

AND

Covering Business
in Flint & Genesee

Nov/Dec 2017



**Shift change: As manufacturers
evolve, so do job opportunities**

**E&L Construction Group's
enduring legacy**

**The Business and Social Value
of Corporate Citizenship**

A publication of the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

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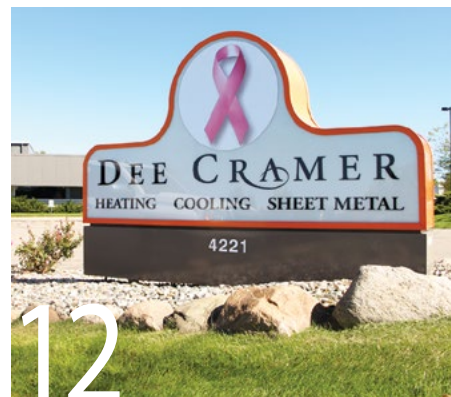
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COVER STORY

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On the cover: (From left) Gerald Kariem, director of UAW Region 1-D; Tom McMillen, executive director of interiors and safety, global purchasing and supply chain at General Motors; Flint Mayor Karen Weaver; Flint native Ray Scott, executive vice president of Lear and president of Lear's seating business; and Jason Scott, global vice president of Lear's GM seating group, breaking ground for the Lear facility at the Buick City complex.

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Nov/Dec 2017
Vol. 1 | Issue 2

AND

AND is published bi-monthly
by the Flint & Genesee
Chamber of Commerce
©2017

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Members are encouraged to send news about their business—staff changes, awards, or expansions—for publication in *Members on the Move*. Send submissions to Savannah Lee, slee@flintandgenesee.org. The Chamber reserves the right to deny and/or edit submissions.

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NOVEMBER

2 | YP Monthly Meet-Up

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Churchill's Food & Spirits, 340 S. Saginaw St.

7 | Speed Networking

\$10 members | \$15 future members

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn Gateway Centre, 5353 Gateway Centre

7 | INSPIRE Leadership Series

Speaker: Isaiah Oliver, President & CEO, Community Foundation of Greater Flint
Noon – 1 p.m.

Diplomat Headquarters, 4100 S. Saginaw St.

8 | Chamber Luncheon

Sponsor – Destinations to Travel, LLC

\$10 members | \$20 future members

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn Gateway Centre, 5353 Gateway Centre

9 | Art of Achievement Awards

Recognizing business excellence

\$25 per person, cash bar

5:30 – 9 p.m.

Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St.

30 | After Hours Wine Down

Sponsor – Ferris Wheel

5 – 7 p.m.

Location: Ferris Wheel, 615 S. Saginaw St.

DECEMBER

7 | YP Monthly Meet-Up

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Churchill's Food & Spirits, 340 S. Saginaw St.

13 | Chamber Luncheon

Sponsor – Hurley Medical Center

\$10 members | \$20 future members

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn Gateway Centre, 5353 Gateway Centre

14 | Professional Development

Importance and Benefit of Google Analytics

Noon – 1 p.m.

Baker College, 1050 W. Bristol Rd.

JANUARY

4 | YP Monthly Meet-Up

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Churchill's Food & Spirits, 340 S. Saginaw St.

10 | Chamber Luncheon

\$10 members | \$20 future members

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn Gateway Centre, 5353 Gateway Centre

25 | After Hours Wine Down

Sponsors – B's Bowling, Ashlor Staffing and Genesee Connects

5 – 7 p.m.

Location: B's Bowling, 750 S. Center Rd.



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From the CEO

A Look Inside Manufacturing



In this issue, *AND* explores manufacturing in Flint and Genesee County. Despite being hit hard over the past two decades, the manufacturing sector remains a significant driver of innovation, economic growth and sustainability not only in the Flint region but, the country.

As many are aware, the Flint area has a deep history in automotive manufacturing. And while its footprint has changed over the years, it remains a cornerstone of economic activity for the region. From the continued investment by General Motors to Laird's new R&D facility for connected vehicles, to Magna Electronics and Android Industries to Lear Corp., which recently announced it plans to build a new seating assembly plant. CNXMotion – a joint venture between Nexteer

Automotive and Continental Corp. – also just opened a new R&D facility in Grand Blanc Township that will focus on the development of sophisticated brake and steering systems for automated driving.

Today's manufacturing is advanced, high-tech, clean spaces with state-of-the-art equipment, and goes beyond the automotive industry to include plastics, energy, electronics and food processing.

In 2016, there were over 300 manufacturing firms in Genesee County including businesses such as Coffee Beanery, TMI Climate Solutions, MacArthur Corp. and Miller Industries.

Collectively these firms employed 12,240 people, a 2 percent increase compared to the year before.

I hope you will take the time to learn more by reading this month's cover story, which goes in depth on manufacturing in Flint & Genesee, and Michigan. Also featured are stories on how area businesses are engaging with our local communities, and a profile on one of our members, E&L Construction. All three are great reads!

Tim Herman
CEO

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"The manufacturing sector remains a significant driver of innovation, economic growth and sustainability not only in the Flint region but, the country"

Shift change:

As manufacturers evolve, so do job opportunities

The October groundbreaking for Lear Corp. to build a \$29.3-million plant at the old Buick City complex is not only a shot in the arm for Flint, but also a reminder of how manufacturing remains a critical leg of the economy for Flint, and for many other U.S. cities as well.

By Gary H. Piatek

From coffee production – including roasting, flavoring and packaging – at the Coffee Beanery facility in Flushing (opposite top left) to medical device manufacturing by TIDI Products in Fenton, Flint & Genesee's manufacturing sector is diverse.



Not long ago, a growing viewpoint was that U.S. manufacturing was on its death bed, and there was ample evidence for that opinion as the U.S. lost 5 million manufacturing jobs since January 2000, much of it to other countries. That reality was reflected in the statement from state Sen. Jim Ananich, D-Flint, about Lear's decision to build in Flint.

"They chose Flint, Michigan, over Mexico, and that's great for the citizens of Flint and for everyone in Michigan. I'm very excited," he said during the August announcement.

Evidence shows, however, that many ailing manufacturers shook off the death throes of the 2000s and began or intensified their reach into new markets domestically and overseas. They also invested in technology that barely existed decades ago, such as 3-D printers, Computer Numerical Control machines and robotics that are making small-batch and niche manufacturing more affordable and accessible.

While many manufacturing jobs certainly were lost and will continue to be lost due to retirements and advancements in technology, new jobs were created and will continue to be created. And many of those jobs offer a good wage. The national average annual wage for manufacturing jobs was \$63,907 in 2016, compared with \$52,291 for all industries, according to Chmura Economics & Analytics.

That's important to cities like Flint and the country as a whole. Manufacturers contribute about 12.5 percent of America's gross domestic product and employ roughly 12.6 million people, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show. Also, industry production has continued to grow since 2000, increasing by 38 percent, or \$1.6 trillion, and manufacturers contributed \$2.18 trillion to the

U.S. economy in 2016. The impact of that sends ripples across communities in indirect ways, such as:

- U.S. manufacturing has the highest multiplier effect of any economic sector, says a 2017 study by Deloitte. For every \$1 spent in manufacturing, \$1.81 is added to the economy, compared to 54 cents for retail and 58 cents for wholesale.

- For every job created in manufacturing, four additional new jobs are created in the broader economy, it said.

In Michigan, manufacturing directly employs more than 608,000 workers — up more than 175,000 since June 2009 — accounting for 19 percent of the state's GDP and 22 percent of all U.S. auto-related jobs, according to the Michigan Manufacturers Association.

In Flint and Genesee County in 2016, the manufacturing sector employed 12,240 people in more than 300 businesses, according to Emsi, an economic data research firm. While vehicle manufacturing still accounts for the largest chunk of the jobs, the sector locally covers a diversity of industries, including printed circuit assembly, medical equipment, iron and steel pipe manufacturing, and coffee production. The average earnings per job was \$84,107.

Lear's plant is expected to add about 600 more workers to the local mix, and the investment by the General Motors supplier of automobile seats adds to the more than \$2.8 billion GM has invested in Flint since 2009, Tom McMillen, executive director of interior and safety for GM, said in a statement.

"This expansion of capacity reflects the positive outlook we have for our business as well as the favorable economic climate in Michigan, and will contribute to the revitalization of Flint," added Ray Scott, Lear executive vice president and president of seating operations.

Among those who are positive about manufacturing's future here is Tom Crampton, executive dean of regional technology initiatives at Mott Community College.

"Manufacturing today, based on the strong economy, is very strong in Genesee County as well as Michigan in general," he said.

And while Lear's announcement is great news for our community, it's not just about Lear, he said. "When we talk with other manufacturers in the community, we see them also growing."

And most are growing with the future in mind, making advances in technology and looking for workers that have the right skills. As an example, Crampton mentioned Automation Movers International, a Flint Township company that installs and moves production automation manufacturing systems nationwide. It is growing as manufacturers ramp up and upgrade their production lines to equip for the future generation of automobiles and other products, said AMI President and Owner Steve Tondou.

That increased automation is increasing the demand for those with higher skilled trades, Tondou and other leaders of AMI said during an interview. And while they are part of the changes being made in manufacturing, they don't see that as a threat to area jobs.

"All the jobs are still there, they're just shifting their classification," said Dustin Clymer, program manager at AMI.

Plus, they maintain that manufacturing is never going to leave the county because all the infrastructure and the knowledge base is still here.

Crampton agrees with that assessment. He said that while manufacturing companies may never have as many humans engaged in assembly as in the past, "we'll have more (workers) behind the scenes



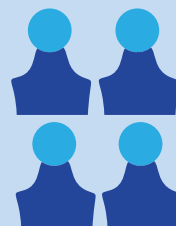
\$1.81



Amount added to our local economy for every dollar spent in manufacturing, compared to just **54¢** for retail

4

Additional jobs created for every **1** manufacturing job created



doing the design and the development and the programming.”

And he is also optimistic about Genesee County, in particular. He mentioned how the county, as part of the Southeast Michigan economy, is taking advantage of the technology advancements happening there, such as connected and autonomous vehicles. In that regard, Laird and CNXMotion each opened R&D facilities recently in Grand Blanc Township. He noted Kettering University’s work building a low-speed road course this year and developing a research garage and lab facility at the old Chevy in the Hole site to test automotive technology.

“The sooner that the community recognizes that General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler are IT companies almost as much as they are automotive companies, the better off we’ll be,” said Crampton. “We’re seeing now these industry sectors — that maybe used to be silos — coming together.”

Greg Freitas, operations manager at TMI Climate Solutions in Holly, said he also sees a bright future for manufacturing in Genesee County and elsewhere. The manufacturer of custom-engineered HVAC systems displayed its optimism when it completed a 59,000-square-foot manufacturing plant expansion in Holly in 2014 and added a 200,000-square-foot plant in Quebec in 2015, expansions that he noted would create more jobs.

The company’s goal, Freitas said, is to be a global leader in custom modular climate systems and bring the skilled trades workers from the field into the plants.

“We have a dedicated team who works everyday to make that happen. We are continually looking at new ways to grow our business and our base operations here in Holly,” he said.

While the evidence points to a future of leaner, more technologically savvy manufacturers that will pay good money



Top: Sheet metal workers at TMI Climate Solutions operating hydraulic swing beam Shear to manufacture custom air handling units.

Middle: AMI’s headquarters in Flint Township.

Bottom: A TMI air handling unit under construction.

for well-trained employees, Mott’s Crampton observes a nagging problem of perception among current college students who observed — and many felt the ramifications of — family members and others losing their manufacturing jobs in the 2000s: Now only a small percentage of today’s college students have any interest in a career in manufacturing, recent statistics show.

“Maybe the bigger challenge is helping young people understand what a career in manufacturing is really like today,” he said.

Clint Joyner, AMI’s training manager, tells young people that “it’s another whole industry than it was back then. Now it’s super advanced technologies, constantly evolving technology, fascinating equipment.”

“(And) there are a lot of opportunities,” said Crampton. “We generate 1/20th of the number of people with degrees in IT than the job market calls for.

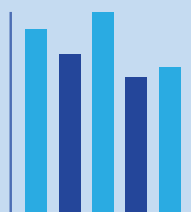
“We see companies coming regularly looking for graduates or people with skills,” he said. “A lot of our students are getting hired even before they finish their program. Companies are willing to work around their schedule because they know that getting access to skilled workers is critical to their survival.”

AMI also recognizes the growing need for skilled trades workers and is making an effort to help fill the gap, said Tondou. In September, it announced that it has opened its own skilled trades training center at its headquarters in Flint Township.

“We’re hoping that we can build a large pool of individuals with the skills that we need so we can place them in jobs,” Joyner told ABC12 at the time.

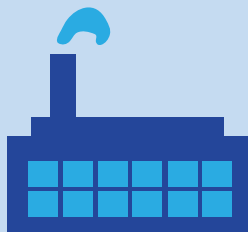
“Not only can we train them, we can provide opportunities for them as well,” Tondou added.

That is the kind of news that Crampton and many others want to hear more of.



\$84,107

Average earnings per manufacturing job in Flint & Genesee



12,240

Number of manufacturing jobs created by the **300⁺** businesses in Flint & Genesee



Member Spotlight

THE ENDURING LEGACY OF E&L CONSTRUCTION GROUP

By Gary Piatek | Photo E&L



When Lear Corp. announced in August that it had chosen Flint to build an automotive seat manufacturing plant on the former Buick City site, it only seemed fitting to choose a longtime Flint company to be its construction firm: The E&L Construction Group, Inc.

E&L Construction – founded in 1953 as Erickson & Lindstrom Construction Co. – was on Lippincott Boulevard for 62 years, making it one of the oldest construction firms in Flint. A few years ago, owners Greg and Mark Krueger decided that they needed more space to accommodate the growing company.

So, E&L moved its headquarters in 2015 but remained within the city of Flint. The move was needed, as E&L grew from 50 employees in the recession years to its current employment of 175 people. Instead of heading to the suburbs, they chose to renovate a building next to Bishop Airport.

“We wanted to stay in the city of Flint,” said Greg Krueger, company president.

E&L is recognized for many local construction projects it has completed over the years. Examples include building the Genesee Valley Mall in the early 1970s and its periodic renovations and additions. It also renovated the interior at The Whiting and recently completed construction on the intermediate pump station for the Karegnondi Water Authority to bring water from Lake Huron to Genesee County.

While E&L has been known for its work on General Motors, Ford and Chrysler plants for many years, it recently has gained recognition for its work in diverse

sectors, including Tier I automotive, retail, higher education, K-12 schools, churches, offices, and many other businesses.

“A significant amount of our work comes from our repeat customers” said Tim Fick, E&L’s vice president of business development. “We rely on our quality construction and our talented employees to gain the trust and satisfaction for our clients.”

For example, Kamax LP selected E&L when it decided to add 140,000-square-foot to its Lapeer facility, where it manufactures high-strength fasteners for the automotive industry. The project was completed this fall, and Kamax has retained E&L for future projects.

“To handle the increase in amount and scope of projects, E&L needs good

workers. And that’s where we’ve always put our focus,” said Greg Krueger. “The strength behind E&L ... lies in the talent and integrity of our people. Very simply, we attract and keep the best in the business.”

E&L continues to focus on the city of Flint. Its

“E&L continues to focus on the city of Flint. Its efforts helped the company earn the contract for the first new manufacturing facility in the city in nearly two decades.”

efforts helped the company earn the contract for the first new manufacturing facility in the city in nearly two decades. Lear on selected E&L to build its new 156,000-square-foot factory on a portion of the former Buick City site.

“This community needs companies like Lear to locate here,” said Fick. “For E&L to get Lear allows us to use local subcontractors as much as possible. We’re trying to keep the people working within the city and surrounding areas.

“The best way we can do that is by E&L Construction continuing to grow and diversify, and getting more companies, like Lear, to come to the city of Flint.”



Above: Kamax selected E&L when it decided to add 140,000-square-feet to its Lapeer facility. E&L completed the project this fall.



By Gary H. Piatek

The Business and Social Value of Corporate Citizenship

When employees of Dee Cramer spend time helping with Hurley Medical Center's phone-a-thon or GM Customer Care and Aftersales employees do work around Carriage Town Ministries, the organizations clearly benefit from the help and are grateful for having their load lightened a bit. For the volunteers, they get a day away from their jobs and gain the sense of satisfaction that comes with helping others.

Not always recognized, however, is the value those efforts have for the participating businesses.

Recent studies show that companies that allow and even encourage community volunteering benefit in a number of

ways: an enhanced reputation within the community; an increase in employee job satisfaction, which helps with retention and recruitment; and even a little free positive publicity that could lead to new business.

It's a winning situation for all involved, the evidence of which has encouraged participating businesses to do more community engagement and others to jump on the volunteer train.

"Effective corporate citizenship programs achieve two goals: They deliver business as well as social value," said Katherine Smith, executive director of the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship, commenting on its 2015 study.

Michael Stevenson, a managing partner at Clarus Partners in Columbus, Ohio, added that it also boosts morale. "It's an opportunity for employees to get to know one another better, to work as a team. That teamwork and camaraderie carries over to the work environment and improves the business," said Stevenson, in a November 2016 article for *Smart Business*.

Dick Skaff, president of Skaff Furniture & Carpet, would agree with those observations, since he is modeling those at his Flint store.

"We are trying to create a culture in here, an attitude of respect," he said. "To attract and retain good employees is about the most important thing a busi-

ness can do. Our employees see the way we treat our customers, they see the way we treat other employees and the way we give back to the community. I just think that we are sort of sending a message.”

Skaff’s biggest community engagement project has been its Save and Share event. It began in 2012 as a one-day sale from which 15 percent of every purchase was split among Carriage Town Ministries, Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and Whaley Children’s Center. That first year, Skaff gave a total of \$12,500 to the three charities.

The event has been held every year since then, with a few tweaks here and there. Last year an extension of the sale brought in a total of \$33,000, which was split evenly among the three charities. This year’s sale will be held on the four days following Thanksgiving and a fourth organization will be added: Communities First Inc.

Skaff said that giving back also is part of his Christian values and is something that was modeled by his father, Woody, who died in 2013. “It was very important to him to be active in the community. That’s just who he was,” said Dick Skaff, in an interview with MLive at the time. “(He was known for his) generosity, passion and selflessness. He was a good businessman too.”

Many local companies, such as Skaff, conduct their own giving events in addition to giving to what continues to be one of the most common sources of local community engagement for businesses and their employees: the United Way of Genesee County. And it is seeing growth in giving, said Jamie Gaskin, CEO of the United Way, which he said interacts with more than 300 businesses in Genesee County.

“I think it’s fair to say that the United Way here in Genesee County has experienced pretty continuous growth over the past five years in general,” he said. “We see tremendous generosity ... and in some areas some significant growth.”

GM and the UAW continues to be the most significant campaign for the local United Way, and it has grown tremendously, Gaskin said. Including

its dollar-for-dollar match, it has grown from \$280,000 in 2014 to \$900,000 to \$1 million now, he said.

“That allows us to do a lot more work in the community,” he said.

And with many companies, the United Way is just one part of its giving platform, said Gaskin. Once many larger

“We are firm believers that you give back to the community, and if something does come back for the company, that’s just an ancillary benefit.”

~Matt Cramer



companies, and others, reach their giving goals through one platform, they also give to favorite local charities.

One smaller local company that stood out last year, Gaskin said, is TIDI Products, a Fenton-based medical products company that after changing hands three years ago became a United Way supporter and went from essentially no contributions to \$8,000 and then to now \$34,000 over the past two years. The company increased its giving by offering a number of incentives, such as allowing employees to “buy” vacation time through

their United Way donations, he said.

“One of our core values is to be involved in the community and support the community,” said Margie Harvey, vice president of human resources at the TIDI corporate office in Neenah, Wis. She added that TIDI encourages employees to give their time and funds beyond United

Way by paying them to volunteer for a day at a charity of their choice, and it maintains a budget to contribute to a particular group or cause that an employee feels strongly about and fits the company’s guidelines.

Dee Cramer in Holly is another local company that supports the United Way but also backs other community charitable organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and Carriage Town Ministries, to name a few.

It’s a value that has been handed down from the company founder, Dee Cramer. He was one of the first Big Brothers in the program in Genesee County, said Matt Cramer of his grandfather, who started the company in 1937.

“My grandfather and grandmother and mother and father have always raised us to make sure that community and civic responsibility is just part of what we do as a business in our community,” said Matt Cramer.

“We encourage our people to give back to the community through volunteering their time,” he said. The company focuses on several fundraisers beyond United Way that it supports as a group, such as the Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowling Challenge, Christmas in Action in Holly and the American Cancer Society’s Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk.

How does that play out in benefits to the company? Camaraderie among the workers is the most obvious gain, he said, but the company doesn’t track it.

“My brother Rich and I, who run the company, we are firm believers that you give back to the community, and if something does come back for the company, that’s just an ancillary benefit.”

Get Ready for 'Meet the Buyer 2018'



The Region 6 Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) at the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce is gearing up to host its Meet the Buyer. The event will take place in April 2018, but it's not too early for prospective "buyers" and "sellers" to begin planning for the event at the Riverfront Banquet Center.

"Meet the Buyer" brings together procurement officials from various local, regional, state and federal agencies and businesses with goods and services for sale. It is a forum establishing and nurturing relationships that may result in securing a government contract.

Attendees will rotate among different agency tables, learning how the organization buys, what they are buying, and other valuable procurement information. Each buyer has five minutes to share information about their organization and what they buy, followed by 15 minutes for attendees to briefly present their companies and ask questions.


"This is one of the key procurement matchmaking and government contracting events in the state," said PTAC Regional Director Stacy Betts. "For the prospective governmental agency, it's an opportunity to meet face-to-face with business representatives and to familiarize themselves with the wealth

and growth of businesses in the region that they could be working directly with for their purchasing needs."

Buyers in past years have included Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, Bay Metro Transit, Bishop International Airport, City of Flint, Consumers Energy, Department of Veteran Affairs, Flint/Genesee Job Corps, General Dynamics Land Systems, Genesee County, Genesee County Road Commission, Hurley Medical Center, Mass Transportation Authority, Oakland County, TACOM LCMC, United States Army, and others.

Regional and community business resource partners will also be in attendance and available for discussion on how to start, grow, and expand businesses, including: the Small Business Administration (SBA), Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Mott Community College FABLAB, the University of Michigan-Flint and the Region 6 PTAC.

The roster of buyers for Meet the Buyer 2018 is still being developed, said Jasmine McKenney, Senior PTAC Counselor. Buyers interested in participating should contact McKenney at (810) 600-4066 or jmckenney@flintandgenesee.org.

Registration for sellers will open in January 2018. In the meantime, businesses looking to attend should work with their PTAC counselor to prepare themselves for the big day. PTAC can assist them with research on what the purchasers are buying or have bought in the past. PTAC counselors also can help with the creation of marketing and presentation materials for use at the event as well as for use in ongoing business development. 

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Congratulations to our members on the move. Share your ribbon cutting ceremony, groundbreaking, expansion or promotion with us. The Chamber has the media connections to promote your news, offering valuable exposure to the community announcing you are open for business.



Automation Movers International, 4110 Market Place, Flint Township. Unveiled a new skilled trades training center on Sept. 13



Wears Like New, 4362 Miller Rd., Flint Township, on Oct. 5. A consignment boutique that specializes in quality merchandise for the entire family.



Mid-Michigan Business Center, 4520 Linden Creek Pkwy, Flint Township, on Sept. 27. Offers executive office, shared office and co-working space.

Promotions/New Hires

Security Credit Union welcomes **Heidi Schwarz, CPA**, to its corporate office as the institution's Controller. She was formerly the director of finance and administration for Signature Truck Systems. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Michigan-Flint.



Janis Mueller is the new the Regional Director for the **Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** for I-69 Region, hosted at Kettering University. Previously, Mueller served as a Senior Business Consultant for the SBTDC North Carolina in Wilmington, and served as an interim regional director there for almost a year.



Three physicians have joined the employed staff at **Genesys**: **Steven Brooks, DO**, Cardiologist; **Michael Collins, MD**; and **David Luebbert, MD**, both primary-care physicians. Dr. Brooks, who joined the **Genesys Heart Institute Physician Group**, recently completed a fellowship in cardiology at Genesys and brings expertise in the areas of electrocardiography, echocardiography, transesophageal echocardiography, nuclear cardiology and preventive cardiology. Dr. Collins joins Dr. Melanie Pendergrass at **Genesys Primary Care Grand Blanc**, 8392 Holly Rd. Dr. Luebbert is seeing patients at the **Genesys Family Health Center**, 1460 Center Rd. in Burton.



McLaren Flint announces the appointment of **Parul Sud, M.D.**, as Program Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program, and **Kavitha Kesari, M.D.**, as Associate Program Director. Prior to her promotion, Dr. Sud had served for more than 20 years as Associate Program



Director/Director Ambulatory Medicine in Internal Medicine at McLaren Flint. Dr. Kesari has served as Assistant Program Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program at McLaren Flint for 10 years. The Internal Medicine Residency Program is affiliated with the **Michigan State University College of Human Medicine**. The **Family Residency Center** welcomes family and sports medicine physician, **Hussein Saghir, D.O., CAQSM**. Dr. Saghir has provided sports medical care to all of Detroit's professional athletic teams and also treats the general public and recreational athletes.

Heather Kale is the new General Manager of the **Ferris Wheel Innovation Center**. Kale was formerly the Director of Member Services for the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce.



Jennifer Wygonic has been promoted to Executive Director of **Meridian Senior Care/Landings of Genesee Valley**. She was Community Relations Manager.



McLaren Homecare Group has named **Vicki Watkins, MSN, RN**, Vice President of Homecare. She will oversee all statewide home health care operations for McLaren Homecare Group and the McLaren Health Care system. Watkins is formerly the interim service director at Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Medical Center Home Health and Hospice.

The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce announces the following promotions: **Elizabeth Murphy** to Chief Operating Officer from Group Vice President; **Kristina Johnston** to Group VP from Director of Grants & Development; **DeAndra McCain** to Group VP from Director of Core Initiatives and the Convention and Visitors Bureau; **Janice Karcher** to Senior Vice President of Economic Development, has been promoted to Senior VP from VP of Economic Development; **Michelle Hill** to Director of Core Initiatives and Shared Services from Director of Shared Services; and **Brandon Morgan** to CVB Director from Associate Director of CVB and Core Initiatives. **Lottie Ferguson** is the new Director of

Grants & Development for the **Flint & Genesee Chamber**. She was formerly Fund Development Specialist with the Ennis Center for Children. **Tyler Rossmassler** is Director of Economic Development. He was formerly a Business Development Manager with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Business News

Lambert, Edwards & Associates, a top-10 Midwest-based PR firm and a top-15 investor relations firm nationally, is a cool place to work according to *Crain's Detroit Business* 2017 list of "Cool Places to Work in Michigan."



Douglas K. Brown, Director of Development for **ASTI Environmental**, is the recipient of the Robert Sieghart Award for Enthusiasm for the Economic Development Profession, presented by the Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA). Brown received award at MEDA's annual conference in August.

Baker College System's business education programs have received reaffirmation of accreditation from the International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE) through July 31, 2023. IACBE accreditation is an independent evaluation of educational business programs.

Diplomat Pharmacy, Inc. in September acquired Focus Rx Pharmacy Services Inc., a specialty and infusion pharmacy with two locations in New York state. Focus Rx is a customer-focused health care partner that provides home infusion and specialty prescription management services. The acquisition bolsters Diplomat's offering of extensive solutions to meet growing demand for infusion therapies.

Health Alliance Plan (HAP) ranked highest in member satisfaction among health plans in the Michigan region, according to the J.D. Power 2017 Member Health Plan StudySM. The study measures satisfaction based on six key factors: coverage and benefits; provider choice; information and communication; claims processing; cost; and customer service. HAP received the highest regional score

among participating health plans and excelled in overall customer satisfaction. HAP was the top regional performer on coverage and benefits, cost, information and communication and claims processing. **Bridget Hollingsworth**, Regional Director of New Business and Account Solutions, was honored at the Third Annual Women in Power Summit. She was recognized for her community service and outreach. Hollingsworth was honored for her work with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Flint and Genesee County on projects like the annual Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser.



Genesys stroke care has earned a national award from the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association. Genesys received with the "Get with the Guidelines" Stroke Gold Plus achievement award – the highest recognition possible – and the Target: Stroke Honor Roll award for its excellent process improvement efforts in treating stroke patients. Hospitals receiving the Gold Plus achievement award have reached an aggressive goal of treating stroke patients with 85 percent or higher compliance to core standard levels of care for 24 consecutive months. The Target: Stroke Honor Roll award recognizes quality measures to reduce door to tPA time – at or below 60 minutes in at least 75 percent of stroke patients.

Superior Travel Services is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Jack and Ursula Schmitt founded the travel agency in 1967 in downtown Flint. Now, the third generation is working in the family business and helping travelers experience the world.



Deidra Wilson, Vice President of Government Relations for **McLaren Health Care Corp.**, has been named to the prestigious *Crain's Detroit* 40 Under

40 list. Wilson oversees government affairs for the system and its 19 subsidiaries. She has established operations for advocacy at the state and federal levels, oversees a political action committee and manages grant writing.

Members are encouraged to send news about staff changes, awards, or recognitions to Savannah Lee: slee@flintandgenesee.org.

Redefining the potential of manufacturing jobs

By Jeff Mason

Manufacturing is Michigan's legacy and an essential part of Flint and Genesee County's promising future.

Yesterday's manufacturing, however, won't resemble the manufacturing of tomorrow.

And preparing for that future begins today.

During the last several years, the state has made great strides in further elevating Michigan as a global manufacturing leader along with emerging as the preeminent site for autonomous-vehicle technology research, development and testing.

Keys to remaining a competitive state for manufacturing businesses to locate and expand include a tax structure that supports and encourages private investment, fiscal stability, regulatory reforms and economic development programs that bolster business/community growth and improve the reputation of the Great Lakes state.

Fostering a pro-growth manufacturing environment is step one of a critical two-step process that includes developing and rebuilding a manufacturing workforce that put the world on wheels.

There are reasons to be optimistic.

In early October, Lear Corp. broke ground on the former Buick City site on Flint's north side. With the support of a \$4.35-million Michigan Business Development Program grant, Lear is investing \$29.3 million into an automotive seating assembly plant and creating 435 jobs.

The rebirth of the former Buick City site is a symbol of hope and a prime site for additional manufacturing growth and jobs in Flint and Genesee County. Indeed, there are compelling signs across the state where significant private investment supported by the state and local governments are transforming local economies and prospects for the future.

The state of Michigan has been in the forefront of job creation and training investment, including:

- Creating a \$50 million fund to support college skilled trades equipment, the largest of any state.
- Maintaining one of the largest skilled-trade workforce in the nation, which has increased by 15 percent (604,000) since 2012.
- Increasing automotive-related jobs by 227,300 (since 2009).

Clearly, the future of manufacturing in Flint and Genesee County must consider the place for the next generation of skilled workers performing 21st-century manufacturing. Preparing for the next stage in manufacturing is the mission of the Institute for Advance Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI) and Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow (LIFT) located in Detroit.

The R&D efforts at IACMI and LIFT play a vital role in identifying new types of work, which is essential in the campaign to inspire the next generation of talented manufacturing workers.

As we look around Flint, let's keep in mind the critical link between building the economy and fostering entrepreneurial spirit.

Along the city's downtown main street, the finishing touches are being put on the historic, 40,000-square-foot art deco Ferris Building, home to the Ferris Wheel Innovation Center in what will be the region's epicenter of entrepreneurial activity.

The hub provides one-stop support for entrepreneurs, from concept to commercialization.

While manufacturing trends come and go, let's remember the most indispensable ingredient of economic growth – innovation. 



Jeff Mason is CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.



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