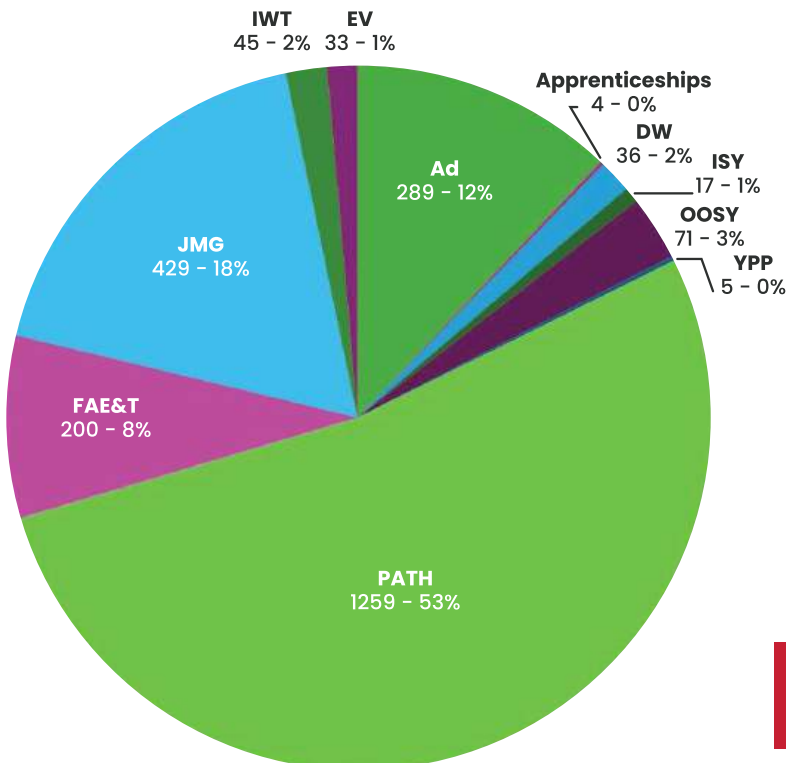
## CAREER SERVICES & PARTICIPANT PAYMENTS

July 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025



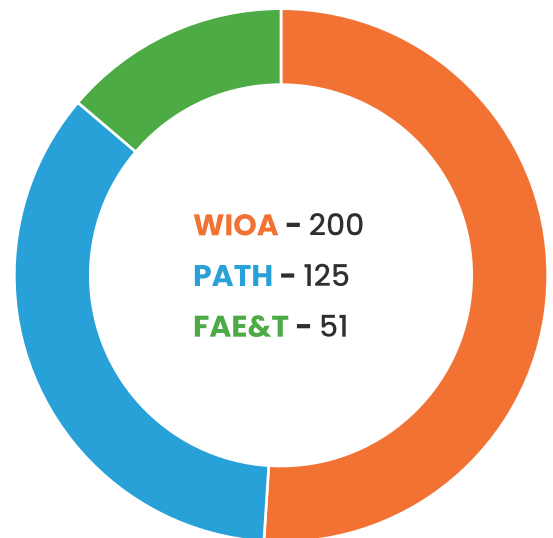
## NEW ENROLLMENTS

July 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025



## ENTERED TRAINING

July 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025



**70.8%** Exited to Training!

# EMPLOYEE SUCCESS STORIES

## EMPOWERING THE FUTURE:

*Joshua's Success Story in the CNC Operator and Programmer Apprenticeship Program with Arch Cutting Tools*

**Genesee Co.** - Joshua successfully finished a CNC Operator and Programmer apprenticeship program at Arch Cutting Tools in Flushing, Michigan. This accomplishment is a pivotal milestone in his career in the manufacturing industry and exemplifies his dedication to professional development and lifelong learning.

During his apprenticeship, Joshua gained essential practical and theoretical skills for CNC operations. The training afforded him comprehensive practical expertise in configuring, programming, and operating CNC machines, enabling him to manufacture high-precision components for diverse industrial applications. He explored sophisticated machining methods and adeptly managed the intricacies of contemporary industrial processes.

The assistance from GST Michigan Works! was pivotal in Joshua's success, offering crucial resources, sound advice, and significant networking opportunities that enhanced his apprenticeship experience.

In contemplating his path, Joshua stated, *"Finishing this apprenticeship has been a transformative experience for me. The practical training and guidance I received enabled me to refine my skills and approach my profession with increased confidence. I am enthusiastic*

*about my prospects in the manufacturing sector and the opportunities that await."*

Mandie Klatt, the HR Manager of Arch Cutting Tools, remarked on Joshua's achievement, noting, *"We are exceedingly proud of Joshua and his accomplishments through the apprenticeship program. It is gratifying to observe our staff develop and capitalize on the possibilities we provide. The partnership with GST Michigan Works! enhances our capacity to cultivate proficient professionals in our sector."*



**Upon completing his apprenticeship, Joshua became a proficient CNC Operator and Programmer, prepared to tackle new challenges in the manufacturing industry.**



## FROM A DOUBTING SHADOW TO A SHINING LIGHT:

### *A Success Story of Persistence and Growing Confidence*

**Sanilac Co.** - Joyann came to the GST Michigan Works! office to attend the PATH program orientation. She was feeling a range of emotions and was full of anxiety about the future. For the past 22 years, she had been a stay-at-home mother of seven. Having never entered the workforce, her support system was weak, and so was her confidence.

With the weight of the world on her shoulders, Joyann took the PATH requirements in stride, going above and beyond to meet her required hours. She found herself at a crossroads: should she stick with what's comfortable or take a chance on herself? After much thought, she decided to register for CNA training and didn't look back. Joyann adapted easily to her coursework, passing her tests with flying colors, and was at the top of her class.

She did her research, volunteered when it wasn't required, and ended up gaining employment at the Sanilac Medical Care Facility. Her bright personality, attention to detail, and caring bedside manner put her above the rest. She aspires to continue her education and obtain her nursing degree.

Over the course of 8 weeks, Joyann's courage, determination, and pure tenacity have transformed not only her future but her self-worth.

## A CAREER BUILT FOR THE LONG HAUL

**Genesee Co.** - Theodore first came to GST Michigan Works! in January of 2025 seeking a path toward a more stable and long-term career. At the time, he was working full-time at O'Reilly Auto Repair, but he knew he wanted a career with opportunities for advancement and the ability to someday retire comfortably.

While exploring CDL-A training options that could fit around his work schedule, Theodore enrolled in the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program. As his career goals became clearer, he transitioned into the WIOA Out-of-School Youth program and made the decision to attend US Truck Driving School in August. He completed the program, earning both his CDL-A license and his hazmat endorsement.

Theodore received comprehensive support throughout his journey—including assistance with tuition, mileage, auto repairs, and essential work equipment.

In November, his hard work paid off when he secured full-time employment with Cassens Transport. The position came with a \$4.00 hourly increase, health insurance, vacation benefits, and a pension—exactly the kind of stable, long-term career he had been striving for!

Theodore shared that he is incredibly thankful for everything GST Michigan Works! did to support him in achieving a fantastic job and launching a promising career.



# TIME FOR A CHANGE



**Genesee Co.** – Kelsey knew she needed a change in her life. She wanted to do more with her career, something that offered greater challenge, excitement, and a deeper sense of purpose. Having spent years responding to emergencies, she was no stranger to high-pressure situations. She wanted a career that combined action with the opportunity to better the community she had long served.

Before coming to GST Michigan Works!, Kelsey worked as an EMT. In that role, she often collaborated with local police officers while helping people during emergencies. Through this experience, she realized she wanted to take the next step in her career and become a police officer protecting and serving her community in a new and fulfilling way.

Kelsey came to GST Michigan Works! seeking assistance to enroll in the Law Enforcement Regional Training Academy (LERTA) through Mott Community College. LERTA is designed to help candidates meet the standards required to become law enforcement officers in the state of Michigan. With the help of

dedicated career coaches, Kelsey's skills were assessed, and she was determined eligible to enroll in the program.



Through funding provided by GST Michigan Works!, Kelsey received financial support for her academy training, as well as assistance with purchasing her uniform and academy t-shirts. After 16 weeks of intensive training, she successfully graduated from the academy with the certifications and knowledge required to become a police officer in Michigan.

**Today, Kelsey proudly serves as a police officer with the City of Flint Police Department. Her story is a reminder that careers in emergency services, whether as an EMT or a police officer, can be both long-lasting and deeply rewarding.**



# OPEN THE DOOR TO SUCCESS!

**Shiawassee Co.** - Franklin came to GST Michigan Works! (GST) in Owosso on October 1st, 2025, after being recently paroled from serving almost 9 years in prison. Being out of the workforce for that long and needing a fresh start presented him with a substantial barrier. His experience before being incarcerated mainly consisted of seasonal tree work that would be impossible to find in the fall. He needed support and guidance to navigate through an apparently closed door to success. While incarcerated, however, he took the initiative to complete an associate's degree in business management through a community college and worked in facility maintenance.

When Franklin first came to GST Michigan Works! and shared his barriers, he met with a Career Coach to determine the appropriate resources and opportunities available to him. When they met, she saw all the potential transferable skills and began helping him look for work. Franklin's Career Coach told him about a job fair taking place at GST Michigan Works! the next day, and assisted him with completing several applications, including one for Midwest Bus. The Career Coach and Business Solutions staff at GST discussed a potential On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunity with the company. After interviewing with the HR representative, the employer was impressed by his efforts to improve and gain experience and was willing to give him an opportunity through an OJT. He was assisted with work boots and required tools to get him started on the job.

His attendance and attitude carried him through the completion of the OJT, including the thirty-day retention period. He now has the ability to work overtime and earn benefits. He received a nice review from his new employer stating, "He has been an ideal new employee with perfect attendance!" His determination and dedication to learning a new role have paid off.

**Franklin is still employed with Midwest Bus and is enjoying the job more each day. He stated,**

*"As you may know, I made some mistakes in my life. I was only home two weeks when I got hired at Midwest Bus after serving 106 months in prison. I wanted a job more than anything. This changed my life, and I am so thankful. I have learned many lessons at Midwest Bus. I learned teamwork and how to do many things that I had not known before. I am a hard worker and always push myself to be better at my job. I recently got medical and life insurance for the first time in my life on my own. I am proud of myself, and I believe God put me right where I belong. I am doing awesome and love my job. I am thriving alongside my loving wife, who has been a great support for me."*



# CHANGING PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE

**Genesee Co.** – Keosha came into the PATH program unmotivated and uninspired. She had just lost her job and lacked a support system. She had questions about her worth as an employee. She felt defeated and uninterested in what the program could offer. She stated that if it had not been for her coach’s compassion, meeting her needs, offering reassurance, helping her create a plan, and adjusting to redirection, she would have struggled to move forward.

Keosha’s immediate barriers were: lack of transportation and work clothing. She and her coach continued to meet weekly and developed a plan of action to assist with removing barriers and gaining employment or entering training. Keosha was reluctant and ready to give up when she was assigned to complete the Workplace Excellence series at GST Michigan Works! in Flint. That is when her mindset began to change.



*“Suddenly, I had a new perspective on life and felt motivated to use the soft skills that were taught in those classes to pursue my aspirations.”*

Shortly after starting training, she gained employment with Burton

Glen Charter Academy as a paraprofessional.

Keosha’s career coach helped her obtain appropriate clothing for her new position and assisted in removing her transportation barrier with PATH funding for a car purchase and auto insurance.

*“It only took me to change my perspective, but I do not know if that would have happened without my coach and the tools that PATH offers to support,”* shared Keosha.

## CHASING PURPOSE, NOT COMFORT

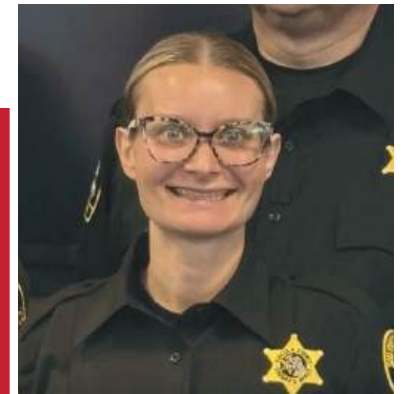
**Genesee Co.** – Jacquelyn’s journey into corrections wasn’t a straight line—it was a discovery. She began working for Tuscola County as a Jailer in December of 2024, stepping into a role that immediately challenged and energized her. Very quickly, she realized this was more than just a job; it was the next step toward the career she truly wanted. Determined to grow, she set her sights on becoming a Certified Correctional Officer and continuing her work with the county at a higher level.

To help her reach that goal, GST Michigan Works! assisted Jacquelyn by covering the cost of her academy training and providing supportive services such as tools and mileage to ensure she could travel back and forth. Jacquelyn expressed deep gratitude for this support, sharing how the financial assistance and encouragement relieved a major burden and allowed her to fully focus on her training and success.

Her commitment paid off! Jacquelyn received an Academy Award for Best Performance in Defensive Tactics, a recognition that highlighted not only her skill but also her discipline, resilience, and determination to excel.

Before corrections, Jacquelyn worked as a dental hygienist—an admirable profession, but one that didn’t quite fit her spirit. She’s a bit of a thrill seeker at heart, someone who thrives on staying active, thinking on her feet, and facing whatever comes her way. What truly sets her apart, though, is her ability to connect with people. Whether a person is having a good day or their hardest one, Jacquelyn listens without judgment and tries to meet them where they are.

Her transition into corrections feels less like a career change and more like a calling—a path that allows her to use both her courage and her compassion. And with each step forward, she continues to prove that she’s exactly where she was meant to be.



# THE ROAD TO ADVANCEMENT *HUNTER'S JOURNEY TO CDL CLASS A*

**Huron Co.** - Hunter had always been passionate about mechanics. However, he felt a yearning for more responsibility, more skills, and ultimately, a more lucrative salary. That's when he decided to pursue a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class A to boost his employability within his company.

On January 16, 2024, Hunter took the first step in his transformative journey by attending a WIOA orientation. This session opened his eyes to the opportunities available for skill enhancement and training, setting him on the path to achieving his goal. With renewed determination, he signed up for a training program that would teach him everything necessary to obtain his CDL Class A license.

The training was intense, filled with hands-on learning and rigorous instruction at Thumb CDL, LLC, but with the support of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program helping to cover costs of tuition, drug test fees, skills tests, and the

necessary temporary permit, Hunter felt equipped to tackle the challenges ahead.

By March 13, 2024, he finished all the necessary testing, successfully earning his CDL Class A license. The taste of achievement was sweet. This new qualification not only represented a personal accomplishment but also promised new opportunities within his workplace.

His employer appreciated his initiative and the new skills he brought to the table. As a result, he got a raise of \$3.00 per hour, significantly boosting his income. As if that wasn't enough, in February 2025, another promotion came his way, increasing his hourly wage by an additional \$4.00 from the orientation date.

**Reflecting on his journey,  
Hunter expressed,**

*"I was able to update my skills and continue working with my current employer, unlocking more opportunities to make a higher wage. The support I received through the WIOA program was invaluable, helping me achieve my goals and take my career to the next level."*



**Hunter's story is one of resilience, ambition, and success—showcasing how a single decision to invest in oneself can lead to profound professional growth and financial stability.**

# FROM TRAINING TO SERVICE: PATH TO A CAREER IN CORRECTIONS

**Genesee Co.** – From a young age, Nataliee felt compelled to serve others. Drawn by integrity, discipline, and community safety, her sense of purpose grew into a clear goal: to work in law enforcement and make a positive difference.

Nataliee’s path grew step by step. She earned her high school diploma, knowing it was the foundation for her future. Seeking real-world experience, she entered Job Corps and chose the Homeland Security trade, turning her passion for public safety into action.

While in the program, Nataliee challenged herself through several paid work experiences, where she developed practical skills, confidence, and professionalism. She also found encouragement and stability through supportive services, including professional clothing, essential resources, and the ongoing support of the WIOA Youth and Jobs for Michigan Graduates programs. This support helped her stay focused and move forward, even when the journey felt demanding.

In March 2024, Nataliee reached an important milestone by completing her Homeland Security Career Training program with Job Corps. Just a few months later, in June 2024, her hard work was recognized when she earned a certificate from the Kiwanis Law Enforcement Career Academy. Next, she completed training with the Michigan Department of Corrections, preparing her for the responsibilities of a career in corrections.

Nataliee’s dedication and persistence paid off when she was hired as a Corrections Officer at the Richard Handlon Correctional Facility. With a start date in July 2025, she works 40 hours per week at a competitive wage, and she can operate in a role that plays a vital part in maintaining safety, accountability, and rehabilitation within the facility.

Her journey shows that working in corrections is about more than enforcing rules; it’s about guiding, supporting, and protecting individuals within the system, while helping create a safer environment for everyone.



## ReStoring HOPE

**Tuscola Co.** – In September 2025, Christy, a determined single mother, connected with GST Michigan Works! in Caro to participate in the PATH program. Focused on creating stability and a brighter future for her family, Christy actively engaged in job search and job readiness activities, consistently demonstrating motivation, resilience, and commitment.

Within a few weeks, Christy’s career coach placed her at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, where she completed her required weekly hours through community service while gaining valuable hands-on work experience. Christy quickly distinguished herself, earning consistent praise from the ReStore manager for her strong work ethic, reliability, and positive attitude.

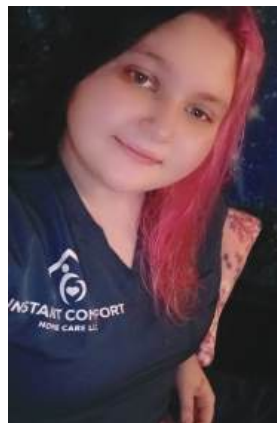
Throughout her journey, GST Michigan Works! provided supportive services that helped remove barriers to employment and ensured Christy remained on a clear path to success. Reflecting on her experience, Christy shared, ***“How grateful I am for all the support the team at GST Michigan Works! has given me. You all have been so kind and helpful, including emotionally, when I felt like giving up. Thank you!”*** This encouragement allowed Christy to stay focused, motivated, and confident in her abilities.

Christy’s dedication soon led to a job offer from the ReStore. She quickly thrived in her role, and her commitment and leadership potential did not go unnoticed. As a result, Christy has since been promoted to Assistant Store Manager, a testament to her hard work and the trust she has earned from her employer. She continues to enjoy meaningful work while achieving increased self-sufficiency. Her employment has provided financial stability, strengthened her confidence, and enabled her to support herself and her family independently. Christy shared, ***“I really believe in the company’s mission,”*** and her employer has repeatedly recognized her as an excellent worker and a valued member of the team.

Christy’s success doesn’t stop there. Motivated to continue building her future, she will begin school at the end of January to pursue a career as a Medical Assistant. This next step reflects her long-term commitment to growth, stability, and creating even greater opportunities for her family.



## **FROM UNCERTAINTY TO MOMENTUM**



**Genesee Co.** – Gabriella began her journey with Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG) and GST Michigan Works! in the spring of 2025. She entered the program as a high school dropout, navigating an unstable home environment, unemployment, and deep uncertainty about whether returning to school and earning her diploma was possible.

At the start of her journey, the future felt fragile and unclear. Without a high school diploma, opportunities seemed distant, and ongoing anxiety made the idea of starting over overwhelming. Still, Gabriella made a brave choice. She decided not to let uncertainty dictate her future and committed to pushing ahead, even when the path felt muddy.

Through her involvement with GST Michigan Works!, JMG, and the support provided through WIOA, Gabriella began rebuilding more than her pathway to employment. She began rebuilding her confidence. Over time, she developed essential workplace skills, including effective communication, collaboration, and the ability to work comfortably with people she had never met before. What once felt intimidating gradually became familiar and then empowering.

In August of 2025, Gabriella reached a significant milestone when she gained employment as a Caregiver with Instant Comfort. This represented a meaningful step toward stability and independence, which bolstered Gabriella’s growth.

Employment provided Gabriella with structure, routine, and a renewed sense of purpose. Through this experience, Gabriella learned more about herself, including discovering that she thrives as a morning person. These insights helped her better understand her strengths and how to apply them in both personal and professional settings.

Perhaps most importantly, Gabriella learned how to use her voice. She realized that asking for help is not a weakness and that advocating for herself is essential to growth and success.

As Gabriella shares in her own words, ***“Even when it’s hard, stick with it. Use your voice and ask for help. You must be the strongest advocate for yourself.”***

# JOURNEY TO A CAREER IN HEALTHCARE

**Shiawassee Co.** – Nikolas entered GST Michigan Works! Owosso Service Center with a strong desire to build a career in healthcare. While highly motivated, he faced financial barriers that made it difficult to access the training needed to move forward, and he needed a boost to get established in the healthcare field.

His journey began when he attended a Career Services/WIOA Orientation. During his appointment, Nikolas openly discussed his career goals and barriers. Together with staff, an action plan was developed. It focused on assessing his skills and aptitudes, career goals, researching available job opportunities, and culminated in researching available Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training programs.

Nikolas qualified for the WIOA funding and was enrolled on 6/11/2025. At enrollment, he was working part-time at Los Tres Amigos, 20 hours per week with no benefits. With support from WIOA and JMG, Nikolas began CNA training at Baker College on June 17, 2025. Throughout the program, he remained committed, positive, and focused on his long-term goals until he finished!

Nikolas successfully passed both CNA exams and immediately began searching for employment in the healthcare field. His dedication and perseverance paid off when he secured employment as a Certified Nursing Assistant with Pleasant View (Shiawassee County Medical Care Facility), earning \$4 more per hour than his restaurant job, working 36 hours per week, and receiving medical, dental, and vision benefits.

**Reflecting on his journey, Nikolas shared,**  
“I’m thriving. I am forever grateful for all the help you guys gave me.”

Nikolas has successfully transitioned from underemployment to a stable, benefit-earning, healthcare career and is well-positioned for continued growth in the healthcare field.

Nikolas’s journey was not without challenges. Financial barriers were a significant obstacle throughout his path, including the cost of CNA training and required certification exam fees. Balancing part-time employment with training responsibilities also requires strong time management and persistence. Through these challenges, Nikolas learned the value of advocacy, accountability, and perseverance. By staying engaged with his Career Coach, asking for support when barriers arose, and remaining focused on his long-term goals, he was able to successfully navigate each obstacle. This experience reinforced the importance of utilizing available resources, maintaining consistent participation, and trusting the process.



## ANNQUETTA'S SUCCESS STORY



Annquetta 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. Annquetta was preparing for high school graduation when she attended a presentation about PULSE, the FHEO's summer youth work experience program. Annquetta applied to the PULSE program because she was interested in learning about a possible healthcare career, as she had a strong interest in helping others, especially women.

Annquetta was accepted into the program and completed ten days of life skills and healthcare career exploration training hosted by the FHEO program. This paid training included workplace readiness and professional development activities, entrepreneurial and career exploration, financial fitness, mental health strategies, digital literacy training, and public service. Annquetta actively participated in training by

contributing to group conversations and projects, engaging with guest speakers, and bringing a positive attitude to class each day. Annquetta also received scrubs for work experience and a new laptop computer for completing digital literacy training. Annquetta shared that this pre-employment training was transformative for her. She stated, "I really do appreciate the opportunity. I didn't know what I would do after high school. Being in Flint, I didn't see any big windows of opportunity, and I never really had a role model. This opportunity opened my mind and helped me understand that there is help and that I don't have to do everything alone. Thank you for providing me with such an amazing experience!"

Annquetta was placed at McFarlan Villages for her summer work experience as a Universal Worker, where she assisted with residents' activities of daily living, ensuring sanitary living conditions, and assisting with meal preparation. Annquetta said her experience as a Universal Worker was positive because she enjoys meeting new people and was able to grow her customer service skills. Annquetta shared, "I learned how to properly care for the elderly and ensure they are comfortable throughout the day. It also strengthened my patience and communication skills." She added, "I was given an opportunity that I never thought I would have. It is a blessing, and I am thankful."

At the conclusion of her work experience, Annquetta chose to pursue Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training so that she could further her skill set as a caregiver. She earned her certificate in December of 2025 from Mott Community College and is actively seeking employment as a CNA. Annquetta is looking forward to a bright future, sharing, "I want [to] try to further my education in nursing, possibly in women's health." Annquetta's participation in the PULSE program has impacted her future for the better, she said that overall, "I got hands-on training that motivated me to the fullest to just work hard. I wasn't too sure about college or even being a nurse, but I figured out what I want to work for, and I'm going to push thanks to them." She added that the program gave her the motivation to reach her goals, and she encourages others to do the same: "Try, try, try and push yourself. If you really want it, go get it!"



## Student SUCCESS STORIES

# KATIE'S SUCCESS STORY



Katie is an adult participant from the Flint Healthcare Employment Opportunities (FHEO) program, a GST Michigan Works! service provider. Katie has been involved with the FHEO Program since 2022, when she participated in the FHEO Program's summer work experience program. Katie was a recent high school graduate who was looking for an opportunity to begin her healthcare career, as her long-term goal was to be a registered nurse.

During program participation, Katie completed 10 days of life skills and healthcare career exploration training that included workplace readiness, professional development, entrepreneurial and career

exploration, financial fitness, and mental health strategies. Katie embraced the workplace readiness training and felt prepared to enter work experience. Katie worked at Genesee ENT as a medical assistant, where she supported staff with both front and back-office tasks. The office manager at Genesee ENT stated that Katie was a quick learner and very helpful. Katie completed her work experience with a positive review and a newfound skill set to propel her into the next phase of her career.

In September 2022, Katie enrolled at Mott Community College as a pre-nursing student. She maintained contact with the FHEO Program during this time, providing education and employment updates. In 2024, she contacted FHEO to inquire about tuition assistance for the final semesters of her associate degree. Katie was then enrolled in the FHEO program's Advanced Healthcare pathway, which provides tuition assistance and career guidance to participants. During program participation, Katie served as a guest speaker and shared her story with other young adults interested in a healthcare career. The FHEO program supported Katie with tuition funding during this time. With dedication and hard work, Katie graduated from Mott Community College with her Associate of Applied Science in Nursing degree in December, 2025. She promptly accepted an employment offer from Hurley Medical Center as a Graduate Nurse in the NICU, earning a great wage. Once Katie obtains her license, she will be employed as a Registered Nurse and receive another wage increase. Katie serves as an inspiration to other young healthcare professionals!



## JMG STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: CAYDEN

Congratulations to Cayden, our November JMG Student Spotlight!

Cayden joined Genesee ISD's Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program in July of 2025. From day one, his strong attendance, punctuality, and participation during training sessions showed his commitment to success.

Cayden is in the Advanced Automotive Technology program at the Genesee Career Institute. For his JMG summer work experience, he chose to work at Randy Wise Motorcars, where he quickly proved himself as a reliable and hardworking team member.

After starting his senior year at Genesee High School, Cayden wanted to continue gaining experience. JMG helped arrange an interview with Randy Wise, hoping he could continue his work experience through our program. They were so impressed by Cayden that they brought him on as one of their employees! He now works part-time after school each day at Randy Wise Motorcars as a porter. He hopes to start an apprenticeship program there after graduation.

Brent, the Service Manager, shared, *"He has been a great addition to the team."*

**Way to go, Cayden—your dedication and professionalism make us proud!**

## LEADERSHIP DAY

Students in the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program at Quest High School started the year off strong with a day at Covenant Hills Camp & Retreat in Otisville, Michigan. This event was modeled after the JMG Statewide Leadership Day, which had to be cancelled this year due to the decrease in state funding for the JMG program. Students spent the day working together to achieve goals and challenge themselves. Activities included teambuilding challenges and games, an archery tournament, a rock climbing wall, and a vertical climbing element, each over 30 feet tall.

*"I've seen how our statewide Leadership Day brings participants out of their shell and gets them in a mindset of growth and leadership,"* says JMG Specialist Katie Chrismer. *"I didn't want the youth at Quest to miss out on this valuable experience even though the statewide event had to be cancelled."*

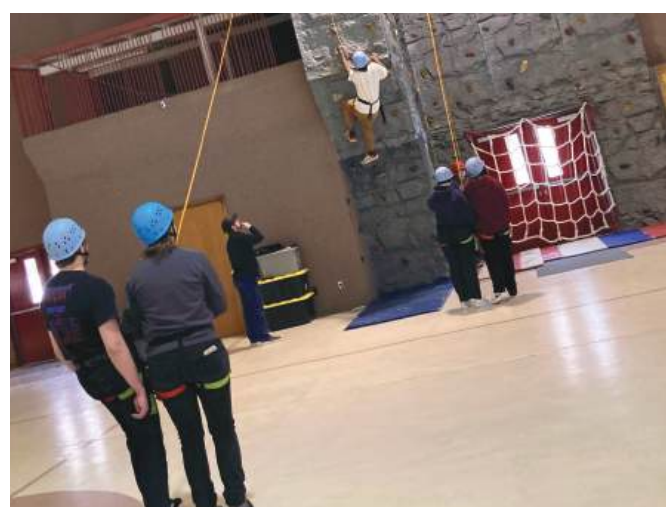
Twenty-two youth expanded their comfort zones and brought their best efforts to the event, even though some experienced a major fear of heights. Youth supported their team members by "belaying" – working in teams of two to four to secure the other end of the safety harness rope while their team members climbed the rock wall and vertical element. *"I was impressed with our teamwork and communication,"* says senior Hazen H. about the Leadership Day event. *"We all worked together, and no one argued."*



## Leadership Day addresses core competencies of the JMG curriculum, such as:

- Working Cooperatively with Others
- Effective Decision Making and Problem Solving
- Positive Attitude, Work Ethic, and Behaviors
- Following Directions
- Communicating Verbally
- Demonstrating Team Leadership
- Applying Critical Thinking Skills

These are all skills that these youth will utilize after they graduate from Quest and move into their career pathways. The JMG program supports the future planning process, but also focuses on providing youth the skills they need to retain employment and successfully climb the professional ladder – not all that different from the skills they need to climb the rope ladder at Leadership Day!



# TALENT GROWTH & BARRIER REMOVAL INITIATIVE

In rural communities across the GST Michigan Works! region, transportation remains one of the most significant barriers to employment and career advancement. Limited public transit, the absence of ride-sharing options, and a lack of reliable transportation during non-traditional work hours prevent many individuals from accepting or maintaining employment.

The Talent and Growth Barrier Removal Initiative directly addresses this challenge by providing

funding to purchase or repair vehicles for eligible participants. Individuals must have a confirmed job offer or be currently employed and meet Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) income guidelines.

By removing transportation barriers, this initiative empowers individuals to secure and retain employment, strengthens workforce participation, and supports greater economic stability throughout the region.



In November 2025, **GST Michigan Works!** connected with Alanna as she prepared to begin classes at **Mott Community College**. At the time, she was working full-time, had recently earned her GED, and was eager to take the next step in her career journey. Since then, she has remained actively engaged with the **Family Literacy Center (FLC) - Jobs For Michigan's Graduate Program (JMG)**, where she completed her GED. Through workshops and Life Skills classes, Alanna has strengthened her communication skills, developed a deeper sense of self-worth, and learned how to surround herself with positive influences.

Recently, Alanna faced a significant setback when her car began having mechanical issues that would cost more to repair than the vehicle was worth. Recognizing how critical reliable transportation was to her stability, FLC reached out to explore whether **GST Michigan Works!** could assist. Recently, having secured the Talent Growth & Barrier Removal Initiative funding, the partners jumped into action to work with Alanna to evaluate her options and ultimately pursue the purchase of a reliable vehicle.

During the meetings to gather the necessary documentation, it was clear how overwhelming the situation felt for Alanna. Each partner took time to talk through her concerns. She was deeply worried about how she would get to work without transportation and whether the added financial strain might leave her short on rent. As a young adult living independently, maintaining steady employment and staying current on rent are essential to her continued success.

With strong collaboration, all the required documentation was quickly secured. Within a week, she was able to identify a vehicle and complete the purchase process. As a result, Alanna now has dependable transportation to get to work without taking on the full financial burden herself.

The support also ensured she could remain current on her rent and maintain her stability.

Alanna expressed heartfelt gratitude for the assistance she received. She was visibly relieved and excited, repeatedly thanking **GST Michigan Works!** for the opportunity and financial support that helped her move forward with confidence and security.



Jakob first connected with GST Michigan Works!, seeking support as he worked to build a more stable future. He had recently arrived in Lapeer County without permanent housing, unsure of where to turn or how to access help. Despite the uncertainty, he was determined to change the trajectory of his life.

Through the Family Literacy Center- Jobs For Michigan's Graduate Program (JMG) in Lapeer, Jakob began working toward earning his GED—something he once believed was out of reach. With dedicated tutoring and encouragement, he successfully completed his GED in just one month. Beyond academics, he also began attending Life Skills sessions, where he continued to strengthen his communication skills, learned how to set healthy boundaries, and built stronger relationships with family and friends. Jakob often shares how grateful he is for the guidance and encouragement he has received.

When Jakob first came to Lapeer County, he was experiencing homelessness and had little support. Today, he is working with a local housing organization that provides living assistance while he rebuilds his life. As part of that program, he must maintain employment, remain drug-free, and actively participate in programs that support his growth—and he has embraced those expectations wholeheartedly.

For much of his life, Jakob moved between family members' homes, navigating instability that included homelessness and substance abuse within his family. With limited support, he learned early on how to rely on himself. Those experiences, while difficult, shaped his

determination to create something better—not only for himself, but for the family he hopes to have one day.

Jakob came to GST Michigan Works! because he plans to attend Mott Community College and knew he would need financial assistance to make that goal possible. He met with staff to complete a WIOA application and explore training support. That same day, he learned he might also qualify for assistance through the Talent Growth & Barrier Removal Initiative to help purchase a vehicle.

For Jakob, reliable transportation wasn't just convenient—it was critical. Without a vehicle, maintaining employment could become a challenge, which would directly impact his housing stability. When he heard there was even a possibility of receiving help with a car, he was overwhelmed with gratitude and excitement.

Jakob quickly submitted all required documentation, and within a week, he received a check to purchase his own vehicle. When the staff handed it to him, he could not stop smiling. He expressed heartfelt thanks for the support and shared how much it meant to know that people believed in him.

Today, Jakob continues working toward his goals with renewed confidence. He hopes to pursue additional training assistance in the future and remain connected with GST Michigan

Works! as he continues building a stable, successful life. Most of all, he is grateful to know he has a community behind him—one that sees his potential and is invested in his success.

For Faimah, a new career was just beginning when an unexpected breakdown threatened to stall her progress. Faimah started her new role at Hometown Medicine in April of 2025, but the excitement of her new employment was quickly met with a major hurdle, her only vehicle was out of commission. Facing significant car troubles, Faimah knew that without a functioning vehicle, she wouldn't be able to maintain her job or reach her future milestones.

Fortunately, she qualified for the Talent Growth & Barrier Removal Initiative through GST Michigan Works! She jumped into action to complete the required documentation and received the funding needed for essential auto repairs.

This support did more than just fix a car, it protected her livelihood and her future. With a reliable vehicle, Faimah is not only maintaining her position at Hometown Medicine but is also able to begin her LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) program at Dorsey College.

*"This support came at the exact right time," Faimah shared. "I am so grateful I was able to receive the help I needed to keep working toward my goals."*

**We are proud to support Faimah as she drives toward her dream of becoming a nurse!**



When Gavin first walked through the doors of GST Michigan Works!, he was facing multiple barriers all at once. No high school credential, no work experience, and unreliable transportation. He knew he wanted something better for himself but wasn't sure where to start. With determination and the right support, he committed to change. Initially, he approached his career coach looking for assistance with earning his GED. Working closely with the on-site Family Literacy Center - Jobs For Michigan's Graduate Program (JMG) GED tutor, he dedicated himself to studying and successfully earned his credential.

As he worked toward his GED, he was enrolled in the Young Professionals Program, participating in a paid work experience with Habitat for Humanity. The opportunity gave him hands-on training and real-world job experience. During his time there, his vehicle required transmission fluid repairs, and suddenly, his progress towards steady employment was at risk. Through the assistance of the Talent Growth & Barrier Removal Initiative, GST Michigan Works! was able to assist him with the repairs needed, and he was able to remain consistent and dependable on the job. "I really appreciate the help with my repairs," he shared. "It helped me continue to get to and from my job." Because transportation was restored, he successfully completed his paid work experience and was offered continued employment.

Today, with his GED earned, steady employment secured, and a dependable vehicle, he is not just working...he is moving forward. This story is a reminder that something as practical as an auto repair can directly eliminate employment barriers and change the trajectory of someone's life.

# EMPLOYER SUCCESS STORIES

## SMITH'S WATERPROOFING

### A SIMPLE CALL CREATES LASTING WORKFORCE IMPACT

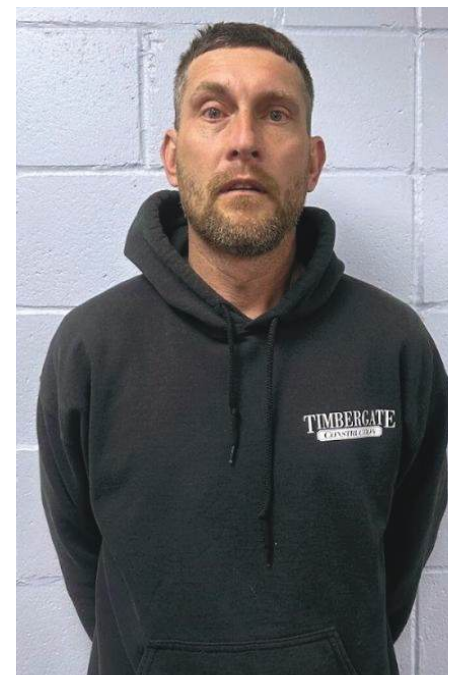
*Lapeer Co.* - Smith's Waterproofing in Almont, Michigan, became a new partner with Business Services through the Lapeer office in spring 2025. The partnership began with an application for the Program Year 2025 Going Pro Talent Fund to support employee training needs. While the company was not awarded funding through that initial opportunity, the connection established an important line of communication.

In mid-summer, Smith's Waterproofing reached out again to inquire about other potential funding options to support CDL training for existing staff. Although incumbent worker funding is limited in Lapeer County, Business Services explored all available options,

including coordination with the Thumb Area Business Services team. That outreach proved timely as a different employer had just released previously awarded training funds, making resources immediately available.

Through this opportunity, Smith's Waterproofing received a \$10,000 Industry Infinity Incumbent Worker Training award. The funding supported CDL training and licensing for three current employees through Classic Driving School, expanding the company's internal capacity and operational flexibility.

With more employees holding CDL endorsements, Smith's Waterproofing strengthened its ability to maintain efficient yard operations, labor support, and commercial driving needs, critical components of remaining competitive as a leading commercial waterproofing company at both the state and national levels. Cross-training existing staff also allowed the company to operate more efficiently while investing directly in workforce retention and skill development.



## ACUMENT

### STRENGTHENING MICHIGAN'S FUTURE, ONE SKILLED HAND AT A TIME

**Genesee Co.** – In the heart of Genesee County, Acument Global Technologies proves that when a company invests in its people, the return reaches far beyond the walls of its plant. Partnering with GST Michigan Works!, Acument took full advantage of the Industry Infinity Grant, federal funding secured in partnership with the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN), intended to help advanced manufacturers sharpen their edge through workforce training and innovation.

Through this partnership, Acument committed to more than training; it committed to transformation. Employees engaged in specialized instruction, including Core Tools: APQP, Control Plan, FMEA & PPAP, and ISO 14001:2015 Internal Auditor Training. These programs didn't just teach processes; they built precision, accountability, and pride in craftsmanship. The result... A workforce ready for tomorrow, today.



Employees are stepping into new roles with confidence, and Acument is building its future on a foundation of homegrown skills and leadership. Promotions are earned from within, retention is stronger, and the company's ability to compete in a rapidly evolving global market has only deepened. This is how you build strength, not by chasing talent, but by growing it.

Acument Global Technologies is leading by example. Their success sends a clear message across Michigan's manufacturing landscape: when businesses invest in their people, communities grow stronger, and our state moves forward together.

## SRCC

### TRAINING TO HELP SERVE SHIAWASSEE COUNTY

**Shiawassee Co.** – Since 1902, the Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce (SRCC) has been an integral part of the county's business community, dedicated to economic growth. Serving nearly 500 members, the Chamber's impact is felt in all corners of Shiawassee County.

Assisting with information and working with and supporting many county-wide programs is a daunting task, especially for a staff of two. When the need arose to replace the Administrative/Business Manager, the Chamber had large shoes to fill.

After a thorough candidate search, the decision was made to offer the position to Jamie. Although Jamie had many qualities and experiences, she still needed more training in specific "Chamber" requirements. That is when SRCC reached out to GST Michigan Works! (GST) for training assistance. Working with their Business Solutions Professional (BSP), Chris, a training plan was put together for Jamie using On-the-Job-Training (OJT) funds through GST's WIOA program.

The 240-hour plan helped Jamie get the skills needed to perform the duties of her new position. She now assists in running the Chamber seamlessly, overseeing marketing, events, finances, and membership relations.



Chamber President and CEO, Jordan Hankwitz stated, "I am grateful for GST Michigan Works! and the services they provide our region. Our chamber was able to participate in the On-the-Job-Training program to help cover the cost of training our new team member for a brand-new role within our organization. This program really helped us hit the ground running with our new hire!"

## KAIS-AIR®: BUILDING THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW, TODAY

**Genesee Co.** – Kais-AIR® continues to show what’s possible when you invest in people. Through the successful completion of the 2025 Going Pro Talent Fund, the company was awarded \$115,900. The funding supports a range of training initiatives that build technical skills, strengthen workplace safety knowledge, and ultimately develop the next generation of company leaders.

At the heart of this investment is Kais-AIR®’s commitment to apprenticeship programs developed and delivered in-house. These critical programs for the skilled trades create clear, achievable career paths. At Kais-AIR®, team members receive advanced electrical safety and high-level technical training. This ensures they can work safely and confidently in complex, mission-critical environments. The result is a safe, skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of an evolving industrial landscape.

Equally important is Kais-AIR®’s focus on leadership training, recognizing that sustainable growth

depends not only on technical capability but on strong, prepared leaders. Through leadership development initiatives, Kais-AIR® is cultivating future supervisors, managers, and team leaders equipped to mentor others, drive innovation, and uphold the company’s core values.

The success of this effort was made possible through a close partnership with GST Michigan Works!, whose collaboration and expertise were instrumental in securing the Going Pro Talent Fund award.

Kais-AIR®’s continued partnership with Michigan Works! reflects a shared commitment to workforce development that benefits both the employer and the broader regional economy.

Kais-AIR®’s participation in MiCareerQuest East 2025 highlights a dedication to the next generation of local talent. As a company working across engineering, skilled trades, advanced manufacturing, and technology, Kais-AIR® gives students a real look at how life-long careers can begin. This hands-on exposure connects students with high-demand career paths they can pursue close to home.

By investing in skills, leadership, and community partnerships, Kais-AIR® is doing more than training employees. It is building a workforce ecosystem: one that supports employee advancement, prepares future leaders, and strengthens the talent pipeline that will power the economy for years to come.



## ASPIRE & MCKENZIE HEALTH SYSTEM

### GOING PRO ELC – EMT TRAINING

**Sanilac Co.** – Rural communities across Michigan’s Thumb region face an ongoing shortage of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), a critical role that connects patients in emergencies to lifesaving healthcare services. Addressing this workforce gap required a coordinated, regional approach focused on both immediate staffing needs and long-term workforce sustainability.

Through collaboration with the Thumb Community Health Partnership, workforce challenges were identified at Aspire Rural Health System and McKenzie Health System, both of which were experiencing difficulties filling EMT positions. With support from GST Michigan Works! and the Thumb Region Employer-Led Collaborative, the organizations partnered to pursue a Going Pro Employer-Led Collaborative grant to train employees for EMT roles.

The grant supported EMT Basic Training through Sanilac Medical Services, Inc., equipping participants with essential emergency medical skills and preparing them for continued professional growth. As

a result, trained employees moved into full-time positions, strengthening emergency response capacity across the region and helping ensure reliable access to emergency medical care for local residents.

In addition to meeting immediate workforce needs, Aspire Rural Health System is actively launching an EMS Apprenticeship Program designed to enhance training and expand career pathways for Emergency Medical Services professionals. This initiative further supports workforce development efforts by creating structured opportunities for skill advancement and long-term retention.

By leveraging regional partnerships and targeted training investments, this collaborative effort strengthened the Thumb region’s emergency medical workforce while establishing a sustainable model to address critical healthcare staffing needs.



## CURBCO

### BUILDING A BRIGHT FUTURE THROUGH ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

**Genesee Co.** – At just 19 years old, Chris walked through the doors of Curbco in search of an opportunity to prove himself. Eager to begin a career in the company’s Landscape and Lawn Division, Chris expressed a strong interest in working with his hands and being outdoors.

Recognizing his potential, Curbco also understood that Chris would need guidance and training to be successful in his new role. Through a partnership with GST Michigan Works! the company was able to establish an On-the-Job Training (OJT) plan tailored to help Chris gain essential workplace skills while

earning valuable experience.

Before joining Curbco, Chris had never held a full-time job. With the additional supportive services provided by GST Michigan Works!, he received the encouragement and resources needed to thrive. Chris completed a 160-hour OJT program, where he quickly made a positive impression on his team. His employer shared that Chris “fit right in with the crew from day one” and consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic, reliability, and a willingness to learn.

Through his determination and the structured support of the OJT program, Chris not only completed his training successfully but also achieved retention, solidifying his role as a valued member of the Curbco team.



# JENSEN BRIDGE

## BUILDING LEADERS FROM THE INSIDE OUT

**Sanilac Co.** - For more than 100 years, Jensen Bridge & Supply Company in Sandusky, Michigan has built its reputation on quality manufacturing and dependable service. Producing corrugated metal pipe, campfire rings, end sections, and agricultural and residential roofing panels, the company has remained grounded in its motto, "The Friendly House of Service," while continuing to expand its product lines and reach new markets.

As Jensen Bridge looks toward continued growth across additional regions, leadership recognized that long-term success depends on strengthening the foundation of the company: its workforce. With increasing demand for management and leadership capacity, the company identified a need to prepare current employees to step into supervisory roles and support smooth, efficient operations.

With assistance from GST Michigan Works!, Jensen

Bridge applied for and received \$15,840 through the Going Pro Talent Fund (FY25 Cycle 1). The funding supported leadership and supervisory training for 10 employees across four targeted courses, delivered through Baker College and the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC).

Throughout 2025, employees completed courses including Leadership & Influence, Problem Solving, Achieving Supervisory Excellence, and Supervisor Skills 2.0. Training focused on practical, applicable skills essential to effective leadership, such as communication, accountability, conflict resolution, time management, and team development. Participants also gained experience in 8D problem-solving, a structured methodology designed to identify root causes and implement lasting solutions –an essential competency in manufacturing leadership.

Together, the courses provided employees with both the technical knowledge and leadership tools needed to succeed in supervisory roles. More importantly, the training reinforced Jensen Bridge's commitment to developing talent from within, ensuring leadership continuity while supporting employee growth.



**STEMCO**

# PRECISION TRAINING DRIVES WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE



**Tuscola Co.** – Stemco, located in Millington, Michigan, is an advanced manufacturer of heavy-duty truck and trailer parts. If you’ve ever noticed a semi-truck’s wheel caps or suspension components, there’s a good chance Stemco’s products are part of what keeps it running smoothly. Specializing in seals, bearings, hubcaps, kingpins, suspension parts, brake components, and tire/mileage solutions, the company is committed to delivering high-performance systems that increase safety, extend component life, and lower maintenance costs for trucking fleets.

A key component of achieving these goals lies in investing in employee skills. To ensure the production of precise, high-quality parts and strengthen overall safety and efficiency, Stemco identified GD&T



(Geometric Dimensioning & Tolerancing) training as a priority. This training improves employees’ ability to produce parts correctly, reduces scrap and rework, enhances communication, and provides opportunities for professional growth.

Working closely with GST Michigan Works!, Stemco identified a narrow window to train employees before the end-of-year deadline. Leveraging available funding, the company accessed \$2,970 through the Industry Infinity Incumbent Worker Training grant. With rapid coordination among management, training dates were finalized, participants were selected, and the GD&T Fundamentals course was scheduled for completion by December 4, 2025.

The training, delivered by the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC), was conducted on-site, providing hands-on application of the concepts in a real-world setting. Six employees successfully completed the course and earned Certificates of Completion.



*“The training provided valuable knowledge that can be directly applied to daily work, bolstering skills critical for growth and future business opportunities,”* **said Stemco’s Kimberly Byers.**

By responding quickly to workforce training needs and strategically using available resources, Stemco strengthened its team’s capabilities while supporting operational excellence and company growth. The investment in employee skills ensures that Stemco is ready not only to meet current production demands but also to take on future opportunities with a highly skilled and confident workforce.

## FESSLER & BOWMAN



**Genesee Co.** - The partnership between Fessler & Bowman and GST Michigan Works! continues to demonstrate strong workforce impact. On October 22, 2025, Fessler & Bowman participated as both an exhibitor and sponsor at MiCareerQuest East 2025 at the Dort Event Center, engaging 2,176 students from 52 school districts. Through hands-on demonstrations, heavy equipment simulators, and

interactive displays, the company showcased career opportunities in the skilled trades and helped inspire the next generation of construction professionals.

The following day, October 23, 2025, GST Michigan Works! delivered a reimbursement check totaling \$494,891.61 from Fessler & Bowman's FY25 Going PRO Talent Fund Award. This investment supported the training of 254 employees, including 108 skilled trade apprentices and 146 non-apprentices, strengthening workforce skills and supporting long-term organizational growth.

President & CEO Jim Malenich expressed appreciation for the partnership, noting that the Going PRO Talent Fund support received through GST Michigan Works! has been instrumental in advancing employee development and sustaining meaningful workforce growth. Together, Fessler & Bowman and GST Michigan Works! continue to model a strong employer-workforce partnership that supports talent development and economic vitality in Michigan.

## NIRVANA HEALTHCARE STAFFING

### LOCAL SPACE, BIG IMPACT: CPR TRAINING IN CARO

**Tuscola Co.** - Tuscola County continues to see a growing demand for caregivers, and Nirvana Healthcare Staffing has been working diligently to fill that need in the rural Thumb region. When the company reached out to GST Michigan Works! in Caro for help finding an affordable space to host CPR training for prospective hires, Business Services was ready to assist. A training room that could comfortably accommodate 10-12 participants, plus a trainer, was offered at no cost. After reviewing photos of the space, Nirvana quickly booked the room, setting the stage for an efficient, group-based training session.

The training was a critical step for the candidates who had already completed interviews and required screenings. CPR certification was the final requirement before they could begin employment. Conducting the training in a single group not only streamlined the process but also accelerated the timeline for participants to enter the workforce.

With support on-site from Business Services Professional Genna, the training ran smoothly, and eight individuals successfully earned their CPR certifications. Following the training, six participants began working in Tuscola County, and two took positions in Huron County. Nearly a year later, all eight remain employed and are excelling in their caregiving roles.

This collaboration demonstrates how small logistical support (simply providing physical space, professional guidance, and on-site assistance) can create meaningful results for both employers and the local workforce. By helping caregivers get certified and into positions quickly, this partnership strengthened the region's healthcare capacity and showcased the value of strategic, hands-on support in addressing workforce needs.



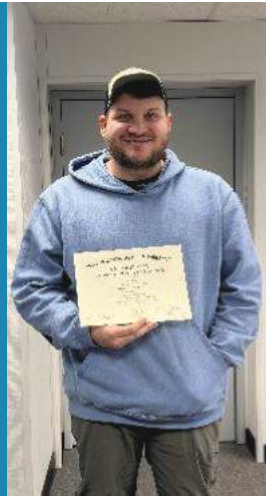
## EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION: CIE NEWCOR MTG'S INNOVATIVE USDOL REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP SUCCESS STORY

**Genesee Co.** – In August 2022, CIE Newcor MTG launched a noteworthy initiative by establishing an apprenticeship program in collaboration with GST Michigan Works! This initiative sought to tackle the skills gap in the manufacturing sector through the cultivation of a new generation of talent. GST Michigan Works! has been an invaluable partner throughout this journey, offering crucial support and resources that have greatly improved the apprenticeship experience. The program initially involved two committed apprentices, Jacob and Erik, who concentrated on acquiring knowledge and developing their skills in their respective areas. Jacob and Erik's dedication to learning and development led to the successful completion of their Mechatronics Technician apprenticeships by November 2025. Their journey highlights personal achievement while also reflecting the organization's commitment to developing a skilled workforce. Jacob and Erik both provided insights into their experiences throughout this transformative journey.



Jacob stated, "My apprenticeship at CIE Newcor MTG has been a transformative experience. The practical training and mentorship provided me with the opportunity to enhance my skills and build my confidence. I am pleased to take on the role of a mentor, assisting others as they begin their journey."

Erik expressed a similar viewpoint, stating, "Completing my apprenticeship was a challenging yet rewarding journey. I acquired essential skills and knowledge that equipped me for my career in manufacturing. I appreciate the support from CIE Newcor and take pride in mentoring the upcoming generation of apprentices."



CIE Newcor MTG, in partnership with GST Michigan Works!, has gained significantly from grant funding aimed at enhancing apprenticeship initiatives. Jacob was also assisted with mileage and purchasing tools, facilitating his success in his new position. CIE Newcor MTG received funding to assist in the On-the-Job training of both apprentices, along with an additional grant focused on addressing the skills gap in the manufacturing sector.

**Alicia Walker from  
CIE Newcor stated,**

*"Our apprenticeship program reflects our dedication to developing a skilled workforce.*

*Witnessing Jacob and Erik develop into self-assured individuals in their careers is truly rewarding. **We are***

***committed to investing in our workforce and fostering talent for the***

***future of our sector."***

# WHERE STRATEGY MEETS THE SPOTLIGHT!

Through strong partnerships with local businesses, GST Michigan Works! is proud to help advance talent attraction, development, and retention strategies that make a real difference.



**LAFONTAINE**  
AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **LaFontaine Automotive Group Launches New Automotive Technician Specialist Apprenticeship Program in Partnership with GST Michigan Works!**

**December 19, 2025** – LaFontaine Automotive Group proudly announces the launch of its Automotive Technician Specialist Apprenticeship Program, developed in partnership with GST Michigan Works!. This forward-thinking initiative reinforces LaFontaine's commitment to cultivating the next generation of automotive talent by offering hands-on training, structured education, and meaningful career pathways across its statewide footprint.

As one of Michigan's fastest-growing, family-owned and operated automotive groups, LaFontaine has long recognized that its people are the heartbeat of its success. The new apprenticeship program strengthens that legacy by giving aspiring technicians the tools, mentorship, and real-world experience needed to excel in today's rapidly evolving automotive landscape.

"Growing talent from within has always been at the core of who we are," said Ryan LaFontaine, CEO of LaFontaine Automotive Group. "We are a family company—built on passion, purpose, and people. This program represents our commitment to providing life-changing opportunities. When you join LaFontaine, you're not just starting a job—you're building a rewarding career with unlimited potential, and you're becoming part of a family that truly invests in your future."

#### **A Comprehensive, People-Focused Apprenticeship Experience**

Participants in the apprenticeship program will benefit from a robust curriculum that blends hands-on shop experience with classroom instruction, emphasizing both technical mastery and professional development. Apprentices will work side-by-side with experienced Master Technicians, gaining mentorship, real-time feedback, and invaluable insight into the industry.

Beyond technical proficiency, the program focuses on essential skills such as teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving—key competencies needed to thrive in today's dynamic automotive environment. The immersive structure prepares apprentices not just for a job, but for long-term career growth and advancement.

#### **A Workplace Culture Rooted in Family Values and Community Impact**

LaFontaine Automotive Group's culture is intentionally built around family, collaboration, and service. As a family-owned and operated business, LaFontaine believes every team member deserves the opportunity to grow professionally and personally. The organization operates 44 retail locations, representing 55 franchises and seven collision centers, and continues to experience record growth driven by its people-first approach.

Employees embrace the company's core values—work-life balance, integrity, innovation, and community involvement—fueling LaFontaine's reputation as a trusted automotive leader. The company's in-house Grassroots Marketing Team works year-round to strengthen relationships in each community LaFontaine serves, while team members regularly engage with local nonprofits and charitable organizations.

#### **A Launch That Supports the Future of Michigan's Automotive Workforce**

As Michigan continues to evolve as a hub for advanced mobility and automotive innovation, LaFontaine's apprenticeship program serves as a gateway for driven individuals to build meaningful careers with a company that celebrates growth, diversity, and excellence.

"With this program, we're empowering the next generation of technicians to thrive in an industry full of opportunity," added LaFontaine. "We're proud to offer a pathway that changes lives, strengthens communities, and builds the foundation for our long-term success."

For more information about the Automotive Technician Specialist Apprenticeship Program and current career opportunities, please visit [www.familydeal.com](http://www.familydeal.com).



**NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: xxx, 2025

Contact: Kelsey Nicol

[knicol@aspirerhs.org](mailto:knicol@aspirerhs.org)

(989) 635-4007

**Aspire Rural Health System Launches Registered Radiologic Technologist Apprenticeship Program**

Aspire Rural Health System is proud to announce the launch of its new Registered Radiologic Technologist (RT) Apprenticeship Program, developed in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bay College, and GST Michigan Works!. This innovative initiative aims to develop highly skilled radiologic technologists dedicated to providing top-quality healthcare services close to home in rural communities.

The program combines practical on-the-job training at Aspire's Cass City location, with classroom instruction through Bay College, ensuring participants acquire essential skills and professional expertise. Aspiring technologists will work alongside our experienced imaging team, including board-certified radiologists and registered technologists, within a supportive, community-focused environment.

"By launching this apprenticeship program, we are investing in the future of rural healthcare and creating meaningful opportunities for local residents," said Trisha Clark, Senior Director of Human Resources of Aspire. "Our mission is to expand access to vital diagnostic imaging services while fostering career development. This initiative reflects our core values of teamwork, integrity, quality, and exceptional service."

Participants will receive mentorship, advanced training, and the chance to establish a rewarding career in medical imaging—contributing to the health and well-being of our regional communities. To learn more, please call 989-912-6240.

Deckerville Community Hospital | Hills & Dales Healthcare | Marlette Regional Hospital



## HARBOR BEACH COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

### Harbor Beach Community Hospital Expands Workforce Development with Third USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Program

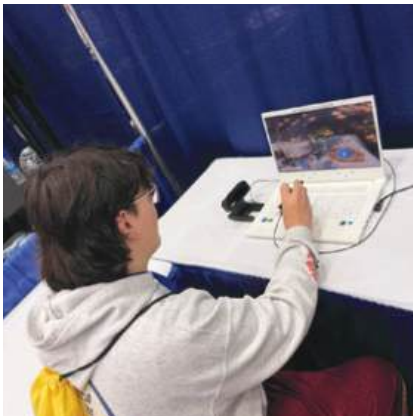
Harbor Beach Community Hospital is proud to announce the launch of a new Central Sterile Processing Technician apprenticeship program, starting on December 9, 2025. This initiative is in partnership with GST Michigan Works! and marks our third registered apprenticeship program with the USDOL. The collaboration with GST Michigan Works! is an essential aspect of this program, supplying us with the resources and expertise required to develop a curriculum that prepares participants with the critical skills needed for success in the healthcare industry. This new program showcases our commitment to workforce development and aims to provide essential training for individuals aspiring to careers in healthcare, specifically in central sterile processing, a vital area for maintaining patient safety and operational efficiency in healthcare settings.

Located on Lake Huron in Michigan's Thumb region, our Rural Critical Access Hospital is dedicated to delivering exceptional healthcare services to the community. Our committed team of healthcare professionals focuses on personalized care, guaranteeing that each patient receives the utmost respect. The initiation of the Central Sterile Processing Technician apprenticeship program, enabled by our partnership with GST Michigan Works!, will greatly enhance our ability to deliver quality healthcare by

developing skilled professionals who are comprehensively trained in the critical protocols and practices of sterile processing. This collaboration enables us to link apprentices with local employment opportunities, thereby enhancing the workforce within our community.

Harbor Beach Community Hospital was founded in 1920 by a committed group of community leaders who recognized the need for quality healthcare in the rural Thumb area. Today, we continue their legacy by providing exceptional healthcare services. Our apprenticeship programs demonstrate our commitment to development and community engagement, allowing us to address workforce shortages and improve the overall quality of care in our region. In collaboration with GST Michigan Works!, we are committed to providing our apprenticeship participants with exceptional training and support as they begin their professional journeys.

Harbor Beach Community Hospital strives to be the leading healthcare provider for the Thumb region of Michigan. We are dedicated to exceeding our patients' expectations by providing outstanding, patient-centered care. We are dedicated to strengthening our community relationships and are focused on promoting the health and wellbeing of those in our vicinity. The newly established apprenticeship program, in collaboration with our ongoing partnership with GST Michigan Works!, enables us to invest in the future of healthcare in our rural community. This initiative ensures that we are equipped to meet the evolving needs of our patients while cultivating a strong healthcare workforce for the future.



# LEARN & EARN

DECEMBER 2025 | VOL. 24 ISSUE 2

## Jobs For Michigan’s Graduates and MiCareerQuest East



The Shiawassee RESD’s WIOA program is excited to be collaborating with the Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG) program this school year. JMG expands opportunities for students and helps them build the skills needed for career success. The program offers a variety of supports, including career readiness training,

student-led leadership development, life skills training, community service, post-secondary exploration, and paid work experiences.

This fall, JMG students have been actively engaged in a variety of experiences designed to help them explore various post- secondary education and career options. One highlight was attending MiCareerQuest East at the Dort Event Center in Flint, hosted by GST Michigan Works! This large scale event included more than 2,100 students from 52 school districts across the region. Students explored over 100 high-demand occupations in fields such as health sciences, advanced manufacturing/STEM, construction, information technology, automotive, skilled trades, and agriculture. There were hands-on activities for students to engage with, and they interacted with industry professionals to learn about different careers. Our JMG students had a great experience, and their feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

## Student Success Story:

# MARISSA

## Growing Through Experience and Finding Her Path

When Marissa joined the WIOA Youth Employment Program, she hoped it would help her break out of her shell. She wanted to try working for the first time and see what having a real job felt like. What she discovered was much more than a summer job— she found confidence, purpose, and a clear direction for her future.

The summer before her junior year, Marissa was placed at TIP'n POINT Grocery Store in New Lothrop. She spent her time cleaning, helping around the store, and learning to interact comfortably with customers and coworkers.

“At TIP'n POINT I got comfortable talking with people and really loved working there,” she shared. This first step into the workforce gave her a supportive environment where she could grow—and it worked.

By the summer before her senior year, Marissa was ready for something new. She had a growing interest in healthcare and wanted hands-on experience in the field. Through WIOA, she was placed in the Activities Department at Durand Senior Care & Rehab Center.

There, she led activities like Bingo and coffee hour, spent time with residents, and observed other departments throughout the nursing home. “I loved working with the residents,” she said. She also had the chance to shadow therapy services—an experience that would later shape her college major.

During her senior year, Marissa enrolled in the Shiawassee RESD's Health Science CTE program, where she studied medical terminology, anatomy, and participated in clinical rotations at Memorial Healthcare. Exploring various areas of the hospital deepened her interest in a therapy-related career and strengthened her confidence academically and professionally.

Looking back, Marissa rates her WIOA experience a 10 out of 10. The program helped her improve her communication skills and gain confidence in new environments.

**Marissa's advice to other students considering WIOA: “Try it out and see where it leads you. You might find out what career you like. It did that for me.”**



“It gave me the confidence to go out and get a job on my own,” she said.

Today, Marissa is attending Mott Community College, working toward becoming a Physical Therapist Assistant. She is also employed full-time as a caregiver with Veterans Affairs, where she is gaining hands-on experiences that support her career goals. Marissa is proud of how far she has come. She has built confidence, knows what she wants, and is pursuing her dream career.

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