NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2026

West Coast Way

A Publication of the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce



The West Ottawa Way

Where strong relationships and meaningful opportunities help every student find their path forward.

ON THE COVER

Pictured from left to right: Kristin Graham, Todd Tulgestke, Tim Bearden, Matt Stolz

PHOTO CREDIT

Elisabeth Marie Photography

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ABOUT THE CHAMBER

The Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce exists to be a trailblazing organization that creates tidal waves of positive impact. 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 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 Chamber is proud to be named a 2025 Chamber of the Year by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE).

THE WEST COAST WAY

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Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

We have a lot to celebrate in this community. And if you know me, you know I love a good reason to celebrate the people who make this place so special.

Each year, our Annual Awards shine a spotlight on remarkable people and organizations. While our honorees represent different industries and experiences, they have something important in common: they see opportunities to make a difference, and they choose to do something about it.

In this issue, we're proud to feature our 2026 Excellence Award recipient, West Ottawa Public Schools. Their impact extends far beyond the classroom as they create opportunities for young people, build strong community partnerships, and prepare the next generation for what comes next.

And they're not alone. Every day, people and organizations throughout our community are creating their own Moments of Positive Impact. Sometimes they're big and easy to see. More often, they happen quietly through an opportunity, a helping hand, or someone simply choosing to step up.

I hope these stories remind you how much there is to celebrate here and inspire you to create a Moment of Positive Impact of your own. Because that's how a million moments begin. One moment at a time.

Jodi Owczarski
President & CEO

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Meet the New Chamber Board Members

The West Coast Chamber Board of Directors consists of local business leaders who guide the Chamber's work and ensure we continue to fulfill our mission. Representing a diverse range of industries, backgrounds, and experiences, these individuals volunteer their time, expertise, and leadership to serve our entire Chamber community.

This year, we're excited to welcome five new Board Members, including a Young Professional representative. Keep reading to get to know these individuals and learn more about their passion for our business community.



Nick Cassidy

Holland Public Schools

Title: Superintendent

Years at Current Organization: 14

What's one value or principle that guides you in your work?

We believe our responsibility extends beyond educating students. We are preparing the next generation of leaders, workers, and community members who will strengthen Holland.

What do you believe makes our business community special?

Our local businesses invest in our students and our future workforce. There's a genuine understanding that when our students succeed, Holland succeeds. That shared commitment to the next generation is what makes the Holland business community truly special.

What excites you about joining the Chamber board?

I am excited to join the Chamber board and be a voice for our local schools. I am honored to be a part of a Chamber that focuses on creating opportunities and mutually beneficial partnerships.



Kent Ensing

Global Concepts Enterprise

Title: President

Years at Current Organization: 5

What's one value or principle that guides you in your work?

Growing up in an entrepreneurial family, I learned early on in my life the importance of the customer and the team that you surround yourself with. With the right customer-focused team, decisions are easy and all team members are empowered to exceed the customer's expectations. Team members should be given the right role and training to be the best version of themselves.

What do you believe makes our business community special?

Our community is a very giving community. There are always opportunities to share and receive best practices, lessons learned, and referrals. Even competitors will work together to accomplish what is best for the West Michigan community.

What excites you about joining the Chamber board?

The Chamber has a great strategy including the focus on young professionals. I am grateful that they want input from the business community on what our needs are and how we can all work together to retain and attract great talent.



Jason Latham

Macatawa Area Coordinating Council

Title: Executive Director

Years at Current Organization: 4.5

What's one value or principle that guides you in your work?

Public service. I have worked for state and local transportation for over 30 years. I believe that efficient and safe public roads and trails are the foundation for vibrant communities.

What do you believe makes our business community special?

I have worked in several communities over the years and the level of support from business owners and their workforce to participate in community events is amazing.

What excites you about joining the Chamber board?

I look forward to working with the Chamber and our members on making the greater Holland/Zeeland area a great place to live, work, and play! I also look forward to sharing what I have learned regarding public investment in infrastructure and how it supports businesses and ultimately helps attract and retain talent.



Chad Mesbergen

Tulip Time

Title: Director of Events and Operations

Years at Current Organization: 4.5

What's one value or principle that guides you in your work?

"Good for the hometown." I try to look at decisions through the lens of whether they create a positive impact for the people who live, work, and visit here. I believe great organizations can be successful while also making their communities stronger.

What do you believe makes our business community special?

Our willingness to collaborate. People share ideas, make connections, and step up when there is an opportunity to make our community better. That ability to turn relationships into action is what makes the West Michigan business community special.

What excites you about joining the Chamber board?

I'm excited to be part of a group that isn't afraid to trailblaze. I've experienced firsthand how the Chamber brings people together, develops leaders, and turns ideas into action.



Renee Wilson

Hemco Gage

Title: COO/Co-Owner

Years at Current Organization: 27

What is one value or principle that guides you in your work?

Integrity and respect for others are at the core of my professional values and serve as the foundation for how I approach relationships and responsibility. I believe treating people with honesty, fairness, and respect fosters a culture of trust, accountability, and collaboration. Throughout my career, I have found that these principles create stronger working relationships, encourage open communication, and drive positive results.

What do you believe makes our business community special?

Our community has a diverse range of industries, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and everything in between. This blend creates an innovative, entrepreneurial, and collaborative community. That spirit of partnership makes our businesses and the people powering them stronger.

What excites you about joining the Chamber board?

I am excited for the opportunity to contribute to the Chamber's mission by supporting local businesses, advancing economic growth, and fostering meaningful partnerships across our region. I believe a strong business community is built through collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to creating opportunities for organizations of all sizes.

Beyond the Internship

Helping summer interns build connections to our community



By Lauren Siegers

Career Center Coordinator, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

Helping young people see a future in our community starts with connection. That's why the Chamber launched our first Summer Intern Series in May as part of our Career Center work, creating opportunities for interns to discover what it means to live and work in the Holland and Zeeland area.

Throughout the summer, we connected with 67 interns, from Holland natives to those discovering West Michigan for the first time. Each brought their own interests, experiences, and career goals. The series gave them a chance to meet other young people navigating a similar season of life while getting to know the community beyond their workplace.

Following our May kickoff, we brought interns together to explore Downtown Holland, enjoy time at Tunnel Park, and build relationships with one another and



our business community. These gatherings created space for conversation, new friendships, and shared experiences. For one participant, that opportunity to connect was especially valuable.

"The most valuable part for me was getting the chance to connect with other young professionals. It was refreshing to have space to compare experiences, talk through challenges, and celebrate successes with people my age."

Those conversations extended beyond the events themselves. Another participant shared that after



attending, their inbox was "flooded with LinkedIn invites with very positive messages about how great it was to meet me."

For someone spending their first summer here, those connections can help an unfamiliar place feel welcoming. For those who grew up here, they offer a chance to see their hometown through a new lens.

An internship is an opportunity to explore a career path, develop skills, and learn from experienced professionals. It can also expose young people to new perspectives about the value they bring to an organization. As one intern reflected, "I realized that interns bring the next generation into the business world, and their ideas can and will influence the future."

At the same time, interns are exploring more than where their careers might take them. This season of life can also shape where they ultimately choose to build their lives. Alongside questions about their future work, they may be asking: Can I find my people here? What is there to do? Could I see myself staying?

The Summer Intern Series was designed to help



them explore those questions. By connecting interns beyond the workplace, we hope to help them picture a future in West Michigan that includes both a fulfilling career and a community where they belong. As one intern shared, "Holland is a special place to me, and I want to help keep it that way."

That connection to community matters to employers, too. Businesses invest time and energy in helping interns grow, and the Chamber can complement that investment by helping emerging talent build connections to the area. Together, we can introduce young people to the opportunities that exist here and the relationships that make our community special.

"Request Foods was proud to sponsor and participate in the Chamber's Summer Intern Series this year. The series was a valuable complement to our in-house intern events, giving our interns the opportunity to connect with other interns and local business leaders. It also provided a meaningful way to highlight all that West Michigan has to offer, which plays an important role in attracting and retaining talent from outside the region," Mark Zink of Request Foods shared.

Together, the Chamber and local employers can introduce young people to not only the career opportunities that exist here, but also the people, experiences, and relationships that make this a remarkable place to live, work, and play.

We're excited to build on this year's momentum. Stay tuned for next year's Summer Intern Series, including details on how local employers can connect their interns with the program. We look forward to partnering with our members to help the next generation discover a future in the place we call home.



The future isn't a prediction. It's a practice.

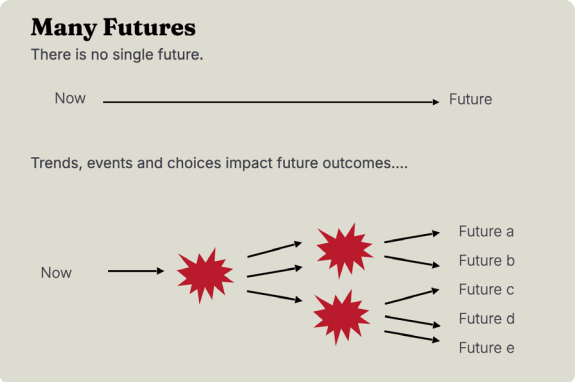
By Laura Leenhouts

Co-founder, Becoming Future Fluent

Every year, leadership teams sit down to plan the year ahead: strategies, priorities, and tactics to help them meet their goals. And every year, there's an unexpected change that derails the best of intentions. Maybe a supplier raised prices, a new tariff changed the math, a regulation moved the target, or a key leader left, upending the plans. The plan or strategy wasn't wrong. It was built for one future and the world delivered a different one.

Leaders and organizations that handle the future well... make a habit of preparing for several possible futures.

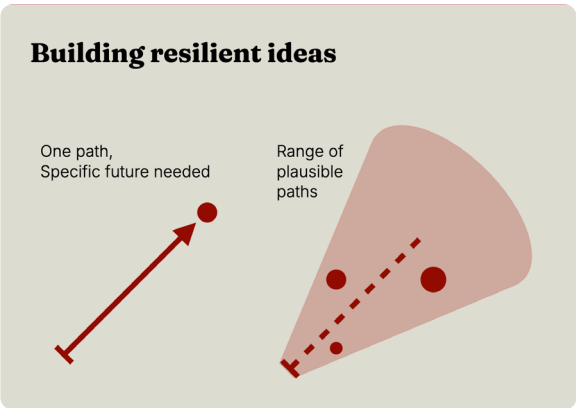
What this shows is that planning alone isn't enough. Leaders and organizations that handle the future well aren't peering into a crystal ball, predicting what's going to happen. Instead, they make a habit of preparing for several possible futures, and they decide in advance what would make them change course.



Here are four things any organization can do to help prepare for multiple futures:

1. Make scanning a habit

Scanning turns noticing change into a routine. What's going on in the world that could affect you? Is there an analyst report, a new technology, or a new consumer behavior that's emerging? Or something happening in an adjacent industry that applies to yours? Signals



from outside your industry are especially useful, because disruption often starts somewhere else. Tracking your scanning hits creates the foundations for anticipating what's next.

2. Plan for a range of futures

Most leaders ask "what's the future going to be?" and build toward it. Future thinking asks "which futures are plausible, and how do I build something robust across several of them?" A plan built around one future scenario is fragile. When reality drifts from that forecast (and it almost always does) the team has to recalibrate under pressure and rebuild momentum. Organizations that plan for a range of outcomes aren't caught off guard in the same way. They've practiced and envisioned possibilities, so change feels like a turn in the road rather than falling off a cliff. The goal isn't to be right about the future. It's to be ready for more than one version of it.



3. Document the assumptions your strategy rests on

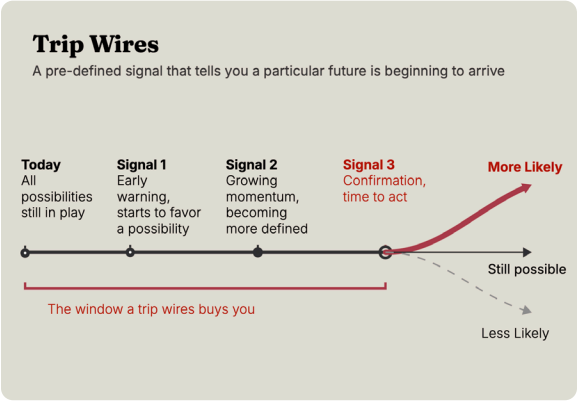
We all have assumptions about what's going to be true.

> *The goal isn't to be right about the future. It's to be ready for more than one version of it.*

Essentially, what do you assume is going to enable your strategy to be successful? For example, customer demand holds steady, interest rates decrease or AI remains low cost. What are the conditions your strategy needs in order to work? Documenting them aligns your team on what needs to be true, and shows you what to watch.

4. Set trip wires

What's a "trip wire"? It's a pre-defined signal that tells you a particular future is beginning to arrive. A good trip wire is specific and observable. It's leading, not lagging, catching the scenario while it's still forming, not after it's arrived. A good trip wire is also tied to a pre-committed response (if X... then Y) and it's monitored by someone accountable. For example: "If our main supplier's lead times exceed six weeks for three months in a row, then we qualify a second supplier."



These four practices work best together. Scanning surfaces signals, planning for a range of futures prepares you for change, naming your assumptions names the variables and trip wires tell you when to act. Above all, foresight is a team sport. When a leadership team shares a view of what's coming, decisions get faster and change feels less like a threat. Your plan will go out of date. That's fine. The goal isn't a perfect plan. It's a team that sees change coming and already knows what to do.



Laura Leenhouts is a co-founder of Becoming Future Fluent, which helps leadership teams at small and mid-sized businesses anticipate change and make better strategic decisions through foresight workshops and custom engagements. Learn more at becomingfuturefluent.com.



The West Ottawa Way

By Tim Bearden

Superintendent, West Ottawa Public Schools

Each year, the Chamber's Excellence Award recognizes an organization that demonstrates outstanding leadership, impact, and commitment to our community. This year's recipient, West Ottawa Public Schools, exemplifies that spirit through its dedication to students, strong community partnerships, and focus on creating opportunities for the next generation. We invited their team to share more about what drives their work and the philosophy behind The West Ottawa Way.

In the popular television show Ted Lasso, much is made of the Lasso Way or later, the Richmond Way - a blueprint for success employed by Coach Lasso that focuses on people and relationships. Similarly, at West Ottawa Public Schools, relationships are at the core of all we do. We believe in opportunity for all, that people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care, and in helping young people find the nexus of passion and preparation that will help them to be College, Career and Life Ready. That's the West Ottawa Way.

Opportunity for Every Student

West Ottawa Public Schools (WO) is a diverse organization with approximately 6,700 students. Named the second most diverse school district in the state of Michigan by Niche.com, WO is a vibrant place with a broad spectrum of programming. Our 6,700 students are served by approximately 450 certificated staff, and another couple hundred full and part time

Relationships are at the core of all we do.

ancillary staff. Located on the north side of Holland and spanning the idyllic Lake Michigan shoreline, WO is a place where passion meets opportunity, and where we offer truly something for everyone.

Comprised of nine elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, an alternative high school, and a 6-12 Virtual Academy, WO offers a variety of





instructional approaches and learning opportunities.

Three of our nine elementary schools, Lakeshore, Riley Farms and Sheldon Woods, have an outdoor learning context, and all nine have outdoor learning spaces. Waukazoo Elementary offers a Montessori program, and Los Lagos Bilingual Academy is a two-way, dual language Spanish immersion school.

Our middle schools offer Unified programming for special education students, introductory travel programming, a wide variety of exploratory learning programs and comprehensive extracurriculars.

Our high school is the only high school in West Michigan to offer both the AP and IB curricula, has access to the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District Careerline Tech Center, offers career-oriented classes on campus, has extraordinary performing arts and athletic programs, college and career counseling, a unique Global Initiatives program and much more. Dunes Alternative High School offers experiential learning for students who are seeking a different approach to high school. Finally, the West Ottawa Virtual Academy, WOVA, offers grades 6-12 a part or full time virtual catalog of West Ottawa courses.

West Ottawa is a place where passion meets opportunity, and where we offer truly something for everyone.

Investing in Our Community

WO has a tremendously supportive community on the north side who recently approved a $237 million bond to ensure the future of the district. This bond and previous bond funds have made West Ottawa's facilities innovative learning environments for students and the community. In addition to upgrading all of our buildings with new furniture, lights, roofing, HVAC, and infrastructure improvements, our state-of-the-art Performing Arts Center, our unique gathering place, West Ottawa Stadium, our spectacular new elementary school, Riley Farms, and our soon-to-be-completed Community and Aquatic Center are all "destination" facilities that attract students, staff, community and all of West Michigan to our campuses.

Growing Together

West Ottawa aspires to be the center of the northside community, and that is one of the core values of our Strategic Plan. WO continues to grow partnerships with area businesses and families, and as we work to fulfill our mission of Preparing Students to Be College, Career and Life Ready, we also want them to be



prepared to be active citizens of our community.

Through our partnership with the Panther Fund and programs like our after-school Panther Pathways, we have developed partnerships with Velo City Bikes, The Boys and Girls Club, Outdoor Discovery Center, The Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area, LAUP, and a number of other area businesses and organizations. Through the efforts of the non-profit Panther Fund, we provide all of our students swim lessons, bike lessons, are working with the Park Twp Fire Department to offer boater safety lessons for free, and we offer free athletic physicals. We want to ensure that as our young people grow into adults they can continue to appreciate all Holland has to offer in the lakes, bike paths, waterways and outdoor community living in the area.

West Ottawa aspires to be a place where young people and our community feel a sense of belonging and attachment.

WO aspires to be a place where young people and our community feel a sense of belonging and attachment. Despite being the largest district in Ottawa County, we have a small school feel because our staff cares about every young person who walks through our doors. We are proud to be an integral part of the Holland and West Michigan community, and the relationships at the core of all of our places and programs are built on the belief that our young people are the future of our community, state and country. That's the West Ottawa Way.



Tim Bearden is in his 40th year of education and his seventh year as Superintendent of West Ottawa Public Schools. Mr. Bearden is a graduate of the University of Michigan-Flint, attended Wayne State University Law School, has a Master's degree from Eastern Michigan University, and a post-graduate certificate from Cornell University. Mr. Bearden started as an English teacher at Atherton High School in the Flint area, coached college volleyball at Mott College and Wayne State University for eleven years, and has been an athletic director, assistant principal, high school principal, a Chief Academic Officer (CAO), and now the Superintendent of West Ottawa Public Schools. He and his wife Jamie have four children and two grandchildren, and live in Holland with their dog Oakley.



Sponsored Content

Marketing Reality Check: What's Changing in 2026 and Where Print Fits

By Bill McDowell

Marketing Specialist, Holland Litho

Marketing has never offered more ways to reach people. Businesses can publish content, run online ads, send emails, create videos, track clicks, and react quickly to results.

That access is valuable. It also creates a challenge: nearly every business is trying to do the same thing.

Customers are surrounded by messages. They are busy, selective, and quick to ignore what feels generic. For corporate marketing teams, the question is no longer simply, "How do we get our message out?" It is, "How do we make it worth someone's attention?"

That is where print continues to have an important role.

Print works best when it gives people something useful, memorable, or worth keeping. It can turn a product introduction into a catalog someone refers back to. It can help a sales team walk into a meeting with materials that look credible and complete. It can make a retail package reinforce the quality of the product inside. It can give dealers and locations a consistent, easy way to access approved brand materials.

The point is not to choose print instead of digital. The stronger approach is to make the two work together.

A printed piece can direct someone to a landing page, video, product demo, or online resource through a simple QR code. A digital campaign can create awareness before an event, while printed materials make the in-person experience more useful and lasting. A custom digital storefront can give distributed teams a convenient ordering tool while keeping printed materials on brand and current.

The companies getting the most from print are not treating it as a leftover item at the end of the marketing plan. They are deciding early where a physical piece can add value.

That might mean creating a product catalog that is easier to understand than a webpage alone. It might mean upgrading a sales kit so it better reflects the value of the company behind it. It might mean building packaging that stands out in a crowded retail setting. Or it might mean giving a multi-location organization one controlled place to order the materials it needs.

As marketing channels keep changing, the basic need has not changed: businesses still need to earn attention and build trust. A well-planned printed piece can do both. It gives the message a place to live beyond a screen, and it gives the brand a chance to feel more real in the hands of the customer.

We come alongside corporate marketing professionals to help build and promote their brand and messaging through brochures and catalogs, retail packaging, and custom digital storefront solutions for centralized ordering and dealer support.

The right print strategy does not compete with the rest of your marketing. It gives it something tangible to stand on. Want to know more? Contact Craig Parker at craigp@hollandlitho.com or 800-652-6567 to access the experts at Holland Litho.



Holland Litho
PRINTING SERVICE



A Reservoir for Electricity

By Anthony O'Donovan

Plant Operations Director, LG Energy Solution Michigan, Inc.

Energy storage systems, often called ESS or BESS, are becoming more common across the country and here in Michigan. But for many people, the technology is still unfamiliar.

So, what exactly is ESS and why are we seeing more of them?

One way to think about energy storage is as *a reservoir for electricity.*

For most of the history of the electrical grid, electricity largely had to be used as it was generated. Utilities continuously balanced generation with demand, producing the electricity homes, businesses and communities needed at that moment.

Just as a water reservoir stores water when it is available and releases it when it is needed, ESS allows electricity to be stored for later use. Energy can enter the system when it is available, remain stored in batteries, and return to the electrical grid hours or days later when demand is higher.

That may sound like a simple change, but it creates significant flexibility. A hot summer afternoon, a cold winter morning, or a large data center operating around the clock can all create periods of greater demand. Instead of every additional need having to be met by additional generation at that exact moment, stored electricity can become part of the solution.

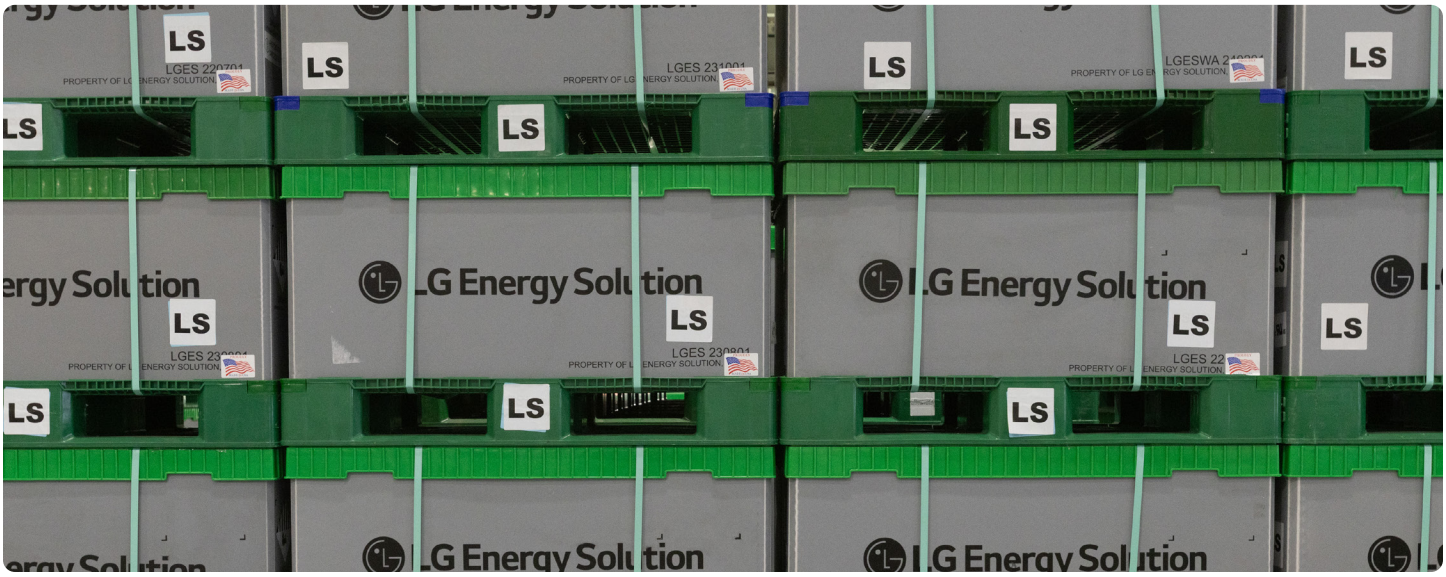
That flexibility is becoming increasingly valuable. U.S. peak electricity demand is projected to increase by 33% by 2034, driven by manufacturing, data centers and AI, population growth, building electrification and other factors.

ESS can work with electricity from many different sources. That includes traditional generation as well as sustainable resources such as wind and solar. In other words, ESS doesn't determine where our electricity comes from; it helps us make better use of what we have.

Understanding that purpose also helps explain what an ESS facility is and what it isn't. ESS isn't a traditional power plant. The batteries don't burn fuel to generate electricity.

As with any major infrastructure project, safety and environmental impact are important considerations. Battery systems store significant amounts of energy and must be designed accordingly. Modern energy storage systems incorporate monitoring, controls and multiple layers of protection, while advances in technology and system design continue to improve safety and consistency.

The environmental footprint is also different from traditional electricity generation. Where and how individual projects are built still matters, including their surroundings and applicable environmental requirements. At the same time, storage can help communities make greater use of sustainable energy



and reduce the need for less-efficient generation during periods of high demand.

The batteries inside these systems aren't just technology we're learning about. They are technology our community knows how to build.

It's one reason the industry is growing quickly. By 2030, U.S. energy storage is projected to reach 150 gigawatts and 525 gigawatt-hours - approximately four times its current scale.

LG Energy Solution brings more than 30 years of battery expertise to that growth. LG Energy Solution Vertech, a subsidiary of LG Energy Solution, has more than 17 years specifically in energy storage and more than 116 gigawatt-hours of projects installed, under construction or under contract across North America.

And the Lakeshore is part of that story. LG Energy Solution's Holland facility is producing batteries for energy storage applications, building on more than 15 years of battery manufacturing experience in our community.

For Holland, that means another growing market for the manufacturing expertise already here - supporting advanced manufacturing careers, local businesses and suppliers, continued investment and greater economic stability as battery markets evolve.

As energy storage becomes more common, communities should understand the projects being considered around them. What is their purpose, what are their benefits, and what questions come with them?

For the Lakeshore, we have a unique perspective on that conversation. The batteries inside these systems aren't just technology we are learning about. They are technology our community knows how to build.



Anthony O'Donovan is Plant Operations Director at LG Energy Solution Michigan, Inc., where he oversees Plant Operations and supports the safe, efficient and responsible operation of the company's battery manufacturing facilities in Michigan.

With more than 30 years of international leadership experience, Anthony brings a broad perspective on advanced manufacturing and the complex operations required to support large-scale battery production. His experience spans manufacturing, engineering, product development and program management, with a focus on operational excellence, continuous improvement and building high-performing organizations.

In his current role, Anthony's leadership encompasses key areas supporting plant operations, including safety, environmental initiatives, general affairs, internal and external communications, and stakeholder engagement. He works across teams to strengthen plant performance while supporting relationships with team members, community partners and other key stakeholders.

Prior to LG Energy Solution Michigan, Anthony held executive leadership positions with Tesla, Aptiv and Webasto, leading large-scale manufacturing initiatives across global operations.

Today, he brings that experience to Michigan's growing battery industry, helping support the people, systems and operations behind advanced battery manufacturing.

Upcoming Programs

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

Women Inspiring Women

NOVEMBER 4, 2026

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM | Tulyp Hotel

Gather with other female professionals for an afternoon of inspiration, authentic conversation, and meaningful connection.

Program Sponsor: Macatawa Bank

Advocacy in Action: Local and State Education Update

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

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

Hear updates from the OAISD and the Chamber on education, workforce development, and our region's future talent pipelines.

Series Lead Sponsor: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Wake Up West Coast: What Holds Us Together?

NOVEMBER 10, 2026

7:30 AM - 9:00 AM | Haworth Hotel

Joe Dyer, President of DISHER, will share stories, practical lessons, and reflections on leadership and culture in the workplace.

Program Sponsor: Independent Bank

Workshop: Hiring IS Marketing

NOVEMBER 12, 2026

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM | West Coast Chamber

Learn how to attract more of the people you want on your team during this engaging session presented by Right People Co.

Program Sponsorship Available

Power Hour

NOVEMBER 17, 2026

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

Start your morning with several rounds of fast-paced, meaningful conversations during this popular structured networking event.

Program Sponsorship Available

West Coast YPs Workshop: Create From the Future

NOVEMBER 18, 2026

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM | West Coast Chamber

Turn your vision into practical next steps at this interactive workshop presented by Rachel Baggech, Executive Coach with Novus Global.

West Coast YPs Trivia Takeover

NOVEMBER 23, 2026

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM | Tulyp Hotel

Join fellow YPs for some friendly competition as we gather for an evening at the Tulyp Hotel's popular Monday night trivia.

West Coast YPs Community Giveback Social

DECEMBER 1, 2026

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM | West Coast Chamber

Connect with fellow YPs while giving back at this casual, open house style social featuring conversation, community, and an opportunity to support local nonprofits.

Breakfast with Our Congressman

DECEMBER 7, 2026

7:30 AM - 9:00 AM | Haworth Hotel

Hear updates from Washington D.C. and ask questions about the federal issues affecting your business and our region at this signature Chamber event.

Program Sponsor: Corewell Health

HAPPENINGS



The Gentex team at the 2026 Golf Outing at Macatawa Golf Club.



Edward Jones opened their new office in Holland, bringing together two branches in one place.



National Bulk Equipment celebrated 50 years in business.



Community Action House officially cut the ribbon on the grand reopening of their Resale Store South.



Ottawa County leaders shared insights and updates during September's Advocacy in Action.



Members enjoying breakfast and networking at September's Wake Up West Coast.



Holland BPW celebrated the completion of their community-owned fiber network at Fiber Fest.



The 2026 Annual Award Winners at this year's celebration.



Three speakers gave important updates about affordable housing in our community at October's Advocacy in Action.



Prestige Auto Sales hosted a ribbon cutting in honor of their new location.

New & Renewing Members

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

Acorn Marketing
Amy Atkinson | **(231) 578-8635**
www.acornmktg.com
amy@acornmktg.com

Aire Serv of Holland
Christopher Vernon | **(616) 777-7933**
www.Aireserv.com/Holland
Holland.owner@aireserv.com

American Valor Nutrition
Emily Kowalczyk | **(412) 914-3957**
americanvalornutrition@gmail.com

Blue Star Sports Apparel
Terry Hossink | **(800) 694-8415**
www.bluestarsportsapparel.com
info@bluestarsportsapparel.com

Dr. Gaynel Nave
Gaynel Nave | **(616) 275-0049**
drgaynelnave@gmail.com

EcoCreative Design
Morna Hallsaxton | **(616) 283-2150**
www.ecocreative.design
morna@ecocreative.design

Fresh Coast Spas DBA Glo Tanning
Cris Doornbos | **(719) 439-3390**
crisdoornbos@outlook.com

Grand Rapids Ophthalmology
Amy Schneider | **(616) 588-6598**
www.seeitclear.com
amyschneider@eyecare-partners.com

Holland Rotary Charities
Kate Fornarotto | **(208) 317-5019**
www.hollandrotary.org
fornarottokate@gmail.com

Hudson Lock
Esmeralda Melendez | **(978) 399-3508**
www.hudsonlock.com
emelendez@hudsonlock.com

Imago Dei Direct Primary Care
Dan Swartz | **(616) 407-4968**
www.imagodeidpc.com
drdan@imagodeidpc.com

Joyn Collective
Taryn Kutches | **(616) 402-3824**
www.joyncollective.com
taryn@joyncollective.com

Love's Ice Cream & Chocolate
Jake Stacy | **(616) 727-3136**
www.lovesicecream.com
scream@lovesicecream.com

Lulu Cadieux
Terry Walker | **(269) 455-5060**
www.lulucadieux.com
lulu@lulucadieux.com

McAlpine Chiropractic
Phillip Maletta | **(616) 392-7031**
www.mcalpinegroupllc.com
phillip@mcalpinegroupllc.com

Paint A Pot
Kerri DeVries | **(616) 355-6442**
www.paintapot.net
info@paintapot.net

EOS Implementer - Ryan Pisciotta
Ryan Pisciotta | **(616) 916-5742**
www.implementer.eosworldwide.com/ryan-pisciotta
ryan.pisciotta@eosworldwide.com

Staples Inc.
Darryl Sherman | **(616) 393-8103**
www.stores.staples.com
darryl.sherman@staples.com

Village Inn North
Michael Pietrangelo
michael.pietrangelo@outlook.com

Waters Edge Coaching
Becky Ploeg | **(616) 218-3981**
www.watersedgecoach.com
bploeg@watersedgecoach.com

We appreciate our members who recently renewed their memberships:

*** indicates years of membership.**

196 Locksmith, LLC

AcenTek (formerly Ace Communications)

Advanced Sealing

AG Collaborative

Ageless Autos

Alamo Valley Solar

All State Crane and Rigging, LLC

Alzheimer's Association Greater Michigan Chapter

Arcadia Capital

Arnold Sales Complete Janitor Supply **-25***

Artex Label & Graphics Inc.

Artisan Medical Displays

Avancer Executive Search

Beeler, Stephen L PE

Bekins Appliance

Big Lake Travel

Black River Pallet Company

Blueprint Dentistry

Bowerman's on 8th

Bremer & Bouman Heating & Cooling, Inc.

BuhlerPrince, Inc.

Buma Solutions

Business Intelligence Solutions **-10***

Busschers Septic Tank & Excavating Services, Inc

Car Center - Holland

CDS Lakeshore Head Start **-30***

Cento Anni

Challenge Island

Comfort Keepers

Community Action House

Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area

Comprehensive Ear & Hearing

Coral Gables Yachts

Corewell Health

Creative Dining Services, Inc.

Culture Impact

Diamond Springs Golf Course

District Five Schoolhouse **-10***

Edge Insurance Group

Edward Jones DeWeerdt

Envizion IT

Evolve by Design, Inc.

Farm Bureau Insurance Spears

Fifth Third Bank

Five Star Real Estate - Jared Brown

Forty Two North Custom Homes

Fustini's Oils & Vinegars

Gilda's Club Grand Rapids/Gilda's LaughFest

Glenda's Lakewood Flowers

Glik's Men's

Goodwill Industries of West Michigan

Green Fork Food **-5***

Hand2Hand

Harbor Steel & Supply **-5***

hg medical USA, LLC

Holiday Inn Express **-25***

Holland Family Dentistry, PC

Holland Museum

Holland Terminal, Inc.

Home2 Suites by Hilton

Huizenga Redi-Mix Inc. **-25***

In-Line Electric and Controls

ITB Packaging

*** indicates years of membership.**

ITC

i-team North America

JMB Propertys LLC

Journey Carpet Cleaning

JR Automation

Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes, Inc.

K-Line Industries, Inc. -5*

KNITit LLC

Lakeshore Bankruptcy Center - Marcia R. Meoli, PLLC

Lakeshore Custom Cabinets **-10***

Lakeshore Dentistry, P.L.C.

Laurie Birkholz MD & Associates **-5***

Lemonjello's Coffee

Lifeline Ministries No 2 **-5***

Logodance

Magna Engineered Glass

Magna Mirrors

Magnus Capital Partners

Mannes Body Shop

Medilodge of Holland

Meyering Insurance Agency, Inc.

Michigan Farmstead (Formerly Critter Barn)

Momentum Center **-5***

Muskegon Community College

Nederveld, Inc.

NextHome Champions

Northland Lanes

Novo Building Products

Old National Bank **-10***

Organizational Talent Consulting

Ottawa News Network

Pavilion Enterprises LLC dba Saugatuck Antique Pavilion

Phares Family Dentistry

Pizza Ranch

PMS Products, Inc.

Port Sheldon Township

Prism Glass (formerly Pyramid Acoustics Inc.)

Red Robin of Holland

Resthaven

Rivers Ace Hardware

RWE Clean Energy

Salt & Pepper Savory Grill and Pub

Sebright Machining, Inc.

Sigvaris **-10***

Skiles Tavern

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge

SolidCircle

Spalding DeDecker

Steven Walters Builders **-10***

Stovetop Coffee Roasters, LLC

Straight Line Designs **-10***

StrEATs Taco Kitchen **-5***

Supply Chain Solutions, Inc.

Tanglewood Winery

Taylor Rental Center

The Bridge

The CBD Store North

The Curragh Irish Pub & Restaurant

The Farmhouse

The Six Eight Cafe & Boutique at Better Way Designs

Thomas A. Davis Jeweler

Thompson M-TEC

Tommy Car Wash Systems **-5***

Townline Poultry Farm Inc.

Transnation Title Agency of Michigan

Tulip City Paddle Tours LLC

Two Men and a Truck/Lakeshore, Inc.

Vanden Bosch Co., John A.

Vitale's Pizza of Zeeland

West Edge Real Estate

West Michigan Advisors

West Michigan Lakeshore Association of Realtors

West Ottawa Eyecare

Westside Service - Holland

Wild Chef Japanese Steakhouse

Wings of Mercy, Inc.

Witness Inspection

Wolverine Precision Financial Operations Group, LLC

Wonderland Tire Company

Workbox Staffing

Zoet Financial



Gentex's Spanish-Speaking Manufacturing Program Celebrates 5 Years

Gentex Corporation is celebrating the fifth anniversary of its Spanish-speaking assembly lines, or Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Program.

The milestone reflects the company's commitment to removing barriers to employment, creating opportunities for Spanish-speaking employees, and strengthening its workforce.

Since launching in 2021, the program has grown from a single production line on one shift to a multi-facility initiative serving employees across all three shifts.

The LEP Program was established following the COVID-19 pandemic as Gentex sought new ways to address workforce needs while creating more opportunities for members of West Michigan's Spanish-speaking community.

Over its five-year history, the LEP Program has averaged 200 employees at any given time, reflecting its sustained impact on Gentex's workforce. Spanish-language work instructions, safety procedures, onboarding materials, supervisory support, and company communications help employees succeed from day one.

Gentex also expanded LEP resources to include on-site English-language learning classes in partnership with the nonprofit organization Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) and Zeeland Adult Education. Since the program was launched, 74 employees have advanced into other roles within the company, demonstrating opportunities for career development and growth at Gentex.



"We are very grateful for the support, training, and trust the company has placed in us," said Elizabeth Rodriguez, a Gentex employee who joined the program five years ago.

As Gentex celebrates this milestone, the LEP Program continues to serve as an example of how removing language barriers creates opportunity, supports business growth, and helps employees build successful careers in West Michigan.

GENTEX CORPORATION



The Local Impact of West Coast Cash

West Coast Cash is a community currency program with certificates redeemable at more than 100 local businesses across the Lakeshore. Each year, thousands of dollars in West Coast Cash are purchased and spent locally, keeping dollars in our community and supporting the businesses that make it thrive. Hear from a few West Coast Cash merchants about the impact of the program and what they love about being part of our local business community.

Merchant Spotlight: Gazelle Sports

Tell us a little about your business and what makes it unique.

Gazelle Sports is a running specialty store with six locations statewide. Gazelle Sports is unique not only because of its core values alone–care, learning, excellence, active living, and community–but because of how organically those values come to life throughout the customer experience in not only our physical stores, but also our community engagement efforts related to movement all over Michigan.

Why did you choose to become a West Coast Cash merchant?

We have artwork, murals, stickers, conversations and more focused on the phrase: "We believe movement can change your life."

We know that getting the right pair of footwear, and other pivotal pieces to make the movement fun, comfortable, and sustainable can help get that journey started. Our hope is that West Coast Cash opens that door for someone to get excited about movement in a way they haven't before!

If someone walked in with West Coast Cash to spend, what would you tell them they have to try, buy, or experience?

It has to be the footwear fitting experience! Gazelle Sports performs a professional walking gait analysis and a full 3D scan of your feet, then works through footwear options from our exciting brands from there, until the customer makes their final decision.

This is an incredible first-time experience for a customer, but I have to be honest, it never gets old as a fitter either. Every individual's needs are different, and it's so rewarding to bring insight and relief to movers of all kinds in this way.

What do you love about being part of our local business community?

What excites me most about being a part of this community is all the impactful work we have yet to do. As shared many times, I have so much pride and joy for the first-time experience a person can have at a Gazelle Sports. I still think about mine in Kalamazoo all the time, and it's the reason I work for this organization today.

Moving towards the future, we're excited about the new and innovative ways we're reaching businesses through our Mobile Fit program. Mobile Fit brings our entire in-store experience to your workplace, making it easier and more fun than ever to find the next perfect pair of shoes.



Merchant Spotlight: GLIK'S

Tell us a little about your business and what makes it unique.

We have something for everyone. Our store offers a wide variety of clothing, shoes, drinkware, and accessories for all ages, styles, and price points. We love being able to offer a little bit of everything so there's something for everyone who walks through our doors.

Why did you choose to become a West Coast Cash merchant?

We wanted to be part of the local retail community and support an initiative that encourages people to shop locally. Being a West Coast Cash merchant also helps bring new customers into our store and increases our exposure.

If someone walked in with West Coast Cash to spend, what would you tell them they have to try, buy, or experience?

We would definitely encourage them to check out our new arrivals. We have a great selection of clothing and wonderful perfumes that are worth checking out.

What do you love about being part of our local business community?

We love the camaraderie among local businesses and the way our community comes together to support one another. It's also great to see so many people participating in local events and supporting local businesses.



West Coast Cash Merchants

Apothecary Gift Shop
Barber Ford, Inc.
Beechwood Dry Cleaners
Beechwood Grill & Catering
Betty's Hallmark Shops II
Big Lake Brewing
Blu Veranda
Boatwerks Waterfront Restaurant
Borr's Shoes
Bowerman Blueberries Farm Market
Bowerman's on 8th
Brann's Steakhouse
Captain Sundae Inc.
Carolyn Stich Studio, LLC
Christian Brothers Automotive
Clovier by Glik's
Community Action House
Costa Oil 10 Minute Oil Change
Craft Co. Social House
Crazy Horse Steakhouse & Saloon
Crown Motors
Crust 54
Ditto Upscale Resale
Don's Flowers & Gifts, Inc.
Ebony Tree Medical Massage
El Rancho - Riley Street
Electric Hero
Expresso Books & Beans, LLC
Frank's Restaurant
Fustini's Oils & Vinegars
Garsnett Beacon Candle Co.
Gateway Mission
Gazelle Sports
Glenda's Lakewood Flowers
Glik's
Goog's Pub & Grub
Great Lakes Clothing Care
Harrington Salon and Day Spa
Haworth Hotel
Hog Wild BBQ
Holland Tasting Tours
Hops at 84 East
Huisman Flowers
James Street Inn
Jean Marie's
Joe2Go
Jonker's Garden
Lakeshore Habitat For Humanity
Lemonjello's Coffee
Locale Nutrition
Lorna Lou
Love's Ice Cream & Chocolate
Mezkla Taqueria
Moo-Ville West, LLC
New Holland Brewing Company
Out of the Box
Paint A Pot
Paradise Bound Thrift Shoppe
Peachwave - Self Serve Frozen Yogurt
Picket Fence Floral & Design
Prime IV Hydration & Wellness
Pro Motors Service
Quality Car Wash
Red Robin of Holland
RedRock Grille
Rock "N" Thai Cafe
Salon Cheveux
Salt & Pepper Savory Grill and Pub
Salubrity Vida Day Spa
Taqueria Arandas
Taqueria Vallarta
Teriyaki Madness
Thai Avenue
The 205 Coffee Bar
The Bridge
The Butler
The City Delicatessen
The Curragh Irish Pub & Restaurant
The Farmhouse
The Frame & Mat Shop
The Six Eight Cafe & Boutique
The Stave and Barrel
The Wooden Shoe Restaurant
Thomas A. Davis Jeweler
Tip Toes
Trio Wellspace
Tropical Smoothie Cafe
Tulip City Paddle Tours LLC
Tulyp Hotel (formerly CityFlatsHotel)
Uptown Cheapskate
Velo City Cycles
Village Inn
Visser Farms
Vitale's Pizza of Zeeland
Waverly Stone Gastropub
Westside Service
Wild Chef Japanese Steakhouse
ZOMburger's

Michigan
West Coast
Chamber
of Commerce

65 E 7th Street, Suite 300
Holland, MI 49423



Greg Accardo
Market President
616.377.1043



Matt Hamm
Commercial Banker
616.377.1210



Jesse Prins
Commercial Banker
616.377.1045

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