

FOCUS

THE MONTHLY BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FEBRUARY 2025


STRATEGIC PLAN 2.0: HOW LRCC RETOOLED ITS STRATEGY FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

IN THIS ISSUE

Potter Park Zoo Enhances and Expands Facilities

ATHENA WIN Sparks Growth and Connections in 2024

Amy Scoby of The Christman Company to Lead the 2025 LRCC Board of Directors




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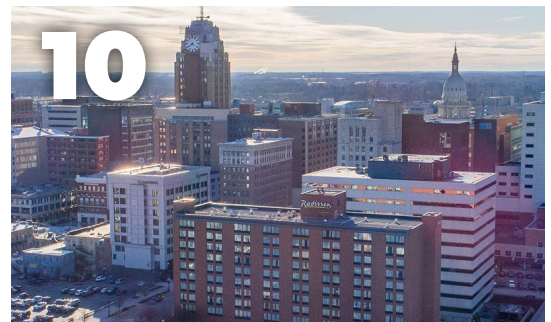
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2025 Board of Directors

Officers

Board Chair

Amy Scoby / The Christman Company

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Lisa O'Connor / Publicom

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Kelly Preston / Capital Steel & Wire

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Michelle Massey / TechSmith

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Government Relations

**Kwafo Adarkwa /
ITC Holdings Corp.**

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TIM DAMAN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
LANSING REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Our board of directors, Chamber team, committee members, and volunteers continue to do tremendous work in the Greater Lansing region.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAMBER

Chamber Excited to Roll Out Refreshed Strategic Plan

As the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) celebrates its 124th anniversary this year, I can't help but be appreciative of the many people who've worked to make this organization a catalyst for business empowerment and success since 1901.

Our board of directors, Chamber team committee members, and volunteers continue to do tremendous work in the Lansing region. As an organization with a long history and deep roots in the local business community, we're fortunate to have a network of people willing to jump in to help when asked.

Which brings me to LRCC's newest strategic plan, an effort that wouldn't have been possible without the collaborative efforts of our Chamber team, board of directors, regional partners, and members. After more than a year of one-on-one interviews, member surveys, and a community café session, we have developed a strategy for moving LRCC forward into 2025 for the betterment of the Lansing region business community.

We envision this as a three- to five-year plan, a living document that will evolve alongside our members and dynamic business environment. We can't always anticipate what's next – the COVID pandemic reminded us of that – but we can build a solid plan to keep us focused on our mission, vision and values.

Our Chamber had the foresight to create our first strategic plan in 2018. That five-year plan helped us navigate some challenging times over the past six years.

It also codified our mission: We work relentlessly to help businesses connect, grow, and thrive.

Please look to this month's FOCUS cover story to learn more about how the strategic plan has been refreshed, what guideposts we'll use to further our mission, and what key performance metrics will let us know we're on the right track.

Thank you for being an essential part of this journey. We can't do it without you. ●



Stay connected and grow with the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce!



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City of Lansing	Mead & Hunt
Consumers Concrete Corporation	Michigan Creative
Courtyard by Marriott East Lansing/Okemos	Michigan Health & Hospital Association
Custom Built Design & Remodeling	MPC Cashway Lumber, Inc.
Dowding Industries	Opportunity Resource Fund
Gallagher, Flintoff & Klein, PLC	PNC Bank
Granger Waste Services	SINICA-US
Hamp Business Coaching	State of Fitness
Harbor Strategic Public Affairs	Stonehedge Apartments
Human Resource Management Services, LLC	University of Michigan Health - Sparrow Lansing
Huntington National Bank	Vlahakis Cole Law Firm
JEM Cleaning LLC	Washington Avenue Advisors
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Chamber Milestones

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30 Years

**MacIntyre & Cowen
ReMax Grand River**
15 Years

Moonsail North
10 Years

**Great Lakes Reality Labs/
Haptix Studio**
5 Years

**Metro Place Apartments
(KMG Prestige)**
5 Years

PFCU
5 Years

**Warren - St. Mary
Investment LLC**
5 Years

We'd like to offer a special salute to these great organizations who reached milestone anniversaries as Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce members this month. Thank you for your continued support throughout the years!

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Lansing Chamber Welcomes Amy Scoby of The Christman Company as 2025 Board Chair

Kelly Preston of Capital Steel & Wire serves as chair-elect

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) is entering 2025 with a new leader at the helm. **Amy Scoby** of The Christman Company has been named the chair of the LRCC Board of Directors, bringing her extensive expertise and leadership to guide the organization through the year ahead. Scoby succeeds **Lisa O'Connor** of Publicom, who will continue to serve on the board as past chair, offering continuity and support in this time of transition.

Scoby will be joined by a talented team of officers and division directors who are poised to make a significant impact in 2025. **Kelly Preston** of Capital Steel & Wire will serve as chair-elect, positioning her to take on the role of board chair in 2026. Other officers include **Mark Burzych** of Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC as legal counsel, **Luke Terry** of Rehmann as treasurer, and **Tim Daman**, who will continue to serve as LRCC's president and CEO.

The LRCC board for 2025 also includes division directors who will lead critical initiatives:

- **Marketing Communications:** Mike Zamaria, Niowave
- **Regional Initiatives:** Kirk Ray, McLaren Greater Lansing
- **Member Services:** Michelle Massey, TechSmith
- **Government Relations:** Kwafo Adarkwa, ITC Holdings Corp.

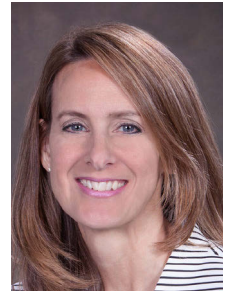
In addition to these leaders, the board boasts a diverse group of at-large members representing a wide range of



Scoby



Preston



O'Connor



With a commitment to fostering collaboration, innovation, and growth, the LRCC board is well-equipped to address the challenges and opportunities facing the business community in 2025.

industries and organizations, including General Motors, Michigan State University, Sparrow Health, MSU Federal Credit Union, and many more. Together, this team reflects the vibrant and dynamic business ecosystem of the Lansing region.

With a commitment to fostering collaboration, innovation, and growth, the LRCC board is well-equipped to address the challenges and opportunities facing the business community in 2025. Under Scoby's leadership, the Chamber aims to build on its successes and drive the region toward a prosperous future. ♦

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Corporate Transparency Act Updates from Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC

By Mark Burzych, Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes

Q: There was so much activity surrounding the Corporate Transparency Act at the end of the year 2024 that I could not keep up. What is the status of the Corporate Transparency Act?

A: You are correct! There was a lot of activity at the end of the 2024 year surrounding the Corporate Transparency Act (“CTA”). I imagine it was difficult to keep your finger on the page.

The short answer is that right now, there is no need to comply with the CTA. However, you should keep a vigilant eye out for future developments. The longer answer is a bit more complicated. The CTA required all beneficial owners of a reporting company to comply with the CTA’s January 1, 2025 beneficial owner reporting deadline. The end of the 2024 year had these additional developments:



Burzych

- **December 3, 2024:** a United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas issued a nationwide injunction to prohibit the federal government from enforcing the CTA. The court held that the CTA is likely unconstitutional because it is outside the scope of Congress’ power and authority. So as of December 3, no one needed to comply with the CTA.
- **December 23, 2024:** the United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit (motion panel) lifted the nationwide preliminary injunction. As a result, the United States Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network published the following CTA reporting deadlines:
 - Reporting companies created or registered prior to January 1, 2024 must file their beneficial ownership information report by January 13, 2025.
 - Reporting companies created or registered on or after September 4, 2024 that had a filing deadline between December 3, 2024 and December 23, 2024 also have until January 13, 2025 to file their beneficial ownership information report.

Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes

EXPERT COUNSEL  REAL SOLUTIONS

- Reporting companies created or registered between December 3, 2024 and December 23, 2024 have an additional 21 days from their original filing deadline to file their beneficial ownership information report.
- Reporting companies created or registered on or after January 1, 2025 have 30 days to file their beneficial ownership information report after receiving actual or public notice that their creation or registration is effective.
- **December 27, 2024:** the merits panel for the United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit (merits panel) vacated the portion of 5th Circuit motion panel’s order that lifted the earlier nationwide preliminary injunction, meaning the December 3, 2024 nationwide injunction is now again in force. The merits panel of the 5th Circuit reasoned that the status quo should be maintained while the constitutionality of the CTA is determined.
- **January 24, 2025:** the US Supreme Court overturned the 5th Circuit’s injunction and stayed the national injunction above, meaning that compliance with the CTA is now required.
- **January 25, 2025:** FINCEN (the Treasury Department’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network) which enforces the CTA issues guidance that since there remains another nationwide injunction regarding the enforcement of the CTA, compliance with the CTA is suspended, meaning that compliance with the CTA is not now required.

For the time being, business owners can hold off on reporting or alternatively, may make the decision to voluntarily report beneficial owners under CTA. However, please keep a vigilant eye on future court developments. What we learned at the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025 is that this can change by the day! ♦



The Education/Business Connection: Building the Talent Pipeline

Leadership Lansing cohort gets firsthand look at how community partnerships are developing and equipping the region's workforce

January was education day at Leadership Lansing and what an education the Leadership Lansing cohort received! Participants learned there are tremendous opportunities for jobs and a quality lifestyle through a multitude of professional trades now offered at the K-12 and community college level. One such program was on display for this year's cohort which had the opportunity to tour the professional trades programs offered through LCC West and Eaton RESA.

The Leadership Lansing participants also enjoyed the privilege of hearing from a panel of leading educators talk about the diversity of program offerings and the benefits for students, employers and the community that comes with the growth in professional trades education and training. The group also talked about the importance of business/education partnerships in supporting professional trades particularly through internship and apprentice opportunities.

Many thanks to the distinguished panel including Sean Williams, superintendent, Eaton RESA; Ben Shuldiner, superintendent, Lansing School District and Shon'ta Dwyer, Dean, LCC Technical Careers Division. The panel was skillfully moderated by Michele Strasz, Capital Area College Access Network.

In the afternoon, Leadership Lansing transitioned to Michigan State University and toured two world-class facilities, including a behind-the-scenes tour of the

Wharton Center for Performing Arts and a tour of the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB), home of groundbreaking research conducted by renowned scientists from around the world. Leadership Lansing is most appreciative of its MSU hosts, including Janet Lillie, assistant vice president for community relations; Eric Olmscheid, executive director, Wharton Center and Zach Constan, FRIB outreach coordinator. ♦



Shon'ta Dwyer, dean, LCC Technical Careers Division speaking on the growth and importance of professional trades in building the talent pipeline for the workforce of tomorrow.



Lansing Regional Chamber Policy Committee Outlines 2025 Focus Areas to Advance Regional Growth

As we begin 2025, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) Policy Committee has established a robust agenda to champion key policy priorities across federal, state, and regional levels. These focus areas reflect our commitment to fostering economic growth, improving community well-being, and ensuring the Greater Lansing region remains competitive and dynamic.

2025 POLICY PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS

The LRCC Policy Committee has outlined the following critical areas for advocacy and action:

- **Economic Development & Job Creation**
Advocating for initiatives that attract investments, spur innovation, and create sustainable employment opportunities.
- **Taxation & Regulations**
Promoting policies that simplify regulations and maintain a competitive tax environment for businesses.
- **Infrastructure**
Driving investment in transportation networks, energy systems, and broadband connectivity to support regional growth and competitiveness.
- **Public Safety**
Prioritizing community safety initiatives that create a secure environment for residents and businesses alike.
- **Talent & Education**
Supporting K-12 education, higher education institutions, and professional trades programs to develop a skilled workforce.
- **Housing**
Addressing housing affordability and availability to ensure the region remains a desirable place to live and work.
- **Healthcare Affordability & Accessibility**
Encouraging solutions that enhance access to affordable, high-quality healthcare for businesses and employees.



The LRCC Policy Committee's 2025 focus areas reflect our ongoing dedication to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous future for the Greater Lansing region.

FEDERAL POLICY PRIORITIES

At the federal level, LRCC is prioritizing advocacy for the renewal of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, recognizing its critical role in bolstering economic growth and enhancing competitiveness for businesses of all sizes. This effort underscores our commitment to ensuring Greater Lansing remains a hub for business investment and job creation.

STATE POLICY PRIORITIES

- **Business Climate & Regulatory Environment:** The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce will monitor and engage on legislation impacting business operations, with a focus on advancing and supporting policies that strengthen the business climate and promote economic growth.
- **CRISP #3:** Building on the success of previous initiatives, we are launching the next phase of the Capital Region Improvement Support Package (CRISP) to secure continued investment in infrastructure and community revitalization. CRISP #3 will focus on targeted projects that drive economic progress.

REGIONAL POLICY PRIORITIES

- **State of the Region Report:** We will review the findings of the upcoming State of the Region Report, identifying actionable insights to drive policy initiatives that advance the region's competitiveness and growth. This effort will align the region's strengths with strategic opportunities.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The LRCC Policy Committee's 2025 focus areas reflect our ongoing dedication to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous future for the Greater Lansing region. By aligning federal, state, and regional efforts, we aim to maximize opportunities, address challenges, and enhance the quality of life for businesses and residents alike. Together, we will continue to shape a region that leads in innovation, collaboration, and sustainable development. ♦

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2.0: HOW LRCC RETOOLED ITS STRATEGY FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

BY JENNIFER MCENTEE

“A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH,” according to a proverb by French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery.

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) had a wish – to refine its strategy as a transformational leader in the Greater Lansing business community – but needed the input and insights of its stakeholders to formulate a modern plan.

The resulting strategic plan, refreshed from a version first crafted in 2018, is now ready to put into action. At its core are these tenets: deliver business value, influence policy that supports economic growth, foster regional collaboration, and sustain LRCC through innovation, outreach, and data-driven decisions.

“It helps us frame what our organization is and what our role in the community is,” explained Tim Daman, LRCC’s president and CEO. “We are leading and tackling some of the most important and critical regional issues.

I think those regional issues are continuing to grow and expand beyond economic development, job growth, and infrastructure to issues around public safety, housing, childcare, and homelessness. We have to continue as an organization to be comfortable figuring out what our role is on these broader issues.”

HOW WE GOT HERE



Resch

Matt Resch, 2024 LRCC past chair and president of public relations, public affairs, and digital marketing firm Resch Strategies, was a part of the original strategic plan design and this refresh.

“The Chamber and the leadership of the Chamber took it upon itself and felt it very important to make sure that we had a strategic plan that was current, updated, and reflected current challenges,” Resch said. “That’s the sign of a very healthy organization — one that recognizes that and then takes the steps to make sure that we have a strategic plan that is current and reflective of what the organization faces.”

The original strategic plan work in 2018 and the 2024 refresh were conducted by Merri Jo Bales of StratAlign 20/20 and Bernadette Johnson of Inspired Action Motivates LLC. The pair submitted a final report on their research to the Chamber in May 2024.

“IT HELPS US FRAME WHAT OUR ORGANIZATION IS AND WHAT OUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY IS.”

Tim Daman, LRCC president and CEO

The 2018 strategic plan was visually depicted as a triangle with regional leadership at the top, and policy influence, business value, and excellent operations – encompassing people, fiscal sustainability, and technology – at the foundation.

Progress in those areas over the years compelled the Chamber to consider how the strategic plan could be reimagined to better focus on that business value piece.

Throughout 2024, the strategy facilitators Bales and Johnson engaged with Chamber leadership, membership, and other stakeholders through member surveys, meetings with Chamber chairs from over the years, interviews with Chamber staff and community leaders, and a community café brainstorming session.

“Strategic planning is essential for shaping the future of any organization,” said Lisa O’Connor, 2025 LRCC past chair and president of advertising and public relations firm Publicom Inc.



O'Connor

O’Connor said she was impressed with the dedication of the 74 business leaders who participated in the three-hour community café session in March 2024. The session yielded many helpful recommendations for strengthening the Chamber’s effectiveness.

“While this session was just one part of a broader information-gathering process, the level of participation from our members speaks volumes about their commitment to the Chamber’s future,” she said.

The latest research suggests members define the Chamber’s “business value” in various ways, from its involvement in public policy advocacy to its networking and educational offerings.

These Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce members came together in March 2024 for a three-hour community café session to brainstorm and collaborate on how best to refresh the LRCC strategic plan:

- Allison Horn** MSUFCU
- Amanda Matelonek** LRCC
- Amy Scoby**
The Christman Company
- Anne Brown**
Office of U.S. Senator Slotkin
- Ashlee Willis**
Michigan Premier Events
- Becky Kanaby**
Townsquare Media
- Ben Dowd** CEDAM
- Ben Rathbun**
Rathbun Insurance
- Ben Bakken**
Tri-Star Trust Bank
- Bill Kimble** C2AE
- Bob Showers** CAPCOG
- Breina Pugh** BWL
- Bridget Drzal** LRCC
- Casey Jacobsen**
LaFontaine
- Cathy Zell**
Lansing Community College
- Cathleen Edergly**
Downtown Lansing Inc.
- Chad Munce** WLNS TV 6
- Chris Nugent** Comerica
- Daniel Rials** Stunio
- David Finkbeiner**
Rathbun Insurance
- Debbie Petersmark**
WILX TV-10
- Jacki Krumnow**
Now Marketing
- Janet Lillie**
Michigan State University
- Jason Mellema**
Ingham Intermediate School District
- Jayme Taylor**
Martin Commercial Properties
- Jessica Fleet**
Maner Costerisan
- Jim Ferrell**
- Joe Dimambro**
Playmakers Fitness Foundation
- Jonathan Lum**
Exit Realtors
- Julie Thomasma**
- Justin Sheehan**
Lansing Promise
- Kari Rennie**
Burcham Hills
- Katherine Japinga**
Capital Region International Airport
- Kelsey Teribery** LRCC
- Ken Martin** Quality Dairy
- Kevin Shaw** WIELAND
- Kwafo Adarkwa**
ITC Holdings
- Laurie Baumer**
Capital Region Community Foundation
- Lisa Webb Sharpe** Peckham
- Lisa Ellen Smith**
InVerve Marketing
- Lisa Fisher**
Lisa Fisher Associates
- Lisa O'Connor** Publicom
- Lolo Robinson** CATA
- Luke Terry** Rehmann
- Mandy Schmitz** LRCC
- Marcus Martin**
Lake Trust Credit Union
- Mark Burzych**
Fahey Schultz Burzych & Rhodes
- Matt Resch**
Resch Strategies
- Melissa Nay**
Choose Lansing
- Michael Mumaugh**
- Michelle Massey** TechSmith
- Michelle Carlson**
- Michelle Reynaert**
Farm Bureau Insurance
- Monica Schafer**
Ingham County Commissioner
- Renee Cole**
- Robyn Howell** LAFCU
- Samantha Benson**
Old Town Commercial Association
- Samantha Le**
Martin Commercial Properties
- Sara Dolan** MSUFCU
- Sarah Bakken** LRCC
- Simar Pawar**
- Steve Japinga** LRCC
- Steve Schmitt** LAFCU
- Steve Opper** WIELAND
- Susan Porrett**
Davenport University
- Susan Shilton**
Junior Achievement of Mid-Michigan
- Ted O'Dell**
- Tim Daman** LRCC
- Tom Arthur**
Sycamore Creek Church
- Tom Ruis** PNC Bank
- Troy Comiskey** GM
- Vernon Woodley** BWL
- Vic Verchereau**
LRCC Board Chair, 2010

STRATEGIC PLAN 2.0:

HOW LRCC RETOOLED ITS STRATEGY FOR 2025 AND BEYOND



Vision

We are the Lansing region's **trusted** and **transformational business leader**, ensuring **sustained prosperity for businesses** and **enriching our diverse communities**.

POLICY INFLUENCE

Mission

We work relentlessly to help businesses **connect, grow** and **thrive**.

BUSINESS VALUE

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

EXCELLENT OPERATIONS

VALUES

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“All the members have their own unique reason for why they value the Chamber,” Resch said. “That’s why I think it’s important that the Chamber continues to update its strategic plan so that we can meet their very different and diverse needs.”

WHAT'S NEW

Feedback from participants in the strategic plan refresh process suggested the Chamber’s stated mission and vision don’t need to change. Members and

staff are still committed to helping Greater Lansing businesses “connect, grow, and thrive.”

The LRCC strategic plan is now graphically represented as a cluster of hexagons, with business value at its core. Like a diagram of a molecular structure, the new image shows business value bonded to policy influence, regional leadership, and excellent operations.

Each hexagon tile comes with its own goals. Under business value, the Chamber intends to enhance the

value and experience of membership, especially for the region's small businesses and their employees. That process will include developing more targeted communications to better meet members' specific needs.



Daman

"We have to figure out how we can more effectively communicate and visually demonstrate to our businesses that there are so many ways for you to connect with the Chamber, not only as an employer and a business owner, but getting your employees to utilize the chamber as a professional development vehicle," Daman said. "That's where the strategic plan is taking us, and I think that's exciting."

In policy influence – which includes proactive engagement with policymakers, advocacy efforts, and communication with members about what issues are more important to them – LRCC hopes to achieve 80 percent positive outcomes on its legislative agenda, a 10 percent increase in donors to the LRCC political action committee, and to increase contributions to the nonprofit Advance Greater Lansing by 10 percent.

For the regional leadership piece, LRCC intends to maintain its leadership role of fostering connections between business, government, education, and community groups. To that end, the Chamber plans to expand its communications efforts and complete the State of the Region Benchmarking Report in partnership with the Lansing Economic Area Partnership.

The newly configured strategic plan again emphasizes excellent operations within the Chamber. By leveraging technology, fostering innovation, and making data-driven decisions, LRCC intends to maintain its U.S. Chamber of Commerce accreditation, establish a customer relationship management system, update its organizational board bylaws, and promote a positive work environment for its staff.

Ultimately, LRCC is cognizant that retaining, attracting, and serving members means understanding what compels people to join a business-focused organization amid ever-present shifts in the Lansing region's economy, technology, and demographics.

"It's always the goal of the Chamber to grow to be able to add members and represent more members across the Greater Lansing region," Resch said. "So we're looking at the services that we provide to make sure they continue to meet the needs of members. As the environment changes, the Chamber needs to change as well."

WHAT TO EXPECT

Daman said the Chamber will likely revisit the strategic plan in three to five years to see if it's due for another refresh. The Chamber intended to reevaluate the 2018 plan sooner, but the Covid pandemic necessitated a "heads down" approach to helping the local business community move forward, he said.

The strategic plan drafted in 2018, along with the Chamber's mission statement, helped the organization ease its operations through the worst of the pandemic, Daman said.

"I'm convinced that without having that base and that mission that our team had fully bought into and embraced, it would have been a much different experience for our organization. I firmly do believe that," he said.

With this refreshed strategic plan, LRCC hopes to continue to deliver the services the membership cited as most valuable to their own businesses and the business community at large. Members surveyed noted they appreciate LRCC's networking opportunities, regional leadership, and pro-business public advocacy.

If LRCC is delivering on its members' directive, the Chamber hopes to show year-over-year revenue growth of 2 percent, achieve member engagement levels of 65 percent, and increase engagement on social media and the LRCC website by 20 percent.

The Chamber also plans to develop a regional economic and policy dashboard based on the findings of the State of the Region Benchmarking Report.

"In my mind, the key to a successful strategic plan is that the members don't necessarily notice there's a 'plan,'" Resch said. "What they're going to notice is that it's a highly functional organization that meets well the needs of the Lansing business community. If a member notices the Chamber's doing that, then the strategic plan is working."

Per the study by strategy facilitators Bales and Johnson, the Chamber can measure its growth in a number of ways, from more members to deeper involvement. Growth can include total membership numbers but also new or enhanced sponsorships, member engagement, event attendance, retention, major projects, and partnerships.

Most 2024 survey respondents — 78.5 percent — indicated that they have recommended Chamber membership to others.

LRCC's new strategic plan isn't the destination but a roadmap for the future. There are always more ways

STRATEGIC PLAN 2.0:

HOW LRCC RETOOLED ITS STRATEGY FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

for Chamber members and the community to help shape LRCC's future.

"If you're a member of the Chamber, you are sure to be getting regular communications with all kinds of opportunities to get involved," Resch said. "Whether you are someone who is looking for opportunities to network, who has an interest in public policy, or

whether you're looking to take advantage of some of the educational programming. It all starts with just going to some of those events, meeting people, and introducing yourself to the staff at the Chamber because they are always looking for members who want to be more engaged. Over time, you'll find your niche." ♦

Don't Miss the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner!



Join us for the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner on **Thursday, February 27th, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Lansing Center.** Celebrate the accomplishments of our business community and connect with local leaders during this premier event.

Visit lansingchamber.org/events to register for the Annual Dinner and explore other upcoming events and programs designed to help you grow your network and your business.



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Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Bill Hamilton



The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) honors the remarkable life of Bill Hamilton, founder of TechSmith, whose entrepreneurial spirit transformed the technology landscape. Bill's vision and innovation built a global company rooted in Greater Lansing, bringing cutting-edge solutions like Snagit and Camtasia to businesses and educators worldwide. Beyond his professional achievements, Bill's generosity and passion for his community left an indelible mark, inspiring countless leaders. His legacy as a pioneer, mentor, and advocate for regional growth will endure as a beacon of innovation and possibility. The LRCC extends its deepest condolences to his family and celebrates the incredible impact of his life. ♦

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Potter Park Zoo Continues Expansion and Improvement Efforts

The Potter Park Zoo in Lansing is in the midst of a multi-year effort to upgrade its facilities for animals and zoo visitors alike.

The new Animal Health Facility, which broke ground in May 2024, could be completed by late July 2025, according to Potter Park Zoo Director Cynthia Wagner. The construction project expands the facility from 900 square feet to more than 5,000 square feet of treatment, quarantine, surgery, and laboratory space, with public viewing windows of the veterinary staff at work.

Located near the zoo entrance, the Animal Health Facility will be equipped with the latest technology and resources, which should exceed current Association of Zoos & Aquariums standards. Potter Park Zoo has held AZA accreditation since 1986, but some outdated elements of the zoo compelled the renovations.

The new veterinary facility also allows the zoo to better participate in zoo and wildlife research projects, Wagner said.

Meanwhile, Potter Park Zoo is still in the planning stages of renovating its feline and primate building. Four architectural engineering firms have submitted proposals for the project, with the design process expected to take an entire year, according to Wagner. Construction likely won't begin until 2026.

Improvements to the feline and primate facility will include modernized animal habitats, more indoor educational space for school groups, and walkways that better comply with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

"There are dangerous animals that will be housed there, so a really big consideration is making sure we're picking somebody that we feel will help us take all the AZA and ADA standards into consideration," Wagner said. "Safety in these exhibits will be of utmost priority."

Potter Park Zoo is open year-round and houses 380 animals of 86 species.

Last year, the zoo installed new asphalt paths, allowing for the creation of a free, early-morning walking program called Potter Park Zoo Wild Wanderers Club.

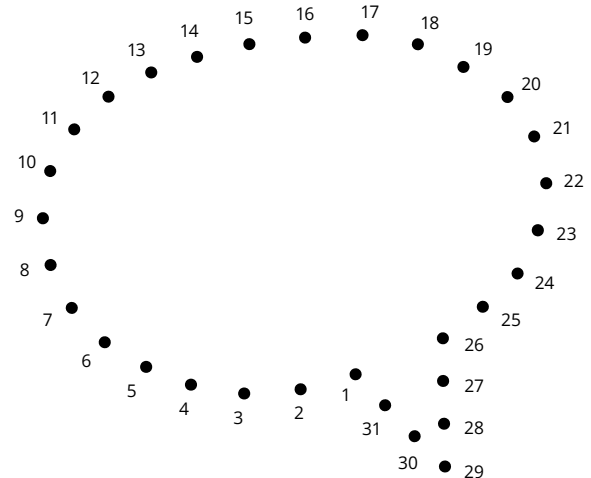
At over 100 years old, the local zoo is making improvements by securing funds through exhibit



sponsorships, foundation grants, and state funding, including \$10 million for the feline and primate building renovation allocated from the state budget last year.

Potter Park Zoological Society Executive Director Amy Morris-Hall said the zoo is always in need of corporate sponsorships to maintain its facilities and equipment and offer educational programming. The Potter Park Zoological Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports Potter Park Zoo. ♦

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ATHENA WIN Sparks Growth and Connection to Empower the Next Generation of Women Leaders

By Leslie Batchelor, Chair, ATHENA WIN and VP Client and Community Relations Director, PNC

As we look back on 2024, I am filled with gratitude and pride for what we have achieved together. 2024 was a remarkable year for ATHENA WIN, marked by growth, connection, and impactful initiatives that further our mission to support, develop, and celebrate women leaders.



Batchelor

We set a new record for event attendance, a testament to the vibrancy and engagement of our community. From thought-provoking panel discussions to inspiring networking events, we have consistently seen the power of gathering as a collective to share ideas, foster connections, and elevate one another. Thank you for your enthusiastic participation and for making these moments truly special.

We were also thrilled to welcome many new members to the ATHENA WIN family this year. Your presence enriches our network, and we are excited to see the diverse perspectives and talents you bring to our organization. Together, we continue to grow stronger, more dynamic, and more impactful.

One of the most exciting milestones of 2024 was the launch of the Aspiring Leaders Mentorship Program. This initiative is already making waves by connecting established leaders with emerging talent, fostering growth and development that will shape the next generation of trailblazers. A heartfelt thank you to all mentors and mentees who have embraced this program with open arms and open minds.

As my term as Chair has ended, I reflect on the privilege it has been to serve this incredible organization. It has been a joy to work alongside so many passionate and dedicated individuals who embody the ATHENA principles every day, and I look forward to continuing on the board as past-chair. I am delighted to pass the torch to Amy McNamara, our incoming Chair. Amy brings tremendous energy, vision, and commitment to this role, and I have no doubt she will lead ATHENA WIN to even greater heights.

I am also thrilled to announce that we have welcomed two new board members this year: Linda Toomey, Director of Marketing and Business Development for McLaren Greater Lansing, and Aneisha McMillan, Director of Marketing for Granger Waste Services. Toomey and McMillan are exceptional leaders, and their expertise and insights will undoubtedly strengthen our board and our organization.

Thank you for your support, your involvement, and your belief in the power of women supporting women! ♦

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Members on the Move

NEW HIRES



Phipps



Reed

Custom Built recently welcomed two new team members. **Jason Phipps** is the company's newest carpenter, with years of experience in trim carpentry. Meanwhile, **Jonathan Reed** is Custom Built's new Boyne City project development advisor, heading up the Northern Michigan office.



Quinton

LAFCU has added **Justin Quinton** as a commercial lending officer. Quinton brings over 12 years of experience in the banking industry to his role at LAFCU, most recently serving as assistant vice president and business banking relationship manager at a nationwide bank. In his new position, Quinton will focus on originating, managing, and contributing to the oversight of the credit union's portfolio of commercial loans. His LAFCU responsibilities include identifying lending opportunities, structuring customized financial solutions, and building relationships with new and existing business members.

Lansing-based public accounting and consulting firm **Maner Costerisan** has announced four team promotions. **Heather Farmer** and **Nick West** have been promoted to senior manager, while **Lindsey Janzen** and **Kenzie Trierweiler** have been promoted



Farmer



West



Janzen



Trierweiler

to manager roles. Farmer, a senior manager in the accounting and outsourced solutions department, brings eight years of experience in governmental accounting to her role. She joined Maner in 2022. West, a senior manager in the audit department, joined Maner in 2017 after two internships with the firm. Janzen, a manager in the accounting and outsourced solutions department, specializes in supporting nonprofit clients with accounting, bookkeeping, audit preparation, and grant management. She also coordinates the department's website and thought leadership efforts, ensuring clients stay informed about the latest insights. Trierweiler, who was promoted to manager in the audit department, began her career at Maner Costerisan as an intern in 2019.



Donaldson

Exit Factor of Grand Rapids and Lansing has welcomed **Tom Donaldson** to its team as an exit strategist. Donaldson brings expertise in guiding

businesses through the process of preparing for a successful sale.

PROMOTIONS



Nay

Choose Lansing has promoted **Melissa Nay** to director of membership and community engagement. Nay joined Choose Lansing in 2018.

Formerly the organization's membership and community outreach manager, Nay oversees all Choose Lansing membership activity, manages and facilitates the Certified Tourism Ambassador program, and is involved in community organizations related to Choose Lansing's mission. She has a bachelor's degree in advertising and communication from Michigan State University.

APPOINTMENTS



Morgan



Kauffman



Roberts

The shareholders of law firm **Fraser Trebilcock** have re-elected **Thaddeus E. Morgan** as president of the firm. Shareholder **Ryan K.**

Kauffman was re-elected to the board of directors, where he will serve as vice president and treasurer. Shareholder **Jared A.**

Roberts was elected to the board of directors, where he will serve as secretary.

Child and Family Charities

welcomes **Steven Fitch**, owner of Your Home Solution Experts, as the newest member of its board of directors. With over a decade of experience in for-profit and nonprofit sectors, Fitch brings invaluable expertise and leadership to the organization. Fitch's clients range from energy companies to residential homeowners. He's involved in nonprofit organizations, including VFW Home for Children, CMIA (Kenya), The F4 Foundation, and The Greater Lansing HBA Toys for Tots.



Williams

Michigan Certified Development Corporation president **Mark Williams** was recently elected as an at-large director of the National Association of

Development Companies. NADCO is the trade association of Small Business Administration-certified development companies, or CDCs, and other lenders who provide SBA loans and financing for small businesses. Williams will serve a one-year term. He will work with the NADCO board in developing policies, priorities, and positions, help provide direction of NADCO's resources, serve on committees, act as an ambassador for the organization, and contribute to decision-making processes. Williams joined the Michigan Certified Development Corporation as president in 2015.

AWARDS

Credit union **LAFUCU** awarded its \$10,000 LAFUCU Innovation for Education (LIFE) Grant to Perry Upper Elementary School. The grant, part of LAFUCU's Pathway to Financial Transformation initiative, was presented to the school's



STEM teacher **Eric Bentley**. The LIFE Grant funded an undersea-themed mural, conceptualized and painted by local muralist **Barb Darling**. Bentley also used the grant to purchase 12 programmable robots, six iPad stands for stop-motion animation projects, decorative lighting to complete the underwater adventure theme, and furniture such as a shark rug, futon, mini couches, new cubbies, mats, and cushions. The LIFE Grant contest invited K-12 schools across Michigan to submit a short video demonstrating how they would use the \$10,000 grant to enhance their educational environment. Entries were judged on creativity, impact, and feasibility.



Sarrault

College HUNKS Hauling Junk and Moving Lansing has named Junior Captain **Luke Sarrault** its "2024 HUNK of the Year." The company noted that Sarrault is

dedicated, hardworking, and always going above and beyond. As a leader and standout team member, he embraces tough challenges and tasks and puts in extra hours. Sarrault's determination has made a lasting impact on both his team and the community.

Silas and Lindsey Coffelt of Graze Craze received the "New Business of the Year Award" from the Meridian Area Business



Association. Other 2024 MABA award winners were: Established Business, **Deb Moerland** with **FirstLight Home Care of Greater Lansing**; Member of the Year, **Mark Lewis** with **M & M Moving and Storage** and President's Award, **Chris Stewart** with **Camelot Emergency Water Removal**.



McLaren Greater Lansing nurse **Rachel Mangopolous** was honored with the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. The award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the exceptional care nurses provide every day. The nomination, submitted by a patient, reads: "I am the husband of the patient, Arlene, who spent the entire weekend at McLaren Greater Lansing with a severe kidney and bladder infection. I wanted to tell you how much I sincerely appreciate the professional and personal attention Rachel gave to my wife during her two-and-a-half-day stay. Through her demeanor and general positive attitude, my wife was uplifted and encouraged every time Rachel came into her room."

LAFUCU has received the Community Impact-Legacy Award from Delta Township, an honor recognizing its dedication to enriching its community since 1971. The award was presented as part of the Delta Township Community Impact Awards Program, which celebrates individuals, businesses, and organizations for their contributions to the township's quality of life. LAFUCU supports



LAFCU team members accept the Delta Township Community Impact–Legacy Award from Clerk Mary R. Clark.

local education initiatives and community events in the township, such as the annual July 3rd Fireworks Show, Delta Township Community Impact Awards, and Delta Rocks! Summer Events. LAFCU has also collaborated with the Delta Township District Library on educational programs that inspire learning and financial literacy. The credit union has also advocated for improved transportation access, which led to the expansion of the CATA Route 3 bus service in Delta Township. LAFCU employees are encouraged to take on leadership roles in various local organizations, reinforcing the credit union's commitment to fostering a strong, engaged community.

Lori Shaw, trauma registrar and EMS liaison, was honored as the newest recipient of **McLaren Greater Lansing's** Extraordinary Employee of the Season Award. Shaw has been at McLaren for 30 years and worked as a unit coordinator and emergency department's administrative assistant/scheduler before moving into her current role as trauma registrar/EMS liaison. The Extraordinary Employee of The Season award is given to an individual each quarter. Nominees can be clinical or non-clinical staff at all levels and are chosen internally by McLaren staff.

COMPANY NEWS

Lansing Community College recently unveiled its new Mobile Health Education Vehicle. The vehicle will allow LCC to expand community health education



Senator-elect Elissa Slotkin inside LCC Mobile Health Education Vehicle. Photo by Kevin W. Fowler

and outreach activities across the college's five-county service area, increasing offerings for in-person, interactive, and customized healthy living education and awareness activities. Senator-elect **Elissa Slotkin** was instrumental in obtaining the funding for the project, helping to secure \$400,000 through the Health Resources and Services Administration awards grants. The vehicle will enable the community college to provide public health and wellness information on oral health, healthy eating, physical activity, exercise, and self-care awareness; hands-on skill labs in conjunction with didactic courses, and more interactive K-12 events catered to young people's curiosity.



Out of more than 100 **Graze Craze** stores globally, the Graze Craze store in Okemos ranked among the Top Five stores in total holiday sales, at number four behind Fort Worth, Seattle, and Orlando.

Mahabir Wellness now offers mental health assessment testing for a range of conditions, including

ADHD, panic attacks, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, sleep disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and bipolar disorder. The testing can be billed to insurance, with results shared with the customer's medical provider, therapist, or other care professional.



McLaren Greater Lansing completed its 10,000th robotic-assisted procedure in 2024. The 10,000th case, an incisional hernia repair, was done on Sept. 30th by **Dr. Nicholas St. Hilaire**, a general surgeon with McLaren Greater Lansing Minimally Invasive Surgical Associates. McLaren Greater Lansing launched its robotics program in 2007 with its first da Vinci robotic-assisted procedure. Robotic surgery can assist in surgery with more precision and dexterity than a human hand, leading to faster recovery, less pain, and smaller scars for surgical patients. Five specialties currently use the da Vinci robotic system at McLaren Greater Lansing, with plans to expand to include gynecologic oncology in the coming months. The current specialties are general surgery, urology, gynecology, colorectal, and thoracic. McLaren Greater Lansing also has a MAKO robotic arm-assisted system for hip and knee replacements, a Brainlab navigation platform for spinal surgery, and an Ion robotic system to biopsy lung nodules. ♦

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