# WEST MICHIGAN TECH TALENT

# 2023 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

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## Fueling the IT Industry in West Michigan

West Michigan Tech Talent engages employers of IT professionals with best practices, resources, and a community to grow, develop, recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive world class IT workforce in West Michigan.

**WMTT IS:**

- Employer-led and convened by West Michigan Works!.
- Working as a region to expand the IT talent pool.
- Creating a network of IT employers focused on talent initiatives.
- Connecting IT employers to resources to upskill their talent.
- Building an inclusive, engaged tech community that supports and mentors career exploration.

## STRATEGIES

- **Grow**: Reaching out to students K-16 to promote IT careers, ensuring that under-represented groups have equitable access.

- **Develop**: Upskilling our current workforce and adult career changers.

- **Recruit & Retain**: Partner with organizers of conferences, meetups and local tech events to sponsor and promote their efforts to build a vibrant and inclusive tech community.

## PARTNERS

**100+** companies/organizations within our network

## COUNCIL SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations have supported the work of WMTT through board membership and funding. All funding goes directly to support local projects.

US Foods, Gordon Food Service, Grand Valley State University, National Nail, Open Systems Technologies, Lakeshore Advantage, Randstad Technologies, SpartanNash, Corewell Health, Tech Defenders, The Right Place, and West Michigan Works!, BizStream, Insperity, Mentavi Health, Spartan Innovations and LaFleur Marketing.

## STRATEGIES IN ACTION

### MI Code Experience

WMTT organizes local participation in this global initiative to bring introductory coding to elementary students in our region.

**Through Hour of Code Experience, WMTT engaged:**

- ▶ **77 classrooms**
- ▶ **2150 students**
- ▶ **58 tech mentors**

### MiCareerQuest

We returned to an in-person experience after 3-years of virtual events. Through the work of our employer network, we engaged with:

- ▶ **8500 Students**
- ▶ **12 employer and partner exhibits**

## TeacherCon 2022

Since 2017, the MiSTEM Network has supported over 600 middle & high school educators in Michigan to implement computer science courses. In 2022 we had over 135 educators come to Grand Rapids to dedicate 3-5 days of their summer to learn more about computer science. WMTT provided speakers and events for teachers to interact with tech professionals to learn more about the importance of CS education in high schools.

- 135 teachers
- 8 tech volunteers
- Participated in three events

## Training

In 2015, tech employers utilized just over $5000 of training funds available for the seven-county West Michigan Works! region.
In 2022 we had over $500,000 training dollars invested in I.T, with over 280 trainees. In 2022 we also started the process to design and launch a new Cybersecurity Apprenticeship program along side a team of six employers.

## Meetups & Conferences

We believe that building a strong and engaged tech community through hosting and supporting tech events is a strategic foundation to attract and retain talent. In the past year we:

- Were annual sponsors of GRWebDev and SoftwareGR- two of the largest meetup groups in West Michigan
- Hosted four Happy Hours and Networking events attended by 210 industry professionals from over 130 unique employers.
- Organized and hosted Tech Trends, attended by 92 unique employers with attendance of over 140 unique employers.
- Sponsored Beer City Code, attended by over 130 industry professionals.

## GOALS FOR 2023-24

We remain focused on our mission to grow, develop, recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive world class IT workforce in West Michigan. In 2023 we will:

- Explore partnerships and initiatives to support tech communities and organizations that are focused on developing an inclusive and diverse tech workforce

- Work closely with The Right Place as they roll out and implement their tech strategy.

- Support our K-12 partners, especially MI-STEM Network, intermediate school districts and Grand Rapids Public Schools, with career exploration, teacher seminars, and innovative and inspiring approaches to STEM education.

- Continue to organize and support a wide range of tech events in West Michigan to help employers connect with talent and job seekers to build their networks.