

# FOCUS

## IN THIS ISSUE

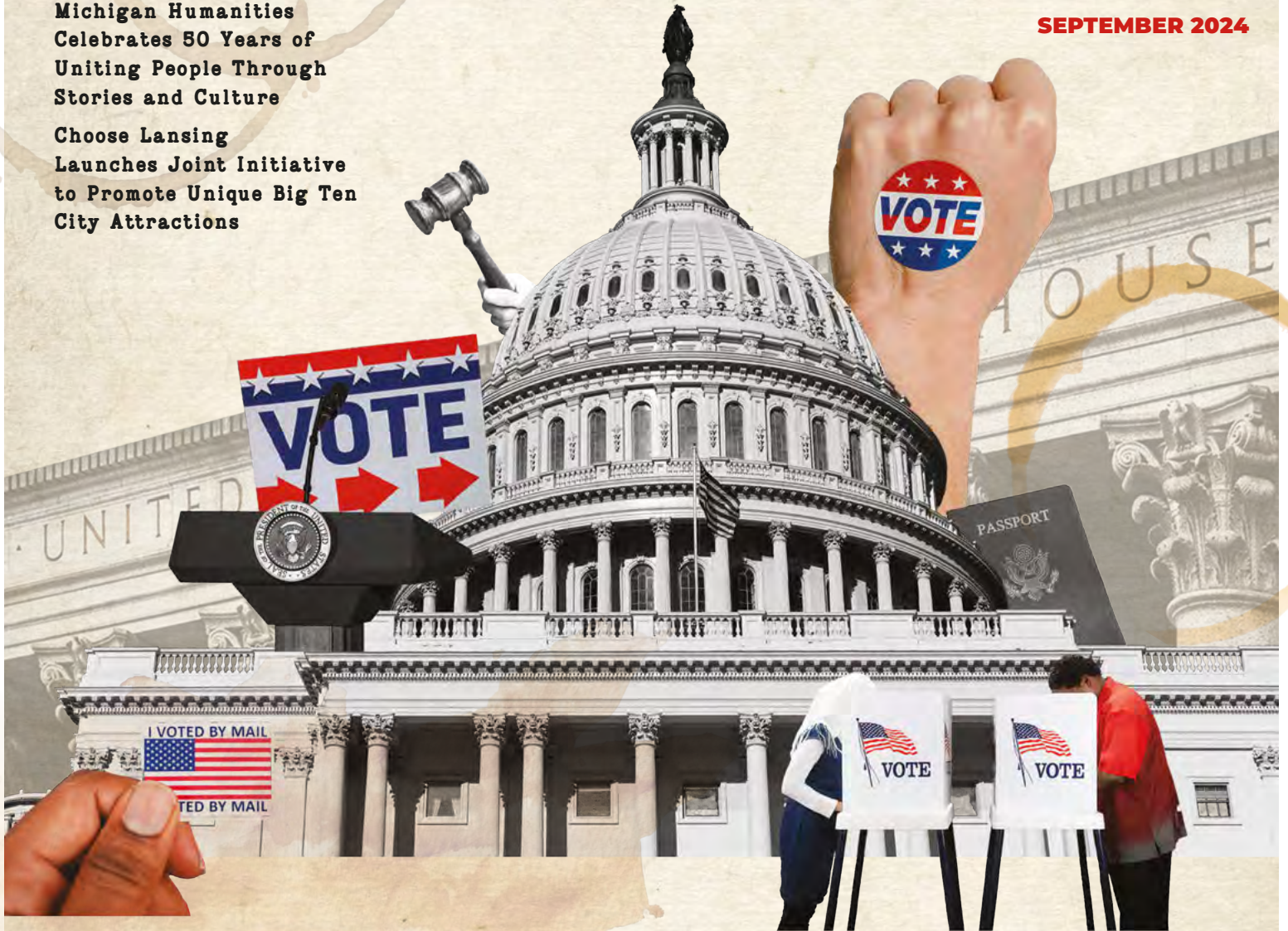
**Stunio Continues Growth Through Funding and Partnerships**

**Michigan Humanities Celebrates 50 Years of Uniting People Through Stories and Culture**

**Choose Lansing Launches Joint Initiative to Promote Unique Big Ten City Attractions**

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

**SEPTEMBER 2024**



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the White House*

**IT'S A PIVOTAL ELECTION YEAR**

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LANSING REGIONAL CHAMBER

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— on the cover

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Emily Rice/Tandem Studios

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[Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce](https://www.linkedin.com/LansingRegionalChamberofCommerce)

## Championing Civility in Politics: A Call to Action for November 2024

**A**s the November 2024 election approaches, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) reaffirms its commitment to fostering civility and respect in political discourse. In an era where political conversations can easily become polarized, it is crucial that we, as business and community leaders, lead by example.

The LRCC has always prided itself on building strong relationships with elected officials across all levels of government. These connections are essential not only for shaping policies that benefit our business community but also for ensuring that the Greater Lansing region remains a beacon of collaboration and progress.

This election season, Michigan is once again in the national spotlight, with key regional, state, and national races that will shape our future. Whether it's the race for Michigan's open U.S. Senate seat or the pivotal contests for our Congressional and local seats, the stakes are high. Yet, amidst the intensity, we must not lose sight of the values that bind us together—respect, understanding, and a shared commitment to the common good.

The LRCC believes that the manner in which we engage in political discussions today will set the tone for our community for years to come. As we navigate this election season, let's approach our differences with open minds and a willingness to listen. By doing so, we can continue to move the Lansing area forward, regardless of political outcomes.

Our region's future depends not just on the outcomes of these elections, but on the way we conduct ourselves in the process. We encourage all members of the LRCC and the broader community to participate actively in this election, exercise your right to vote, and above all, uphold the principles of civility and respect.

We also have strong partnerships with other chambers and business groups to address impactful issues, like the recent Michigan Supreme Court's ruling on mandatory paid leave and minimum wage. We are working closely with the Michigan Chamber, regional chambers, Choose Lansing and other business groups on a broad communication and advocacy strategy, including upcoming educational programs.

For updates on the minimum wage and paid sick leave, please visit the LRCC's resource page at [www.lansingchamber.org/advocacy-priorities](http://www.lansingchamber.org/advocacy-priorities).

Together, we can ensure that the LRCC remains a leader in fostering a positive and constructive political environment, establishing a direction for continued regional prosperity. ●



**TIM DAMAN**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
LANSING REGIONAL  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



**We encourage all members of the LRCC and the broader community to participate actively in this election, exercise your right to vote, and above all, uphold the principles of civility and respect.**



### September Economic Club

Join us for an inside look at the upcoming 2024 national elections as we welcome Jon Decker, White House correspondent and senior national editor for Gray Television.

**Tuesday, September 24 | 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center**

## Thank You Renewing Members

Disability Network Capital Area  
 DK Security & Investigations  
 GMCA - Greater Michigan Construction Academy  
 Hyacinth House Greenery  
 JEM Cleaning LLC  
 Keller Williams - Michaela Martin  
 KTM Industries, Inc.  
 Lansing Legal Group PLLC  
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 T.L. Hart, Inc.  
 Townsquare Media  
 United Way of South Central Michigan  
 Village Common LLC  
 WLNS TV 6

## Chamber Milestones

### Lansing State Journal

70 Years

### Access BIDCO, L.L.C.

30 Years

### Delhi Charter Township

30 Years

### The Markerboard People Inc.

20 Years

### McCardel Restoration, LLC

15 Years

### Piper & Gold Public Relations

10 Years

### Clark Schaefer Hackett

5 Years

### Coontz Law Firm

5 Years

### MetroNet

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!*

## Welcome New Members

### Bright Star Home Care

(517) 679-1700

[www.brightstarcare.com/east-lansing](http://www.brightstarcare.com/east-lansing)

2510 Kerry St., Suite 108  
 Lansing, MI 48912

### Centered Care of Michigan

(517) 394-1234

[www.ccmihc.com](http://www.ccmihc.com)

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 Lansing, MI 48906

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[www.cvshealth.com](http://www.cvshealth.com)

5901 Conner St.  
 Detroit, MI 48213

### Endeavor IT

(833) 348-0007

[www.endeavorit.com](http://www.endeavorit.com)

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 Coopersville, MI 49404

### Health Bar

(616) 200-8435

[www.healthbar.com](http://www.healthbar.com)

109 Michigan St., NW, Suite 424  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49503

### Holt Senior Care and Rehab Center

(517) 694-2144

[www.nexcarehealth.com/search-locations/holt](http://www.nexcarehealth.com/search-locations/holt)

5091 Willoughby Rd.  
 Holt, MI 48842

### OEO Energy Solutions

(800) 553-2112

[www.OEO.com](http://www.OEO.com)

140 Oakwood Rd.  
 Lake Zurich, IL 60047

### Pine Hollow Partners

(517) 339-1676

[www.pinehollowpartners.com](http://www.pinehollowpartners.com)

6200 Pine Hollow Dr., Suite 400  
 East Lansing, MI 48823

## LRCC BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES

### Delta Township – Eaton County

Wednesday, Sept. 4,  
 from 9 to 10 a.m.  
 Crowne Plaza Lansing  
 925 S. Creyts Rd., Lansing

### Lansing – Delhi Township

Wednesday, Sept. 11,  
 from 9 to 10 a.m.  
 Lansing Board of Water & Light  
 1201 S. Washington Ave.  
 BWL REO Town Train Depot, Lansing

### East Lansing- Meridian Township

Wednesday, Sept. 18,  
 from 9 to 10 a.m.  
 Playmakers, 2299 W. Grand  
 River Ave., Okemos

### Clinton County

Wednesday, Sept. 25,  
 from 9 to 10 a.m.  
 Granger Waste Services,  
 16890 Wood Road, Lansing

## September 2024

9/6

### FIRST FRIDAY PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

Friday, Sept. 6, from 11 to 11:30 a.m.  
via ZOOM

Join the LRCC every First Friday of the month for an insightful briefing on policy and political developments impacting the business community.

**Cost:** No cost to attend.

9/10

### MEMBER MIXER

Tuesday, Sept. 10, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.  
The Hidden Gem Event Venue,  
4230 Charlar Drive, Holt

Join us for an evening of connection, collaboration, and community at the September Member Mixer hosted at The Hidden Gem Event Venue on Tuesday, Sept. 10 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.! This event brings together business leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals from across the region for an evening of networking and relationship-building.

**Cost:** No cost to attend.

9/11

### ATHENA WIN GIRLS' NIGHT OUT KAYAK TRIP

Wednesday, Sept. 11, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Dimondale Canoe & Kayak,  
9995 Billwood Highway, Dimondale

Enjoy the scenic views of the Grand River while kayaking with fellow ATHENA WIN members! The trip down the river takes approximately 1.5 hours. Dimondale Canoe & Kayak will transport you to Danford Island Park launch site, which includes several lagoons to paddle around in, as you head down the river.

**Cost:** Tickets are \$25 for ATHENA WIN members and \$35 for future ATHENA WIN members.

9/18

### SUCCESSION PLANNING: A CASE STUDY ON THE ADDED VALUE OF STARTING YOUR EXIT PLAN NOW

Wednesday, Sept. 18, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.  
Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,  
500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

The reality is starting the succession planning process early can provide owners significant advantages that expand options, flexibility and likely increase value for the future. This practical "live" session focuses on a fictional company where attendees will get perspective on understanding the challenges, the opportunities, and the processes for developing a succession plan that is best for his or her business. Participants will have ample opportunities to ask questions.

**Cost:** This event is offered at no cost.

9/19

### CHAMBER 360

Thursday, Sept. 19, from 8:30 to 10 a.m.  
Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,  
500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

As a current member or a business considering joining the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC), it is critically important that you understand and utilize the tools, resources and relationships available to you through your membership investment. The Chamber 360 program provides an intimate venue for you to connect with other members, provide brief remarks, meet the LRCC team and take a deeper dive into a LRCC membership.

**Cost:** This event is offered at no cost.

9/24

### LANSING ECONOMIC CLUB

Tuesday, Sept. 24, from 11:30 a.m.  
to 1:30 p.m.

Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, 219 S  
Harrison Road, East Lansing

The Lansing Economic Club will welcome Jon Decker, White House Correspondent and Senior National Editor for Gray Television on Tuesday, Sept. 24. Decker will provide an overview of the 2024 presidential election.

**Cost:** Tickets are offered at no cost for Lansing Economic Club members, \$55 for LRCC members and \$75 for future LRCC members.

9/25

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION SERIES: WHEN AND HOW TO RESPOND TO INCIDENTS OF BIAS

Wednesday, Sept. 25, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,  
500 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 200, Lansing

Have you ever overheard comments or observed behavior that you considered inappropriate in your organization? Did you respond, if so what and how? If not, why not? Most people avoid responding in such situations because they do not know how to respond. This session discusses the bystander effect and provides tips on how we can go from being mere bystanders to active bystanders or upstanders.

**Cost:** Tickets are offered at no cost for LRCC members and \$25 for future LRCC members.

9/26

### ATHENA WIN EVENING OF EMPOWERMENT

Thursday, Sept. 26, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
Crowne Plaza Lansing, 925 S. Creyts Rd.,  
Lansing

Please join us for a night of comradery and collaboration as we celebrate the 2023 ATHENA Leadership Award recipient, Julie Pingston (President & CEO Choose Lansing) and a special keynote speaker, Tamira Chapman (Founder & CEO Storehouse) who will share more about their leadership journeys.

**Cost:** Tickets are \$75 for ATHENA WIN members and \$85 for future ATHENA WIN members.



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## ‘Cities of the Big Ten’ Passport Initiative Launched

**C**hoose Lansing and Destination Ann Arbor are participating in the new “Cities of the Big Ten” passport initiative, a joint effort to encourage visitors to explore beyond athletic events to discover the unique attractions of Big Ten cities with a digital passport developed with technology company Bandwango.

The group developed a location-based digital passport featuring ten popular things to see and do for each of the 17 Big Ten cities representing 18 schools. The free passport is accessible on mobile devices.

Lori Lanspeary, Choose Lansing’s marketing and community engagement manager, said it was a challenge for organizers to narrow down the list of top local attractions.

“The greater Lansing area has a lot of things to see and do,” Lanspeary said. “I think it’s just the ones that we knew most visitors would want to see while they’re here. It’s kind of a ‘must-see’ list.”

### Highlighted attractions in Lansing include:

- State Capitol Building/Heritage Hall
- Michigan History Center and Archives of Michigan
- Impression 5 Science Center
- R.E. Olds Transportation Museum
- High Caliber Karting
- Zap Zone XL
- Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum
- MSU Horticulture Gardens
- Abrams Planetarium
- MSU Dairy Store

Lanspeary said Choose Lansing was fortunate to team up with Destination Ann Arbor to promote the new regional marketing initiative.



“

**As much as we’re rivals, we’re also very supportive of other destinations and the people who are visiting there.”**

“I think we got a little more bang for our buck because we partnered with Ann Arbor to send out a press release to all our media partners,” Lanspeary said. “As much as we’re rivals, we’re also very supportive of other destinations and the people who are visiting there.”

Highlighted attractions in Ann Arbor include:

- Zingerman’s Deli
- Big House Tour
- Law Quad on Campus
- Main Street
- Michigan Theater & State Theater
- The Nichols Arboretum
- Kerrytown
- Ann Arbor Distillery
- Winewood Organics
- Farmer’s Market

Whether college football fans are visiting Michigan State University or the University of Michigan, they’ll ideally use the Bandwango app to find and check in to noteworthy stops along the way.

“Sometimes fans will only get to the stadium, and then they’ll head home. But we’re like, wait! There’s so much more to see and do while you’re here,” Lanspeary said.

To access the Cities of the Big Ten passport, visit [www.citiesofthebigten.com](http://www.citiesofthebigten.com). ●



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## POTTERVILLE ADULT EDUCATION (PAE) IS NOW EATON RESA ADULT EDUCATION

The Eaton RESA Adult Education program is dedicated to increasing work skills, literacy levels and high school equivalency credentials (GED/HiSET) for adults in Clinton, Eaton and Ingham counties, at no cost to the learner.

Headquartered at Capital Area Michigan Works! (CAMW!) in Lansing, Eaton RESA Adult Education also offers classes at CAMW! St. Johns and Charlotte. We are committed to ensuring accessibility for learners by offering in-person and virtual classes throughout the tri-county area, including in local jails.

Connect with us to learn how businesses can support adult learners and help them build work- related skills, assist with job placement and gain insights to the local labor market.



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## Michigan Humanities Celebrate 50 Years

**F**ive decades in, Michigan Humanities is still working to tell the unique stories of people who live in the state.

To commemorate its 50th anniversary, the humanities council has provided \$25,000 in grant funding to each of five projects that highlight underrepresented populations:

- The Chaldean Community Foundation's "Chaldean Story," which uses published stories, podcast interviews, videos, public forums, and performances to talk about Chaldean's personal journeys;
- The Historical Society of Greater Lansing's "Origin Stories," oral history video stories and artifacts of Lansing residents;
- The Museum of Ojibwa Culture's "Tribal Youth, Our Future for Cultural Preservation," which includes seven traveling exhibits on Native American boarding schools;
- The Underground Railroad Society of Cass County's film "Documentary: The Underground Railroad and Its Legacy in Cass County, Michigan";
- And Wayne State University's "MI Native Stories," an effort to collect 10 Anishinaabe oral histories about 20th-century indigenous Michigan.

The grant opportunity attracted more than 60 applications from across the state, according to Jennifer Rupp, president and CEO of Michigan Humanities.

"We wanted to uplift cultures and individuals or communities that people in Michigan just may not know about but yet are such a big thread in the fabric of Michigan," Rupp said.

The Michigan Humanities Council, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, began in 1974 to offer humanities programming and grant-making. The council aims to explore and celebrate the stories, history, and cultures of the diverse people of Michigan through conversations and creative outlets like literature, film, and art. With just seven staff members, the organization supports more than 500 partner organizations annually across the state.

Rupp said the current cultural climate benefits from opportunities for people to talk and share face-to-face versus anonymously online.

"We really concentrate on what resources and tools we can



Yoshi Michels

The Michigan Humanities team accepted a special tribute from Senator Ed McBroom for the council's 50th anniversary.

provide communities and individuals and organizations to foster healthy civil discourse and promote a healthy democracy," Rupp said.



Also as part of its 2024 celebration, Michigan Humanities is hosting two events this fall. At 7 p.m. on Sept. 12 at the Northern Center on Northern Michigan University's campus in Marquette, the council is hosting "Bridging Michigan: Building Understanding Through Poetry." Dr. Shawnrece Campbell, the newly appointed assistant vice president of diversity and inclusion at NMU, will moderate a conversation between Michigan's poet laureate Nandi Comer and Upper Peninsula's poet laureate Beverly Matherne.

"We'll have an entire evening dedicated to talking about how we can use poetry to build mutual understanding in our communities," Rupp said.

The second event will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 24 at the Pasant Theatre at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts in East Lansing. The "Great Michigan Read Author Reunion" will include Great Michigan Read authors Beth Nguyen, Kevin Boyle, Steve Luxenberg, Kekla Magoon, Dr. Mona Hanna, Mary Doria Russell, and Angeline Boulley. Moderator Bill Castanier will lead a discussion on how literature is critical to building empathy and understanding.

The events are open to the public and free to attend.

"The more we know about someone's history and journey, the more we're going to be able to understand their perspective and respect their viewpoints and their values," said Rupp. "As a statewide organization, we really feel that it's our responsibility to model that and to offer resources that allow people to develop the skills and maybe even the desire to seek out that mutual understanding and be empathetic to the people who are in their communities." ●



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# As a Home Seller, Do I Have to Pay the Buyer's Agent Fee?

By Meghan Webber, CEO, Greater Lansing Association of REALTORS®

**T**he recent proposed settlement involving the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) has brought renewed attention to the question of who is responsible for paying an agent. A common misconception is that sellers are obligated to cover the buyer's agent fees, while in reality, this has never been the case. It's critical that sellers understand the true nature of agent commissions, so they can navigate the selling process with greater clarity and confidence.

## The Agent Fee: A Quick Overview

Commissions are paid to the agents representing the buyer and seller in a real estate transaction. Typically, payment is structured as one commission that is split between both agents, usually as a percentage of sales price or a flat fee which can vary based on local markets and specific brokerage agreements.

Historically, it has been common practice for the commission to be reflected in the sales price and debited from the seller's side to cover the entire commission, including the buyer's agent fee. However, this is not, and has never been, a legal requirement of the seller. Sellers have never been obligated to cover costs for the buyer's agent; it has always been a negotiable aspect of the real estate transaction.

## The Impact of the NAR Settlement

The recent proposed NAR settlement has generated significant discussion within the real estate industry. However, it's important for consumers to understand that the settlement does not require lower commissions or set any type of fee structure.

"The primary change is around offers of compensation on the multiple listing service (MLS)," said REALTOR® Jonathan Lum, Broker Owner of EXIT Realty Home Partners. "While sellers can still cover the buyer's agent fee if they choose to, their agents are not allowed to publicly advertise commission offers on the MLS. This is something that must be pursued through negotiation and consultation with the agents."

## Why Might a Seller Cover the Buyer's Agent Fees?

While sellers have never been required to pay the buyer's agent fee, there are many reasons why it has become a popular practice.

"The goal is always to access the greatest number of potential buyers in order to get the most money for your house in the shortest amount of time," said Lum. "Some buyers, particularly first-time buyers, may not have the financial flexibility to cover their agent's fee on top of other

expenses. By offering compensation [to the buyer's broker], sellers broaden their pool of buyers and increase the chances of receiving competitive offers."

In a competitive market, offering to cover the buyer's agent fee can also give a seller's property a distinct edge over others. Offering buyer broker compensation can also lead to smoother and more straightforward negotiations. Buyers may be less likely to request price reductions or other concessions if their agent's commission is covered and can streamline the negotiation process.

"Paying the buyer's agent fee is a strategic move that offers numerous benefits to home sellers," said Lum. "An experienced REALTOR® can help tailor the approach to your specific situation, ensuring that covering the buyer's agent fee is used effectively as part of a broader selling strategy."

For a list of local REALTORS® who can guide you through your next transaction, visit the Greater Lansing Association of REALTORS® website at [www.lansing-realestate.com](http://www.lansing-realestate.com). ●

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# Understanding the Proposals on the November 5, 2024 Ballot

**A**s the November 5, 2024 general election approaches, voters across the tri-county region will have the opportunity to weigh in on a range of proposals that could significantly impact their communities. With a total of 20 proposals on the ballot, including new millages and renewals, it's important for voters to understand the details before casting their votes.



Specifically, the millage would support the purchase, acquisition, construction, maintenance, operation, improvement, extension, or repair of housing facilities, as well as the elimination of detrimental housing conditions. This initiative is part of a broader effort to ensure that all residents of Ingham County have access to safe and affordable housing.

All the proposal language can be found on your county clerk's website or by visiting the Lansing Regional Chamber - Political Action Committee's (LRC-PAC) Election Guide. The LRC-PAC's Election Guide offers a user-friendly, clickable document that directs you to the specific language of each proposal, ensuring you have the information you need to make informed decisions. The Election Guide is available at [lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac](https://lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac).

### Make Your Voice Heard

As these proposals highlight, the upcoming election will give voters the power to shape the future of their communities. Whether it's deciding on tax limitations in Eaton County or addressing housing needs in Ingham County, your vote matters. Be sure to review all the proposals carefully, consult the Chamber's Election Guide for detailed information, and participate in the democratic process by voting on November 5, 2024. ●

### Eaton County: Tax Limitation Proposal

One of the notable proposals on the ballot comes from Eaton County, where voters are being asked to consider a tax limitation increase. The proposal would allow the County to levy an additional 3.0 mills, raising the total levy up to 8.5 mills for operations and critical services.

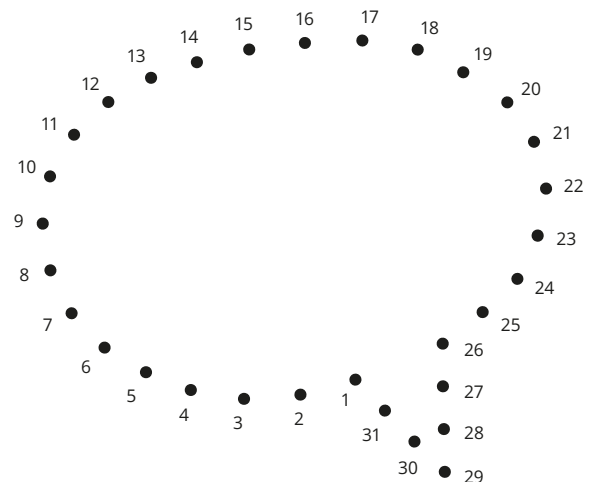
It's important to note that this proposal does not mandate that the Board of Commissioners levy the full 8.5 mills but rather increases the limitation the Board can consider each year during the budget process. This increase is being proposed through a Tax Limitation Alteration process, which is set by the Michigan Constitution but ultimately requires public approval.

The current limitation in Eaton County was established in 1978 at 5.5 mills. Over the years, due to Headlee and Proposal A, this amount has decreased to 5.2096 mills. The proposed increase would give the County more flexibility in addressing its budgetary needs, especially in critical areas such as public safety, infrastructure, and social services.

### Ingham County: Housing and Homelessness Millage

In Ingham County, voters will consider a millage proposal aimed at addressing housing and homelessness. The proposed millage would increase the county's tax limitation by up to 0.5000 mills (50 cents per thousand dollars of taxable value) for four years, from 2024 to 2027. The funds generated by this millage, estimated at \$5,618,512 in the first year, would be used to expand and improve housing options for low- and moderate-income families, prevent and reduce homelessness, and provide services to unhoused persons.

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## Lansing Regional Chamber–Political Action Committee Endorsed Candidates in Local, State Elections Advance to November General Election

The Lansing Regional Chamber–Political Action Committee (LRC-PAC) is pleased to congratulate our endorsed candidates on their successful campaigns in the primary election. Of the 39 candidates that the LRC-PAC endorsed in the primary, 36 (92%) were successful in their election efforts and move onto the general election. This bipartisan group of elected officials is dedicated to working collaboratively with the business community to foster a favorable business climate and develop solutions for the challenges we all face. “We are thrilled to see our endorsed candidates achieve success in the primary election,” said Steve Japinga, senior vice president of public affairs of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. “These leaders have demonstrated a commitment to collaboration and effective governance, which are crucial for overcoming everyday obstacles and enhancing our region’s business environment.”

“This diverse group of officials represents a strong commitment to bipartisan cooperation and problem-solving,” Japinga continued. “Their victories signify a shared vision for a thriving community where businesses and workers can prosper together. We look forward to continuing our work with them to ensure our region remains a favorable place for businesses to grow and succeed.”

The LRCC remains dedicated to advocating for policies and leaders that support a robust economic environment. As we move towards the general election in November, we are confident that these candidates will continue to prioritize the needs of the business community and work towards sustainable, long-term solutions.

LRC-PAC will be reviewing and possibly endorsing additional races as part of our third round of endorsements. The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5.

The LRC-PAC’s endorsement process includes a review of a candidate’s performance, a written questionnaire, and, in some cases, an in-person interview. Only after this process is completed and a vote of the LRC-PAC Board is taken can a candidate be endorsed and be considered for financial support. The LRC-PAC is a separate identity from the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce. The LRC-PAC does not use member dues for political activities.

Learn more about the LRC-PAC here:  
[www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac](http://www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac). ●

### The bipartisan list LRC-PAC endorsed candidates that secured victory in the Primary Election include:

#### State House of Representatives:

- 77th District: Angela Witwer (D)

#### Clinton County:

- Sean Dush for Sheriff
- Clinton County Board of Commissioners:
  - 3rd District: Bruce DeLong (R)
  - 5th District: Bob Showers (R)
  - 6th District: John Andrews (D)
  - 7th District: Dr. Dwight Washington (D)

#### Eaton County:

- Tom Reich for Sheriff
- Doug Lloyd for Prosecuting Attorney
- Eaton County Board of Commissioners:
  - 1st District: Tim Barnes (R)
  - 4th District: Brandon Haskell (D)
  - 10th District: Jacob Toomey (D)
  - 13th District: Jim Mott (R)

#### Ingham County:

- Scott Wriggelsworth for Sheriff
- John Dewane for Prosecuting Attorney
- Ingham County Board of Commissioners:
  - 1st District: Randy Maiville (R)
  - 2nd District: Karla Ruest (R)
  - 3rd District: Chris Trubac (D)
  - 5th District: Myles Johnson (D)
  - 7th District: Thomas Morgan (D)
  - 8th District: Bob Pena (D)
  - 9th District: Ryan Sebolt (D)
  - 10th District: Gabrielle Lawrence (D)
  - 11th District: Mark Grebner (D)
  - 12th District: Irene Cahill (D)
  - 14th District: Mark Polsdofer (D)
  - 15th District: Monca Schafer (R)

#### Delhi Township:

- Supervisor: John Hayhoe (R)
- Treasurer: Tom Lenard (D)

#### Delta Township:

- Supervisor: Ken Fletcher (D)
- Clerk: Mary Clark (D)
- Treasurer: Dennis Fedewa (D)
- Trustee: Fonda Brewer (D)
- Trustee: Andrea Cascarilla (D)
- Trustee: Karen Mojica (D)

#### Meridian Township:

- Treasurer: Phil Deschaine (D)



# From Lansing to the White House

IT'S A PIVOTAL ELECTION YEAR

## WHITE HOUSE

correspondent Jon Decker has reported on every U.S. presidential race since Bill Clinton's win in 1996. The 2024 election cycle — with an assassination attempt on a former president and a sitting president withdrawing from reelection consideration after a disastrous TV debate — is perhaps the most unpredictable he's witnessed.

"There are so many twists and turns," said Decker, the senior national editor for broadcaster Gray Television. "These are things that only Hollywood can make up, but they're real life, and that's what makes this particular cycle so interesting."

Vice President Kamala Harris' selection as the Democratic nominee has changed the dynamic of the presidential race, Decker said, especially as candidates vie for the necessary 270 Electoral College votes to secure the presidency.

Democrats have been "energized" by Harris' campaign, he said.

"Former President Donald Trump anticipated an easy road to winning back the White House. With Kamala Harris at the top of the ticket for Democrats, that road got more difficult," said Decker.

While debates, rallies, and social media banter might

suggest a wide range of controversial topics are on the table, Decker said that polling indicates U.S. voters' top issues are largely the same year-over-year.

"For most voters, the top issues in election cycle after election cycle is always jobs and the economy," said Decker, noting that voters continue to be concerned about the rising cost of gasoline and groceries.



DECKER

In Michigan, Decker expects voters will consider each candidate's position toward vital industries like automotive manufacturing. President Joe Biden and Vice President Harris walked the picket line with United Auto Workers last September, an indelible show of support for the working class.

"It's a memorable image for me because I cover President Biden, and I'm sure that it's not forgotten by some of those union workers who were putting their livelihoods on the line to strike for what they viewed as a fair wage," Decker said.

Presidential races are known to get more voters to the polls than midterm elections, yet Decker said he doesn't expect candidates for U.S. House and Senate seats or even regional races to ride the coattails of Harris or Trump.

"Voters are evaluating their choices, notwithstanding what's happening at the presidential level," Decker said.



Michigan is considered a swing state, where the two major political parties have similar levels of support among voters. How Michiganders vote could have repercussions for the U.S. presidential decision and as the parties each seek control of the U.S. House and Senate.

## Seats to watch

One of the most closely watched races this election year is the contest between Democrat Elissa Slotkin and Republican Mike Rogers for Michigan's open U.S. Senate seat, to be vacated by Senator Debbie Stabenow. The senior senator, a Democrat, said last year she would not seek a fifth term. Democrats currently control the U.S. Senate by a thin majority.

Both candidates have deep roots in the Lansing region. Rogers is a former FBI agent who represented the Lansing area in Congress from 2001 to 2014. Slotkin is a former CIA analyst who has served as a U.S. representative since 2019, initially for Michigan's 8th Congressional District prior to redistricting.

"It's two people who know the Lansing region well," said Zach Gorchow, executive editor and publisher at Gongwer News Service, which focuses its coverage on Michigan government and politics. "If people were worried about a loss of focus on the Lansing region with Debbie Stabenow's retirement, it might not be as significant as it could have been given who is competing for it."

Meanwhile, Slotkin's bid to replace Senator Stabenow leaves her 7th Congressional District seat open, now being sought by former state lawmakers Curtis Hertel Jr. and Tom Barrett. Hertel, a Democrat, served as a state senator representing Michigan's 23rd district from 2015 to 2023. Barrett, a Republican, unsuccessfully ran against Slotkin for the 7th district seat in 2022 after serving in the Michigan House for the 71st district from 2015 to 2018, and the state Senate for the 24th district from 2019 to 2022.

The 7th Congressional District of Michigan is centered on Lansing and includes Ingham, Livingston, Clinton, and Shiawassee counties, and parts of Eaton, Oakland, and Genesee counties.

Gorchow predicts the 7th Congressional District race will be one of the more contentious this election season.

"This will be an absolute donnybrook. It already is," said Gorchow. "Starting probably Labor Day, we'll see massive



GORCHOW

amounts of advertising. Because it's an open seat, this is just going to be a complete battle between both sides."

"With the Democrats who want to retake control of the U.S. House, you know they have to hold on to the seat that Slotkin holds now," Gorchow said. "If Tom Barrett wins, that's a big setback toward trying to win U.S. House control."



GROSSMANN

Matt Grossmann is director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research and a political science professor at Michigan State University. He said state and national races this November will determine the balance of party control for years to come.

"We're at a stage when all of the partisan races at lower levels reflect the presidential race to a great degree," Grossmann said. "The presidential race is coming down to seven swing states and we're one of them. So we're right in the center of the national electorate."

While divisive campaigns are good for getting voters to the polls, higher turnout doesn't necessarily indicate one party will get more votes than the other.



HEMOND

"Both proponents and opponents of Donald Trump are turning out," Grossmann said. "It's hard to rile up your own base without riling up the other as well."

As voters assess candidates' positions on business issues, Grossmann said political party affiliations will still likely hold more sway than policy stances.



SELLEK

"We do have some relatively pro-business candidates on both sides in key races. But in terms of the actual policies enacted, party control is going to matter a lot more than that," he said.

## Let's keep it civil

Adrian Hemond and John Sellek are the political consultants and news analysts behind Baldly Bipartisan. Hemond is a Democrat and CEO of Grassroots Midwest, while Sellek is a Republican and CEO of Harbor Strategic. Despite their disparate political leanings, the pair said it's possible — and even necessary — to remain civil when discussing politics.

"You know our political culture is awash in people that model bad behavior, starting with our elected officials. The incentives of elected officials are different from those of normal people. Elected officials are engaged in partisan competition for a limited number of seats,"

# FROM LANSING TO THE WHITE HOUSE, IT'S A PIVOTAL ELECTION YEAR

explained Hemond. "For normal Americans, they are not competing with one another for power. They're trying to raise families and pay their mortgages and be normal people. And so the more that you can talk to people like they're people and not like they are avatars for politicians who are competing with one another, the more civil your conversations are going to be."

This sentiment applies to their own friendship, too.

"I understand that John doesn't come by the views he has that are different from mine from a place of malice. We just have a different perspective on the world," Hemond said. "If you can appreciate that about other people, even when you disagree, it's going to be a lot easier to get along with people."

Hemond and Sellek host speaking engagements throughout Michigan to share their political insights and promote respectful dialogue.

"People are thirsty to hear more information without it being shouted at them. And because they're concerned about being shouted at or canceled, they're afraid to speak out about it," Sellek said. "They want to talk about it more. They want to confirm whether they should be suspicious of the information they're hearing or the tone that they're hearing is masking the reality of the situation."

Sellek said people won't likely change each other's minds on hot-button topics like abortion. Yet understanding others' perspectives helps us treat each other as neighbors rather than adversaries.

"We're stuck together and so having some understanding of why people who believe differently than you about things that you think are really important makes it easier for us to all sort of navigate and live around one another and not be vile to each other," Sellek said. "Having a civil conversation with somebody about the abortion issue probably won't change their minds. Screaming at them that they're a bad person because they think differently than you, I 100 percent guarantee you will change their mind 0 percent of the time."

The Baldly Bipartisan duo said Chamber events are an excellent opportunity for community members to come together to discuss the issues of the day, from their businesses to the political climate. Finding common ground in face-to-face interactions versus on social media is easier regardless of party affiliation.

Bipartisan cooperation is also the only way to accomplish big regional goals, like infrastructure improvements that require participation from business owners, organized labor, and lawmakers, according to Hemond.

Sellek said Governor Gretchen Whitmer has demonstrated there's a market for bipartisanship and positivity in politics, consistently holding a more than 50 percent approval rating from Michigan residents. Sellek and Hemond were both staffers in the House when Governor Whitmer was a state representative.

"In that time frame, she was known as a fighter. She was the one that went to the microphone to take a whack at the GOP because she was really good at it," Sellek said. "As governor, I'm sure she would argue she's still a fighter, but she's adjusted the way that she talks about it and she is essentially a happy warrior."

Sellek and Hemond said politics get less "toxic" the closer the seats get to home, since your state representative is more likely to shop at your same grocery store than a national representative.

That proximity is also a good reason to stay educated on local issues, they said, since those hometown government officials are often more accessible for questions from the public.

## Endorsing 'problem-solvers'

The Lansing Regional Chamber-Political Action Committee, or LRC-PAC, works to represent the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce's (LRCC) members at every level of government through support such as endorsements and financial contributions.

As LRCC's political arm, LRC-PAC represents over 1,000 businesses in the tri-county region.

The political action committee wants candidates who understand the local business climate and LRCC priorities in elected positions in city councils, township boards, county commissions, and the state legislature.

"We're looking for folks to be part of a problem-solvers caucus," LRCC's vice president of public affairs Steve Japinga said. "We've got a lot of challenges. How do we bring people together, regardless of whatever party, to solve those?"

Japinga said it's critical that elected officials work in a bipartisan way to handle the challenges faced by the business community locally, as a state, and in the nation.

"Since we are a Chamber of Commerce, we represent pretty much every single sort of business," he said. "We want the environment to be conducive to running a business and to make sure these elected officials are making the investments to attract and retain talent for the future."



The latest endorsement round reflects the PAC's preference for candidates who prioritize economic growth, job creation, and fiscal responsibility, according to Japinga.

*"The presidential race is coming down to seven swing states and we're one of them. So we're right in the center of the national electorate."*

**MSU Professor Matt Grossmann**

"To be endorsed, it doesn't mean that the candidates have to be 100 percent with us on every issue," Japinga said. "But they at least have to be able to talk about those challenges and to work together on solutions."

LRC-PAC's 2024 election guide — routinely updated online and through member emails — highlights endorsed candidates. The committee makes endorsements based on a review of the candidate's past performance, a written questionnaire, and, when needed, an in-person interview. Then, the LRC-PAC board votes for who might best represent the local business community's needs.

Beyond the endorsements already given, Japinga said another round of LRC-PAC endorsements could be made between now and Election Day.

Among the slate of endorsed candidates is incumbent Angela Witwer, a Democrat, for the Michigan House of Representatives' 76th district. Japinga said the LRC-PAC endorsed Witwer based on her work thus far, especially to reprioritize spending in the state budget to the benefit of Lansing-region cities.

"She's done a fantastic job serving in this House of Representatives, specifically as the Chair of Appropriations. She and her staff have been very open to her constituents and hearing what the issues are," Japinga said.

## At the local level

The LRC-PAC tends to endorse candidates who've already had a successful working relationship with the LRCC. Among LRC-PAC's 2024 endorsements are several members of the Capital Council of Governments, or CAPCOG. The bipartisan group of representatives from Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties, the LRCC, and Michigan State University work together to advocate for Lansing regional economic development and growth at the Michigan Legislature.

## 2024 Presidential/General Election Dates

**Absentee Ballots Available/Mailed:**  
Sept. 26

**Early Voting:**  
Oct. 26- Nov. 3

**Election:**  
Nov. 5



## LRC-PAC Endorses These Candidates

- Angela Witwer for the 76th District, Michigan House of Representatives

### CLINTON COUNTY:

- Sean Dush for Sheriff
- County Board of Commissioners: Bruce DeLong, Bob Showers, John Andrews, Dr. Dwight Washington

### EATON COUNTY:

- Tom Reich for Sheriff
- Doug Lloyd for Prosecuting Attorney
- County Board of Commissioners: Tim Barnes, Brandon Haskell, Jacob Toomey, Jim Mott

### INGHAM COUNTY:

- Scott Wriggelsworth for Sheriff
- John Dewane for Prosecuting Attorney
- County Board of Commissioners: Randy Maiville, Karla Ruest, Chris Trubac, Myles Johnson, Thomas Morgan, Bob Pena, Ryan Sebolt, Gabrielle Lawrence, Mark Grebner, Irene Cahill, Mark Polsdofer, Monica Schafer

### TOWNSHIP BOARDS OF TRUSTEES:

- Delhi Township Board of Trustees: John Hayhoe, Tom Lenard
- Delta Township Board of Trustees: Ken Fletcher, Mary Clark, Dennis Fedewa, Fonda Brewer, Andrea Cascarilla, Karen Mojica
- Meridian Township Board of Trustees: Phil Deschaine

The full LRC-PAC Voter Guide:  
[www.lansingchamber.org/assets/pdf/0624+LRC+PAC+Voter+Guide](http://www.lansingchamber.org/assets/pdf/0624+LRC+PAC+Voter+Guide)



## FROM LANSING TO THE WHITE HOUSE, IT'S A PIVOTAL ELECTION YEAR

Clinton County Board of Commissioner Bob Showers said his LRC-PAC endorsement affirms that he's adhering to the "high standards that are exemplified by the members of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce."

to have a competitive wage and an atmosphere where they enjoy working."

Mott said he's proud of his LRC-PAC endorsement, especially as he appreciates the Chamber's advocacy on behalf of regional businesses.

"I will, if reelected, continue to practice the same conservative policies that have enabled Clinton County to remain free of any unstructured debt, maintain fully funded pension and retiree medical insurance programs, and continue to encourage intelligent economic growth which allows us to levy the smallest county property tax levy in the Capital region," Showers said.

Eaton County Board of Commissioner Jim Mott said another term would allow him to "put Eaton County on a solid financial footing for years to come."

"The citizens of Eaton County deserve to have a county government that will provide the services they come to expect," Mott said. "And the county employees deserved

*"To be endorsed, it doesn't mean that the candidates have to be 100 percent with us on every issue," Japinga said. "But they at least have to be able to talk about those challenges and to work together on solutions."*

L RCC's Steve Japinga

"The Lansing Regional Chamber also does a fantastic job working with our state legislators to bring resources to the Lansing area. They are truly a blessing," he said.

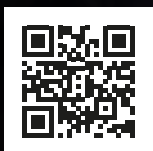
The term of office for each county commissioner elected during this November's election will be four years versus the previous two-year term. The term length change, signed into law by Governor Whitmer, had bipartisan support in the state House and Senate.

For more information on the LRC-PAC and how to get involved or make a financial contribution, please visit [www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac](http://www.lansingchamber.org/lrc-pac). ●

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# The Importance of Community and Giving Back

By Breina Pugh, Government and Community Relations Manager, Lansing Board of Water & Light & ATHENA WIN Board of Directors

Recently, Lansing Board of Water & Light embarked on the journey of writing our new strategic plan and reviewing our mission, vision and values. I am lucky to be part of the team that is working on this important task and the thoughtful conversations caused me to reflect on my own values. After some thought, two things rise to the surface: community and giving back.



Pugh

Fortunately, community and giving back are core values at BWL too. For me that means I've been able to spend time at work volunteering, giving back and serving on boards and committees. I'm honored to currently serve on the ATHENA Women's Interest Network (WIN) Board of Directors.

Not only do I get the honor of serving on this board, but BWL is committed to sharing this opportunity with

our employees through an ATHENA WIN corporate membership led by our Chief Financial Officer, Heather Shawa. While we strive to employ a diverse workforce, the energy industry is still a very male-dominated field. Giving women the opportunity to take an hour or two of their day for a networking event or workshop on leadership is incredibly valuable and speaks to our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Community and giving back are at the core of ATHENA WIN's mission too. This board is a dedicated group of women who are focusing on uplifting women's voices in the Lansing community. It's a labor of love to put on things like the Evening of Empowerment or Girls Night Out and these women are always ready to lend a helping hand. I encourage you to take the time to attend an event, get to know a board member or invest in a corporate membership. You might just find your community like I have. Learn more about ATHENA WIN at [www.lansingchamber.org/athenawin](http://www.lansingchamber.org/athenawin). ●

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ATHENA WIN had a great time at UrbanBeat connecting with ATHENA WIN members and guests during its Summer Social in July! Thank you to everyone who came out, and we hope you had as much fun as we did. We'd like to give a big thanks to our event sponsor GÜD Marketing. Visit [www.lansingchamber.org/athenawin](http://www.lansingchamber.org/athenawin) to register for upcoming events!

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## Stunio Continues Growth Through Fundraising and Partnerships

**H**iring software startup Stunio has raised about a half-million dollars as it upgrades its technology and grows its client base, university reach, and flexible staffing opportunities.

Stunio president and CEO Adam Green said his company has attracted investors from California to Michigan, including Michigan Rise, a wholly owned venture capital subsidiary of the Michigan State University Research Foundation. Michigan Rise operates in partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Green said Michigan State University, where he earned his law degree, has been helpful throughout Stunio's life cycle. Stunio got its start under the tutelage of Michigan State University's Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

"They've helped me grow Stunio from an idea to a business," Green said. "I've felt fortunate to migrate through that ecosystem."

Green's mobile app-based staffing platform connects local college students with area businesses looking to hire reliable help for quick gigs like events, catering, warehousing, and cleaning. MSU and now Grand Valley State University in Allendale are both making the job-finding resource available to their students.

Though Green started his business with small job posts like dog walking and lawn mowing, the need for larger staffing headcounts has shifted Stunio's business model. Hiring entities have included the Lansing Convention Center, the Lansing Lugnuts, and McLaren Health Care.

In response to demand, Stunio is upgrading its software platform to accommodate more sizeable staffing requests.

Stunio works with software design and consulting firm Atomic Object in Grand Rapids and Imagine Software Consultancy, another business started by MSU students.

The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) recently entered a strategic partnership with Stunio. Under the partnership, LRCC members can access Stunio's platform for their short-term staffing needs.



"LRCC is committed to empowering our local business community by providing essential support in attracting local talent. Our partnership with Stunio enables us to further our mission of connecting businesses with the best local candidates," said Sarah Bakken, talent development manager, LRCC.

Green said Stunio's technology updates will make the software more user-friendly for LRCC members, with the ability to post jobs from the app or the website. Previously, larger job requests needed to be set up by email.

"As we open up the LRCC relationship to get more businesses in the system, we'll have the technology to handle it," he said.

Stunio is also working with Lansing-based public relations firm Martin Waymire to better market the job resource to the wider business community.

"We've been deliberate about our growth as a startup," Green said.

He hopes to expand Stunio's reach to businesses and college students throughout Michigan and, ultimately, nationwide.

For more information on Stunio, see [www.stunio.com](http://www.stunio.com). ●

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## Fostering Community & Connection Through Social Media

By Amanda Matelonek, Digital Media Manager, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce


The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce (LRCC) is committed to supporting Greater Lansing's business community and serving as the region's trusted voice of business. We are proud to offer resources that help our members, and the business community connect, grow and thrive. In an era of growing digital media usage, the LRCC social media channels have become a critically important resource for our members and the business community. Our social media channels showcase a diverse range of content from timely business-related policy updates to chamber events to ribbon cutting ceremonies.

So far this year, the LRCC has garnered close to 1 million impressions, 56,000 engagements, and over 69,000 video views, reaching a total audience of 24,617 across all our social media platforms. The LRCC's strong social media presence has been pivotal in elevating our brand engagement and fostering a strong online community for our members and local businesses.

One example of the strength of the online community we have fostered was a post that featured photos of a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted for Beirut Kitchen at the Lansing Shuffle for their grand opening. This post received over 41,000 impressions and 3,727 total engagements on Facebook and drew interactions from local Facebook groups.

The LRCC social media channels have positively impacted our members and the business community by creating a space where businesses can interact with each other and receive important information. The LRCC recognizes that social media serves a purpose beyond promotion. It is about fostering a strong community and supporting local businesses. We are proud of the robust online community we've created

and are dedicated to continuing to engage with our local business community, advocating on their behalf and showcasing their accomplishments through our social media channels. We encourage you to join our social media community if you haven't yet by following us on Facebook, LinkedIn, X and Instagram. ●



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## NEW HIRES



Wetzel

**Great Lakes Christian College** has named **Jamie Wetzel** as its next vice president of institutional advancement. Wetzel replaces **Phil Beavers**,

who will retire in December after serving the college for 25 years. Wetzel is an alumnus of Great Lakes Christian College and earned an M.A. in Practical Ministries at Cincinnati Bible Seminary. He served Meridian Christian Church and, after its merger, 2|42 Community Church for a combined 28 years.



Gordon

The **Michigan Certified Development Corporation** has welcomed **Shannon Gordon** as its new loan officer for the Macomb, northeast Oakland, eastern

Detroit, and the Thumb region. In his new role, Gordon will oversee marketing efforts for MCDC's Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program by collaborating with lenders, small business owners, and other stakeholders to help drive economic development in his designated regions. He brings extensive experience in underwriting, commercial lending, relationship management, sales, and business development. MCDC's 504 program promotes business growth and job creation by providing loans to buy, build, or improve land, machinery, equipment, facilities, and infrastructure. The nonprofit works to match a small business with the right lender to create a package that will finance up to 90 percent of project costs with an

attractive fixed interest rate, long amortization periods, and a low down payment.



Ellis

**Michigan Polymer Reclaim** has appointed **Cooper Ellis** as its sales and marketing manager. MPR is a recycler of post-industrial plastics. They

serve plastic manufacturers throughout the Midwest by helping to reduce their raw material costs.

**EDGE** public relations and marketing agency has hired **Aaron Bodus** as a lead communications strategist. Bodus recently served as the managing editor of *The Argus-Press* in Owosso for nearly two years. During the 2023 Michigan Press Association awards cycle, he was recognized for outstanding column and feature writing and excellence in photography and page design. He graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Arts in sports management.



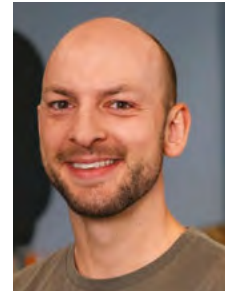
Morales

Environmental consulting firm **Triterra** has hired **Saray Morales** as a senior geologist, working out of the Grand Rapids location. Morales brings more than seven years of environmental consulting experience to the team. Her background includes evaluating contaminated sites, data collection, and evaluation for transaction screen assessments, Phase I ESAs, and other due diligence reports. As a senior geologist, she will work in the Multi-Family Housing group. Some of her responsibilities include assisting clients in reducing their risk associated with property

transactions, coordinating and managing fieldwork, and writing reports.



Roelle



Winter

**Custom Built Design & Remodeling** is excited to introduce **Amy Roelle** as one of its talented Design Assistants and **Greg Winter** as a Project Development Advisor at Custom Built. Roelle serves as the primary contact for clients during their building and remodeling processes, ensuring their visions are accurately captured. Winter is set to leverage his expertise to guide clients through each step of their remodeling journey, ensuring a smooth process and a trusted partnership that transforms their vision into reality.

## APPOINTMENTS

**Greater Lansing Food Bank**, which provides emergency food assistance to families and neighbors in the mid-Michigan counties of Clare, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Isabella, and Shiawassee, has announced new board members and its officers for fiscal year 2025. Officers for fiscal year 2025 include, Chair: **Mona Deliwala**, director of technology strategy and planning, Jackson; Vice-Chair: **Kevin Zielke**, senior vice president and general counsel, AF Group; Treasurer: **Ken Klein**, registered investment advisor, Northbrook Investment Management, LLC and Secretary: **Lavon Dennis**, retired senior director, Coverys Insurance Services. New members of the GLFB board of directors are **John Charamella**, assistant vice president, home office legal at Auto-Owners

Insurance, and **Julie Young, CPA**, partner at Simplified Accounting & Tax.

**AWARDS**

Downtown Lansing's **Veg Head** and Old Town's **Sweet Custom Jewelry** recently received \$40,000 in grants through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Match on Main program. Sweet Custom Jewelry and Veg Head were among 31 small businesses to receive Match on Main funding in the latest round. The Match on Main Program was created to encourage resiliency and strengthen downtowns in communities throughout the state. Plant-based restaurant Veg Head received \$15,000, and Sweet Custom Jewelry received \$25,000 through the program.

The **Michigan State University Museum** has been awarded a grant

of \$190,132 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in a nationwide initiative to improve community services in museums. The grant is part of a \$3.3 million fund distributed among 18 projects nationwide. The grant will be used to improve accessibility within the MSU Museum, specifically for visitors with visual impairments. This includes training for museum staff to better assess accessible pathways and to develop audio descriptions for interpretative and educational purposes. As Michigan's first Smithsonian affiliate, the MSU Museum houses three floors of special collections and changing exhibitions. The museum is temporarily closed for renovation and will reopen to the public in January 2026.

**McLaren Greater Lansing nurse Bret Tingay** 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 coworker, said: "Bret is a team player and always brings positivity to the workplace. He collaborates well with other departments and staff to ensure patients get the care they need. He gets great feedback

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## MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

from patients and their families that he provided extraordinary care. Bret always provides patients excellent care even in the most challenging situations.”



The Christman Company recently renovated the Michigan Farm Bureau corporate headquarters.

The **Christman Company** was ranked No. 87 on the *Engineering News-Record* 2024 “ENR 400” list of the top 400 contractors nationally. Overall rankings were calculated according to 2023 construction revenue. Headquartered in Lansing, Christman also landed at No. 44 on the newspaper’s list of “Top 100 Construction Management-at-Risk” firms and at No. 52 on the 2024 ENR list of “Top 100 Contractors by New Contracts.” The Christman Company, founded in 1894, offers construction management, general contracting, design/build, program management, real estate development, and self-perform services.



**McLaren Greater Lansing’s** Vascular Ultrasound Lab was recently accredited by the Intersocietal

Accreditation Commission for vascular testing. This accreditation includes cerebrovascular, peripheral (upper and lower extremity) venous, peripheral (upper and lower extremity arterial), and visceral (aorta and renal artery duplex) vascular ultrasound imaging.

**Peckham Inc.**, a nonprofit community vocational rehabilitation organization, has

been certified by Great Place to Work for the tenth consecutive year. The award is based on current employees’ feedback about their Peckham work experience. This year, 80 percent of employees said Peckham is a great place to work, compared to an average of 57 percent of employees at other U.S. companies. Peckham ranked high in areas of giving back to the community, flexibility in work, feeling welcomed, and a sense of belonging at work.



**Graze Craze** franchise owners **Lindsey** and **Silas Coffelt** were honored in July with two distinguished awards at the United Franchise Group World Expo in Nashville. The Coffelts received the President’s Award for their outstanding contribution to the success and growth of the charcuterie board company Graze Craze. The award recognizes franchise owners who’ve shown exceptional dedication, leadership, and commitment to the company’s values and mission. Lindsey Coffelt was also honored with the Marketing & Brand Awareness Award. The award celebrates franchise owners whose businesses continue to grow year after year through sustained marketing and sales efforts.

Seven attorneys from the Lansing office of **Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC** have been

## Saving the Family Cottage



Attorney Mark E. Kellogg and the cottage law team can help you think through the issues and take the actions necessary to create a cottage plan to keep your beloved home in the family for future generations.

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selected to the 2024 Michigan Super Lawyers list. The lawyers and their areas of practice are: **James F. Anderton**, tax; **Charles E. Barbieri**, environmental; **Charles A. Janssen**, estate and probate; **Scott L. Mandel**, business litigation; **Douglas A. Mielock**, estate and probate; **Michael G. Oliva**, energy and resources, and **Jeffrey S. Theuer**, business litigation. Only five percent of the lawyers in Michigan are selected by Super Lawyers. Lawyers from more than 70 practice areas are selected based on peer recognition and professional achievement. Two Foster Swift were selected as "Rising Stars": **Taylor A. Gast**, in business/corporate law, and **Brandon M.H. Schumacher**, in business litigation. To be eligible for inclusion in Rising Stars, a candidate must be either age 40 or younger, or have been in practice for ten years or less.

The **McLaren Greater Lansing Birthplace** is the proud recipient of the 2023 Michigan Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health quality improvement silver designation, in recognition of Michigan birthing hospitals improving care for mothers and babies.

## COMPANY NEWS



Auld

**Therapy Today Counseling & Consulting** is celebrating its 12th anniversary. Founded by **Leslie Auld**, Therapy Today provides mental health services in the East Lansing and Greater Lansing area. It has expanded to offer in-person and telehealth services across the state, with its newest location in Ann Arbor. The practice also has a new website at [www.therapytodaycc.com](http://www.therapytodaycc.com).

**PFCU Credit Union** has donated \$5,000 to the Shiawassee County 4-H. This donation reflects PFCU's dedication to supporting youth development and educational programs. The monetary gift from PFCU will directly contribute to the Shiawassee County 4-H club's mission of equipping youth with the necessary skills, knowledge, and leadership qualities to emerge as capable citizens and future leaders. 4-H is the largest youth development organization in Michigan.



**Custom Built Design & Remodeling** is thrilled to announce the launch of its Design and Remodeling Show on ABC 53, hosted by CEO Michael Flory and Marketing Manager Isabelle Braeutigam. Tune in on Wednesdays at 9am and Saturdays at 11:00pm to discover the latest trends, innovative techniques, and expert tips to transform your home into the space of your dreams.

**High Caliber Karting & Entertainment** has launched "Sensory-Friendly Hours" as of August 4. The facility will open early at 11 a.m., with sensory-friendly accommodations available to the public until 2 p.m. The hours will be offered on the first Sunday of every month. Key features of sensory-friendly hours will include:

- Facility lights will be on
- Strobe lighting will not flash
- Music will be off



- Sensory-friendly kits available to borrow
- Fully trained, friendly staff on duty
- A sensory-friendly breakroom available for cool-down periods

The initiative is designed to make the facility more accessible to all within the Lansing community.

**McLaren Greater Lansing** invested nearly \$700,000 on a new, minimally invasive peripheral lung biopsy advancing robotics technology. With the addition of the Ion platform, physicians can view deeper into the lungs



and biopsy smaller, previously unreachable suspicious nodules in the peripheral tissue. This will allow more accurate, earlier diagnoses of nodules as benign or cancerous.

**PFCU Credit Union** staff have donated \$7,900.36 to the Greater Lansing Food Bank. Credit union employees chose the Greater Lansing Food Bank to receive their second quarter dress-down monies. The money is collected when staff donate dollars for the right to dress down on Fridays and Saturdays. They then pick where the dollars are donated from 12 to 16 choices of nonprofits in the community. The



Greater Lansing Food Bank has led mid-Michigan's fight against hunger since 1981 to ensure families and neighbors in need have access to nutritious food. ●

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