

West Coast Way

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026

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Prosperity

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Your New
Chamber Home

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OWNER, YELLOW
LIME CREATIVE

Relationships Matter



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PLATINUM PARTNER



COMMUNITY CHAMPION PREMIER PARTNER



GOLD PREMIER PARTNERS



SILVER PREMIER PARTNERS



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CATALYST, CONVENER, AND CHAMPION

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.

THE WEST COAST WAY

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It's January, and while the Chamber's fiscal year begins in September, the start of the new year marks an exciting new chapter as we officially welcome our members into our new home at The Next Center.

We're excited to open our doors and invite you to explore this space, because it's not just our home, it's yours too. It's a place where businesses can connect, grow, and thrive, and we're grateful to be able to share it with you.

As we step into this new season, I'm reminded of our Inspire Award winner, Yellow Lime Creative, whose strong community relationships and contagious energy reflect what makes this region so special. Their example captures exactly what we envision for The Next Center — a place of collaboration, connection, and a shared commitment to strengthening our business community.

This move represents more than a change of address. It marks the beginning of a new chapter for our business community, one where innovation, partnership, and shared success take center stage. Thank you for your continued support and for being a part of the West Coast Chamber story.

We can't wait to see you in our new space and continue trailblazing into the future, together.

Jodi Owczarski

President & CEO

Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

Fostering Economic Prosperity:

How West Michigan Works! and JR Automation Bridge the Talent Gap


By Brandon Dellaposta

Business Solutions Representative, West Michigan Works!

For more than five years, JR Automation, a Hitachi Group Company, has partnered with West Michigan Works! to strengthen its workforce and meet growing industry demands.

What began as a shared goal—expanding access to training and supporting employee growth—has evolved into a longstanding and continually developing relationship grounded in communication, trust, and mutual commitment.

Central to this collaboration is West Michigan Works! support through the Going PRO Talent Fund, which has enabled JR Automation to launch impactful training initiatives across its teams. With the help of these funds, the company has implemented programs such



When people thrive, communities thrive, and this partnership makes that possible.

as Project Management training, the Master Supervisor leadership program, and specialized courses delivered by local experts. These efforts have elevated employee skills, improved readiness for future challenges, and aligned with JR Automation's commitment to advanced manufacturing excellence.



According to Kristen Schuitema, Talent Acquisition Manager, this partnership is driven by more than workforce need:

“Our collaboration with West Michigan Works! through the Going PRO Talent Fund is about more than training—it’s about unlocking potential. Together, we’ve created opportunities that empower our team members to grow, lead, and shape the future of our industry. When people thrive, communities thrive, and this partnership makes that possible.”

West Michigan Works! has supported JR Automation through multiple Going PRO applications across eight of its Michigan locations, reflecting the depth of this growing partnership. At the center of that work is Business Solutions Representative Brandon Dellaposta, who has fostered a strong and trusted relationship with Schuitema. Through consistent communication, a clear understanding of JR Automation's workforce needs, and a proactive approach to sharing available resources, Brandon has helped the company navigate a wide range of workforce-development tools and grant opportunities.

This collaboration has resulted in meaningful training investments, strengthened talent pipelines, and sustained support for a company that plays a vital role in the economic growth of West Michigan.

The JR Automation partnership reflects the larger mission of West Michigan Works!: addressing the region's



talent gaps through innovative recruitment, training, and retention solutions. By deeply understanding a businesses goals and challenges—and by aligning resources to meet those needs—the organization helps build long-term partnerships that remain strong even as labor markets shift.

Over the past year, West Michigan Works! directed more than \$15.3 million in Going PRO Talent Fund training dollars, creating opportunities for employees across the region to gain new skills, increase confidence, and prepare for the demands of today's global marketplace.

By investing in people—and in the businesses who depend on them—West Michigan Works! helps ensure that the lakeshore region moves toward sustained economic prosperity.



Brandon Dellaposta received a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Michigan-Flint and has experience in project management. After working closely with students at University of Michigan-Flint Admissions Office he found a passion for helping people, leading him to workforce development after moving to the west side of the state from Grand Blanc. Brandon enjoys being a part of the business world, meeting and connecting with businesses, and seeing the community grow as he helps others.

Brandon has enjoyed playing soccer for the last eighteen years and was proud to be able to play for Cleary University. He also enjoys playing golf, visiting family, helping his significant other with photography, and gaming.





Strengthening Your Leadership Voice:

How Clear, Confident Communication Sets the Tone for Everything

By Kim
Boudreau Smith

Leadership &
Communication
Consultant

Every leader walks into a room carrying two voices: the one they speak out loud, and the one inside their head. The problem? Most rely on the wrong one.

You can have the title. The responsibility. The team. The goals. But if you're leading from the noisy internal dialogue, second-guessing, over-explaining, hedging, or shrinking, you dilute your influence before you even begin.

Strong leadership isn't about being the loudest or having all the answers. It's about communicating with clarity, self-trust, and a presence that says, "I know where we're going, and I'm leading us there and we can do this together!"

This is where leadership falters today. Leaders are overwhelmed, performing, rushing to respond, or trapped in proving mode instead of actually communicating. They're talking without connecting. They're leading without truly being followed.

And in a world with too much noise and too little trust, your voice, your true leadership voice, is the differentiator.

Why Your Leadership Voice Matters More Than Ever

Your communication sets the culture before any policy does. Employees read you long before they listen to you. When you speak with clarity, confidence, and intention, you create stability. When you communicate from doubt, defensiveness, or disconnection, your team feels it instantly.

A strong leadership voice:

- Lowers confusion and boosts alignment and productivity
- Inspires action instead of compliance
- Strengthens trust, especially in uncertain seasons

- Reduces conflict and misinterpretation
- Elevates your executive presence and credibility

You don't have to be perfect. You just need to be honest, grounded, and willing to show up fully.

How to Strengthen Your Leadership Voice

Here are four practical shifts any leader can adopt immediately whether you're leading a company, a team, or a room full of decision-makers:

1. Slow down so people can keep up with you.

Most leaders move so fast they leave their presence behind. Speed creates confusion. Pausing creates authority and confidence. When you speak slower, breathe deeper, and take a beat before responding, your influence expands. People trust leaders who think before they talk.

2. Lead with clarity, not convenience.

If your message isn't clear, your team will fill in the blanks, and their conclusions won't be flattering. State expectations, decisions, and direction plainly. No hedging. No softening. No ten-minute monologues. Clear is compassionate.

3. Check your internal dialogue before it hijacks your delivery.

If your self-talk is saying, "Don't mess this up... sound smart... they won't take you seriously..." your communication will show it. Presence cracks the moment insecurity drives the message. Leaders must manage their inner critic before stepping into a conversation.

4. Speak from your values, not your reactions.

When you communicate from grounded principles, truth, alignment, and vision, your people follow. When

you react from frustration, pressure, or fear, they protect themselves. One builds momentum. The other erodes trust.

Great communication isn't a skill reserved for "natural speakers." It's a leadership discipline. And it's available to anyone willing to practice it.

The Bottom Line

Your leadership voice is not what you say, it's what people experience when you say it. When you bring clarity, calm, and confident presence into rooms that are otherwise rushed and reactive, people listen differently. They trust differently. They respond differently.

Leadership isn't about getting louder. It's about getting truer. And when you lead with a voice rooted in confidence and clarity, you not only elevate your own presence, you elevate the people around you.



Kim Boudreau Smith is a Leadership & Communication Consultant who helps high-achieving women business owners and organizational leaders strengthen their executive presence, communicate with clarity, and lead with a bold, authentic voice. With decades of entrepreneurial leadership experience and a body of work spanning coaching, consulting, group facilitation, retreats, and corporate training, Kim equips leaders to quiet internal self-doubt, engage teams more effectively, and show up with the confidence their roles demand.

She has worked with executives, VPs, and 6-7-figure business owners across multiple industries, helping them navigate high-stakes conversations, strengthen communication culture, and elevate visibility and influence. Kim is based in the Detroit area and is dedicated to helping leaders rise with more of themselves, not more pressure.





Welcome to Your New Chamber Home

By Emmy Riemersma

Marketing Coordinator,
Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce



It's official – the doors are open, and you can now find the West Coast Chamber at our new home on the third floor of The Next Center in downtown Holland.

This move is more than a change of address. This space was built for you – our members – and because of your support, we're able to trailblaze and achieve remarkable things together. We can't wait to welcome you in.

Designed with connection and collaboration in mind, the Chamber's new home reflects our role as a Catalyst, Convener, and Champion for the West Michigan business community. Every square foot was intentionally created to support innovation, strengthen partnerships, and deepen our shared impact.

The Innovation Center Powered by LG Energy Solution

At the heart of the new space is the Innovation Center powered by LG Energy Solution – the hub for all in-house Chamber programming. This flexible, modular environment can shift from two rooms to one large meeting area to a completely open layout. It's built to adapt to whatever our members need: leadership workshops, networking events, trainings, and more.

The Career Center Powered by Haworth

Just steps away, the Career Center powered by Haworth brings to life a physical hub for career exploration and workforce development. Here, students and young adults will engage in hands-on programming, gain access to professional tools, and form meaningful connections with local employers.

You're Invited

As we open this next chapter, we want you to experience the space that was built with you in mind. Our new home at The Next Center was intentionally designed for our members, and we're inviting you to step inside and see it for yourself.

Join us for a self-guided open house tour, meet our team, and explore how this space can support your business, your goals, and the future of our community. We're here to help you connect, grow, and thrive.

Open House Tour Opportunities

- Tuesday, January 20 | 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
- Friday, January 23 | 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- Monday, January 26 | 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
- Wednesday, January 28 | 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM



Scan the QR code to the left or visit our website (westcoastchamber.org) to register for the date that works best for you. Come see what we've built together.

Host Your Next Meeting Here

Our new home at The Next Center was built for connection, and now it's available to you.

Explore our rental options perfect for meetings, trainings, and more. Visit our website for more information or to book the space.

Thank you to those who are trailblazing with us!

Thank you to the organizations and leaders who have contributed to our Trailblazing Into the Future Capital Campaign. Your generosity helped bring this new space to life and is creating a lasting impact on our business community.

Business Supporters

A.D. Bos Vending Services

Avancer Executive Search

Boileau & Co.

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Cento Anni

Comfort Keepers

Don's Flowers & Gifts

DP Creative Audio & Video

Driesenga & Associates

EV Construction

Foster Swift Collins & Smith PC

GHSP

Gill Staffing

Global Concepts Enterprise

Gordon Water Systems

Greg Maybury Consulting LLC

Haveman Electric

Haworth

Heartland Builders LLC

Holland Hospital

Holland Tasting Tours

Hungerford

Impact Fab, Inc.

Independent Bank

i-team

Kamer Agency - Farm Bureau Insurance

Koops Automation Systems

LG Energy Solution

LVZ Financial Planning

Lakewood Construction

Lighthouse Title Group

Metal Flow Corporation

Modales Wines

Next Creative Co.

Now for the Next Fund

Old National Bank

Peachwave Frozen Yogurt & Gelato

Perspective 3D

Shoreline Technology Solutions

TNT Roofing Inc

The Insurance Group - Stacy Segrist Kamphuis | Doug Kamphuis

Tiara Yachts

Total Control Health Plans

United Bank

Warner Norcross + Judd LLP

Wildman Business Group

Yellow Lime Creative

Individual Contributors

José and Juanita Bocanegra

Nathan and Elizabeth Bocks

Hannah Bowen and Sean Reamer Brinks

Brooks Family Community Fund of the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area

Scott and Amanda Brooks Family Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of the Holland/

Jane and Robert Clark

Jennifer and Josh Crosby

Britt and Josh Delo

Lucas and Karina Emerick

Boyd, Danielle and Reese Feltman

Alyssa and Mitchell Gabriele

Liz and Pete Hoffswell

Doug and Stacy Kamphuis

Raechel Kamphuis

Har Ye Kan

Aris Knitter-Lee

Hope Lesperance

Marcia and Richard Lievense

Mike and Abby Lucas

Jessica Lynch and Mike Shidler

Jodi and Tyler Owczarski

Luke and Katherine Panning

Scott and Jenny Patchin

Michele and Joe Priebe

Shawn Rasmussen

Emmy and Malik Riemersma

Dan and Kelli Robertson

Colleen and Kevin Schipsi

Jill Schutte

Kelly and Randy Springer

Patti VanDort Family

Lindsey and Nate Younglove

Donor listings are current as of December 9, 2025

INDEPENDENT | BANK

Personalities over portfolios

People before money.



IndependentBank.com

Member
FDIC



By Alex Tillard

Owner &
Creative Director,
Yellow Lime
Creative

Who Is Yellow Lime?

Yellow Lime Creative is a team of six creative women who bring color, joy, and inspiration to a room. We're a full-service marketing agency focused on crafting beautiful and strategic work; whether that's branding, websites, content, messaging, or big-picture planning. And we do all of that while celebrating our community..

Our “contagious energy, bold ideas, and strong community relationships” are what earned us the Inspire Award at the 2025 West Coast Chamber Awards. And that “contagious energy” isn't something we generate on our own. It comes from people—our team, our clients, and the community that surrounds us.

Our History

Yellow Lime began in 2019 when I became an “accidental entrepreneur” and purchased the book of business from the agency I'd been working for. At the time, I assumed I'd simply be a freelancer. I definitely didn't anticipate navigating a global pandemic or building a full team of talented women just a few short years later.

But when I talked with my clients—almost all of whom chose to stay with me—we decided to take a leap of faith together. After two years of working independently

and a handful of strategic collaborations, Yellow Lime officially became a team in 2021.

We began by converting the den of my home into our first office (free rent!), and we worked out of that cozy space for two years. In 2023, we upgraded to a real office on 16th Street and Waverly in Holland (shout out Hungerford for being the best landlords). As the team grew to six women over the next few years, we expanded again and moved upstairs in the same building, giving us more room to collaborate, create, and dream.

Everything is Figure-outable

We have a mantra here: “Everything is figure-outable”.

On any given day, you'll find one of us crafting a custom branding package, while someone else is designing a website, and the person next to her is tweaking marketing personas, and another one of us is out at a networking event, while the other two are in a strategic messaging planning meeting. We believe that in order to have the best results in your marketing, you need cohesive planning, which is why we don't just do one piece of the marketing puzzle. We do our best work when we walk alongside organizations to create a strategic plan and see it brought to life through fruitful marketing (yes, pun intended).

What Inspires Us?

It always comes back to people.

Over the past six years, we've had the privilege of partnering with incredible businesses, startups, nonprofits, and individuals. Our community inspires us every single day, whether we're attending events, sponsoring a nonprofit, hosting workshops, connecting people, or sending lots of handwritten notes (in colorful envelopes, naturally); West Michigan is such a unique place, and we're incredibly grateful to call this place our home.



What sets Yellow Lime apart?

On the client side, we approach every client relationship with intentionality. Our unique onboarding process helps us truly get to know the people behind the business. That extra layer of connection doesn't just make our work more fun, it sparks better ideas, builds trust, and allows space for honesty, collaboration, and the occasional shared laugh over a story we all remember.

On a team level, we've all experienced workplace cultures where everyone is siloed, disconnected, or too overwhelmed to be creative. When that happens, teamwork suffers, and the work suffers with it.

At Yellow Lime, we know that when teammates genuinely care about one another's work and well-being, the quality of the work thrives. That's why our

Monday morning huddles always begin with weekend recaps, a light-hearted question, and shoutouts from the previous week. Those small moments of connection make a big difference.

We're also committed to operating on a four-day workweek. Not because it's trendy, but because balance shouldn't be a buzzword. Our people do their best work when they have space to live, rest, and be whole humans outside of the office.

What does the Inspire Award mean to Yellow Lime?

We're so grateful to the Chamber for recognizing us (and for so many clients and friends who submitted on our behalf).

We hope this recognition helps us connect with even more organizations that want a marketing partner who is collaborative, strategic, and genuinely invested. Our goal has always been to help our clients feel cared for and less stressed.

To our friends, partners, and clients: thank you for cheering us on every step of the way. We can't wait to see what the future holds for Yellow Lime and for this community we love so much.



Alex became an accidental entrepreneur when she opened Yellow Lime after over a decade working for other people doing mainly graphic design. Her ability to use her left and right brain together simultaneously to meld creative design and strategy is a work of magic. Her sweet spots are in branding and print but she can also rock a good (but messy) spreadsheet.

She's an enneagram 9 who leans into her 1 and 8 wings when she needs to, and when she's not working, she loves escape rooms, puzzles, board games and a good book. When she isn't playing mom and chauffeur to her three kiddos, you'll find her cracking jokes with her hubby while snuggling her two doodles.



5 Levers to Create a Culture of Accountability

By Dr. Jeff Doolittle

Founder,
Organizational
Talent Consulting

Accountability is a frustrating topic for many leaders and business owners. Despite careful hiring practices, well-designed employment policies, and even digital monitoring, accountability remains puzzling. Why do some employees take accountability for their actions and others don't? When it's lacking, company performance and culture suffer. When done right, accountability leads to better outcomes. Holding others accountable isn't easy, but it significantly impacts your leadership and business results. An organizational culture of accountability is architected. It doesn't just happen. Here are five psychological levers for leaders to create workplace accountability.

Why employee accountability matters

A recent CEO benchmarking report found that nearly one in five CEOs surveyed identified holding others accountable as their greatest weakness, and almost as many struggled with letting go of underperformers. Holding employees accountable is difficult for leaders, even when they are responsible to others for business results.

Employees ignore, deny, blame, and play the victim in a toxic culture without accountability. Evidence from various studies links employee accountability to:

- Job satisfaction
- Motivation
- Stress
- Ethical behavior
- Job performance
- Discretionary effort



5 Psychological levers of accountability

Researchers have found that in the workplace, these five psychological dimensions drive accountability:

Accountability Lever 1: Attribution

When others know who did it—the more personal, explicit, and unambiguous a task, the greater the attribution accountability. When employees expect their actions and decisions can or might be linked directly to them, and leaders know their name, they are more likely to take accountability. Evidence suggests clear standards and expectations increase attribution accountability. Make job descriptions and performance expectations more explicit.

Idea: Develop meaningful relationships with your team members.

Accountability Lever 2: Observation

In a culture of observation accountability, employees expect their behaviors and judgments to be observed by their leader, peers, followers, and others. As the audience size increases, employees' observation accountability increases because they feel more likely to be observed.

Idea: Emphasize transparency and increase the visibility of individual work.

Accountability Lever 3: Evaluation

Feedback is provided for actions and judgments, and the ability exists to be compared to others. Employees who expect performance to be meaningfully reviewed



feel more evaluation accountability. Additionally, when the evaluation outcomes are variable, it increases evaluation accountability.

Idea: Reviewer status increases evaluation accountability. Include a second level (i.e., the leader's leader) review of formal performance evaluations.

Accountability Lever 4: Obligation

Having to explain an action or the way a decision is made and its effect on the well-being of others. Employees who expect to answer for their actions feel an increased obligation accountability.

Idea: Reporting to multiple leaders or customers increases obligation accountability. Use performance calibration meetings with other leaders at the same level to increase visibility to talent across the organization and performance visibility.

Accountability Lever 5: Consequential

Employees working in effective accountability systems expect their actions to be linked to good or bad consequences. Consequences and rewards involve extrinsic (ex., earning a bonus or avoiding a negative) and intrinsic attributes (ex., personal satisfaction or enjoyment). According to equity theory, employees are motivated when rewards are fair as compared to others.

Idea: Involve employees in defining rewards and recognition systems and defining levels of expectation for tasks.

Holding employees accountable isn't easy, but it significantly impacts your leadership and business results.



Dr. Jeff Doolittle is a human capital consultant and executive coach dedicated to elevating leaders and empowering organizational excellence. With over 25 years of experience across Fortune 500 companies, he is known for building high-trust relationships and using data-driven insights to drive culture, performance, and strategic growth. Jeff has held senior leadership roles in talent management and organizational development across industries, including healthcare, manufacturing, retail, and distribution.

*He has led significant initiatives in culture building, leadership development, performance improvement, and strategic workforce planning. Jeff holds a Doctorate in Strategic Leadership from Regent University and an MBA from Olivet Nazarene University. The author of *Life-Changing Leadership Habits: 10 Proven Principles That Will Elevate People, Profit, and Purpose*, Jeff lives in Zeeland, MI, where he enjoys hiking, scuba diving, and serving his community through a local recovery ministry and non-profit service initiatives.*

Upcoming Programs

Advocacy in Action: West Michigan Policy Forum

JANUARY 9, 2026



7:45 AM – 9:00 AM | West Coast Chamber

Join us for Advocacy in Action where we will welcome Jase Bolger, President of the West Michigan Policy Forum, to provide insight into statewide policy priorities and their impact on our region. Plus, you'll hear updates directly from our state legislators to stay informed on the issues shaping West Michigan's future.

Lead Sponsor: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

2026 Economic Forecast

JANUARY 13, 2026



7:30 AM – 9:00 AM | Engedi Church

Join Dr. Paul Isely, as he shares expert insights into the trends shaping our local, state, and national economies. Gain a clear picture of what to expect in the year ahead — from workforce and inflation to consumer confidence and business growth. You'll walk away with the data, context, and perspective you need to make informed decisions for your business and our region's future.

Program Sponsor: Huntington National Bank

West Coast YPs Kick Off

JANUARY 13, 2026



4:00 PM – 5:30 PM | West Coast Chamber

Join us for an energizing kick off to the West Coast YPs program! Professionals ages 35 and under are invited to an exclusive sneak peek of the new Chamber space at the Next Center. Enjoy a self-guided tour, hear what's ahead for YP programming in our community, and get connected with other YPs. See you there!

Program Sponsorship Available

Social Mingle Sponsor: Macatawa Bank

Workshop: Driving Culture Change – Tools for Today's Leaders

JANUARY 21, 2026



8:00 AM – 10:00 AM | West Coast Chamber

Join us for Driving Culture Change: Tools for Today's Leaders, an interactive workshop with Design Group International that helps leaders uncover what truly drives their workplace culture. Walk away with practical tools and a personalized roadmap to lead meaningful, lasting change within your organization.

Lead Sponsor: Fifth Third Bank

Power Hour

JANUARY 28, 2026



3:00 PM – 5:00 PM | West Coast Chamber

Don't miss the afternoon edition of Power Hour—our first in the Chamber's brand-new space—complete with energizing structured networking rounds, a tour of the new space, and complimentary snacks. It's the perfect way to wrap up your workday and grow your network.

Program Sponsorship Available.

Workshop: Website That Wows – A Practical Workshop for Small Businesses

FEBRUARY 4, 2026



8:00 AM – 9:30 AM | West Coast Chamber

Create a website that shines. In this practical workshop with Yellow Lime Creative, you'll learn how to plan, design, and elevate your online presence—whether you're launching a brand-new site or improving the one you have. You'll leave with clear strategies, useful tools, and the confidence to turn your website into your business's most powerful marketing asset.

Program Sponsorship Available.

To register, and for an up-to-date list of all upcoming events, scan the QR code or visit **westcoastchamber.org**.



Advocacy in Action: Energy Sustainability & Management

FEBRUARY 6, 2026


 7:45 AM – 9:00 AM | West Coast Chamber

Join us for Advocacy in Action as we welcome Foresight Management, a Holland-based leader in energy sustainability and management. Their team will share insights on emerging trends, evolving regulations, and practical strategies businesses can use to reduce costs, strengthen resilience, and meet growing sustainability expectations. You'll also hear timely updates from our state legislators to stay informed on policy discussions shaping West Michigan's economic future.

Lead Sponsor: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Wake Up West Coast

FEBRUARY 10, 2026

 7:30 AM – 9:00 AM | Haworth Hotel


We're excited to welcome Kyle Sexton to Wake Up West Coast this February. Known for his dynamic style and strategic insights, Kyle will share forward-thinking ideas to help local businesses adapt, innovate, and stand out in today's shifting economy.

Program Sponsor: GMB

Morning Mingle Sponsor: RedWater

Social Hour

FEBRUARY 18, 2026

 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM | X-Golf Holland


Expand your network and enjoy a relaxed evening with fellow professionals at this month's Social Hour. We're gathering at X-Golf Holland, where you'll find state-of-the-art golf simulators, a lively bar, and a welcoming atmosphere that's perfect for meeting new people.

Swing by—whether you golf or not—for easy conversation, great connections, and a chance to support a local business.

Program Sponsorship Available.

Lakeshore Women Connect

MARCH 5, 2026

 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM | Haworth Corporate

Connect, celebrate, and be inspired at Lakeshore Women Connect. Enjoy networking, refreshments, and a special program recognizing women stepping into new roles and leadership positions. All are welcome to attend and support the honorees.

Tickets are limited—reserve yours today.

Program Sponsorship Available.

Please note the West Coast Chamber's new address is:
**65 E 7th Street, Suite 300,
Holland, MI 49423**

HAPPENINGS



Attendees at October's Wake Up West Coast featuring Rob Hughes.



CraftCo. opened their tasting room and restaurant, CraftCo. Social House.



Sun Title celebrated the grand opening of their Holland location.



Werner Roofing commemorated the opening of their Holland location.



The Stave and Barrel opened their new retail store in the Holland Town Center.



The West Michigan Regional Airport marked their next stage of growth with a ribbon cutting.



The Holland Ice Park officially opened with a community celebration.



Women enjoy networking at Port 393 during the Women Inspiring Women event.



Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) celebrated the purchase of their own building.



Taryn Kutches and Jodi Owczarski at Wake Up West Coast in November.



Alliance Retirement Plan Solutions celebrated one year of their Zeeland office with a ribbon cutting.



Affordable Education Starts Here — Together, We've Got This

Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) was established in 1914 as Michigan's first community college and we are proud to provide accessible education opportunities that are responsive to the needs of West Michigan.

Whether a student's goal is to launch a rewarding career after graduation or to transfer to a top university, GRCC is here to help everyone succeed. We're not just about earning a degree or certificate — we're removing barriers to education and transforming lives. GRCC offers more than 145 career, transfer and certificate programs, from business and healthcare to skilled trades and technology. Classes are offered in Grand Rapids, Holland and online, giving students the flexibility to design a schedule that works for their life.

GRCC has served the lakeshore community since 1989 by offering access to in-demand academic and job skills

training. Today, our state-of-the-art Lakeshore Campus facility features 10 classrooms, three computer labs and five specialty areas — plus on-site student support services to help everyone achieve their goals. With flexible schedules, high-quality instruction and significant financial aid opportunities, GRCC remains a top choice for students of all backgrounds and experiences.

And because we know that life doesn't pause for education, our programs and support services are built around what works for students. From free tutoring and counseling to transportation and food assistance, students have the resources they need to focus on achieving their goals. No matter their path, students can start their education for less and feel empowered to meet today's economic, social and environmental challenges with confidence and purpose. We'll be beside them every step of the way. Together, we've got this!



New & Renewing Members

Welcome to these new members who recently joined the West Coast Chamber!

Alliance Financial & Insurance

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Focusing on West Michigan's Reliability Future

Jeremy Grossenbacher can't remember the last outage to his family-owned property in Coopersville that has housed a business for his entire life – more than 40 years.

The most recent family venture is Coopersville Brewery, in West Michigan and is owned and operated by Grossenbacher. Previously, it was a Recreational Vehicle dealership that the family operated for several decades and where Grossenbacher learned how to run a business.

Keeping The Doors Open

"I think in any business, especially one that is six days a week and is customer-facing, being reliable and being open within that time frame is paramount," he said. "We don't make money if our doors aren't open, and we can't serve our customers. And in the almost four years we've been open we've seen little to no disruption."

He compares relying on reliable power to an important piece of equipment like a glycol chiller, a refrigeration system that uses a mixture of water and glycol to cool liquids.

"It's an unsung hero," he said. "And you take it for granted. Nobody cares until it becomes a problem. But every day we can flip a switch and turn the lights on. And Consumers Energy has helped. They are with us every single day to help us run this business."

Nearly 90,000 Ottawa County residents and thousands of visitors to the area count on us to power their lives. And that means fewer outages and shorter outage durations.

There is a lot of work that has been done or underway to improve the reliability for thousands of customers in Ottawa County and the rest of West Michigan, including underground work, substations improvements and additional fuses added to circuits.

And making our service more reliable for our customers throughout Michigan continues to be a priority. In 2024, our crews completed 1,350 major projects to improve reliability and we've had similar progress as we close out 2025.

Rich Houtteman, a Consumers Energy area manager for the west side of the state, said it's a top priority to help provide reliable services to recruit businesses and help them grow.

"Our mission is to help Michigan be a destination to attract talent to this state," Houtteman said. "As well as to help those businesses expand who want to stay here and continue to thrive."

An A For Reliability

Grossenbacher said he would give Consumers Energy an A for the reliability efforts being made to power his daily life.

"We count on Consumers Energy so that we can open our doors every day," Grossenbacher said. "If we don't have power, we can't open our doors. If we don't have power, we can't brew and make our beer. If we don't have power, I can't turn my fryers on and make delicious dollar wings on Wednesdays, and that's important to us."

Get to Know Your Chamber Team



At the West Coast Chamber, our work is powered by a team that shows up every day with contagious energy, curiosity, and a commitment to delivering remarkable experiences for our members.

We're catalysts for business growth, conveners of leaders and ideas, and champions for a thriving community. Together, we're dedicated to trailblazing new paths and making sure every member feels supported and connected.

The entire team is incredibly passionate about the work we get to do. **Read on to learn more about each staff member below.**



Jodi Owczarski

PRESIDENT AND CEO



Years with the Chamber: 9

What's something you enjoy doing outside of work?

I'm a diehard Spartan and proud MSU alum. It's where I met my husband! We love having season football tickets and can't get enough of Spartan basketball and volleyball.

What do you love about your work at the Chamber?

This role is never a "have to" for me, it's always a "get to." I get to wake up every day

knowing that when I do my work well, our community is stronger because of it. As the CEO, I get to dream about the future, set a bold direction, and then roll up my sleeves to help make it happen. Right now, I'm especially excited about building our new Career Center. Imagining the ways it will shape the future for students and young professionals is energizing. I can't wait to see the ripples of impact we're making grow into tidal waves of positive change.



Britt Delo

VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



Years with the Chamber: 8

What's something people might not know about you?

I'm an ordained minister and I've officiated 4 weddings. I've loved being a part of my friends' weddings in such a special way!

What do you love about your work at the Chamber?

I love waking up and going to work. I know that might sound a little crazy, but I truly love what I get to do. It took years and several different jobs for me to finally

discover that the West Coast Chamber was exactly where I belonged. I'm so grateful for all of the people and businesses I get to meet and work with, the students and educators I'm able to connect and grow with, and ultimately, the community we all get to positively impact through hard work and collaboration. Every day is a new and exciting challenge to think bigger and to trailblaze together to create a future that's bright for generations to come. Some may call me cheesy, but I believe it from the bottom of my heart!



Colleen Schipsi

VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS



Years with the Chamber: 10

What's a fun fact about you?

I met my husband, Kevin, on Mackinac Island when we were both working at the historic Grand Hotel. It's one of my favorite reminders that the best connections often happen when you least expect them.

What excites you about the work you get to do?

Every day I feel grateful to do what I love, with people I love, while making a difference in our thriving community. Over my ten years at the Chamber, I've seen firsthand how our work helps businesses grow and connections thrive. Looking ahead, I'm most excited about moving into our new home at The Next Center and continuing to create ripples of influence that grow into lasting impact for our community.



Lindsey Younglove

VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBERSHIP



Months with the Chamber: 2

What do you value most outside of work?

Staying connected to my family. I'm originally from West Virginia, so I love traveling back home when I can, and I also value time with my family here in West Michigan. The older I get, the more I realize that being with loved ones matters most. It keeps me grounded and reminds me of my 'why.'

Why do you love what you do?

I love what I do because it allows me to build meaningful relationships while creating positive, lasting change in our community. Bringing people together, supporting their growth, and helping them discover their passions and develop their skills is incredibly fulfilling—and it reminds me why this work matters every day.



Hannah Bowen

PROGRAM MANAGER



Years with the Chamber: 4

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

If I could invent teleportation, I would! I love calling West Michigan home, but I also love to travel anywhere and everywhere. When I'm not exploring, you'll usually find me with a book in hand, reading anything and everything I can get my hands on.

What do you love most about your role?

As Program Manager, I get to dream up and deliver the experiences that bring our Chamber to life, from high-energy networking to inspiring workshops and big community celebrations. I'm all about the details that make events feel seamless and remarkable for our members. What I'm most excited about? Our new office space will give us even more room for big ideas, meaningful connections, and plenty of coffee-fueled conversations. Got ideas for future programs? I'm all ears—let's connect!



Alyssa Gabriele

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



Years with the Chamber: 3

What's something that brings you joy?

I'm happiest hanging out with my husband Mitchell and daughter Ava, sneaking in a game of tennis or golf, enjoying a meal at our go-to spot The Butler, and catching up on a good podcast.

What drives your passion for your work?

I love working with our business community, and as a former business owner, I feel a strong connection to small

businesses in particular. I can empathize with their challenges and am passionate about making sure our resources truly work for them. One of my favorite parts of this role is getting to know the unique businesses that make Holland and Zeeland so special, and I'm excited to see our area continue to grow and thrive. My work ties directly to the Chamber's mission of being a catalyst for business growth and development, which I focus on every day. And truly, there's no bigger champion for a thriving business community than our team!



Emmy Riemersma

MARKETING COORDINATOR



Years with the Chamber: 1.5

What's something you're passionate about outside of work?

I've been a dancer for over 20 years and I teach dance at Avalon School of the Arts in Holland. I love the opportunity to perform and express my creativity on stage!

Why do you love what you do?

I spend most of my time behind the scenes (unless I'm out capturing photos at an event!), but I love getting to tell our members' stories and shine a spotlight on the incredible people and organizations that make our community thrive. It's energizing to me to celebrate the impact being made in our community every day through creativity and storytelling.



Lauren Siegers

MEMBER EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR



Months with the Chamber: 4

What's something you're passionate about?

I have always loved animals – ask me how many pets I have! I especially enjoy spending time riding horses with my close friends with our dogs running along.

What excites you about your work at the Chamber?

From my initial interview, I knew that the Chamber was the right place for me. I am incredibly grateful to work with the Chamber team and honored to be part of the Chamber's trailblazing work. I'm currently looking forward to welcoming you into our new space at the Next Center.



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