



2024

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



WEST MICHIGAN
TECH TALENT

ABOUT THE COUNCIL



MISSION AND VISION

West Michigan Tech Talent connects local employers, educators, community organizations and workforce experts who are invested in creating a strong tech workforce. By sharing best practices, leveraging resources and collaborating on innovative solutions, we are addressing the tech talent gap.



INDUSTRY IMPACT

West Michigan Tech Talent is recognized as a critical resource to our region's employers, students and I.T. professionals in supporting their career needs. Our council includes leaders from the tech industry, economic and workforce development, intermediate school districts and higher education all working together to identify short and long-term opportunities. We leverage our shared expertise to develop actionable projects to cultivate the future IT workforce, and ensure the current, workforce has the skills to keep our industry thriving in West Michigan.

2024 was a banner year for WMTT. We connected hundreds of IT professionals through networking and educational events, taught employers how to hire Visa candidates and provided youth with IT career opportunities. We also supported talent recruitment through partnerships with GRWebDev, Beer City Code, SoftwareGR and Code on Wheels.

- Rob Geer, Randstad Digital Americas

GROW • DEVELOP • RECRUIT • RETAIN



DEVELOP



RECRUIT & RETAIN

Building a welcoming tech community through sponsorship and leadership of local meetups, conferences and events. We connect local employers with organizations that actively recruit top talent from outside areas to West Michigan.



BE THE CHANGE



{MI}CODE EXPERIENCE

{MI}Code Experience is an annual event that introduces third through fifth-grade students to coding and computer science career paths. Learning to code can help these students become the next generation of problem-solvers, creators and innovators!

This incredibly valuable experience allowed our students to practice coding and learn about future careers in this field. The 3rd grade teachers that participated in the {MI}Code Experience absolutely loved it and shared that they felt it was very beneficial for them and the students.

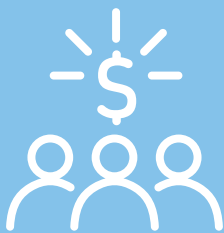
- Michelle Kuck, Muskegon Area ISD



71
CLASSROOMS

1,757
STUDENTS
ENGAGED

58
VOLUNTEERS



\$429,971
TRAINING
DOLLARS
INVESTED



241
PROFESSIONALS
TRAINED



100+
ENGAGED
EMPLOYERS



60
PROJECT
VOLUNTEERS

DEMYSTIFYING THE VISA PROCESS SERIES

This event empowered business owners, hiring managers and recruiters with the knowledge and tools to attract and retain top tech talent. Presenters shared insights into how to tap into this talented pool, including the basics of how to hire an international student as an intern or employee. Most importantly, this event served as a catalyst to create a series of events led by Global Detroit to continue the discussion.



The panel of experts provided industry partners and employers a unique opportunity to learn how and why to hire from the growing population of highly skilled international students at GVSU's Padnos College of Engineering and College of Computing, and the greater West Michigan area.

- Rachel Salinas, Grand Valley State University



4
EVENTS HELD

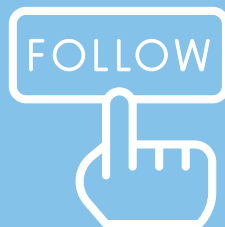
60+
PROFESSIONALS
ENGAGED



9,702
K-12 STUDENTS
EXPLORED
CAREERS



766
EVENT
ATTENDEES



3,200+
LINKEDIN AND
NEWSLETTER
FOLLOWERS



BE THE DIFFERENCE

MAKING CONNECTIONS

The council hosted several new and annual networking events this year, including an inaugural West Michigan Tech Trails series, a rooftop happy hour at Spartan Innovations, a Tech Week GR coffee shop discussion on DEI, a local brewery event on the future of tech and coffee and conversations at PeopleIT. Just this year, these events have built connections and community among more than 500 professionals.

Thank you to West Michigan Tech Talent for always working hard behind the scenes to bring such great events to the West Michigan area!

- Kim Peters, Feyen Zylstra

500+
ATTENDEES



TEACHERCON 2023

WMTT has supported TeacherCon from its inception by recruiting industry professionals to speak at events, arranging company tours and hosting special receptions. Since 2017, Grand Valley State University has supported over 700 middle & high school educators in Michigan to implement computer science courses within the school district in partnership with the MiSTEM Network. Each participating instructor commits to implementing computer science learning into their courses at the start of the academic year.



Having WMTT part of TeacherCon elevates our event and provides another layer of learning for our educators. The teachers were quite excited to hear from CS professionals in West Michigan and learn what they do in relation to Computer Science.

*- Larry Wyn,
Grand Valley State University*



9
PROFESSIONALS
RECRUITED

140
TEACHERS

COUNCIL MEMBERS



- ROB GEER
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
RANDSTAD DIGITAL
- SARA SCHMIDT
US FOODS
- BRIAN ANDERSON
AUGUSTO
- STEVE BAAR
NATIONAL NAIL
- CINDY BROWN
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
- LISA FRICANO
GORDON FOOD SERVICE
- TARITA JOHNSON
THE RIGHT PLACE
- AMY LEBEDNICK
WEST MICHIGAN WORKS!
- GREG SNOW
COREWELL HEALTH
- GARRY VONMYHR
TECH DEFENDERS
- ELIZABETH WILSON
VERVINT
- ROBERT WRIGHT
SPARTANNASH

FUNDERS

- COREWELL HEALTH
- GORDON FOOD SERVICE
- SPARTANNASH
- VERVINT
- GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
- TECH DEFENDERS
- THE RIGHT PLACE
- NATIONAL NAIL
- AUGUSTO
- RANDSTAD DIGITAL
- MENTAVI HEALTH
- INSPERITY
- BIZSTREAM
- SPARTAN INNOVATIONS
- MICROSOFT TEALS
- LAST MILE CAFE
- MACATAWA TECHNOLOGIES
- COMPUCRAFT TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS
- MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION
- GLOBAL DETROIT
- TANIUM
- FUSIONARY
- IMLAW
- BRAVO LT
- PEOPLEIT
- LAKESHORE ADVANTAGE



West Michigan Works! is a division of ACSET, an equal opportunity employer/program and a proud partner of the American Job Center network. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. West Michigan Works! is supported by state and federal funds; more details at westmiworks.org/about/.