

Ann M. Harten
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Haworth

Feedback is a Gift: Creating
a Culture of Open and
Constructive Communication

121-Year-Old Gateway
Mission Launches Restaurant
to Empower Students

The Journey to Belonging:
Fostering Inclusion Through
Business and Community
College Partnerships

Haworth: How Space Design Can Foster Culture

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The Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce serves as a catalyst for business growth, a convener of leaders and influencers, and a champion for our thriving community. The Chamber serves its 1,200 members by building businesses, advocating for issues that matter, developing leaders, and supporting initiatives to build an inclusive community where all feel welcome.

The West Coast Chamber has been recognized with the U.S. Chamber's prestigious Five Star Accreditation. Less than 1% of Chambers in the country receive this distinction.

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The West Coast Way

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In our vibrant West Michigan community, the strength of each individual plays a crucial role in our collective achievements. This was vividly demonstrated by the remarkable success of our annual Community Impact Day last month—a testament to our shared dedication and commitment.

In this edition, we continue to spotlight initiatives that empower our community. From launching educational programs that open doors for emerging talent, to representing our local interests on a national stage, we are steadfast in our mission to forge environments where everyone can thrive. Each article in this magazine celebrates the strides we are making together toward positive change.

Join us as we delve into these uplifting stories. Let's continue to collaborate, building communities that are not only stronger and healthier, but more inclusive than ever before.

Jodi Owczarski

President & CEO
Michigan West Coast Chamber
of Commerce



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Feedback is a Gift: Creating a Culture of Open and Constructive Communication

By **Melissa Haveman** | Executive and Team Coach, Creatively Centered

What do you think when hearing the word “feedback?”

For many of us, the word reminds us of negative interactions and harsh criticism. That’s unfortunate because feedback is pivotal in molding teams that are not just functional, but exceptional. Feedback is more than constructive criticism; it’s a gift that allows teams to improve and reach their full potential

Understanding Feedback

Feedback is information. It’s a mirror showing us our impact on the world and how we can adjust to align with our intentions and goals. Constructive feedback is specific, objective, and focused on behavior rather than personality. The psychological impact of feedback is profound; it can either uplift or demoralize, depending on its delivery and intent.

Effective feedback is a balance. It requires a blend of honesty and sensitivity, clarity and diplomacy. In a professional environment, the stakes are high — feedback can shape careers and change trajectories. That’s why it’s essential to be both thoughtful and deliberate in how we give and receive it.

Thinking of feedback as a conversation in which we impart and gain information provides us with a strong starting point. One way feedback often lacks context. Focusing on feedback as a conversation allows leaders to gain a fuller context in which to help employees and teams improve.

Creating a Feedback-Friendly Culture

If your goal is to create a feedback-friendly culture on your team, here are a few steps that can help you get there:

1. **To cultivate a culture where feedback is as natural as morning coffee, start by leading by example.** Show that you value feedback by soliciting it for yourself and responding to it gracefully. Regular feedback sessions signal that improvement is an ongoing process, not a once-a-year event. The bedrock of this culture is trust and transparency — without these, feedback can be seen as insincere or intimidating.
2. **Creating such a culture also involves dismantling the fear associated with feedback.** This means celebrating successes as much as we constructively critique mistakes. Encourage team members to view feedback as an opportunity for growth and learning, rather than a personal attack or a performance judgment.
3. **Tailor your feedback style to the individual.** Some team members may respond well to direct, no-nonsense feedback, while others may need a more nuanced approach. Understanding your team’s individual personalities and communication styles is crucial in delivering effective feedback.
4. **Peer-to-peer feedback can be a goldmine of insights.** Encourage initiatives like feedback circles or pairings and create a safe space for open communication. This isn’t just about pointing out areas for improvement but also about recognizing and reinforcing what’s going well. A team that learns to provide balanced feedback among themselves is a team that’s geared for success. To encourage this, establish regular feedback sessions where team members can share their thoughts in a structured, respectful environment.
5. **Incorporating feedback into the continuous improvement process is where its true value lies.** The cycle of feedback and improvement should be ongoing. Encourage team members to set personal growth goals based on feedback and track their progress over time. This approach transforms feedback from a one-time event into a continuous journey of development.



Overcoming Feedback Challenges

Feedback can be a tough pill to swallow. Common obstacles include fear of negative feedback or perceiving it as a personal attack. Counter these challenges by framing feedback as a pathway to excellence, not a sign of failure. Turn feedback into a constructive dialogue by asking questions like, “How can we work together to improve this?” or “What support do you need from me?”

It’s also crucial to address the emotional aspect of feedback. Receiving criticism, even when constructive, can be hard. Leaders should be equipped to handle emotional reactions and provide support where necessary.

Conclusion

By fostering a culture where feedback is welcomed and valued, you’re not just improving processes; you’re building stronger, more resilient teams. Remember, the most successful teams are those that communicate openly, challenge constructively, and grow continuously. So, unwrap the gift of feedback — your team will thank you for it.



Melissa Haveman is an organizational sociologist and ICF-credentialed, certified coach and trainer. She specializes in helping teams develop communication-centered, results-driven, innovative cultures and helping creative professionals build bold goals and sustainable ways to reach them. Melissa has a master’s degree in Sociology from Southern Illinois University and the Leading Virtual Teams Certificate from Cornell University. She is an independent authorized partner and certified trainer for Everything DiSC, an accredited facilitator for The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team, and a Positive Intelligence coach. She loves taking these team-building solutions to businesses and nonprofits around West Michigan and beyond.



121-Year-Old Gateway Mission Launches Restaurant to Empower Students

The Spoon Restaurant Continues Mission's Legacy of Hope

By Jay Riemersma | Executive Director, Gateway Mission

Established in 1903, Gateway Mission (formerly Holland Rescue Mission) has been a refuge for members of our community to overcome poverty, addiction, and homelessness. The mission offers not just shelter and sustenance, but also a path to experience transformation and lasting change.

We've been providing hope and opportunity to the greater Holland area for over a century now, and we're excited to continue empowering and uplifting even more individuals throughout our newest initiative.

Serving Up Hope

Late last year, we launched The Spoon, a breakfast and lunch restaurant that also features a coffee shop and drive-thru located at the corner of 24th Street and US-31 in Holland.

The restaurant was developed in partnership with Creative Dining Services (CDS) and is run by a staff that includes seasoned chefs and part time team members. The restaurant also employs students of the Gateway Mission program, helping them to build lifelong skills through CDS' robust culinary training program.

Under the guidance of experienced mentors, these students are gaining invaluable life skills that will serve them well beyond the kitchen. The Spoon provides delicious meals to the Holland community while also creating a new hospitality education platform that helps individuals rebuild their lives through vocational training.

Community Connections

Throughout our 120+ year history, we've learned the importance of building deep relationships.

The Spoon has partnered with the Holland Area Arts Council (HAAC) to highlight local artists in the restaurant. Each quarter, a new talented artist has their work on display throughout The Spoon, and during an after hours "Art of the Spoon" exhibition that takes place at the restaurant.

Additionally, several menu items at The Spoon feature ingredients from local farmers and vendors, including DeBoer Bakery, Bowerman Blueberry Farm, and Crisp Country Acres. These partnerships help us make The Spoon a place to gather around the table in a warm, inviting atmosphere with friends, family, faith groups, and more.

Invest in People, Invest in the Mission

I see The Spoon as more than just a restaurant—it's a catalyst for change in our community. Diners can enjoy good food knowing that they're also supporting a worthy cause, helping to fund the mission's vital programs and services.

By providing students of the mission with opportunities to gain meaningful employment and marketable skills, we're helping individuals rebuild their lives from the inside out.



Jay Riemersma, Executive Director of Gateway Mission, is passionate about helping people transform their lives. Jay coaches and empowers the executive team of Gateway, as they collaborate to effectively direct operations and steward resources of the nonprofit organization to serve the homeless and hurting in West Michigan. The board of Gateway Mission named Jay as executive director in February 2023. Prior to his role at Gateway, he worked in nonprofit development for 15 years at a prominent pro-family public policy organization and the nation's premier faith-based prison ministry. Jay and his wife, Cara, are parents of three children.



Hope Found Here

With so many in our community experiencing uncertainty and adversity, Gateway Mission remains a beacon of hope, illuminating the path towards a brighter future for those in need. We aspire to lift up hurting community members with a hand up, and through the establishment of The Spoon, the mission's work as "a gateway to hope" will continue to profoundly impact the lives of our neighbors in need. Lift a spoon, lift a life!





The Journey to Belonging: Fostering Inclusion through Business and Community College Partnerships

By Ken James | Chief Diversity Officer, Muskegon Community College

The employment landscape is evolving. As the Chief Diversity Officer at Muskegon Community College (MCC), I have seen firsthand the power created when higher education institutions forge meaningful partnerships with local businesses. In this article, I will share the significance of belonging and its crucial role in business success. Collaboration between businesses and community colleges can pave the way for inclusive workforce development.

When I work with businesses, I remind them that recruitment without retention is ineffective. The biggest impact on retention is culture. For a positive culture, employees must feel like they belong. Belonging goes beyond mere diversity—it's about creating an

environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Employers that have employees who can bring their authentic selves to work and employers who can foster a culture of belonging are better equipped to attract and retain top talent, drive innovation, and have better overall performance. Studies have shown that diverse and inclusive teams that feel like they belong outperform their homogenous counterparts.

Community colleges can be pivotal in nurturing a diverse talent pool and helping employers on their journey to belonging. MCC does this by providing affordable and accessible education and offering opportunities for individuals from all walks of life to pursue their dreams and aspirations. True success lies in access and ensuring



that every student feels a sense of belonging and support as they navigate their educational journey. MCC also has tools and resources to help employers connect with employees so they believe, feel, and trust that they can be and bring their authentic selves to work, resulting in increased engagement and stronger connectivity to our teams and the broader organization.

Businesses and community colleges can join forces to create a more inclusive ecosystem. Through strategic partnerships, businesses can engage with community colleges to develop tailored workforce development programs that address the specific needs of their industry and promote diversity and inclusion. By collaborating on curriculum development, internships, apprenticeships, and job placement initiatives, businesses can directly influence the pipeline of talent coming into their organizations while providing students with real-world experience and mentorship opportunities. Community colleges can provide customized development sessions for businesses and their leadership teams to create positive work cultures.

For MCC, partnering with lakeshore businesses offers invaluable opportunities to align our programs with industry needs, enhance student outcomes, and strengthen our role as a catalyst for economic development. By working hand in hand with businesses, MCC can ensure that our graduates are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and experiences needed to succeed in today's competitive job market. This benefits individual students and fuels economic growth by supplying local businesses with a skilled workforce that meets their evolving needs.

In conclusion, the journey to belonging is a shared endeavor that requires collaboration, commitment, and continuous effort from businesses, educational institutions, and the broader community. By striving toward belonging within their organizations and partnering with community colleges on workforce development initiatives, businesses can unlock the full potential of their employees and contribute to a more equitable and prosperous society.

With nearly three decades of experience spanning a multitude of industries including non-profit, health care, and higher education, Ken is driven by his passion to initiate cross-cultural dialogue and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. As Chief Diversity Officer for Muskegon Community College, he combines his knowledge and lived experiences to deliver creative, intentional programs to students, faculty, staff, community members, and businesses. Ken is an alumnus of Kentucky State University and Grand Valley State University, from which he holds a master's in public administration. Most recently, he earned Executive Certification in Diversity Coaching through the CoachDiversity Institute in partnership with Howard University School of Business and is recognized as an Associate Diversity Coach (ADC).





Haworth: How Space Design Can Foster Culture

By Ann M. Harten | CHRO/VP of Global Human Resources, Haworth

Harvard Business Review has called COVID the greatest disruptor of work patterns since the Industrial Revolution. During the pandemic, many people started to work from home and came to prefer it. At home, alone, without the distractions of the office, people believe they can accomplish more.

But this situation creates a level of isolation that is impacting people in a number of ways, spotlighted by research and news headlines. While the road to isolation started well before COVID, it seemed to find its peak in 2021 and 2022. There is no denying that technology has provided an increasing opportunity to be entertained while alone. Gone are the days when we would sit together as a family watching the newest episode of our favorite TV show. We can now download any show, watching it anytime we want, anywhere we want and often we do so alone.

This should come as no surprise. Satisfying 'me' is natural, it isn't unusual, or even negative. It's just who we are. As we grow, this natural tendency to focus on self is counterbalanced by socialization with others at school, work, church, and among our family members, all of which encourage us to interact with, and care about, others.

As we shift our thinking to the social contracts that are built between employees and employers, we find that when co-workers are in a room together, there is an exchange of energy that increases collaboration and creativity. When we arrive at and work in a common space there is a *stickiness* or bond that contributes to our engagement and retention. When, instead, we are in virtual meetings, there tends to be an energy drain, because we are all interacting only with those appearing on the screen. This one-way giving of energy leads

people to feel more isolated, leading to burnout and exhaustion. During the pandemic, as many were encouraged or required to work remotely, they focused more and more on the *self*.

In contrast, companies succeed because they have teams of people that come together and solve problems, exchange energy, and see things in the room that you can't possibly see when you're outside the room.

Research shows that workers who can work remotely (only about 35 percent of the workforce), are getting burned out at a higher rate than before COVID, with 69 percent reporting they experience at least occasional burnout, and 58 percent saying they plan to leave an unsatisfactory job in the next 12 months.

Also, 51 percent of companies say they're experiencing resistance to a return to the office. Encouragingly, 10 percent of employers indicate that hybrid practices are increasing retention and improving engagement. (source: Paycom)

Several studies have been conducted focusing on the importance of collaboration. From this research we know that 55 percent of people who work in collaborative organizations report higher revenue growth in the past



three years compared to those who work in non-collaborative organizations. Data shows that 79 percent of workers at collaborative organizations feel well prepared to adapt to emergent business challenges.

So how do you encourage people to return to the office? And how do you set up workspaces that encourage a culture of collaboration?

In February 2023, Haworth started an ongoing study drawing information from companies around the globe. It shows that the purpose of an office is to provide intentional collaboration. Supporting social and group work is now considered critical and floorplans are adapting to accommodate these priorities.





Given the critical importance of collaboration to a successful business, employers are seeking insight to help encourage collaboration within their workspaces. We believe space can be a solution. Our research has identified these key recommendations.

Floorplans are shifting. With 47 percent of employers adapting their space to support a variety of activities, what was previously a rather static floorplan is now very flexible.

Different work, different spaces. Allowing people to have choice is important. While collaborative space is vital, to facilitate individual creativity, you should pepper your area with a number of heads-down spaces as well. More companies are experimenting with unassigned desks versus assigned.

Provide a restorative area. Group, social, and restorative spaces are increasing. These areas typically have access to food, often accompanied by a refrigerator and a sink.

Utilize the outdoors. If you have access to the outdoors, consider putting in a patio or a deck. Make sure these spaces have Wi-Fi so that work can be done while facilitating respite. There is nothing like spending an hour in nature in the middle of the day.

Honor the trepidation. For those who are reluctant to return to the office, ask them first to articulate why they feel remote work is so beneficial. Once they have an opportunity to share these deeply held beliefs, then ask them to list what benefits there may be to coming together: personal, team, and business benefits. You are sure to gain insights that provide guidance.

The journey to our current situation started long before the pandemic. The social contract between employer and employee has shifted and we must adjust to re-establish the connection to our employees. Space can provide a powerful magnet to support a return to the workplace, so consider space design something you control and can leverage. Design it in a way that helps your team be more collaborative.

These are the types of challenges that inspire creative solutions. Take these up and raise the bar.

About Haworth. Founded in 1948, Haworth is a privately-owned company operating in more than 150 countries through a global network of 400 dealers and over 8,000 employees. Headquartered in Holland, Michigan, the company had sales of \$2.5 billion USD in 2023.

Ann M. Harten is Chief Human Resources Officer and Vice President of Global Human Resources at Haworth, where she oversees human resources initiatives. With experience in both public and private companies, Ann's contributions extend beyond her role at Haworth, as she chairs the boards for Priority Health, and FZ, and is a board member of Wyffels Corn Hybrids. Ann is a co-founder and current chair of Hello West Michigan, a regional talent attraction initiative. In addition, Ann serves on various community advisory boards, including past service on the board of the West Coast Chamber of Commerce, reflecting her commitment to community engagement and leadership.



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan: Building Healthier Communities

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Offers Maternity and Menopause Support Programs to Members

By Nicole Sherwood

Providing support to members when they need it most is a primary focus of Blue Cross® Blue Shield® of Michigan. This includes support for the sometimes overlooked phases of life such as maternity, postpartum, and menopause. One in five members of the workforce are impacted by menopause, and menopause-related productivity losses can amount to more than \$150 billion globally, making menopause benefits a key area of focus for global employers. According to a survey of more than 300 HR leaders conducted by Maven in July 2022, more than 50 percent of employers said that menopause is a benefits priority to stay competitive.

Maven's Menopause and Ongoing Care program fills gaps in care by identifying symptoms of menopause early, providing guidance on treatment plans and virtual access to providers who specialize in menopausal care, and guiding members to clinically-sound education on a variety of topics related to this health journey.

In order to support members during these very important, and sometimes challenging, phases of life, Blue Cross and Blue Care Network are working with Maven to offer fully-insured group customers and their members maternity and menopause support programs at no added cost. These programs provide personalized care navigation, 24/7 on-demand support, and education. Eligible members can enroll and participate at no cost.

Blue Cross commitment to building healthier communities extends beyond traditional healthcare boundaries. By addressing the social determinants of health and promoting whole person health, BCBSM is driving meaningful change that transcends traditional medical interventions alone. Through philanthropy, volunteerism, and employer solutions, BCBSM is paving the way for a healthier, more vibrant Michigan for generations to come.

In addition, Blue Cross and Blue Care Network have launched a Family Building and Pregnancy Support microsite, as well as



a Menopause Education and Resources page on bcbsm.com. These webpages aim to provide employees and their dependents with timely, useful information, and benefit and coverage support throughout their family-building journey and beyond. These sites are independent of the Family Building and Women's Health solution with Maven, so the information is available to all members.

To further support family building, in July 2023 the BCBSM Foundation awarded Hope College Department of Nursing a \$50,000 grant to implement and evaluate the My Mother's Milk program for Michigan Infants.

To learn more about these programs and all of the innovative solutions offered by Blue Cross and Blue Care Network, please visit the Improved Care For Your Employees page on bcbsm.com/employees.

Maven is an independent company supporting Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network by providing family building and maternity support services.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.





D.C. Fly-In Recap: Advocating for Your West Coast Community in D.C.

By **Erich Boileau** | Partner, Boileau & Co.

Earlier this year, leaders from local businesses and organizations participated in the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce's first ever Washington D.C. Fly-In event. For three days in mid-March, we toured our nation's capital and met with elected representatives, including Rep. Bill Huizinga and Sen. Gary Peters. Our trip also included briefings and Q&As with leaders in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—the world's largest business advocacy group and the largest political lobby in the U.S.

West Coast Chamber leaders Jodi Owczarski and Hannah Bowen joined Rep. Huizinga's office Chief of Staff Todd Whiteman and U.S. Chamber Great Lakes Region Senior Manager Ryan Gleason as our guides to navigating some of the political realities that influence important issues in our region.

We were also richly blessed to arrive at full bloom for D.C.'s 9000+ cherry trees, an event that only lasts 3-4 days of the year before the blossoms begin to scatter. Washington's first cherry trees were brought from Japan as a gift of friendship from the People of Japan in the early 20th century. Having spent a few years of my early career in Japan, it was nostalgic to walk under the trees and participate in hanami again.

Attainable Housing Challenges

At each of our meetings with both elected officials and staffers, the topic of workforce housing was at the center of our conversation. You have likely heard about West Michigan's housing affordability crisis as well as the important work that organizations like Jubilee Ministries,

Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity, and ICCF have undertaken to meet the growing need for housing in our region.

What you may not have heard is that while millions of dollars are available for workforce housing development, including \$13.5M in funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for housing in Ottawa County and \$10M in funding from the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF), only a fraction of these funds have made it to local builders to address the problem. The majority of the money has been delayed for years in bureaucracy or tied up in opaque financial structures.

In another poignant example, Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Don Wilkinson, who joined us on the trip to Washington, revealed to lawmakers how Habitat recently had to turn down \$1M in funding it received through Michigan's Missing-Middle Housing Program grant because the organization's volunteer and sweat-equity model didn't meet the government's "prevailing wage" requirements.

Our lawmakers seemed genuinely surprised to learn that the well-intentioned money wasn't making its way to help the intended recipients, and we remain optimistic that our legislators will do what they can to free up funding and help Habitat, Jubilee and others continue to address the housing crisis that continues to hamper our region's growth.



Erich is a strategic thinker, writer, and coach whose passion is to see people and organizations grow into the truest expression of their best selves. People (and their stories) are complicated by nature, and he enjoys the challenge of bringing clarity and understanding into complex scenarios. Prior to becoming a partner in 2021, Erich served the company in various roles for 12 years. His approach to communications is informed by nearly a decade of non-profit leadership while living abroad in Morocco and Japan. He earned his bachelor's degree in English from Grand Valley State University in 2009 and a master's degree in psychology from Divine Mercy University in 2024. Erich is fascinated by the human brain, and outside the office he enjoys co-hosting a Japanese-language podcast on mental health with his wife, barstool philosophizing with friends, and spending time with his new son and little dog Fuji.



Tax & Regulation Issues

Members of our group also brought up challenges their clients have had with the Corporate Transparency Act, which went into effect January 1 of this year. The act was intended to curb fraud and other financial crimes but has had an outsized impact on small businesses, which struggle to comply without spending hours of research.

Finally, we discussed expiring laws regarding the tax treatment of research and development (R&D) expenses, which impacts a number of West Michigan organizations. There exists some proposed legislation that would foster a conducive environment in many types of organizations to expand investments, however it requires action from Congress to build momentum.

The Next Fly-In

While it sounds like the Chamber is still early in the planning process, there seems to be growing interest in making visits to D.C. from our region a more regular event. I would encourage anyone from our region, but especially business and organizational leaders, to consider the trip.

Upcoming Programs



To **register**, visit our website or scan the QR code on this page.

June 13, 2024

Midday Mingle

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

We're so excited for our new Midday Mingle series this summer! Join us for our very first one as we host Wok Me Up Food Truck on the Chamber patio. Attendees are invited to purchase a delicious Asian inspired meal while enjoying networking in an informal setting.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

July 10, 2024

Midday Mingle

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

We're so excited for our Midday Mingle series this summer. Join us as we host Kona Ice of West Kalamazoo on the Chamber patio. Attendees are invited to purchase a customized shaved ice while enjoying networking in an informal setting.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

August 19, 2024

56th Annual Golf Outing

7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Macatawa Golf Club

Get ready to swing into action at our 56th Annual Golf Outing! Join us for a chance to get together with other members, network, and enjoy the great outdoors. Choose between an AM or PM shotgun start with lunch served in between flights. Foursome or single golfer registrations are available.

*Tournament Sponsor: **Gentex Corporation***

September 26, 2024

Annual Awards Celebration: An Evening With the Chamber

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Holland Civic Center Place

It's time to celebrate! We invite you to join us as we recognize and celebrate the collective success of our business community with awards, food, drinks, and live music.

*Platinum Program Sponsor: **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan**
Additional Sponsorship Opportunities Available*

HAPPENINGS



The team at Boileau & Co. celebrated their new office space, located in the former Holland Sentinel building in downtown Holland, with a ribbon cutting.



Ann Harten, CHRO/VP of Global Human Resources at Haworth, presented to a sold-out crowd at Wake Up West Coast.



Nearly 100 people enjoyed networking during our Social Hour with the Chamber at Tanglewood Winery on the northside of Holland.



West Michigan Advisors celebrated their continued growth with a ribbon cutting honoring their new office in Holland.



The West Coast Chamber team celebrated the groundbreaking of the Holland Ice Rink alongside the City of Holland and several community partners.



Zeeland residents, business owners, and employees shared important and timely updates during our Zeeland Network Meeting at Zeeland City Hall.



Drew Dudley shared leadership lessons from around the world with engaged attendees during Leadership Live at Engedi Church.

Premier Partner Spotlight

Empowering Communities: Huntington's Lift Local Business® Program

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, Huntington Bank stands out as a beacon of support and empowerment for local entrepreneurs. Through our Lift Local Business® program, we are committed to investing in our communities, strengthening their future, and fostering economic growth.

At the heart of the Lift Local Business program is a dedication to nurturing minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses. We understand the unique challenges and opportunities these businesses face, and we're here to provide the resources and support they need to thrive.

From start-up to expansion, Huntington is by your side every step of the way. Our program offers a range of services, including loans, business planning support, and free financial education courses delivered through Operation HOPE. We believe in looking out for you, so you can focus on what's best for your business, your family, and your customers.

As part of our broader \$40 Billion Strategic Community Plan, the Lift Local Business program embodies our commitment to strengthening small businesses. With a dedicated focus on lending to minority-owned businesses or businesses operating in majority minority communities, we are actively working to level the playing field and create opportunities for all.



Eligibility for the Lift Local Business program is open to businesses that are at least 51 percent owned by minorities, women, or veterans. Whether you're a start-up or an established enterprise, we're here to help. Our loan amounts range from \$1,000 to \$150,000, with competitive terms and an 85 percent SBA loan guarantee.

In addition to financial support, we offer fee-free Business Unlimited checking for three years and waive SBA and bank fees for our customers. Our entrepreneurial training program through Operation HOPE equips business owners with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed.



For more information about the Lift Local Business program, please reach out to our Lakeshore Market Director, John Burmeister, at john.burmeister@huntington.com. Together, let's lift our communities and build a brighter future for all.



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Renewing Members

It's All About YOU

The West Coast Chamber's **Why** boils down to this: It's All About You. Being a partner for you, a resource for you, and an ally for you. When you renew your Chamber membership, it tells us that we are being responsive to your needs and providing value, and that you trust us to be here for your business whenever you need us. Your renewal is the ultimate source of feedback on the positive impact the West Coast Chamber has on fostering strong businesses that support a thriving community. Thank you!

We appreciate our members who recently renewed their memberships:

* Indicates years of membership

- | | |
|---|---|
| 730 Eddy Studios - 5* | For His Glory Ministry |
| Advanced Architectural Products - 5* | Fris Supply Shop |
| AFC Urgent Care Holland | Gateway Mission |
| Anchorage Yacht Sales | Geenen and Kolean |
| Baer, J Andrew | Glik's Boutique - 10* |
| BAM! Entertainment Center | Gordon Water Systems |
| Barnes & Thornburg LLP | Grand Valley State University |
| Bayside Capital Management | HealthBar |
| Beechwood Dry Cleaners | Hello West Michigan |
| Beechwood Grill & Catering | Hog Wild BBQ |
| Benchmark Wood & Design Studios | Huisman Family Dentistry |
| Billco Products, LLC - 10* | Hyperion Automation |
| Blendon Township | i'move - 10* |
| Buckman MacDonald & Brown PC | Inovis Energy |
| CarePatrol of West Michigan | INSIGHT Action Learning Group, LLC |
| Cento Anni | InsITe Business Solutions |
| Coastal Careers, Inc. | JabberDesign Website Design & Development |
| Cobblestone Crafts & Hobbies | Jackie's Place |
| Crane's In the City | Jamesway Tool & Die |
| Dickey's Barbecue Pit | Jennifer Maxson & Associates |
| Diverse Dimensions Inc. | Joe2Go |
| Downtown Place Condominiums - 10* | Kids Hope USA |
| DUCA, LLC | Koop & Burr Insurance Agency, Inc. |
| Edward Jones Knapp | Lakeshore Orthodontics |
| Elite Screen Printing & Embroidery | Landscape Design Services, Inc. |
| Fiduciary Financial Advisors | Latin Americans United For Progress |
| Flex Fitness Center | |



- Lumir, LLC
- Maple Tree Marketing
- Maplewood Auto, Inc.
- Mercantile Bank
- Michigan West Shore Nursery, LLC - **10***
- Mosquito Hunters
- New Holland Brewing Company
- ODC Network - **20***
- Off the Grid
- Ottawa County
- Peerbolt's, Inc.
- Pigeon Creek Golf Course
- RE/MAX Lakeshore: Becky Pollack
- Ready for School
- Renew Therapeutic Riding Center
- Republic Services of Holland
- ROL USA - **10***
- sci_Zone, Inc.
- SpartanNash
- Starbuck Machining, Inc.
- State Farm Insurance - Karhoff
- The City Delicatessen
- The Grounds Guys of Holland MI

- The Insurance Group: Stacy Segrist
Kamphuis | Doug Kamphuis
- The Next Chapter Book Mart
- The Outpost
- The Promo Agency - **5***
- TopLine Engineering
- Total Control Health Plans
- Tric Tool, Ltd.
- Van Der Meulen's Fine Finishers Inc.
- VanNoord & Associates, Inc.
- Visser Farms
- Volta Power Systems
- Warner Norcross + Judd LLP
- WelchDry
- Wings of Mercy, Inc.
- WPNW / JoyWorship 96.5FM, 1260 AM - **5***
- WZZM - 13 & 13 ON YOUR SIDE
- Yanfeng Global Automotive Interiors
- Zeeland ACE Hardware
- Zeeland Dry Cleaners

New Members

Welcoming these new members who recently joined the West Coast Chamber

ATI Physical Therapy
Jessica Steffes
(616) 594-2000
www.atipt.com

ClickBid
Paige Stanley
(800) 513-5097
try.cbo.io

Design Group International
Linda Milanowski
(616) 836-8047
www.designgroupinternational.com

Dry Eye Spa of West Michigan
Kirsten Brady
(616) 344-1601
www.dryeyespaofwm.com
drbrady@dryeyespaofwm.com

Family Central Bookstore
(833) 967-3721
www.focusonthefamily.com/about/
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familycentral@fotf.org

FASTSIGNS
Wesley Bekins
(616) 421-9577
www.fastsigns.com/467

Foxtail Coffee Co.
www.foxtailcoffee.com

Holland Quality Monument Company
Cristine Bouwkamp
(616) 392-3838
www.hollandquality.com

Hylant
Jonathon Benedict
(616) 855-7900
www.hylant.com/locations/grand-rapids-mi
jon.benedict@hylant.com

Quest Design Build
Adam Groulx
(616) 947-8378
www.questdesignbuild.com
info@questdesignbuild.com

Surv Lakeshore
Taylor Blom
(616) 283-9294
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