



# FLINT AND GENESEE A STORY OF RESILIENCE

FLINT  
GENESEE  
*Chamber of Commerce*  
2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce thanks all of our partners for helping to move Flint forward. We are grateful for your dedication to improving the region's economy and quality of life for its residents, and your confidence in the Chamber.

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“*Resilience*

IS ALL ABOUT BEING ABLE TO  
OVERCOME THE UNEXPECTED.

SUSTAINABILITY IS ABOUT SURVIVAL.

THE GOAL OF RESILIENCE IS TO *thrive.*”

~JAMAIS CASCIO

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN and CEO

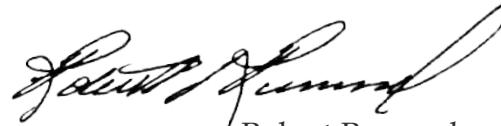
The year 2015 was a mixed story. It was our 109th year helping businesses grow and helping our community as a whole. Parts of the Flint & Genesee story included general economic improvement, reports of redevelopment and investment projects, and the community's strength and resilience. But, there was an unsettling undercurrent throughout the year that came to a head. That undercurrent is now known to the world as the Flint water crisis.

Against the backdrop of the growing water story, the Flint & Genesee Chamber stayed focused on our mission and the needs of our customers, doing what we believed would help move Flint forward. And as we reflected back on the Chamber's results, there are a few that we would like to highlight:

- Spearheaded the Flint & Genesee Manufacturing Coalition to help manufacturers meet their talent needs and improve public perception of the industry.
- Launched Leadership NOW – in collaboration with United Way for Genesee County – a leadership development program designed to provide community leaders with a deeper understanding of the critical issues affecting the Flint area.
- Launched the Certified Tourism Ambassador program, which helps to increase tourism by training hospitality workers, and private and public sector employees to deliver a consistent brand experience to visitors.
- Increased job preparedness and opportunities for area youth and adults through TeenQuest/Summer Youth Initiative and Career Edge programs.
- Partnered with companies to diversify their revenue streams through government contracting, and at the same time assisted companies with expansion projects, and job creation and retention.
- Hosted multiple forums with state legislative delegates throughout the year to build and strengthen relationships and promote advocacy for public policy issues such as road funding.
- Harnessed innovations in information technology to improve performance and reduce costs due to a more efficient organizational operation.

These highlights are just a small part of our story in 2015. The following chapters provide more of the Chamber's results from a business, education and talent, community, and image perspective.

We sincerely thank all of our partners for standing with the Chamber, and helping us move Flint & Genesee forward.



Robert Rummel,  
Board Chair



Tim Herman,  
CEO

# CHAPTER ONE Business



**C**ontinued business investment and tourism were bright spots throughout 2015, even as Flint was entangled in a state of emergency due to the water contamination issue.

The strong business climate that the Chamber has led—along with its partners—has created an environment where companies can be successful and grow, and create and retain jobs. We also saw year-over-year improvements in business and tourism economic impact.

The state of the Flint and Genesee County economy held steady ending the year with an unemployment rate of 4.6 percent for the County compared to 5.8 percent in 2014. In fact, the year-end rate was the lowest of the year and the best rate in nearly 14 years. Once again, auto sales were brisk and gas prices continued to decline putting money back into the pockets of consumers and businesses.

Finding the right solution for the water contamination crisis is top of mind for everyone. This situation must be resolved, and resolved soon. In the meantime, Flint & Genesee is open for business. There are many opportunities for entrepreneurs, inventory for businesses that are looking to relocate, available workers, government contracting and export opportunities, great cultural and social attractions, bars, restaurants and breweries, and venues to hold conferences, meetings and sports tournaments.

While the evidence may be clouded by the water contamination emergency, be assured that the Flint & Genesee turnaround continues.

**\$1<sup>+</sup>B**



TOTAL INVESTMENT AND CONTRACT VALUE SUPPORTED

**\$129M**



TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$338M**



ESTIMATED ANNUAL PAYROLL  
GENERATED FROM 42  
INVESTMENT PROJECTS

**3,471**

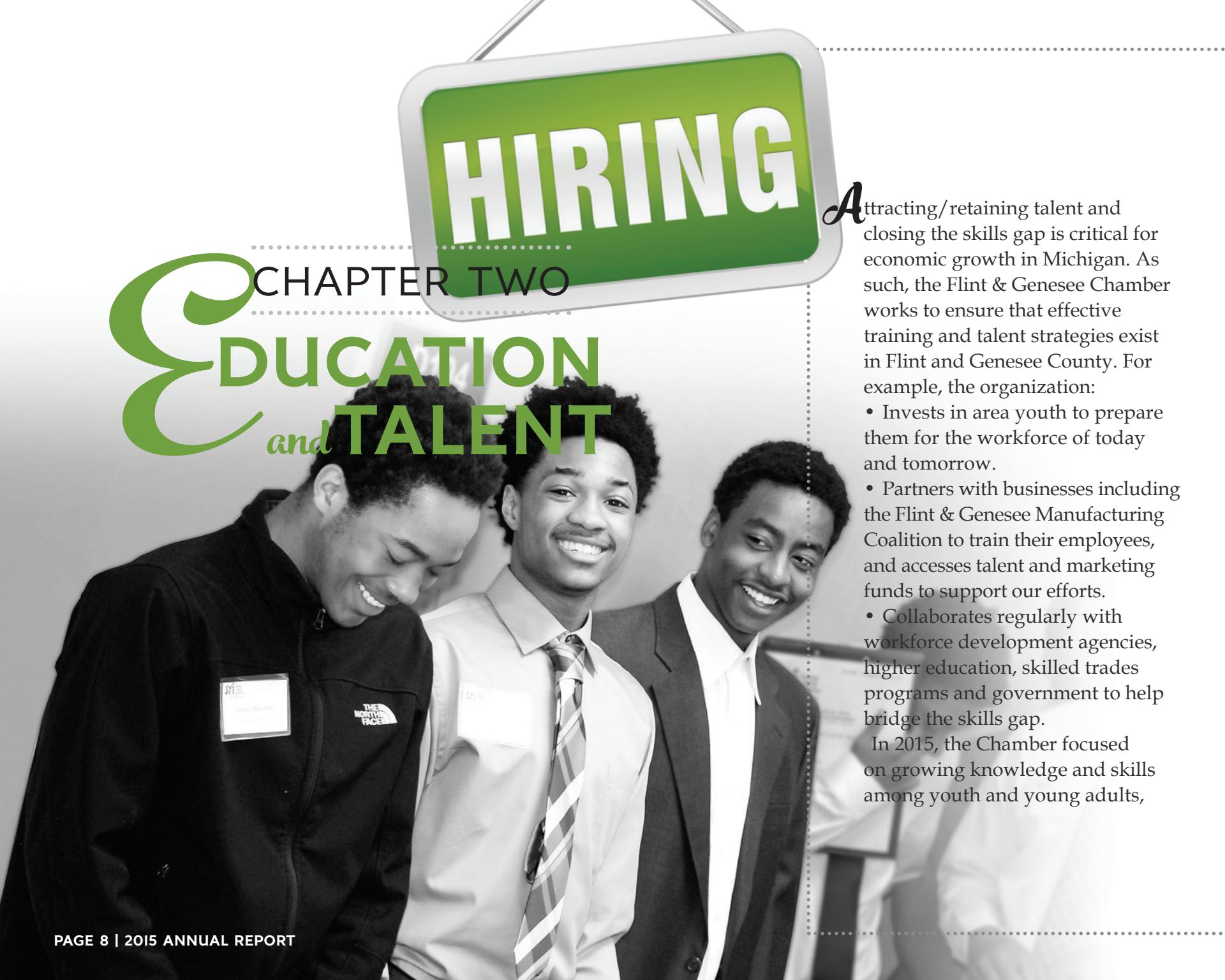


JOBs CREATED AND RETAINED

**363**



TEENQUEST GRADUATES HIRED  
BY FLINT-AREA EMPLOYERS



## CHAPTER TWO

# EDUCATION and TALENT

# HIRING

Attracting/retaining talent and closing the skills gap is critical for economic growth in Michigan. As such, the Flint & Genesee Chamber works to ensure that effective training and talent strategies exist in Flint and Genesee County. For example, the organization:

- Invests in area youth to prepare them for the workforce of today and tomorrow.
- Partners with businesses including the Flint & Genesee Manufacturing Coalition to train their employees, and accesses talent and marketing funds to support our efforts.
- Collaborates regularly with workforce development agencies, higher education, skilled trades programs and government to help bridge the skills gap.

In 2015, the Chamber focused on growing knowledge and skills among youth and young adults,

preparing them – through programs such as YouthQuest, TeenQuest/Summer Youth Initiative (SYI) and Career Edge – with employability and soft skills needed to be successful in college and a career.

The Chamber partnered with employers to connect TeenQuest graduates with summer jobs, and longer, more permanent opportunities with a goal to create a sustainable career pathway. Strong collaboration between our Education & Training and Economic Development groups also ensured that TeenQuest graduates were part of the talent pipeline needed for open positions in manufacturing and other industries.

The Chamber also worked in collaboration with the Flint & Genesee Manufacturing Coalition to expose students to the world of manufacturing on National Manufacturing Day. Nearly 80 students toured 10 Flint-area

companies and 3 colleges/universities. The nationally celebrated day aimed to shift perceptions of manufacturing and skilled trades, and generate interest in manufacturing careers.

In addition, business training is a high priority for Flint & Genesee employers. In 2015, the Chamber launched – in partnership with United Way for Genesee County – Leadership NOW, a development program designed to challenge emerging and existing leaders to bring about positive change. Also, nearly 80 professional development courses for business employees were offered. And small business and entrepreneurial support was provided through our e-TEAM including the annual Jumpstart Conference and Flint Food Business sessions.



# 125

SMALL BUSINESSES BENEFITED FROM ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT



# 4,431+

BUSINESS EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATED IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



# 19,003

AREA JOB OPENINGS PROMOTED IN 2015



# \$1.9M

ACCESSED BY COMPANIES IN TALENT AND MARKETING FUNDS



# 4,000

K-12 YOUTHQUEST STUDENTS EXPOSED TO HANDS-ON STEM PROJECTS ANNUALLY



# 8,104

STUDENTS SERVED THROUGH 241 CAREER PREP ACTIVITIES AND 503 HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS TRAINED ON EMPLOYABILITY AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS



**C** CHAPTER THREE  
**COMMUNITY**

A black and white photograph of three individuals in professional attire standing together. On the left, a man in a dark suit and striped tie holds a large, faceted blue crystal award. In the center, a woman in a dark zip-up jacket holds a smaller clear crystal award. On the right, another man in a dark suit and patterned tie stands with his hands clasped. They are positioned in front of a light-colored wall with a subtle texture.

The Flint & Genesee Chamber supports not only business growth, but also quality of life in the Flint & Genesee community. Our key focus areas include advocacy, delivering services that benefit the community, increasing knowledge and capability, honoring business and community excellence, and giving back to the community.

Our outreach efforts in 2015 helped to grow relationships with community stakeholders and, in turn, increased our effectiveness at improving quality of life in the area. The Outreach staff coordinated with over 250 leaders to support and/or execute 30 community-based projects. The projects ranged from a Middle Market Housing Study with the Live Flint Housing Subcommittee to the Flint Community Higher Education Partnership around land use and food systems to municipal finance workshops.

Public policy advocacy is another important part of the Chamber's leadership in Flint & Genesee. Our Public Policy Committee or PPC, which consists of business,

education and government leaders, addresses issues that affect job providers, and engages in the legislative and political process. In 2015, the PPC worked with our members to address key issues such as road funding, education, and political endorsements with a goal to create an environment favorable to business, jobs, and community growth and development.

Through the Shared Services Center, the Chamber worked with municipalities to identify opportunities to become more efficient, reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction. Shared services initiatives in 2015 included shared purchasing and IT solutions, and shared police and fire departments.

The Speakers Bureau is also a key component of the Chamber's outreach strategy. The program allows community groups to request a speaker to present on a variety of subjects. This service allowed Chamber staff to communicate positive news, investment project updates and new program offerings.

# 43,665



VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS  
PERFORMED BY CVB SPARKS,  
COMMITTEE MEMBERS, FGCC  
AMBASSADORS AND STAFF,  
YOUTHQUEST AND TEENQUEST  
STUDENTS

# 8



SHARED SERVICES INITIATIVES  
IMPLEMENTED

# 13



HONOREES RECOGNIZED WITH  
ART OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS  
FOR OUTSTANDING BUSINESS  
AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

# 80



SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS  
WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS  
ON CHAMBER PROGRAMS  
AND SERVICES

# 120



NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES  
PRESENTED TO CHAMBER  
MEMBERS ANNUALLY



## CHAPTER FOUR

# IMAGE



**L**ike most urban areas, Flint & Genesee has its challenges, but there are many bright spots. Despite its challenges—including the water contamination in Flint—the community continues to demonstrate incredible strength and resilience.

In 2015, the Chamber worked with public, private and nonprofit entities on an economic recovery and to build awareness of the strengths that make the Flint area a great destination for business investment, tourism and higher education. But this monumental rebranding effort requires all hands on deck and the Chamber's Convention & Visitors Bureau or CVB, has a great initiative that does exactly that: the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) program.

Launched late last year, the Flint & Genesee CTA program is an initiative designed to inspire hospitality staff, business employees, and other volunteers to turn every visitor encounter into a consistent, positive brand experience. It teaches participants

best practices and encourages a greater appreciation of the unique roles individuals play in increasing tourism. The program also helps frontline employees to increase their knowledge of the region and respond to a variety of questions from visitors.

Honoring excellence in the workplace and community remains a priority for the Chamber as demonstrated through the Art of Achievement Awards. It was the Chamber's privilege to present 13 awards recognizing outstanding business, community, and hospitality leadership. New in 2015 was the Small Business Government Contracting Award.

In addition, the Chamber continued to benefit from its partnership with Pure Michigan, exposing more people across the country to the many facets of Flint & Genesee. Also, national and international groups continued to choose Flint for meetings, sports events, and attractions—bringing in new business. And that's what it's all about.



# 978

PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCED THE FLINT AREA THROUGH BE A TOURIST IN YOUR HOMETOWN EVENT



# 34,789

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS EXPOSED TO POSITIVE MESSAGES ABOUT FLINT & GENESEE



# 500+

POSITIVE NEWS STORIES



# 40+M

IMPRESSIONS YIELDED THROUGH SEE WHAT'S POSSIBLE ADVERTISING

# FGCC BY THE NUMBERS

2

**503**

TEENS GRADUATED  
FROM TEENQUEST

**363**

TEENS HIRED IN 2015  
THROUGH SYI JOB FAIR

**3,799**

STUDENTS SERVED  
THROUGH YOUTHQUEST

**8,104**

STUDENTS SERVED  
THROUGH 24I CAREER  
PREP ACTIVITIES

**\$1B**

TOTAL INVESTMENT AND  
CONTRACT VALUE  
SUPPORTED

**32**

RETENTION/EXPANSION  
INVESTMENT PROJECTS  
AND IO ATTRACTION  
INVESTMENT PROJECTS  
IN GENESEE COUNTY

**168**

ASSISTANCE PROJECTS  
153 EXISTING BUSINESSES  
15 ENTREPRENEURS AND  
START-UPS

**3,471**

JOBs CREATED AND  
RETAINED

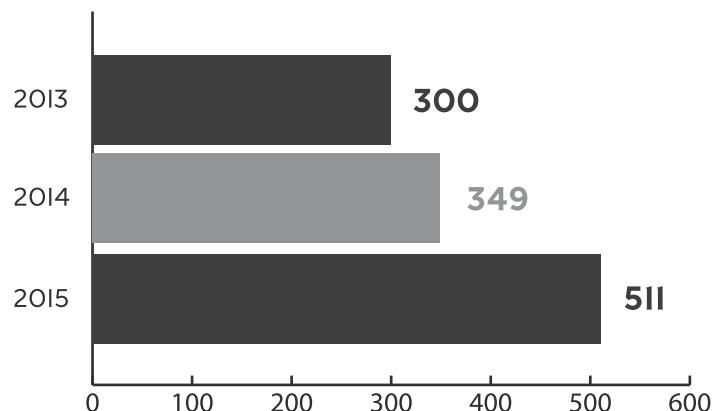
**42**

INVESTMENT PROJECTS  
GENERATED AN ESTIMATED  
\$338M IN ANNUAL PAYROLL

**1,149**

GOVERNMENT  
CONTRACTS AWARDED

COMPANIES COUNSELED BY PTAC



# 015

7.8%

RISE IN LODGING  
REVENUE IN 2015 WITH  
OCCUPANCY AT 54.3%

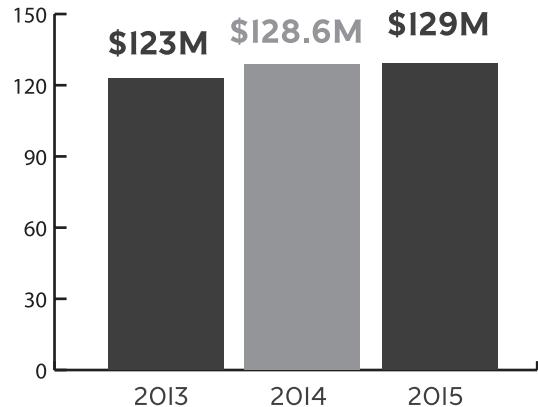
346.5

VIEWING HOURS ON  
DIGITAL VISITORS GUIDE  
AND 27.9% INCREASE IN  
NEW USERS VISITING THE  
CVB SECTION OF THE  
WEBSITE PER MONTH

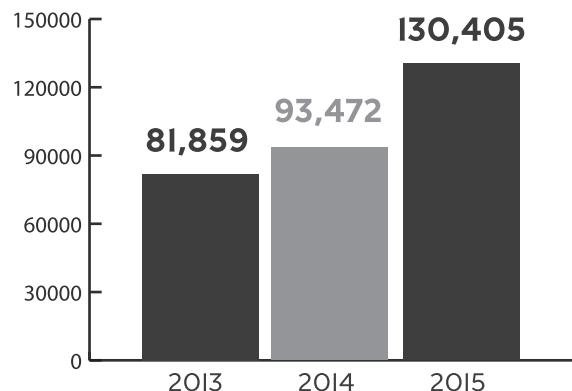
19,641

INDIVIDUALS ATTENDED  
142 EVENTS IN 2015

ECONOMIC IMPACT DUE TO  
OVERNIGHT HOTEL ROOM  
RENTALS IN GENESEE COUNTY



VIEWS ON DIGITAL MEMBER  
DIRECTORY/VISITORS GUIDE



65

INFORMATION FORUMS  
CONDUCTED

8

SHARED SERVICES INITIATIVES  
IMPLEMENTED

17

SITE VISITS FOR BENCHMARKING

93

WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED

3,401

FIRMS SERVED



4,431

BUSINESS EMPLOYEES TRAINED

# FLINT & GENESEE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Business, education, government and community leaders worked collaboratively in 2015 to move Flint & Genesee forward; and much progress was made. However, as the water contamination issue started negatively impacting

public perception and confidence, the County began to see a slight downturn in business and tourism. Despite this significant challenge, there's positive news for the Genesee County economy.

## S NAPSHOT\*

**GENESEE COUNTY IS ONE OF 83 COUNTIES IN MICHIGAN. IT IS HOME TO OVER 409,000 RESIDENTS, 6,192 BUSINESSES EMPLOYING 143,500 PEOPLE, AND SERVES AS A REGIONAL HUB FOR COMMERCE, CULTURE, EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION.**

**5.8%**

2015 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE  
COMPARED TO 7.8% IN 2014.  
CITY OF FLINT AND GENESEE  
COUNTY ANNUAL AVERAGE  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES WERE  
THE LOWEST SINCE 2000.

**176,000**

TOTAL 2015 EMPLOYMENT

**4.6%**

GENESEE COUNTY  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN  
DECEMBER 2015. LOWEST  
OF THE YEAR AND BEST IN  
14 YEARS.

**8.5%**

FLINT UNEMPLOYMENT  
RATE IN DECEMBER 2015.  
LOWEST OF THE YEAR AND  
BEST IN 14 YEARS.

\*As of January 2016

Sources:

Department of Technology, Management and Budget (Labor Market Information)  
EMSI – Economic Modeling Specialists International  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

# WHO WE ARE

The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce is a premier business membership organization. In addition to member services, our responsibility includes serving as the lead economic development and tourism agency for Flint & Genesee, managing innovative youth and business training programs, public policy advocacy and a Shared Services Center.

## MISSION

Maximize economic and community growth through collaborative partnerships and promotion of the region.

## VISION

Be the symbol of collaboration, reinvention, leadership and growth.

# OUR CORE VALUES

## INTEGRITY

We are trusted to do the right things with conviction, courage and transparency.

## CREDIBILITY

We are responsible and accountable for our agreements and actions, striving for honesty, trust, commitment and authenticity in all our communications and endeavors.

## HIGH STANDARDS

We actively pursue diversity, inclusion, collaboration and equitable treatment that empowers and inspires creativity and innovation.

## LEADERSHIP

We lead change, challenge ourselves and inspire the community to achieve greatness.

## RESPECT

We are professional, courteous and welcoming in all our interactions.

# 2016 OPERATING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Robert Rummel, Chair**

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, CHASE

**Steve Landaal, Chair-Elect**

PRESIDENT, LANDAAL PACKAGING SYSTEMS

**Joe Serra, Past Chair**

CEO, SERRA AUTOMOTIVE

**Donald Kooy, Secretary**

PRESIDENT/CEO, MCLAREN FLINT

**Thomas Shade, Treasurer**

PRINCIPAL, LEWIS & KNOPF CPAS, PC

**Jane Worthing, Regional Leadership Council Chair**

PRESIDENT/CEO, THE GENESEE GROUP

**Gary Hurand**

PRESIDENT, MANAGEMENT DIVERSIFIED, INC.

**Jeff Lamarche**

COMPLEX DIRECTOR, GM FLINT MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

**Clarence Pierce**

CEO, HAMILTON COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK

**Beverly Walker-Griffea, Ph.D.**

PRESIDENT, MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Dr. Karen W. Weaver**

MAYOR, CITY OF FLINT

**Mark Young**

COMMISSIONER & FINANCE CHAIRMAN,  
GENESEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# OUR INVESTORS: REGIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

A.G. BISHOP CHARITABLE TRUST	GST MICHIGAN WORKS! INC.	MOTT CHILDREN'S HEALTH CENTER
AT&T MICHIGAN	GENESYS HEALTH SYSTEM	MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BAKER COLLEGE OF FLINT	GM FLINT ENGINE OPERATIONS	NORTHGATE
BISHOP AIRPORT AUTHORITY	GOYTETE MECHANICAL	PEERLESS MATTRESS CO.
BROWN & BROWN OF MICHIGAN	HAMILTON COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK, INC.	PLANTE & MORAN, PLLC
CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION	HEALTHPLUS OF MICHIGAN	RIVERFRONT EYECARE
CHASE	HUBBARD SUPPLY CO.	ROWE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES COMPANY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER FLINT	HURLEY MEDICAL CENTER	RUTH MOTT FOUNDATION
CONSUMERS ENERGY	IMS HOCKEY CORPORATION	SERRA AUTOMOTIVE
DEE CRAMER, INC.	KETTERING UNIVERSITY	SHALTZ AUTOMATION
DIPLOMAT	KOEDEL MEATS	SIWEK CONSTRUCTION
DWLURVEY CONSTRUCTION	LANDAAL PACKAGING SYSTEMS	SORENSEN-GROSS CONSTRUCTION SERVICES
E & L CONSTRUCTION GROUP, INC.	LEWIS & KNOPF CPAS, PC	THE DM BURR GROUP
FIFTH THIRD BANK	HURAND & HURAND, LLC	THE GENESEE GROUP
FIRSTMERIT BANK	MASS TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY	THE HUNTINGTON NATIONAL BANK
FOOD BANK OF EASTERN MICHIGAN	MCLAREN FLINT	UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT
GENERAL MOTORS LLC	MLIVE MEDIA GROUP AND THE FLINT JOURNAL	WEINSTEIN ELECTRIC COMPANY



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