

Administration

1409 Washington
Midland, MI 48640
Phone (989) 754-1144
(800) 285-WORK
Fax (989) 754-1439

www.michiganworks.com

Dan Wortman
*Workforce Development
Board Chair*

Carl Ruth
Consortium Board Chair

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Contact: Ann Marie Batkoski

Cell phone: 989-280-8311

Office: 989-754-1144 x212

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$1.8 Million Awarded to Local Employers

(Great Lakes Bay Region) —It's been a great week for Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! and area employers! Two significant state grant programs facilitated by Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! will bring millions of dollars to the area to help train and develop the current and future workforce employers need to be competitive.

Just yesterday, Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! was awarded \$1.8 in Going Pro Talent Fund grants for 52 employers in five counties. These funds will provide crucial opportunities to train new and existing employees. The funds will focus training in areas like lean manufacturing, inventory management, blueprint reading, advanced safety, welding, and accounting. Since the program's inception in 2014, Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! has helped over 100 employers and over 6,000 employees!

Access to Going Pro Talent Funds (formerly known as Skilled Trades Training Funds) is possible only through a proprietary grant process spearheaded by Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! The organization partners with local economic developers as well as regional training providers and chambers of commerce to refer employers to the application

MORE

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process. Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! holds employer information sessions each summer to help them successfully apply for Going Pro Talent funds.

Also announced this week was Governor Snyder's Marshall Plan for Talent grant award recipients. Two regional partnerships have been granted over \$7.4 million to address the talent gap by connecting employers and K-20 students to high-demand, skilled-technical jobs. Saginaw Intermediate School District, in partnership with Muskegon Intermediate School District, and Gratiot-Isabella RESD were both on the receiving end of the grant process. Both organizations turned to Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! for vital labor market information and training connections when submitting their successful grants.

Chris Rishko, CEO of Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! notes, "The role of our organization puts us in a unique position to facilitate collaboration between partners in education, industry and training. These types of partnerships inspired by the Marshall Plan for Talent drive the innovative solutions that are so very crucial to ensuring our region's labor force is ready to meet the needs of employers now and into the future."

Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! is a consortium of Saginaw, Midland, Bay, Gratiot, and Isabella counties, established to operate workforce development programs for this region. It is one of 16 separate and independent Michigan Works! agencies and one of about 550 similar agencies nationwide.

Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! operates a total of five sites throughout the region. Michigan Works! strengthens the local economy 1) by assisting regional employers in finding and retaining qualified employees; and; 2) by assuring that the labor force meets the needs of regional employers.

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