

# MICHIGAN **WORKS!**<sup>®</sup> NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM

Serving Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford,  
Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle Counties

# 2025

Program Year 7/1/24-6/30/25

# ANNUAL REPORT

DRIVING OPPORTUNITY,  
BUILDING FUTURES

# A WORD FROM OUR CEO

Dear Colleagues,, Partners, and Board Members,

This past year was one of both progress and perseverance. Across our eight-county region, we continued to navigate funding reductions, workforce shortages, and shifting community needs—all while staying focused on what matters most: helping people and businesses succeed.

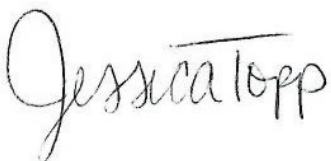
Our team showed up in every way possible. We strengthened employer partnerships, launched and supported apprenticeship programs, connected individuals to training and employment, and provided critical supports like transportation, childcare, and work tools to help people stay employed. In a time when many are doing more with less, our staff continued to deliver high-quality, people-centered services that make a lasting difference.

What stands out to me most isn't just the numbers in this report—it's the people behind them. It's the job seeker who finally found stability after months of uncertainty. It's the business that kept its doors open because we helped them find and train the right talent. It's the staff member who went above and beyond, again and again, because they believe in our mission.

As we look ahead to the coming year, our focus remains steady: strengthening local talent pipelines, meeting employers where they are, and finding innovative ways to serve individuals in our region. The landscape of work is changing, but our commitment to this region—and the people who call it home—is as strong as ever.

Thank you for your partnership, your trust, and your belief in what we do. Together, we're not just responding to today's challenges—we're building tomorrow's workforce.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Topp". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

**Jessica Topp**

CEO, Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium



# Table of Contents

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WHO WE ARE	1
REGIONAL IMPACT	2
REGIONAL IMPACT	3
LOOKING AHEAD	4
MW ASSOCIATION AWARDS	5
MW ASSOCIATION AWARDS	6
APPRENTICESHIP	7
GOING PRO TALENT FUND	8
OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE	9
JOBS FOR MICHIGAN'S GRADUATES	10
MICAREERQUEST	11
TALENT TOURS	12

# WHO WE ARE



## OUR VISION

A **UNITED COMMUNITY** of employers and jobseekers **WORKING TOGETHER** towards a prosperous future.



## OUR MISSION

To **EMPOWER** today's workforce and **IGNITE** tomorrow's economy by bringing together employers, jobseekers, and partners.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Improve the **essential skills** of the workforce by offering basic soft skills and computer skills workshops, career awareness services, and job search assistance.

Improve the **occupational skills** of the workforce for in-demand jobs through classroom and work-based training, thereby increasing the credential attainment in the region.

Improve **placement and retention** by identifying the right match between job seekers and employers, and providing support before and after placement.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Improve **quality** in all we do – services, workplace, and partnerships – by focusing on performance and professional development.

Improve internal and external **engagement** with colleagues, customers, and partners by increasing outreach, leveraging technology, and communicating effectively.

Make the best **use of resources** internally and externally by braiding funding and referring to community partners.



# REGIONAL IMPACT

CONNECTING TALENT WITH OPPORTUNITY: Program Year 7/1/24-6/30/25

**1,272**

EMPLOYERS SERVED

Unduplicated

**22,153**

AGENCY VISITS

at our 8 service centers

**3,904**

JOBS FILLED

with Michigan Works! assistance

**9,837**

JOB SEEKERS SERVED

In-office, unduplicated

**296**

INDIVIDUALS TRAINED

in local growth industries

**235**

AT-RISK YOUTH SERVED

**29**

OJTS

On-the-Job Trainings

**25**

YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE

**389**

BARRIERS REMOVED

thanks to Barrier Removal and  
Employment Success funding

**2,309**

STUDENTS REACHED

through Michigan Works!  
school presentations and expos

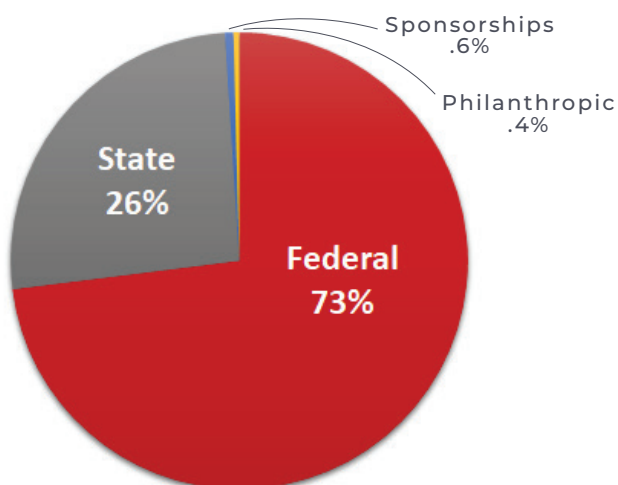
**\$5.7M**

INVESTED IN TRAINING & SUPPORT

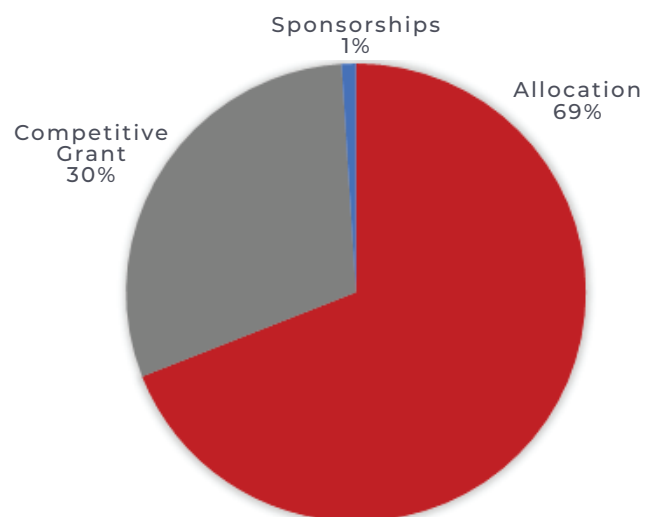
## REVENUE BY SOURCE

Fiscal Year 2025, ending 6/30/25

Total: \$6,838,040



## FUNDING MIX



# GRANTS

Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium applied for additional grant funding throughout the year. From 7/1/24 - 6/30/25, out of the 11 grants applied for, 8 were awarded., totaling over \$814,000.\* Grants awarded include:

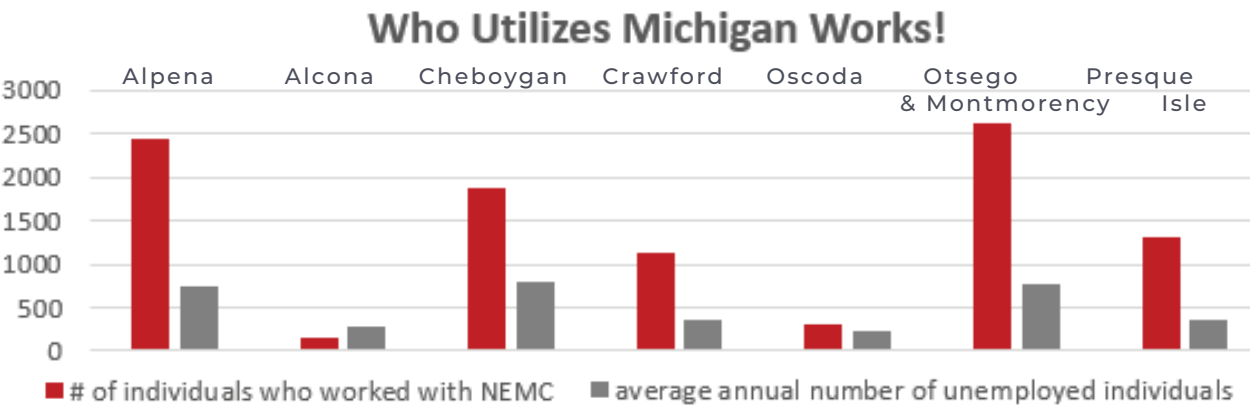
- **FAFSA Frenzy Grant**, awarded by MCAN (Michigan College Access Network)
- **Michigan Inclusive Training, Technology and Equity Network Grant** (MITTEN), awarded by Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI)\*
- **Innovative Program Grant**, awarded by MCAN (Michigan College Access Network)
- **Early Childhood Investment Corporation Round 3 Grant**
- **Young Professionals**, awarded by the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO)
- **Talent and Growth Barrier Removal Initiative**, awarded by the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO)
- **Nonprofit Disaster Grant**, awarded by Otsego Community Foundation

*\* in May 2025, a Presidential Executive Order clawed back the MITTEN funding (\$446,023)*

# PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium proudly expanded support in several key areas:

- **Talent & Growth Initiative:** Provided essential transportation and training resources.
- **Apprenticeships:** Providing hands-on training where workers learn while they earn.
- **CDL Training Support:** Assisted job seekers in gaining this in-demand credential.
- **IGNITE Program:** Partnering with IOSCO RESA we supported individuals incarcerated at the Alpena County Jail, offering hands-on career readiness services, career guidance, resume assistance, mock interviews, job search help, and more.
- **Education partners:** We're grateful for partnerships with local schools and training providers who share our commitment to upskilling Northeast Michigan's workforce.



# LOOKING AHEAD

This past year, Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium has been proud to help individuals and businesses across our region thrive. From connecting job seekers with training opportunities to supporting local employers in meeting their workforce needs, our team has remained committed to building a stronger future for Northeast Michigan.

In PY2025, we served more than 9,800 individuals and partnered with over 1,200 employers. These efforts resulted in hundreds of job placements, new credentials earned, and opportunities for long-term success. As we look forward, we remain focused on innovation, strong partnerships, and helping our communities grow together.

While inflation has steadily eroded WIOA funding, our commitment to building a skilled and adaptable workforce has never wavered. Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium continues to champion innovative funding strategies and advocate for legislative solutions that keep Northeast Michigan’s workforce strong, prepared, and ready for the future.

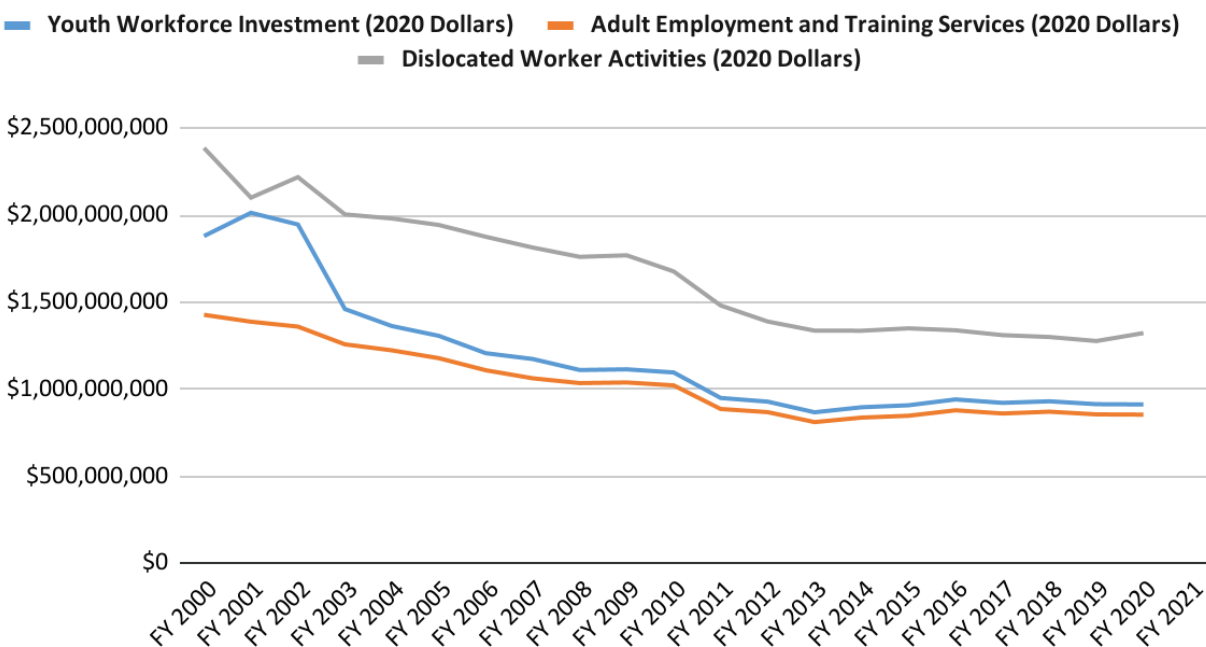
## FUTURE FOCUS

In the coming year, we will continue to focus on:

- ✓ Continued legislative efforts
- ✓ Diversifying funding
- ✓ Expanding apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities
- ✓ Supporting youth through career exploration and training
- ✓ Addressing transportation challenges for workers
- ✓ Helping employers adapt to changing workforce needs

Together, we will keep building pathways for success across our region.

## Funding for WIOA Has Been Steadily Eroded by Inflation



Source: Congressional Research Service.



# MICHIGAN WORKS! ASSOCIATION AWARDS



## 2025 SHINING STAR AWARD KIM SCHULTZ

The Shining Star award celebrates Michigan Works! frontline staff who, through dedication and outstanding contributions to workforce development, personify the Michigan Works! mission. Program Specialist Kim Schultz is known for her deep knowledge of programs, attention to detail, and willingness to assist with any task. Her behind-the-scenes work keeps the agency running smoothly and her contributions are invaluable to the team.

**“ Jessica Topp**  
CEO, Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium

*“Kim truly embodies the best of NEMC. From creating the detailed systems and reports that keep us running smoothly to supporting her colleagues whenever needed, she does it all with skill, kindness, and dedication. This award reflects the tremendous impact she’s had on our team and organization.”*



## 2025 EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR CHEBOYGAN COUNTY SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT

The Michigan Works! Association honored the Cheboygan County Sheriff’s Department for going beyond the call of duty – not only in public safety but also in workforce development.

Named the association’s 2025 Employer of the Year, the Cheboygan County Sheriff’s Department was recognized for working with Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium to implement a registered apprenticeship program. The program creates clear, hands-on pathways in corrections and public safety, addressing both regional workforce shortages and barriers to employment.

The Employer of the Year award highlights an employer that works in partnership with a Michigan Works! agency and goes above and beyond to contribute to local job placement, while promoting education to maintain a skilled workforce.





# IMPACT AWARD

## NEW LIFE PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTER & CHELSEA BOLINGER

The Michigan Works! Association's Impact Awards honor those who have contributed to strengthening Michigan's economy by actively creating jobs and developing fresh talent in their communities.

Chelsea wanted to do better for her children, but was struggling to find an employer that would look past her criminal history due to addiction. With support from Michigan Works!, Chelsea began a work experience with New Life Pregnancy Center in Gaylord. The staff welcomed her with open arms and without hesitation or judgment. They were so impressed by her commitment that they asked their board for a funding adjustment to hire Chelsea on full-time. Michigan Works! applauds New Life Pregnancy Resource Center for being a key part of Chelsea Bolinger's success story and commends their investment in people and supporting skills training to help workers grow!



## MICHIGAN WORKS! GUIDANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT STEERS YOUNG MOM TOWARDS SELF-SUFFICIENCY

When Chelsea began the PATH program she was facing many barriers. As a young mother of three, she was ready to work hard to make a change. Due to her past, she struggled to find an employer willing to work with her. She continued to apply for similar jobs she'd had in the past, afraid to branch out and risk the unknown. But that was about to change.

"If it wasn't for Michigan Works!' help, we wouldn't be where we are now. We wouldn't have what we have today," shares Chelsea.





## ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICESHIP

After reaching out to Michigan Works! interested in pursuing an electrical apprenticeship, Apprenticeship Specialist Jeremiah Johnston connected Michael with P & C Prime. Jeremiah helped them set up their USDOL Registered Substation Electrician Apprenticeship program and Michael was hired on!

**19 APPRENTICES**  
REGISTERED WITH USDOL



# APPRENTICESHIP

With guidance from Michigan Works! Apprenticeship Specialist, Jeremiah Johnston, Registered Apprenticeships continue to grow in Northeast Michigan! Michigan Works! holds the standards for these USDOL Registered Apprenticeships:

CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST  
EARLY CHILDCARE EDUCATION OPERATOR  
CONSTRUCTION DRIVER  
CORRECTION OFFICER  
ELECTRICIAN - SUBSTATION  
ELECTRICIAN - MAINTENANCE  
MEDICAL ASSISTANT  
WELDER  
ENGINEERING ASSISTANT  
HVAC MECHANIC/INSTALLER  
TOOL MAKER

“

**Brenda Beckwith**

Jail Administrator, Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department

*“Having Michigan Works! as our intermediary has been awesome. We started our program from the ground up. Jeremiah's been a wealth of help and information to keep our program rolling. I've put 6 apprentices through so far and I have another 4 enrolled.”*

# Going PRO IN MICHIGAN

TALENT FUND

## GOING PRO TALENT FUND (GPTF)

The Going PRO Talent Fund is a competitive grant program in Michigan that reimburses employers for a portion of the costs to train current and new employees to fill skill gaps.

### NORTHEAST MICHIGAN IMPACT

**\$135,433**

AWARDED TO COMPANIES

**60**

INDIVIDUALS TO BE TRAINED

**9**

ANTICIPATED NEW HIRES

**5**

PLANNED APPRENTICES

**7**

### AWARDS RECEIVED

HB CARBIDE  
OSSINEKE INDUSTRIES  
RS SCOTT  
RAZOR CONSTRUCTION  
RYBA MARINE  
ALCONA HEALTH  
THUNDER BAY HEALTH

“

**Julie Peters**

Business Manager, R.S. Scott

*“With the help of the Going PRO grant funds for our required new hire training, we were able to afford two new hires instead of just one at a time of year when funds are typically short for us!”*



# OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE



## LEGISLATIVE DAY

Michigan Works! takes six youth to Jobs for Michigan's Graduates Legislative Day in Lansing. The youth represented Mackinaw City, Graying, Wolverine, and Fairview schools. This Youth Solutions annual event focuses on empowering youth to engage with Michigan's policymakers, share their personal stories of success, and advocate for continued support of career-focused education. In Lansing, the youth were able to meet with Senator Michele Hoytenga, Representative Ken Borton, and Representative Cam Cavitt. They spoke with the legislators about current issues facing young people and members of rural communities, such as transportation, education, and access to quality careers.

## LEADERSHIP DAY

Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium Youth Career Advisors took five Jobs for Michigan's Graduates students to participate in Leadership Day at Camp Daggett in Petoskey for a day of growth, self-discover, and empowerment. Leadership Days is JMG's annual event focused on leadership and team building activities that allow participants to get to know their fellow JMG youth from around the state and gain confidence in themselves.

## OFFERING GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Whether it's helping youth overcome barriers to graduation or helping them gain the confidence to win multiple woodworking awards in the Michigan Industrial Technology competition, our Youth Career Advisors put their heart into every youth they work with!





# JMG SUMMER SUMMIT

## MICHIGAN WORKS! NORTHEAST CONSORTIUM WINS MULTIPLE AWARDS

The Summer Summit is an annual statewide professional development conference celebrating excellence in the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program.

**JAG 6-of-6 National Awards** recognize affiliates and program specialists who meet or exceed all six performance metrics ensuring youth success in education and employment.

**Affiliate Award:** Ashley Udell, JMG Manager

**Individual Awards:** Jeanie Flory (Cheboygan & Presque Isle) and Erin O'Rourke (Crawford)

**Outstanding Manager of the Year:** Ashley Udell – recognized for exceptional leadership and dedication to helping her team prepare Michigan's youth for success.

**Living Our Values Awards** recognize JMG staff who model JMG's core principles in their daily work.

**Transformational Award:** Erin O'Rourke – for creating lasting, positive change in the lives of Michigan's youth.

**Advocates Award:** Seth Gruenberg (Otsego County) – for courageous advocacy and commitment to expanding opportunities for young people.

Congratulations to Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium JMG staff on their outstanding achievements at this year's Summer Summit!





# CAREER EXPLORATION



**MiCareerQuest Northeast** is the largest hands-on, career exploration event for students in northeast Michigan. This annual event in May provides a platform for students to engage with industry professionals and participate in interactive experiences. Each exhibit provided students with a hands-on activity and an opportunity to talk with professionals about their career paths and the skills and education needed to succeed in those fields. Students grades 8-12 are invited to explore careers in construction, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and technology.

**1,100+**  
STUDENTS

**22**  
SCHOOLS

**82**  
EXHIBITS

**125+**  
OCCUPATIONS  
HIGHLIGHTED



Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium partnered with the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (NEMIGLSI), Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG), and the MiSTEM Network to host the first annual

**EcoCareers Expo.** This career exploration event focused exclusively on exploring careers in natural resources and connected 566 eighth grade students from 15 schools across the region with 27 exhibitors. Students engaged in hands-on experiences at a variety of interactive booths where they could learn about the diverse range of careers available within their communities and across the state.

The Consortium also coordinated two **Career Expos at local schools**, at which students could talk to professionals in the field, learn about career tracks and programs, and participate in some hands-on activities. The Rogers City Schools Career Expo featured 21 businesses and drew over 300 high school and middle school students from 4 schools, and the Cheboygan High School Career Expo had over 600 students in attendance.





Employers and partners this year included Alro Steel, H.B. Carbide, Industrial Arts Institute, Kirtland Community College, Moran Iron Works, the UAW Center at Black Lake, and Weyerhaeuser.

## TALENT TOURS

Talent Tours introduce young adults to available career paths by offering a behind-the-scenes look into in-demand businesses and industries. Talent Tours provide real-time information regarding local opportunities, and the education, and training requirements needed to secure employment in these fields.

**8** TOURS   **7** EMPLOYERS   **7** SCHOOLS   **92** STUDENTS

## Career Readiness & Exploration



Thanks to a Young Professionals Grant, Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium once again held a Career Readiness & Exploration Summer Program, designed to equip youth ages 14–17 with essential employability skills and hands-on career preparation. Nine teens participated in the four-week program, preparing them for gainful employment, helping them create a personal portfolio, and by enriching them with positive self-development. The program covered weekly themes, including Career Exploration and Personal Reflection, Skills for a Successful Career, Landing the Job, Professional Portfolio Completion, and Preparing for Interviews.

The Consortium also partnered with MiSTEM to support the Summer Academies, offering hands-on, earn-while-you-learn experiences for 29 area youth. Building on the success of the Welding Academy, now in its third year, 2025 marked the launch of two new programs: the Construction Trades Academy and the CNC Academy.



A proud partner of the American  Job Center network

**MIWORKSNE.ORG**



**CONNECTING TALENT  
WITH OPPORTUNITY**

Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request. Supported by the State of Michigan. Funded with federal funds; details available at [www.miworksne.org/about](http://www.miworksne.org/about).  
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