

TALENT



BUSINESS

COMMUNITY



Networks Northwest

Talent / Business / Community

2020
ANNUAL REPORT

NETWORKSNORTHWEST.ORG

To Partners, Stakeholders, and to all of **Northwest Michigan,**

The Board and Staff of Networks Northwest is pleased to present our 2020 Annual Report. Like in years past, you'll find information and highlights about our many program accomplishments throughout 2020 and our continued positive momentum. However, we all know 2020 was unlike any other year. As such, we have made every effort to also include in this report some of the specific COVID-19 response activities we led, including:



Additionally, we received a U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration Grant of \$200,000 to assist in economic recovery and development planning for the region, received U.S. Department of Commerce, Small Business Administration Grants totaling \$260,000 dedicated to increasing programming to meet the needs of SBDC clients, including an additional 3,222 business counseling hours across the region, & assisted the State of Michigan, Unemployment Insurance Agency with 32,547 unemployment claims receiving direct assistance from Northwest Michigan Works.



While we remain very proud of our ability to quickly adapt to the landscape of 2020 and help facilitate the above, we know that it was still not enough. The economic and social disruptions caused by COVID-19 has hastened and placed a spotlight on some of the underlying challenges to our region, impacting businesses, workers, households, and communities alike. More must be done to improve our shared economy, but thus far, 2021 is showing promise.

Networks Northwest will continue to be a champion for Talent, Business, and Community focused prosperity throughout Northwest Lower Michigan. The Board and Staff of Networks Northwest is proud to partner with you as we continue to prove the resiliency and adaptability of Northwest Michigan. And, like you, we know our shared path to success must be earned—that is the way of this agency, our communities, and its people.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Fedus, Board Chair
Owner, Mitchell Graphics

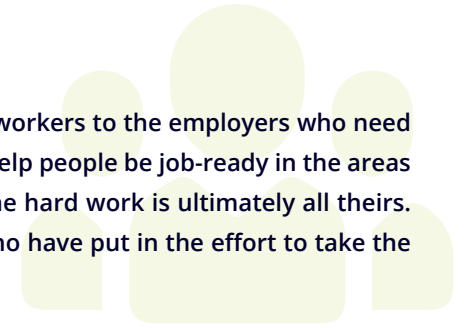
Chris Christensen, Chief Elected Official
Charlevoix County Commissioner

Matt McCauley,
Chief Executive Officer



TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The dedicated, experienced staff at Networks Northwest helps connect job seekers and workers to the employers who need talent. Northwest Michigan Works! is the signature program in an array of services that help people be job-ready in the areas that employers need most. Our unique services help our clients reach their goals, but the hard work is ultimately all theirs. In the following pages you will be inspired by people from all over Northern Michigan who have put in the effort to take the next big step in their careers.



- ➔ *Job Seekers*
- ➔ *Jobs for Michigan's Graduates*
- ➔ *Employee Retention*
- ➔ *Apprenticeships*
- ➔ *Adult Education*
- ➔ *Offender Success*
- ➔ *Skilled Trades*
- ➔ *Business Services*

In March 2020, Northwest Michigan Works! followed State of Michigan and local Health Department recommendations and guidelines to quickly transition to a remote and virtual work environment. While the majority of staff worked remotely, essential frontline personnel remained onsite at our American Job Centers (AJC) assisting with an onslaught of incoming calls from customers who found themselves unemployed during the early stages of the pandemic.

While the public no longer had physical walk-in access to our AJCs, we quickly evaluated service delivery options and began developing methods to deliver much needed demand driven services to our customers. The use of virtual meeting platforms became the norm for one-on-one customer meetings, workshops, and networking groups.

Throughout the remainder of 2020, a significant number of Michigan workers continued to experience layoffs and struggled to obtain unemployment insurance benefits. With the State of Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency unable to meet the increased demands placed on their systems and staff, Northwest Michigan Works! volunteered to partner with the State of Michigan to train additional staff in resolving complex unemployment insurance claims. As a direct result, Northwest Michigan Works! staff provided direct assistance to 32,547 unemployment claimants.

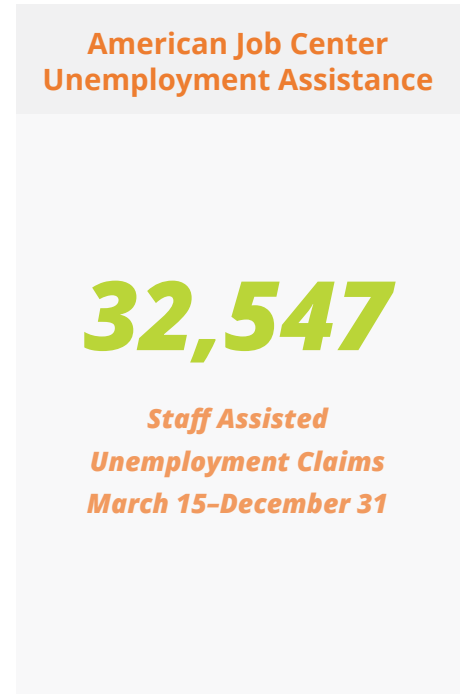
Additionally, early in the pandemic, Northwest Michigan Works! launched a COVID-19 resource page on the Northwest Michigan Works! website that served as a one-stop location for information and resources related to COVID-19. Visitors to the page could find information regarding assistance in meeting their basic needs such as food, housing, and healthcare; up-to-date data-driven information pertaining to virus transmission and safety protocols; assistance with unemployment benefits, and many more COVID-19 related subjects.

As 2020 drew to a close, our Northwest Michigan Works! AJC teams began to see an increase in the number of customers requesting reemployment services. With requests for unemployment insurance assistance decreasing during the same time frame, staff could once again begin to focus on connecting job seekers to employers; while ensuring all customers received compassionate, world-class service.

Major Theme Throughout the Pandemic: Flexible & Adaptable

Our teams exemplify this notion and continue to pivot during a time when there are so many unknowns.

Talent Development



Talent Development Veteran Services



Service Type	Services Provided
Appointment	133
Career Connection	12
Interviewing Assistance	6
Job Fair	3
Job Search	169
Learning Lab	50
PATH	1
Résumé Assistance	65
Unemployment	338
Veterans Workshop	13
Total	790



"Their patience, understanding and commitment to their clients is a testament to the quality of the company they represent."
 —Jay Hudson (& Family)

"Michigan Works is amazing—they were a huge help in assisting me to move forward in a career."
 —Tina Day, Pinnacle Truck Driver



Talent Development
Partnership. Accountability.
Training. Hope. (PATH) & Workforce
Innovation and Opportunity Act
(WIOA) — Community Impact

34%¹ *Average percentage of PATH program participants who met or exceeded their program participation requirements*

Average percentage of WIOA participants who were employed 6 months after completion of services **88%**

84% *Average percentage of WIOA participants who were employed a year after completion of services*

4,938

Number of Wagner Peyser participants employed 6 months after completion of services

Average percentage of WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers who received a credential

81%

\$14.83/hr

Average reported wage earned 6 months after completion of services by Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult, and WIOA Dislocated Worker participants

1. Due to the pandemic, PATH participants were exempt from the requirement to meet their program participation requirements, which significantly impacted this result.

Talent Development

Meet John Mistura

Boyne Resorts, North Central Michigan College, the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and Northwest Michigan Works! partnered to develop a culinary apprenticeship program offering a unique interactive learning experience with executive chef mentors. The apprentices will achieve their Sous Chef certification along with a DOL National Credential and a Hospitality Certificate.

One of the current apprentices is John Mistura. His career at Boyne started in 2015 as a line cook. When Boyne initiated the Sous Chef Apprenticeship recruitment process, John saw it as an opportunity to upskill and launch his career pathway in the culinary field. He had never really considered this type of career yet was drawn to the education and mentoring the apprenticeship offered.

As John progressed through the program, he realized the many benefits of the apprenticeship including his new network of contacts and friends while learning about food. "Learning about the nutritional value of food was life-changing," said John. "How to cook it appropriately while maintaining the flavor and nutritional value is interesting."

John's Mentor, Executive Chef Dean Grill, says John will play an ongoing role in the Apprenticeship program.

"This program is very dear to me personally and identifying the right apprentices is essential to the success of the apprenticeship," said Dean. "Johnny is a great fit and has been selected to be the liaison for the upcoming cohort of students."

As John continues his success, he is enthusiastic to mentor the new cohort of apprentices and is Boyne's most influential spokesperson for the benefits of the training. "Seeing my progress from where I started to where I am now is my favorite part of the program!" said John.

"Seeing my progress from where I started to where I am now is my favorite part of the program!" — John Mistura



**BOYNE
HIGHLANDS**



Executive Chef
Dean Grill



John's Mentor, Executive Chef Dean Grill, says John will play an ongoing role in the Apprenticeship program.

John Mistura



Talent Development

Apprenticeships — Skills for In-Demand Jobs

Northwest Michigan Works! Sponsored Apprenticeships:

- Medical Assistant
- HVAC Installer
- HVAC Servicer
- Plumber
- Mechatronics Technician
- Culinary
- Accounting Technician
- Fiber Optic Lineworker

In the region, there are currently 364 registered apprentices along with 49 active programs. NMW presently sponsors 49 apprentices for businesses of every size and various industry sectors.

Northwest Michigan Works! partnered with Kalkaska Memorial Health Center and Penn Foster online education to develop a

unique Medical Assistant registered apprenticeship program. The program includes approximately 2000 hours of on-the-job competencies along with approximately 200 hours of online related instruction. Once the apprentices complete the requirements, they will receive a Medical Assistant Career Diploma, Department of Labor National Credential and State of Michigan Certification.



364

Registered Apprentices
Across the Region



Talent Development

Business Resource Network Employee Retention Program

In partnership with Char-Em United Way, and TCF Bank, the Business Resource Network (BRN) is an innovative employer retention program which includes an on-location Success Coach. In 2020, 227 new individuals participated in success coach services and 62 received ongoing case management. The BRN remains strong with all 8 of the initial employers renewing the program for another year.

In 2020, 607 referrals for services were provided. Ninety percent were in the following categories:

Unemployment Assistance	275	Employment Assistance	19
Transportation Assistance	100	Daycare	15
Housing	48	Finance & Budgeting	13
Mental Health Counseling	21	Educational Support	11
Car Repair	20	Utilities	10

“The BRN is a solid business decision. Our company’s participation and investment have provided a positive return whether you measure that in dollars or in associate “wellness”. Our associates and company rely on the BRN to identify and utilize resources that otherwise would be unknown. From housing to transportation to domestic or childcare issues, the BRN addresses the barriers that prevent our associates from being fully engaged in their work.” —Pat Gammon, SHRM-SCP, SPHR, Human Resource Generalist, Petoskey Plastics



“Our BRN success coach is instrumental in helping bring a productive work-life balance to our organization.”

Talent Development

Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG)

The success of our region's K-12 students and young adults remains a top priority of Northwest Michigan Works! and our JMG team. With the significant skill gap and a talent pipeline shortage, Michigan's future workforce needs well-prepared and work-ready young adults. Each moment is critical; every action matters. As the host for Northwest Lower Michigan's Jobs for Michigan's Graduates program, in 2020 we were able to equip 341 young people with the skills to overcome barriers and win in education, employment, and in life.

As with most workforce development programming, we have transitioned our services to be provided on a virtual basis. Even though many youth became disconnected from in-person school and programming, they did not become disconnected from their JMG specialist. In fact, contact between our JMG team and the youth they serve increased as students reached out on a more frequent basis for advice, support, and mentoring. The specialists became focused on being a support role in the youth's lives and were often able to still provide the needed, socially distanced and protocol safe, in-person connection students sought. Specialists work closely with their cooperating teacher to provide enrichment activities and virtual classroom instruction. These partnerships ensured students received the same pre-pandemic level of support, mentorship and guidance throughout 2020.



Youth listening to a speaker during Up North Virtual Leadership Day.

341
Students
Enrolled



57 students participated in leadership development events at the regional, state, or national level.

Northwest Michigan Works! is proud to have partnered with the following schools to achieve a record JMG enrollment of 341 students in 2020:

- Traverse Bay Area ISD
- Char-Em ISD
- Wexford-Missaukee ISD
- Cadillac High School
- Cadillac Innovation High School
- CASMAN Academy

Highlights of the year:

- 29 out-of-school young adults are enrolled in JMG receiving high school completion and career preparation services.
- 13 JMG students participated in paid work experience and internship opportunities with 9 area employers.
- Networks Northwest hosted the first ever Up North Virtual Leadership Day in collaboration with UP Michigan Works and Northeast Michigan Works Consortium. This event drew 63 youth who participated in career awareness, budgeting, and leadership activities.

For the fifth consecutive year, our program received the National Jobs for America's Graduates "5 of 5 Award" for meeting or exceeding national standards in five categories measuring student success.

JOBS *for* MICHIGAN'S GRADUATES

All JMG students receive:

- Barrier removal, drop-out prevention, career preparation
- One-on-one guidance counseling
- Student-led leadership development
- Community service projects
- Adult mentoring
- Work-based learning
- College preparation and transition
- 12 months of follow-up services



Students meet with Senator Curt Vanderwall during Legislative Day 2020 in February.

99% *High School
Graduation Rate*

78% *Employment
Rate*

67% *Full-Time
Job Rates*

91% *JMG students
pursuing
employment,
military, or college
after high school*

Talent Development

NMC Collaboration



In partnership with Northwestern Michigan College, a Northwest Michigan Works! Employment Readiness Specialist serves NMC students and area employers by offering employment services at NMC's Traverse City campus. These services include résumé assistance, mock interview sessions, job search assistance, classroom presentations, and connections to local employers. This partnership is successfully preparing students as they take those critical next steps towards obtaining employment and careers in regionally in demand industries.



Employment Readiness 2020 Accomplishments

- ➔ Met with 260 individual students and presented to 9 classes
- ➔ Delivered Résumé Assistance to 448 students, both individually and through workshops
- ➔ Held 54 Mock Interviews
- ➔ Assisted 28 students with one-on-one Job Search Assistance



Special Events

- ➔ 4 Pop-up résumé workshops throughout campus
- ➔ 2 Student Success Pop-up Events
- ➔ Mid-February 5-day drop-in résumé and cover letter review at Lobdell's teaching restaurant

Resources Developed

- ➔ How to Prepare Your Résumé—PowerPoint Presentation
- ➔ Employment Readiness—Web Resource
- ➔ How-To Guide for Virtual Job Fairs—Web Resource



Talent Development

MiSTEM Career Advisor Collaboration



Northwest Michigan Works! and the Northwestern Lower Michigan MiSTEM Network have collaborated to connect our local students to STEM careers. STEM related career exploration, STEM informed curriculums, and on the job experiences are the key factors to this successful partnership.

The Northwest Michigan Works! Career Advisor is in a unique position to connect students of all ages to regional businesses offering Science, Technology, Engineering and Match (STEM) related careers. The Career Advisor incorporates a variety of different resources and services such as career exploration events, talent tours, educator professional development, and employer engagement activities.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this unique partnership quickly pivoted towards supporting educators in a remote environment. All projects and deliverables that could be moved to the virtual world were moved without an interruption to service. Additionally, adapting classroom lessons for teachers to use during the crisis was integral in continuing the program's work in 2020. The Northwest Michigan Works! Career Advisor worked collaboratively with the regional MiSTEM Network director to provide resources and professional learning that enable educators to reach unexpected levels of success.

2020 Highlights

- Developed platforms and procedures to have students and business interact safely across the region.
- Presented at TC Wired and the Michigan Works! Association Annual Conference on the Intersection of STEM Education and Careers.
- Worked with 53 different local educators to provide online professional learning that included; Elementary and Secondary STEM Career Exploration Webinars, Career Exploration Software lessons, and other professional development opportunities.



2300

Students participated in 4 career exploration events before COVID lockdowns

65+

Businesses engaged with local educators and students

Over 20

School districts recruited to create & foster a STEM culture

50+

Career profile cards developed for use across the region

Talent Development

Adult Education

Total Number of Students: **279**

Total Number of Attendance Hours: **19,200**

Class of 2020: **64 Graduates** (21 HSD; 43 HSE/GED)

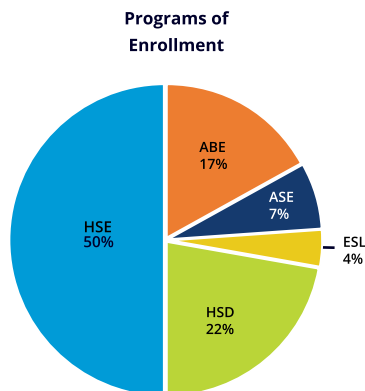
ABE: Adult Basic Ed

ASE: Adult Secondary Ed

ESL: English as a Second Language

HSD: High School Diploma

HSE: High School Equivalency (GED)



Adult Education services

delivered through the Northwest Michigan Works! Learning Labs have an Education for Employment focus. Labs operate year round with an open registration schedule. Participants aged 18 and older can learn for free at their own pace.

Instructional Delivery Changes to the Learning Labs Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic:

The month of March 2020 marked the closure of on-site instruction for adults in the Northwest Michigan Works! Learning Labs. Because the distance learning instructional option has been embedded in our delivery model of services for over 12 years, instruction continued without significant interruption. Enrollment processes required revamping to allow for a remote option. Group registrations were suspended and moved to individual appointments and the mandatory assessments moved to online administration. Registration packets were mailed to students for completion prior to the individual appointments. During registration, students are now required to learn how to virtually connect with teachers through Zoom or Google Meet. Teachers delivered individualized instruction via these online tools. Graduation day featured the first ever remote program. John Barron, pictured, was the featured speaker.



Literacy Services

A fuller range of literacy services was developed in the learning labs during the 2019-20 school year. Literacy can be defined as the ability to functionally read, write and speak in the English Language. This year saw the addition of texts and software to aid this instruction. Tutor recruitment and training began utilizing the newly developed online training modules. The pandemic forced tutoring services to a remote delivery system via Google Meet.

Adult Education CTC Special Programs

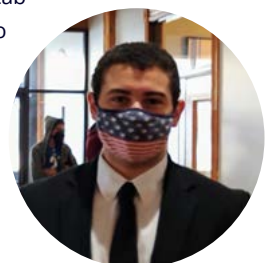
The pandemic significantly impacted the Adult Education CTC Special Programs at the Wexford Missaukee ISD (WMISD) Career Tech Center and the Traverse Bay Area ISD (TBAISD) Career Tech Center. These programs offer adult education students a direct link and opportunity to participate in career technical training. When on-site, in-person classroom instruction was paused in March 2020, this innovative education model met immediate challenges. When many of the State's 14 programs struggled to overcome the void created, Northwest Michigan Works! Adult Education and WMISD rose to the occasion to overcome the obstacle. The Adult Career Training program's 2020 Spring Cohort returned to training in July and resulted in the certification and immediate employment of seven Certified Nursing Assistant students.

46% *Of all attendance hours came from Distance Learning*

75% *Of all students are between the ages of 16-44*

ADULT EDUCATION STUDENT FOCUS

Chris Rowland worked in both the Learning Lab and with a Michigan Works! Career Advisor to help him pass his GED and obtain training and employment as a CNA. Chris states: "Michigan Works is very flexible and works with your work schedule while making sure you get through your GED on time."



Talent Development

Offender Success Program

The vision of the Offender Success program is that every offender released from prison will have the tools needed to succeed in the community and the opportunity to use those tools to be productive, self-sufficient citizens. Targeted services, such as job placement, housing navigation, and more are provided for formerly incarcerated individuals by Offender Success staff, and in partnership with other community agencies.

With the onset of COVID-19 in early spring, the Michigan Department of Corrections and the Northwest Offender Success program quickly pivoted to address the needs of participants. The MDOC began to institute mass COVID testing for inmates and for those parolees coming home. Offender Success staff was charged with identifying placements for newly released parolees considered close contacts that were required to quarantine. In addition, meeting the basic needs of those quarantined participants presented a unique challenge at a time when stay at home orders and social distancing requirements were prevalent.

The region's Offender Success staff rose to the occasion and established 15 new relationships with area pantries, non-profits, and thrift stores to provide food, basic hygiene items, and clothing for participants in quarantine. Key partnerships were developed with the Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness, Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency and the Community Connections program. In doing so, the OS program leveraged over \$2,600 in community-based resources for participants.

33,000

MDOC Prison Population—lowest level in 30 years

26%

Recidivism rate, dropped for the second year in a row; lowest rate in state history and one of the best in the nation



Despite the barriers the pandemic posed, during 2020, the Offender Success program served 210 individuals and achieved a 71.6% job placement rate.

Residential Stability

- 119 individuals that would otherwise be homeless received assistance with finding and securing a place to stay
- 32% of the program budget was spent on providing residential stability services.

Job Placement

- 72 new participants were enrolled in Job Placement services and received employability skills training, job counseling, temporary work experience, On-the-Job Training, help with purchasing necessary work supplies, and more from dedicated Offender Success Job Placement staff.

210

Individuals served

71.6%

**Job placement rate*
State average: 49%**

*Second highest in the state

72

**New participants in
job placement services**

59.3%

**Job retention rate*
State average: 49.1%**

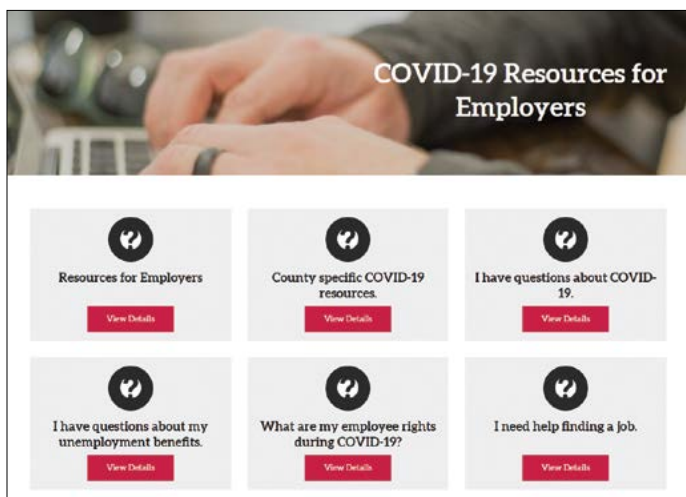
*Participants had to maintain employment for 12 consecutive months or until successfully completing parole term.

Talent Development

Business Services at a Glance

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed the way we conducted business in Northwest Michigan. From a thriving economy with near record low unemployment rates our region experienced an overnight transformation to elevated unemployment rates and the near complete halt of many businesses and industries. The Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services Team met these new challenges head on by providing employers with up-to-date labor market information, employee retention services, access to the latest COVID related resources and information, and a connection to available grant and financial relief programs.

- ➔ A COVID-19 Employer Resources page was developed on the Northwest Michigan Works! website with 24/7 access to up-to-date information and links to resources.
- ➔ Assisted 5 business and 150 dislocated workers with Rapid Response Services during unexpected and permanent pandemic related layoffs.
- ➔ Partnered with the Leelanau Peninsula Economic Foundation to provide information and resources to help Leelanau County businesses remain open through the pandemic.



“When the COVID crisis took off, I was not ready for the challenges before me. Normally, I learn through trial and error, but surfing through web pages and making dead end phone calls for information was a waste of time. I was dealing with people’s livelihood and needed answers! I reached out to Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services for advice and was provided with an abundant amount of resources to get our employees the help they needed to survive and make positive strides in helping them get their unemployment/underemployment issues straightened out. On behalf of our employees and myself— Thank you Northwest Michigan Works! for your assistance!”



—Russ Paull, Human Resources Manager, Kalkaska Screw Products

Mr. Chain has experienced a significant, pandemic-related, increase in the demand for its safety products that support social distancing protocols. Many of their products are utilized in directing foot traffic and assisting with crowd control. With pre-pandemic production being at approximately 30% manufacturing capacity, the company is now operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week to meet demand.

“We are in constant contact with Northwest Michigan Works! when looking to fill positions and attend all of their events because we believe they have the resources to find us the best candidates for our openings. With all of the chaos in 2020, they were able to put on several virtual hiring events allowing us to spread the message about our full-time positions. We look forward to continuing our growth as a company, and Northwest Michigan Works! will be a massive part of that push for years to come.”

—Ryan Schultz, Chief Operating Officer, M R Products, Inc.



Talent Development Business Services at a Glance

215 & **86**
job seekers *employers*

*attended the pre-pandemic
March 2020 Career &
Employment Job Fair*

*Northwest Michigan Works!
Collaborated with the Michigan
Economic Development Corporation
and the region's Economic
Development Organizations to
conduct*

86 *business retention and
growth visits.*

34

*Employer of the Day
hiring events were held,
with nearly 300 job
seekers attending*

84

online campaigns included over

100,000

*emails to job seekers promoting
employment workshops,
networking, and hiring events.*

97

*Career Connection
events were held,
serving 316 participants*

*Northwest Michigan Works!, in
partnership with the State of
Michigan Workforce Development
Department, hosted its first online
hiring event.*

*This 3-hour virtual job fair
achieved a 62% attendance rate by
connecting 51 jobseekers with 27
employers across the region.*

Nearly

\$31,000

*provided to employers to offset
the cost of on-the-job training for
new employees entering in demand
industries with an average hourly
wage of \$17.00.*

Talent Development Company Testimonials

“Through all the turmoil of the year 2020, there has been a bright spot that has helped our company grow and has helped set the foundation of our future success. Northwest Michigan Works! is that bright spot! ... The OJT program combined with the apprentice programs have provided our company with a candidate pool that is pre-screened and coached through the hiring process so that when they enter our doors, they are ready to hit the ground running. We have a great partnership that has resulted in opportunities for all involved. I highly encourage any small business in Northwest Michigan to reach out to them to learn more about the programs that have helped us acquire and train quality people!”

—Ethan Smith, General Manager, Precise Door Company



“The entire staff at Northwest Michigan Works! is incredibly dedicated to the community and the work they do. Brake & Alignment Plus+ has been working with the Veterans Services to help employ veterans. The staff made the entire process easy by providing me with all the forms and information to facilitate hiring. I was fortunate to hire a young man who relocated to our area for an Automotive Technician position. They have an awesome recruitment process, standing by the young man as we did on-boarding. They didn't stop until he was hired! The staff continues to check on his progress and wellbeing. I highly recommend that employers tap into Northwest Michigan Works! as a resource for new or experienced candidates.”

—Mike Taylor, Service Manager, Brake & Alignment Plus +

“Northwest Michigan Works! has been an excellent recruitment partner providing Great Wolf Lodge with multiple top talent referrals to help us fill difficult positions. Last spring, we hired a well-qualified referral as our Security Manager and were able to qualify for the On-the-Job Training program as well. Other valuable benefits of our partnership included assistance during COVID-19 with WARN notices and Rapid Response, participation in hiring events and being the featured Employer of the Day.”

—Laura Neubauer, Human Resources Manager,
Great Wolf Lodge



Talent Development Company Testimonials

“Northwest Michigan Works! continues to be an invaluable resource for our organization by providing creative responses to our hiring needs. We have a huge influx of staffing needs during the holiday season and with COVID-19, we were trying to figure out how to hire folks quickly. The Business Services team at Northwest Michigan Works! put their heads together and created a Virtual Employer of the Day for our company. We also participated in the Virtual Job Fair in October which was also a success. The Business Services team not only answers all of my questions but backs them up with real world examples from their wealth of experience. I appreciate having them as part of my recruiting team!”

— Merry Hawley, HR Manager, eFulfillment Service, Inc.



“Thank you, Northwest Michigan Works! for all you have done in our search for new employees. Our Business Services Representative has always been dedicated to finding the right fit for our workplace family, which is something we feel is very important to our success. Northwest Michigan Works! has assisted us with recruitment of workers, job postings, candidate referrals, business growth and employer incentive programs. Keep up the great work you do for our business and our community!”

— Scott Mosher and Jerry Pierce, Co-Owners, Active Brace and Limb

Talent Development

Business Services

Michigan Works! Business Services: Unique Companies Served by County, By Industry

Industry	Antrim	Benzie	Charlevoix	Emmet	Grand Traverse	Kalkaska	Leelanau	Manistee	Missaukee	Wexford	Out of Region	Total
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	1	1	1	3	5	1	15	2	5		6	40
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction					2					1		3
Utilities	1		2		5	1		1			4	14
Construction	1	1	5	9	28	7	4	6	1	1	4	67
Manufacturing	12	4	22	17	70	8	11	8	3	10	22	187
Wholesale Trade	1			1	13	1	1	1	1		3	22
Retail Trade	5	11	10	27	67	9	9	15	7	1	72	233
Transportation and Warehousing		1	1	1	7	1	1			2	7	21
Information				4	11		2	1			5	23
Finance and Insurance		2	2	5	23	1	5	2			11	51
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing				1	1	2	2				2	8
Professional, Tech Services		2	3	5	37	2	2		1	1	19	72
Management of Companies					2							2
Admin, Support, Waste Management	1	1		5	5	1	1	2		1	6	23
Educational Services			2	2	14		5			4	8	35
Health Care and Social Assistance		4	5	9	51	2	7	6	5	4	32	125
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation			2	6	8	1	5	4			5	31
Accommodation and Food Services	1	7	3	13	39	4	17	9	2	3	27	125
Other Services	1	7	5	11	40		5	4	2	11	9	95
Public Administration	2	2		4	11	3	4	4	1	4	9	44
Total	26	43	63	123	439	44	96	65	28	43	251	1,221

Northwest Michigan Works! partnered with **Wolf Line Construction and the Northwest Lineman School** to develop an innovative Fiber Optic Lineworker program. Wolf Line has locations throughout the US including Michigan, Colorado, Illinois, North and South Carolina. There are currently 18 participating apprentices with 15 more on the program waiting list. Apprentices have been recruited from across the nation and travel to rural locations for the installation of Fiber Optic internet service in underserved rural areas. The apprentices receive on the job training with highly qualified mentors and attend the Northwest Lineman School at one of their three locations.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Networks Northwest has a broad sweep of unique services focused on helping businesses succeed. Ultimately, we help improve business results — sales growth, reduced costs, and higher profitability. Maybe that’s why our business clients continue to work with us over many years. These clients impress us every day with their hard work and creativity as business leaders. As you read through the following client success stories, we hope you, too, are impressed.



➔ *Small Business Development Center*

➔ *Northwest Michigan Procurement Technical Assistance Center*

➔ *Global Trade Alliance*

Business Development

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

2020 Regional Program Impact

In response to the COVID-19 health crisis, the SBA released additional CARES Act funds to the MI-SBDC. \$260,000 was committed specifically to the Northwest region. These funds were to be used in a variety of ways including hiring contract business consultants to add capacity to the Networks Northwest counseling team, developing new and appropriate training opportunities, and forging collaborative partnerships with other community organizations to expand services.

Notable business-focused partnerships forged during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- ➔ Northwestern Michigan College Extended Educational Services (EES)—relaunch *Business Development Certificate Program*, providing ongoing training opportunities and a micro-credential to early-stage entrepreneurs
- ➔ Taste the Local Difference—Marketing and online sales support to small agricultural producers and processors at no cost
- ➔ Addition of 3 contract business consultants—Increasing the number of consulting hours available to regional business, and one additional service provider specializing in design services



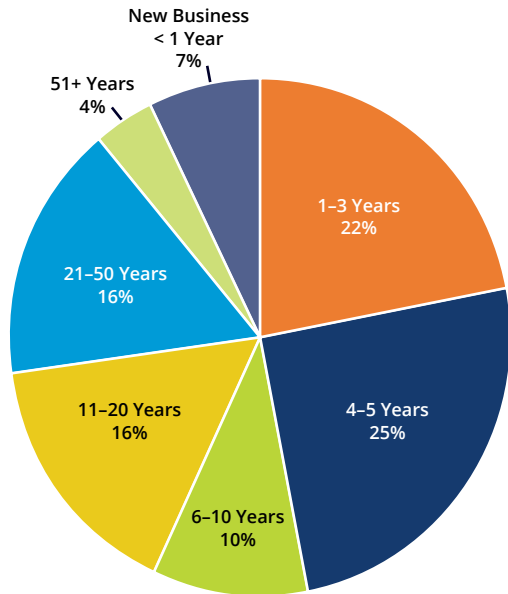
U.S. Small Business Administration

The Northwest MI-SBDC Regional Team collaborated with the statewide SBDC Growth and Technology teams to serve 439 clients in 2020.

- ➔ 58% were considered already “in business”
- ➔ 21% consisted of online clients
- ➔ 5.8% minority-owned small businesses
- ➔ 1,793 full and part-time employees positively impacted in 2020

Business Development

SBDC 2020 Regional Program Impact



- 42% (181 clients) consider themselves 'Not Yet in Business.' 13.2% (24 clients) successfully opened their doors for business.
- Assisted 58 clients by accessing \$5,379,700 in various forms of capital to include loans, private investment, personal investment while also securing an additional \$3,506,326 in specialty COVID response grants.
- Assisted 32 clients to increase sales totaling \$5,160,017.
- Provided 2,377 consulting hours to 439 total clients.
- 212 Jobs Retained (for those 'in business' clients) and 128 Jobs Created (for both 'in business' and 'start up' clients).

It remains a priority for the Northwest region to equitably service our 10-county Northwest footprint. This is a demonstration of how we were able to service clients region-wide in 2020:

Northwest Clients by County		
County (MI)	Customer Count	% Total of Companies Served
Antrim	27	6%
Benzie	29	7%
Charlevoix	42	10%
Emmet	33	8%
Grand Traverse	159	36%
Kalkaska	12	3%
Leelanau	42	10%
Manistee	45	10%
Missaukee	16	4%
Wexford	24	5%
Other	10	2%
GRAND TOTAL	439	100%

2020 Featured Small Business

Lakeshore Dry Goods is the producer of Sunrise Bliss organic cotton hair towels and they sell their products direct to consumer via their website and Etsy, as well as wholesale through retailers and salons across the county. Owner, Pam Colby, first began working with the Northwest MI-SBDC at the onset of her business in 2016. The SBDC provided a range of services over the past few years that included business planning, financial projections and development, pitch deck preparatory support for various local pitch events (earning them a second place and people's choice awards), and ongoing general support and encouragement as Lakeshore Dry Goods evolved beyond its startup phase.



Business Development Global Trade Alliance



Networks Northwest completed their third year of a five-year contract as the Regional Export Network (REN) host for all of Northern Lower and the Upper Peninsula.

In 2019, GTA helped organize six trainings and workshops throughout the region geared toward helping companies that are new to exporting and preparing businesses for international trade shows.

In 2020, GTA was met with severe COVID-19 restrictions, these restrictions caused us to pivot and adapt the way we did business. We participated in one in-person event that showcased a new relevant resource and partner, World Trade Press. All other events were moved to the virtual space.

Given the world moved online, we followed and made countless connections to virtual trade missions, export webinars and other professional development opportunities

for our clients in the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Michigan.

The Global Trade Alliance continues collaborations with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Grand Traverse Area Manufacturing Council, International Affairs Forum, Northern Initiatives, Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance, Networks Northwest Procurement and Technical Assistance Center, Networks Northwest Small Business Development Center, and the Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services team.

Our partnership with our regional MEDC International Trade Manager has grown and we have been able to connect businesses with export resources to expand their international reach.

Business Development Global Trade Alliance Clients



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**



Businesses served

59

*State Trade Export Program
grants totaling*

\$226,400

Export sales

\$42,391,484

Business Development

Northwest Michigan PTAC

The onset of widespread COVID-19 brought with it a new set of challenges for northern Michigan's businesses. The Northwest Michigan PTAC responded by immediately moving all training, networking events, and one-on-one counseling to an online format and expanding the range of services offered to clients.

Northwest Michigan PTAC counselors assisted businesses in their effort to pivot toward production of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other COVID-19 related products.



Business Support and Technical Assistance

- Understanding emergency acquisition regulations.
- Registering on new COVID Response Government Supplier Portals.
- Matchmaking with government agencies and large prime contractors in need of emergency supplies.
- Updating bid-match services that included disaster response and COVID related capabilities.
- Responding to contracting opportunities aimed at ensuring long-term domestic production of hospital-grade PPE.
- Making referrals to resources partners offering funding and assistance for staffing, supplies or new equipment.

Special Events

- COVID 19 and the Federal Contractor
- Time to Cyber Up—Preparing for the Cyber-Security Maturity Model Certification (CMMC)
- Buy American Act, Berry Amendment and Trade Agreement Acts
- Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) Training Series
- Changes to the Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program
- A Conversation with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers

\$122.2m
in Client Contract Awards

**2 Offices
Serving
25 Counties**

2020 Impact

- Over 1,620 counseling hours helped the region's businesses understand, compete, bid, receive and perform on local, state and federal opportunities.
- 26 events brought together industry, government, and subject matter experts and gave participants a competitive edge in the government marketplace.
- PTAC clients received over \$122.2m in government contracts making a significant impact on the local economy in the form for 578 jobs created or retained (\$200k in contract awards equates to one Job).



"I have found the Northwest MI PTAC group to be FABULOUS. The help I have received from PTAC has helped my company with getting its first PRIME contract (\$293.4k) as a WOSB (Woman Owned Small Business), usually I was a sub to big companies. Thank you for all you do for me and my company!" —SHRR Consulting, Inc.



Business Development

Meet TentCraft

TentCraft in Traverse City manufactures outdoor marketing elements such as pop-up tents, custom structures, flags, signage, and event solutions for businesses, popular brands, and agencies across North America. In 2017, TentCraft decided to look at opportunities for sales to the government and the Northwest Michigan Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) helped them do that.

“The PTAC provided invaluable information on registering in the various systems (and kept us from making mistakes), gave us examples of capability statements, helped us format our government page on the TentCraft website, as well as create our own capability statement,” said Matt Bulloch, TentCraft President.

When the COVID-19 crisis hit in 2020, and demand for its custom-printed tents disappeared, TentCraft had to pivot to keep its employees working. The company recognized a critical need for portable, quick-deploy tents and shelters to support medical testing and containment, and emergency response activities. TentCraft quickly realized that selling to the government is rife with government-specific rules and regulations and complicated steps and procedures. Because of the existing relationship, TentCraft turned to the PTAC for assistance.

The PTAC collaborated with TentCraft’s supply chain manager and sales team and provided support and technical assistance including information on regulations and guidelines; contact information for agencies (and large prime contractors) in need of emergency supplies; assistance responding to solicitations from the Veterans Administration and FEMA; bid-match services focused on COVID response supplies; information on GSA Schedules; market research and procurement history; help with government-specific marketing material; and assistance with government registrations. In 2020, the PTAC recorded nearly 100 hours of counseling hours time assisting TentCraft, Inc.

“The PTAC has been helpful researching new opportunities,” said Bulloch. “These efforts, with the PTAC’s guidance, gave us an enormous amount of credibility with the VA when we worked with their individual hospitals and regions on COVID-19 screening products and mobile infirmaries.”

“TentCraft took advantage of our many services and the expertise of the PTAC staff to switch gears mid-stream and without warning,” said Cathy Fairbanks, Northwest Michigan PTAC Regional Director. “I am glad we already had a relationship with them and they reached out to us. It was rewarding to play a small part in responding to the pandemic.”

With the assistance from the PTAC and TentCraft’s successful pivot to government sales, the company weathered the pandemic and jobs were retained. Since March 2020, TentCraft has been awarded over \$2 million in federal government contracts (Source: USASpending.gov.)

For more information about TentCraft, go to Tentcraft.com.

“Our work with the PTAC has shown us that there is a world of opportunity for us to seize. We look forward to continuing to work with the PTAC to bid on government contracts as they become available.”
— Matt Bulloch, TentCraft President



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development in Northwest Lower Michigan seeks to convene partners for collaboration, generation of ideas and achieving consensus on both clear and onerous subjects, while also providing educational opportunities, and assisting with development of plans, policy and land use ordinance language. Staff with Community Development oversee and are involved with State and Federal programs, such as asset management in assistance of the Michigan Department of Transportation, planning for solid waste management in conjunction with the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy or Hazard Mitigation Planning in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Department also provides planning services for local level development of Master/Comprehensive Plan Documents, Recreation Plans, Capital Improvement Plans or Zoning Ordinances. The Community Development Department is eager and qualified to convene groups, perform research, write plans and advise residents, elected and appointed officials on important issues to our region.



→ *Covid Response*

→ *Freight Plan*

→ *Benchmarks Northwest*

→ *Bear Creek Recreational Trail*

Community Resilience

Networks Northwest was a recipient of the Economic Development Administration's Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) Recovery Assistance Grant in the amount of \$400,000. This grant, which spans a two-year period, allotted the organization \$200,000 in 2020 for projects and processes which will assist with pandemic related economic recovery and resiliency measures in our Northwest Michigan region.

The funding from this grant will strengthen economic and community partnerships throughout the region. Specifically, local communities are provided direct support, guidance and assistance in regard to updating key economic related data and information, identification of marketable growth and

investment areas, and direct participation and coordination with their regional Economic Development Organizations.

Data and information have been established and updated, preparing for a critical update to the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This strategy, built upon the input of information from incubated County-Level Economic Development Task Force Groups, will drive the establishment of a strategic direction and accompanying action plan for economic development activities. Together, these initiatives have set the stage for a resilience plan which will identify regional strengths and proactive measures better capable of averting future economic disruptions.

Community Development Benchmarks Northwest

Regional population
302,983

Percentage of population 25 and older with Associate's Degree or higher across region

39%

Regional poverty rate
13.22%

Median home value
\$210,267

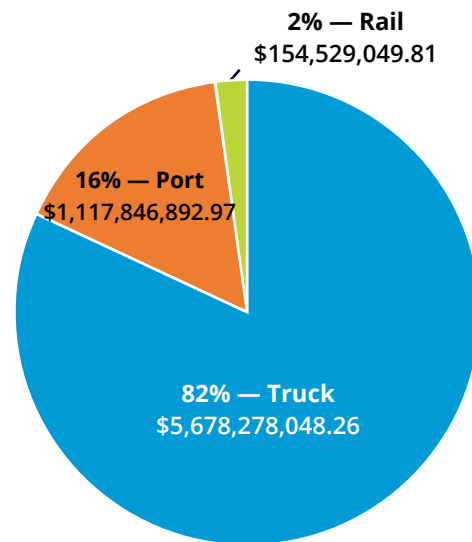
Community Development Freight Plan

In anticipation of 2020 census data confirming the establishment of our region's first Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI) completed the "Northwest Michigan Freight Plan".

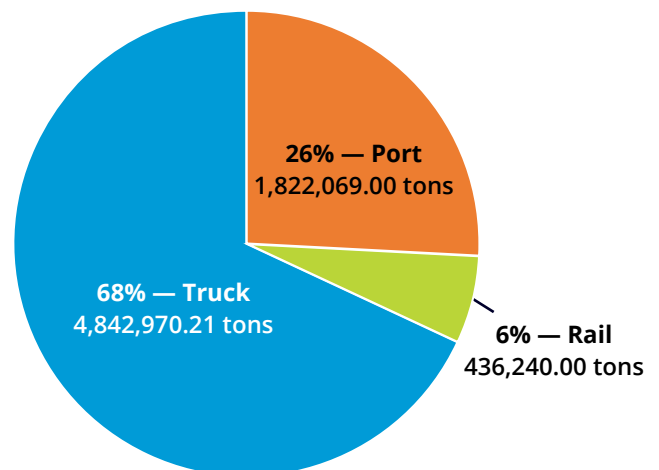
TTCI has been the coordinating body for regional transportation issues in the greater Traverse area. This body has taken the lead and initiative to move forward with projects and plans that lay a foundation for an MPO to build upon. With \$7 billion dollars worth of freight shipped in our region, according to 2018 data, movement of freight has a direct impact on our region's economic growth. The freight plan provides a base of data which identifies commodity types and amounts, and by what means those commodities are shipped throughout our region.

A survey conducted of businesses that utilize freight and direct shipping companies provided insight into the challenges facing the region, and also the opportunities that are available. The large geographic region with abundant lakes and lack of interstate freeways present challenges, but the ability to add travel lanes, adjust roundabouts, realign intersections and provide additional connections are a few of the opportunities noted from the survey. The plan concludes with future suggested projects that could include a Freight and Economic Analysis, and the creation of a freight committee to the MPO.

Commodity by Value



Commodity by Tonnage



Community Development

Bear Creek Township Recreation Plan

Outdoor recreation was an avenue for maintaining activity and peace of mind for much of the population during the COVID pandemic of 2020. The recommendations for social distancing and stay at home orders provided an opportunity for the population to pursue increased outdoor activities while enjoying the many natural wonders of our region. Timing for administering a planning process certainly presented some challenges, but the development of a recreation plan is a project that can bring about the support of a community during this time.

Bear Creek Township in Emmet County had undertaken a Recreation Planning Process under the guidance of the Township Park & Recreation Committee and facilitated and developed by Networks Northwest. This successful process sought to identify the needs of the community. Background information for the existing demographics of the community, the process with which the community approves and implements recreational assets, the inventorying of recreation sites and features, and the setting of goals for recreation frame the process and plan.

Similar to many Northern Michigan communities, the survey that was conducted during the planning process displayed favoritism towards recreational activities that center on trail use (walking/running, biking and hiking) as well as those activities that necessitate access to water, whether it is lakefront sandy beaches or stream corridors. The completed plan sets the stage through goals, which when implemented, will seek to maintain clean and safe recreation sites, provide for a broad range of age of recreational users and abilities, as well as continue and expand upon planning activities for trails and non-motorized users.

“I would like to thank you for guiding us through our recreation plan update. The project was done on time and within budget and we look forward to working with you in the future.”

***—Dennis Keiser, Supervisor,
Bear Creek Township***



Financial Summary

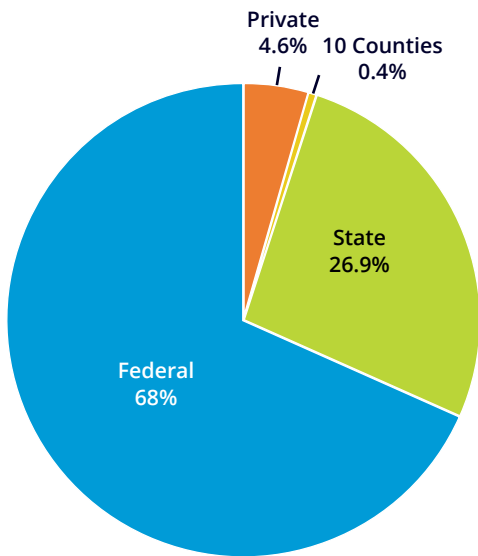
2020



Both of our legal entities, Networks Northwest and Northwest Michigan Works! Inc., received FY20 audits that contained no significant deficiencies of any kind.

Revenue by Source

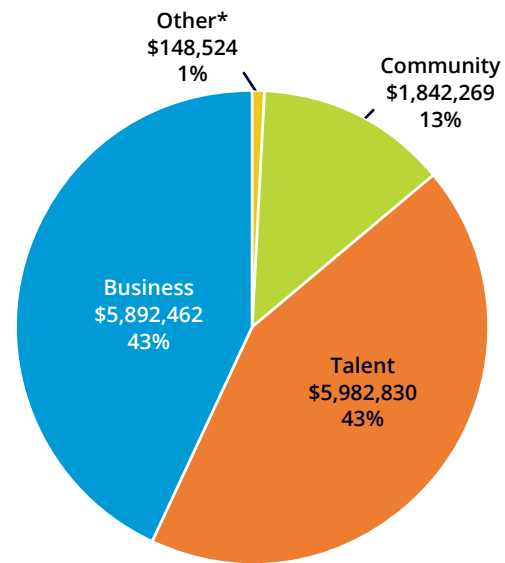
Fiscal Year 2020, Ending 9/30/2020



Expenditures by Service Category

Fiscal Year 2020, Ending 9/30/2020

Total: \$13,866,085

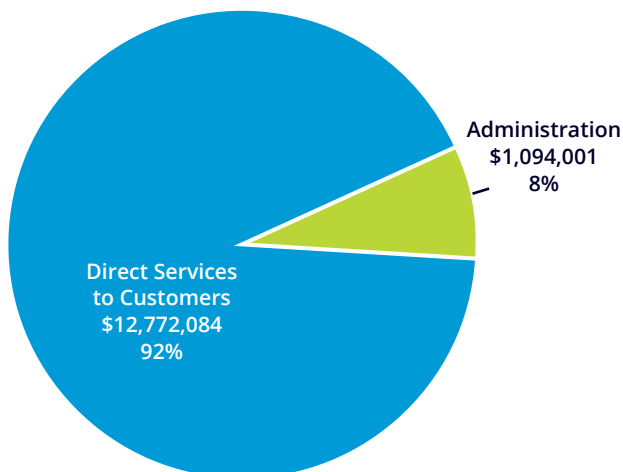


*Reserve Fund; Leave Fund; Pass-through funds

Expenditures by Function

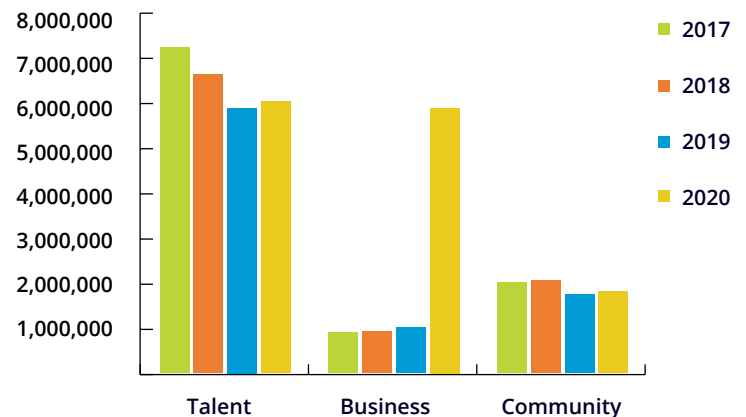
Fiscal Year 2020, Ending 9/30/2020

Total: \$13,866,085



Budget

2017 - 2020



Networks Northwest

Regional Prosperity Board Members in 2020

PUBLIC SECTOR	PRIVATE SECTOR	OTHER SECTORS
<p>Ed Boettcher, Antrim County Commissioner</p> <p>Evan Warsecke, Benzie County Commissioner</p> <p>Chris Christensen, Charlevoix County Commissioner</p> <p>Charlie MacInnis, Emmet County Commissioner</p> <p>Kohn Fisher, Kalkaska County Commissioner</p> <p>Bryce Hundley, Gr. Traverse County Commissioner</p> <p>Ty Wessell, Leelanau County Commissioner</p> <p>Richard Schmidt, Manistee County Commissioner</p> <p>Dean Smallegan, Missaukee County Commissioner</p> <p>Ben Townsend, Wexford County Commissioner</p> <p>Michael Cain, Manager, City of Boyne City</p> <p>Josh Mills, Manager, City of Frankfort</p> <p>Doug Mansfield, Mi. Township Assoc.</p> <p>Alan Cooper, Manager, Wexford Co. Road Commission</p> <p>Chip Johnston, Executive Director, Centra Wellness</p> <p>Pat Lamb, Principal, TBAISD CTC</p> <p>Bill Kennis, Executive Director, Benzie Transportation Authority</p>	<p>Jim Barnard, Owner, Barnard Engineering, Bellaire</p> <p>Betty Workman, Owner, Vacation Trailer Park & Sales, Benzonia</p> <p>Gary Fedus, President & CEO, Mitchell Graphics, Petoskey & Traverse City</p> <p>Sue Peters, VP for HR, Munson Healthcare System, Traverse City</p> <p>Kelli Stepka, Human Resource Manager, Cherry Republic</p> <p>Kim Weckesser, Director Human Resources, West Shore Medical Center</p> <p>Tom Vine, Plant Manager, Viking Energy, McBain</p> <p>Ken Bollman, President, Sabre Tool, Cadillac</p> <p>Leslie Nowlin, HR Manager, 9&10 News</p> <p>Chris Warren, General Manager, Midwestern Broadcasting Co., regional</p> <p>Nicole Sulak, Director of Accounting, Munson Medical Center</p> <p>Mike Ascione, CEO, American Waste, regional</p> <p>Jamie Al-Shama, Bay Construction, regional</p> <p>Lisa Leedy, Owner, Sky Telecom</p> <p>Kent Wood, Director of Gov. Relations & Community Development, TC Chamber</p> <p>Stacie Bytwork, Executive Director, Manistee Area of Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Mike Groleau, Co-owner/Project Manager, RJG, Inc.</p> <p>Doug Rath, Graceland Fruit, Inc.</p> <p>Diane Allington, Owner, Master Craft Extrusion Tools, Inc</p> <p>Elizabeth Dewey, Human Resources Manager, Kalkaska Screw Products, Inc.</p> <p>Sean Adams, President, Bear Lake Hardware</p>	<p>Andy Hayes, President, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (economic development)</p> <p>Eric Bachmann, Regional Manager, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (rehabilitation)</p> <p>Bob Scheele, Vice President, Central Labor Council (labor)</p> <p>Clint Steele, Pipefitter, UAW Local 85 (labor)</p> <p>Kristine Lagios, Director, Manistee-Benzie Dept. of Human Services (human services)</p> <p>Jane Korthase, HR Director, Grandview Medical Care (community based organizations)</p> <p>Steve Perdue, President & CEO, Grand Traverse Industries (community based organizations)</p> <p>Jim Smith, Controls Designer, Tool North, Inc. (apprenticeships)</p> <p>Charles Welch, Parole Supervisor, MDOC (corrections)</p> <p>Scott LaDeur, Professor, North Central Michigan College</p>