

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



— MIDDLE MICHIGAN —
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**Growth
for the Future**

MMDC leads regional efforts

**Celebrating
Local Businesses**



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Wow, what an incredible year! In 2021, we at MMDC faced many continued challenges as we worked with our area businesses to try to get things "back to normal." Once again, we were honored to be selected by the State of Michigan to be one of fifteen local economic development organizations to administer the Michigan Small Business Survival Grant program. Through that program, we were able to distribute \$1,840,000 in grants to 183 small businesses that were reeling from the shutdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the counties of Clare, Isabella, Arenac, Gladwin, Gratiot and Midland.

Toward the end of the year, I worked closely with a Special Committee of the MMDC to craft our new three-year Strategic Plan (see pages 4 and 5). In addition, we were able to secure a \$350,000 Business Development Grant from the MEDC and a property tax abatement from the City of Mt. Pleasant for MAC LTT to locate their growing stainless steel tanker production in the Mt. Pleasant South Industrial Park rather than at their facilities in Kent, Ohio. We also welcomed Amazon to Union Township where they renovated an existing building behind the Home Depot to serve as a "last mile" distribution center to better serve area customers. MMDC assisted Amazon with their request to quickly rezone this building and we worked with Union Township to get the necessary approvals completed in record time.

In 2021, I was greatly honored to be chosen to serve for one year as President of the Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA). MEDA is a statewide economic development advocacy organization with about 500 members. In addition, I have continued to serve on the Collaborative Development Council (CDC) for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). I also have continued to serve on the select 12-member Economic Development Leaders of Michigan (EDLM) team.

After a lengthy search process, the MEDC hired Quentin Messer as their new CEO. Quentin and I hit it off right away and I have spent a fair amount of time with him in an advisory role. I would honestly say that the relationship between the MEDC and MMDC has never been stronger. In December, Quentin called on the members of EDLM and the CDC to call legislators to help pass a \$1.4 Billion legislative package designed to help the state compete for major automotive-related projects. This legislation was in response to the recent decision by Ford Motor Company to move all their electric vehicle production to Kentucky and Tennessee. Michigan just has not had the necessary tools to compete for major projects when many southern states are offering the "sun, moon and stars" to lure our largest companies away.

Even though I was out of state at a conference, I was able to make a number of calls to legislators and the legislative package passed by strong margins in the Senate and the House. We all celebrated on December 20th when Governor Whitmer signed the bills at Henry Ford Community College in Detroit (see photos opposite page). In response to this, General Motors recently announced that they will be investing \$3 Billion and adding 2,700 additional jobs for electric vehicle production to their current substantial footprint in Michigan. Having the right tools makes all the difference in the world!

Our team here at MMDC continues to amaze me! Kati Mora was honored this year with the Robert Sieghart Award for Enthusiasm for the Economic Development Profession by the members of MEDA. We also were very pleased to receive the 2021 Meet Mt. Pleasant Tourism Award from the Mt. Pleasant Area Convention and Visitors Bureau for everything we have done to help save area small businesses. When you look at the other organizations that make up the fifteen economic development organizations the state has selected to distribute grants and administer programs, most of them have at least four to five times the number of staff that we have. And when I think of the number of people we have been able to assist and the number of businesses we have helped to save, I have to say that Kati Mora, Pam O'Laughlin, Jessie Stickler and Heather Schlorff truly are real-life superheroes. Our team is genuinely looking forward to another successful Economic Development year in 2022!

LOCAL IMPACT



184



404



OVER \$40.1
0 MILLION



624

Grant Funding = \$2.1 Million

MMDC supported employers of all sizes in Middle Michigan by distributing grant funding totaling \$2,117,482

THE BIG PICTURE



ADVOCATE

As a member of key legislative advocacy teams (EDLM, MEDA, CDC), Jim is part of shaping policy that supports a thriving Michigan economy.



LEGISLATE

Because of strong appeals to increase funding for retaining and growing Michigan's automotive industry, a \$1.4 Billion legislative package was approved.



CELEBRATE

After the incentive package passed, GM announced that it will invest \$3 Billion and add 2,700 Michigan jobs through expanded EV production.



GM's announcement to expand in MI is featured in a December issue of The Wall Street Journal

2022-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

PLANNING FOR FUTURE VITALITY

Every three years, MMDC revisits and revises its strategic plan to ensure that the corporation is responsive and proactive to the current economic climate. This year, efforts to put forth a new plan began over the summer when MMDC team members reviewed the corporation's last strategic plan and made recommendations for changes and additions. Considerations for the new plan were instructed by strategic plans from leading economic organizations like the MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corporation) and others.



MISSION

We grow the economy with services designed to retain, expand and attract businesses in Clare and Isabella Counties to foster economic vitality and resilience in our region.



VISION

As the primary economic development driver for businesses, communities and industrial partners, we champion prosperity and vibrancy for Middle Michigan.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND GROWTH



- ✓ Conduct regular business retention calls
- ✓ Advocate for state and local incentives for business expansion
- ✓ Strengthen supply chain and business export activity
- ✓ Connect businesses with grant funds and other financial opportunities
- ✓ Lead talent attraction strategy, and support workforce development and employee retention through equitable and competitive models

With a first draft completed, a special task force of MMDC board members discussed their vision for the organization and its priorities for the coming years.

After several meetings and drafts, and a new visually-impactful design, the task force and MMDC team were able to present a recommendation to the full board, which unanimously voted to adopt it.

The new version of the strategic plan may be simplified, but there is nothing simple about the intense goals and strategies outlined.

“We wanted to have a guiding document that was clear and easy to understand so that we could share the mission and vision of the organization with anyone,” states **Kati Mora**, Vice President of MMDC.

“We wanted to ensure that we valued all voices when charting the course for our next three years. I’m pleased that we achieved both of those goals with this new plan,” explains **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of MMDC.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION



- ✓ Attract new businesses to our area
- ✓ Market area opportunities to site selectors and developers
- ✓ Assist incoming businesses with incentives and approvals
- ✓ Support efforts to foster entrepreneurial growth
- ✓ Coordinate with partners for regional attraction strategies

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



- ✓ Work with developers, land owners and real estate brokers to promote redevelopment
- ✓ Advocate for municipal partners for community development projects
- ✓ Assist developers with incentives
- ✓ Support place-based businesses and programs that strengthen quality of life and community vibrancy
- ✓ Coordinate with partners for community development practices

MICHIGAN. CENTERED.

MMDC plays lead role in shaping the Great Lakes Bay Region brand

Middle Michigan Development Corporation is one of seven economic development organizations (EDOs) that make up Region 5, the Great Lakes Bay Region: Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, and Saginaw Counties. And until this year, each organization represented and recruited businesses into their coverage areas independently.

"The way we spoke about our region, the materials and content we shared, and the overall approach we took to attracting businesses differed for each EDO," explains **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of MMDC. "Some of our counties have relatively large, dedicated teams and others are one-person shops, so the approaches were pretty varied."

After the cooperative efforts in 2020 to distribute grant funds across the region, a foundation of partnership and shared planning had been established among the EDOs.

Representatives for each of the eight counties came together to discuss processes and messaging that could serve the entire region well, ultimately creating a plan for attracting businesses to the region that included a regional

elevator pitch with corresponding marketing appeals.

Kati Mora (MMDC) and Greg LaMarr (Saginaw Future) co-led the committee meetings and set the overall direction for the project. Jessie Stickler (MMDC) wrote and designed the marketing materials based on the regional team's guidance.

In addition to the regional materials, the group was able to create new processes for marketing to prospective businesses and site selectors. They also developed tracking and reporting tools so that everyone in the region could participate equally in responding to interested developers and companies.

"This was truly a collaborative effort that equips all eight counties with powerful tools to attract businesses to our region," reflects **Kati Mora**, Vice President of MMDC. "We have an amazing, diverse region and over the course of 2021, our team developed a cohesive brand that could represent us all."

Every county now has access to a robust regional toolkit for attracting businesses, and they are encouraged to customize regional items with the specific appeals and messages that celebrate the counties they represent.



This was truly a collaborative effort that equips all eight counties with powerful tools to attract businesses to our region."

—Kati Mora, Vice President of MMDC



MICHIGAN. CENTERED.

The new Great Lakes Bay Region logo captures both the geographic location of the region and its vibrancy. It evokes water access and nods to the PureMichigan® tourism campaign.



Marketing sheets and ad language use the region's elevator pitch, infographics, and make both quality of life and industry appeals.



Infographics were created to visually represent some of the state's and region's strongest appeals to industry influencers.





NEW MEDC CEO VISITS MIDDLE MIC

On October 22, Quentin Messer, newly-appointed CEO of the MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corporation) spent a day in Middle Michigan, touring the area, and learning about some of the incredible work being done by Middle Michigan companies.

MMDC partnered with economic development leaders in both Gladwin and Gratiot Counties to develop the day's itinerary.

"It was important that we introduced Quentin Messer to our communities and some of our business and community leaders," shares **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of Middle Michigan Development Corporation. "We're passionate about making sure that the excellent work, outstanding companies, and talented people from central Michigan don't get overlooked because metro or urban communities often get more attention. We very much see our job as championing rural development and our local area."

During the day, Messer met with company leadership to listen to top concerns and points of pride. He also was invited to tour five facilities to experience the exceptional work being done in Middle Michigan firsthand.

In total, Messer traveled over 100 miles to visit these manufacturing facilities, and midday he met with and addressed a group of invited community leaders over a boxed luncheon at the Central Michigan University Research Corporation's Mt. Pleasant location.

“Economic development is about connecting people to good jobs, connecting businesses to great people and financial capital, and supporting vibrant communities, and I look forward to doing this vital work at MEDC.”



-Quentin Messer

HIGAN

“I was fortunate to spend additional time with Quentin as we drove between sites,” **Jim McBryde** reflects. “We talked a lot about all that our area has to offer, and it was definitely eye-opening for him. I’m glad to have gotten to know more about him and his vision for leading Michigan forward. Since his visit, Quentin and I have continued our conversations and he has turned to me for advice several times. He really is an exceptional leader.”



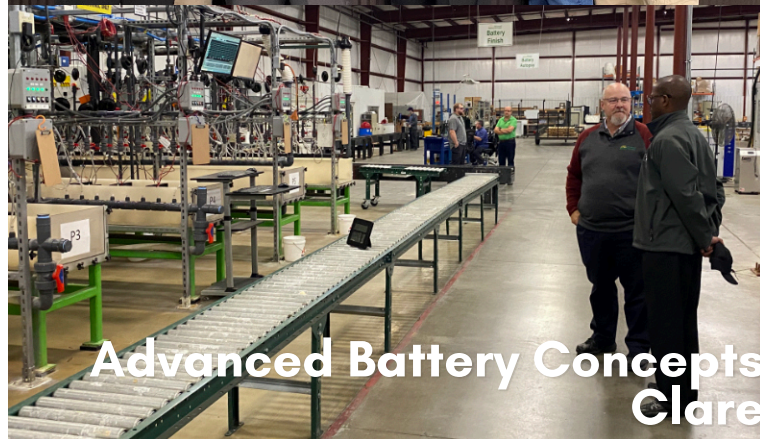
Aircraft Precision Products
Ithaca



Bandit Industries
Remus



American Mitsuba Corporation
Mt. Pleasant



Advanced Battery Concepts
Clare



Luncheon and Discussion
CMURC



Saint-Gobain Industries
Beaverton



MAC LTT

Ohio company chooses Michigan. Again.

Last year, Mt. Pleasant was fortunate enough to welcome MAC LTT, an industry leading manufacturer of liquid tank trailers, to its manufacturing base. Though the company is headquartered in Kent, Ohio, it decided on launching its first stainless steel facility in Mt. Pleasant, because it could acquire the right mix of assets and facility space locally.

Since then, MAC LTT's production of state-of-the-art stainless tankers has flourished, with demand quickly outpacing the production capacity at their location. It was time for a larger space and an expansion of operations.

MAC LTT considered making the obvious choice to move its stainless steel operations

nearer to its headquarters in Ohio. But, company leaders also recognized the benefits of staying in Middle Michigan—an outstanding talent pool with a workforce unlike any other.

"We were thrilled that MAC LTT was doing so well, even in the midst of the pandemic," notes **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of MMDC. "But, we were concerned about finding a larger space for them so that they would stay here. We went to work right away to find the right location and put together financial packages that incentivized their continued investment in our community."

The right location did emerge when Dayco Corporation announced plans to vacate its

current Mt. Pleasant building. Through cooperative efforts with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), MMDC was also able to facilitate a \$350,000 Business Development Grant for MAC LTT. Additionally, the City of Mt. Pleasant granted the company a property tax abatement on the Dayco building, providing even more financial incentive for MAC LTT to remain.

"We were able to secure the business development grant because there was a true risk of losing MAC LTT to another state and the MEDC recognized that," **McBryde** states. "It's so important for Michigan to fight for businesses to come here and stay here. Financial incentives are a big part of that work, so I'm happy that we were able to deliver these funds for an important local employer."

MAC LTT expects that their business expansion to the new facility will include an \$8 Million local investment and will create an additional 60 jobs over two years.

"We appreciate the efforts of MMDC, the City of Mt. Pleasant, and the MEDC to create opportunities for us here," says Mark Upton, General Manager of MAC LTT. "Mt. Pleasant has been a great place to work, and we're looking forward to expanding and growing here."

-Mark Upton, MAC LTT

AMAZON

moves into Union Township

A new Amazon warehouse and "last-mile" distribution center moved into Union Township in 2021. The company selected the Mt. Pleasant area as an ideal location because of its centralized

geography and easy access to major highways. MMDC and Union Township assisted Amazon with their request to rezone the building, getting approvals in record time.

The 12,500 square foot facility, located behind the Mt. Pleasant Home Depot, will employ up to 45 people in good paying jobs.

Amazon facility in Union Township





NEARLY 40 YEARS OF

Bandit Industries announces newest expansions

Bandit Industries has had a long tenure serving as a key employer in Middle Michigan, and its incredible growth continues today.

The Remus-based woodchipper company's early days were modest. It started out as Foremost Fabrications, a small company founded by Mike Morey Sr in 1983, with a goal of building a better chipper than the market had to offer and a better company for which employees could dedicate their skills.

From those humble beginnings and a commitment to honesty, integrity and unwavering employee support, the company thrived. In 1987, when Jerry Morey and Dennis

Tracy joined the team as co-owners, the company name was changed to Bandit Industries while product lines, industry recognition, and sales soared.

Demand for Bandit products, based on its sterling-reputation in the market led to new facilities and product lines—on average, major expansions occurred every two years.

By the end of 2021, the company had grown to 610 employees, up from 450 in 2020, with its main facility extending to 340,000 square feet. The company has pioneered premium tree chippers, stump and horizontal grinders, and forestry mowers. In 2018, it was also an early





GROWTH

adopter of an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) model, in which it announced that 100 percent of the company would be made available to its employees.

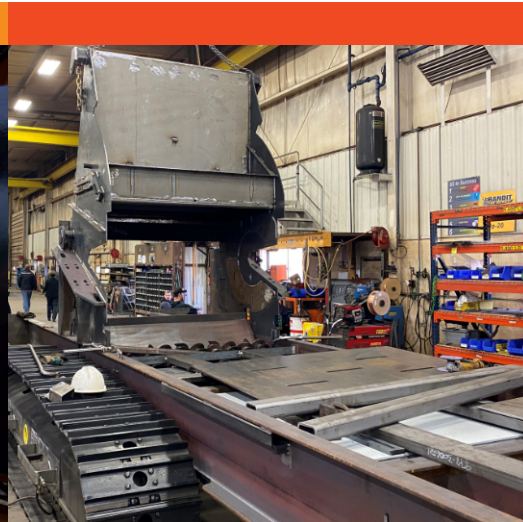
Late 2021 brought about another major expansion for the company, when it announced a purchase of the assets and properties of the Trelan Company.

Trelan has a strong history in the tree chipper arena and has produced equipment since the early '70s. Bandit Industries will continue producing both Trelan and Bandit product lines and provide service and parts for both. The 45,000 square foot Trelan facility will add to Bandit's capacity to manufacture both lines. Bandit has five more expansions underway that



are slated for completion by the close of 2022, totaling a \$16.5 Million investment. Additionally, Bandit's team keeps growing, and it anticipates employing 800 talented individuals by the end of 2022. Currently, the company has over 100 career openings.

"I want to congratulate Bandit Industries for their recent Trelan purchase and their tremendous growth over the last few years," states **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of MMDC. "Bandit is a leader in manufacturing and innovation. We are proud to have them here in Middle Michigan."





TWO BUSINESSES RECEIVE \$25,000

Despite the challenges of 2020 and 2021, grant funds have fostered advancement for some Michigan small businesses. Though financial relief programs have been the focus of media coverage, it's encouraging to take note of programs that took into account growth beyond recovery. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) *Match on Main* program is one example. Through this program, Michigan businesses with planned expansions in downtown locations could receive matching funds to make their aspirations a reality.

This grant program supports Michigan's commitment to place-based initiatives—those that create vibrant communities to attract new residents and deepen the feeling of “home” for lifelong Michiganders. The grants were administered by local authorities like Middle Michigan Development Corporation (MMDC), who managed the grant application process on behalf of the City of Mt. Pleasant. A team of five grant reviewers, three from the City and two from MMDC, reviewed local proposals submitted for the spring funding round by downtown businesses.

"We sent forward the two strongest proposals we received," noted **Kati Mora**, Vice President of Middle Michigan Development Corporation. "Both of our applicants are committed to creating new and vibrant additions to Mt. Pleasant's downtown, but we knew that there would be fierce competition for these grants at the state-level."

Beyond MMDC's role in proposal review, the Corporation helped applicants develop the strongest possible applications to submit for state review. Though only two of the City's five applications were forwarded for *Match on Main* funding consideration, MMDC continues to look for ways to support all of the grant applicants.

In total, MEDC funded 21 projects across all of Michigan through *Match on Main*. Among those selected were both businesses from Middle Michigan: Pleasant City Coffee and Mountain Town Station, each of whom received the maximum grant amount of \$25,000.

Pleasant City Coffee, operating in downtown Mt. Pleasant since 2013, submitted plans to add a wine-tasting bar to its venue and renovate its indoor and outdoor spaces. Currently catering to young professionals and coffee-enthusiasts, Pleasant City's project would create something new for downtown Mt. Pleasant, expand the business' product line by 75%, increase its hours of operation by 25%, and improve its overall seating capacity. The business plans to feature a line of Michigan-made wines, supporting another Michigan business in the process.

"As we reviewed local applications for the *Match on Main* program, we prioritized proposals that would enrich our downtown and offer something new and special to the area," said **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of Middle Michigan Development Corporation. "We think that Middle Michigan is an amazing place, and we want to promote innovative projects that attract people to it."

Also receiving a \$25,000 grant, Mountain Town Station has been a longtime staple in Mt. Pleasant. Operating as both a brewery and a

restaurant, Mountain Town overlooks the Chippewa River and draws customers ranging from college students to retirees. The pandemic has taken a significant toll on the business, which has needed to reduce both its staff and its hours as a result. Mountain Town's proposal expands its outdoor seating and overall capacity by creating a new, heated outdoor dining area. Not only would this expansion provide unique new options for enjoying downtown Mt. Pleasant, but it would allow the restaurant to distance its diners, and expand its overall capacity.

"The folks at MMDC were incredibly helpful in putting forth a strong proposal for *Match on Main* that truly captured my vision for the future of Mountain Town Station," stated **Jim Holton**, Owner of Mountain Town Station. "Beyond that, they assisted me with numerous other relief grants, which made it possible to weather the storm through some really challenging times. As we start our recovery and start to look toward new growth, it's partners like MMDC that I credit."


The renovations have been completed at both venues, so we can raise a glass (of coffee, wine, or a microbrew) to putting recovery behind us and looking forward to a flourishing economy here in Middle Michigan.

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES

This year, MMDC entered into a partnership with the Mid-Michigan Region Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to offer direct consulting to small and micro-businesses. Through this innovative partnership, MMDC could directly assist more businesses and

startups with organizational planning, marketing and communications assistance, and more.



The background image shows a large industrial facility for battery formation. In the upper left, a sign reads "Advanced Battery Concepts Battery Formation Patents by Operation Patent Family (# of patents) SunFlo (13) ViaCool (1) ResilForm (1)". The facility is filled with complex machinery, including conveyor belts, electrical control panels, and various pipes. The lighting is industrial, with bright overhead lights. The overall scene depicts a high-tech manufacturing environment.

Battery Formation

Patents by Operation
Patent Family (# of patents)

SunFlo (13) ViaCool (1) ResilForm (1)

Advancing Energy

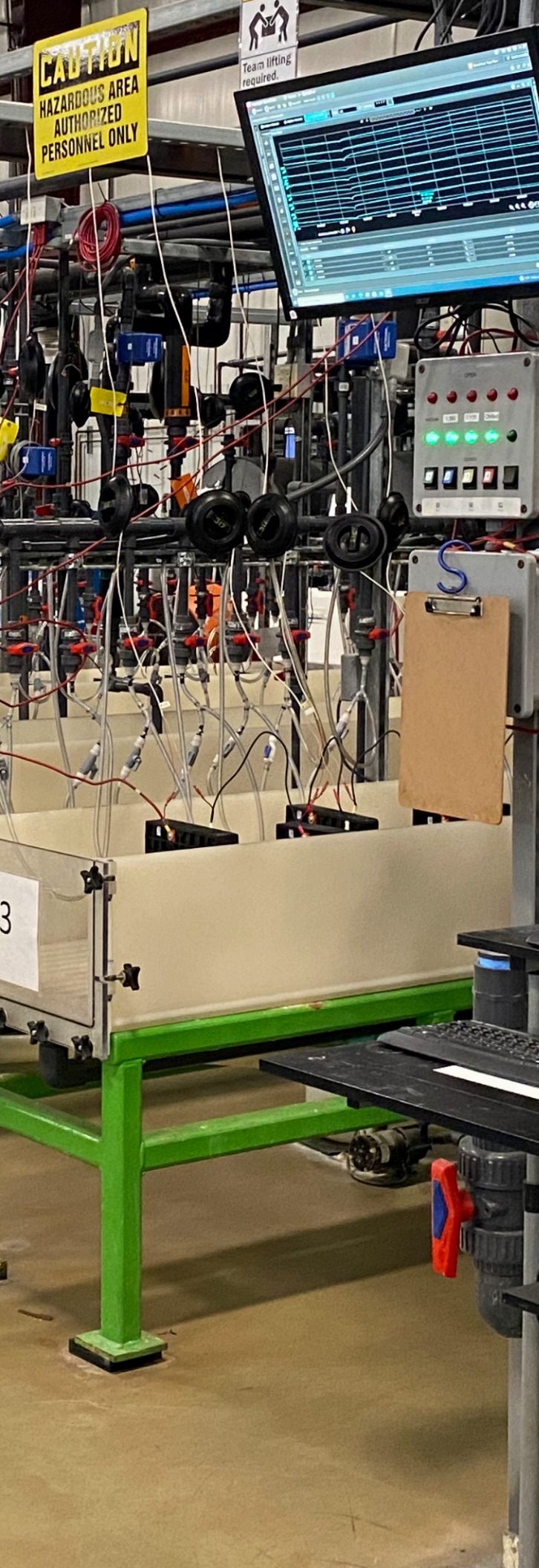
Advanced Battery Concepts (ABC), a battery technology development company, is advancing the future of large-format, energy storage solutions. Since the company's launch in 2009, it has expanded from a simple garage to its current 80,000 square foot facility in Clare's North Industrial Park. The company has grown to over 40 employees who push the boundaries of battery manufacturing and lead the global development of bi-polar batteries using patented GreenSeal® Technology.

GreenSeal® batteries and ABC's newly-released Home Emergency Energy Storage (HEES) solutions rely on environmentally-friendly processes and ethically-sourced materials. Further, the company's production processes represent high-efficiency, low-waste practices.

The HEES™ system is a revolutionary solution to ensure that homeowners have immediate access to emergency power. The system requires only eight square feet of interior space, and once installed, it begins storing excess energy for use during power outages. During power loss, the system activates immediately and can provide up to 6kW of power for two full days.

"Our GreenSeal® battery manufacturing facility in Clare, Michigan is an advanced proving ground for robust scale manufacturing processes that efficiently enables continuous production of our batteries," states **Michael Everett**, ABC's COO. "Trending towards a zero emissions plant and adapting simple and effective industrial technologies, GreenSeal® manufacturing is reliable, precise, clean and minimizes environmental impact of a lead acid plant to levels unattainable in traditional manufacturing plants."

In the near future, ABC plans to change the energy storage industry again with its announcement of EverGreenSeal®, which will greatly enhance battery technology, safety, increased sustainability and production on a world-wide scale.



INSPIRING NEXT-GEN TALENT FOR NEXT-GEN CAREERS

In October, students enrolled in Clare-Gladwin RESD's Career Tech Education (CTE) programming got to see technical innovation at work in their backyards. A partnership between Advanced Battery Concepts (ABC), Michigan Works! Region 7B, and the Central Michigan Manufacturers Association (CMMA) arranged for these 80 high school juniors and seniors to tour ABC's Clare facility, learn about the company's processes and products, and explore future careers.



Students split into small groups to facilitate greater depth and personalization of the day, and they interacted directly with ABC employees to learn about the myriad options available in high-tech production fields: from accounting to engineering, logistics to sales.

"It's so important to provide young people interactive and first-hand experiences like these," observes **Pam O'Laughlin**, MMDC's Clare County Director. "If we really want to inspire our future leaders to stay here, we need to show them that there are amazing local companies and opportunities."



MMDC TO LEAD TALENT & TRAINING GRANT

Nearly \$750,000 in grant funding has been earmarked for customized training in production operations through a Regional Talent Innovation Grant. The program, which will launch in 2022, provides training for up to 200 people to earn at least one industry-recognized credential through Mid Michigan College or Delta College. The grant will be administered for the eight-county Great Lakes Bay region by MMDC.

"We surveyed our regional employers to determine how to best meet their talent needs," explains **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO of MMDC. "It's clear that our companies need entry-level employees in middle-skills areas. We hope that this program provides an important pathway for people to get trained and get to work quickly, while also alleviating some of the challenges that face employers who are trying to fill their rosters."

Through this program, employers can access free training for their newly-hired employees or for those who would like to advance their skills.

Mid Michigan College and Delta College have been designated to provide customized trainings in these key areas. The colleges will develop comprehensive training options from which employers can select to ensure alignment between employer needs and employees' skills.

"We frequently hear from employers that businesses could fill jobs, but candidates don't have the needed skills. The trainings offered are based upon specific areas employers have identified," notes **Pam O'Laughlin**, MMDC Director of Clare County. "This grant will help to raise both skills and wages to improve the overall economic stability of over 200 individuals in our communities."

The Regional Talent Innovation Grant is in the final stages of development and approval. Information about how to be trained through the program or how to request training for your employees will be available on MMDC's website: **mmdc.org**.

GRANT DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE



\$745,940
IN GRANT FUNDING



200
TRAINEES

At least 51%
low-income



Colleges



Delta College



Mid Michigan College

Arenac | Bay | Clare | Gladwin | Gratiot |
Isabella | Midland | Saginaw Counties

POINTS OF PRIDE

MMDC in the news



MMDC HOSTS STATE LISTENING TOUR

In November, MMDC hosted a roundtable discussion between State officials from Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity and local business, workforce development and community leaders. The event was an opportunity to hear about priorities outlined in Gov. Whitmer's MI New Economy plan. The discussion also prompted considerable conversation from the community attendees.

"We are very pleased to host this roundtable discussion and bring together many of our local leaders to discuss our economy with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity," said **Jim McBryde**, President and CEO Middle Michigan Development Corporation. "Michigan faces some major challenges and opportunities, and it will take all of us working together to usher in Michigan's New Economy."



MMDC's Kati Mora and Jessie Stickler participate at MEDA's annual conference as panelists discussing Communicating with Stakeholders

KATI MORA HONORED BY MEDA

MMDC's Kati Mora was honored at this year's Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA) annual luncheon when she received the Robert Sieghart Award for Enthusiasm for the Economic Development Profession. The Sieghart recipient is someone who enjoys economic development and understands the importance of the profession to all communities. They are interested in bringing more professionals into the fold with their passion and dedication. They know that more jobs and investment in a community will benefit the entire state, that the rising tide lifts all ships.

Kati has been instrumental in mentoring and assisting fellow colleagues in the Great Lakes Bay Region, playing a major role in collaborative efforts and distribution of grant and relief funds.



MMDC RECEIVES TOURISM AWARD

The Mt. Pleasant Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) awarded MMDC its 2021 Meet Mt. Pleasant Tourism Award for MMDC's broad efforts to sustain and support small businesses during COVID-19. In recognition of the nearly \$3.5 Million in grant aid distributed by MMDC during the crisis, the CVB honored MMDC staff at its annual luncheon, where Jim McBryde accepted the crystal pineapple award on behalf of the team.

"It sometimes brought tears to our eyes to read through the challenges that our small businesses were facing," **McBryde** said in his acceptance speech. "We are so grateful we could be a part of helping to support our local businesses."



CELEBRATING

Noteworthy & Newsworthy

MYMICHIGAN HEALTH EARNS EXCELLENCE AWARD

Michigan Performance Excellence (MIPEX) awarded MyMichigan Health the 2021 Michigan Performance Excellence Award, the state's highest honor for organizations that have demonstrated outstanding performance, leadership, and operational excellence. As an award recipient, MyMichigan Health can now apply to the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program.



LEAR CORP. RECOGNIZED FOR IMPACT



Lear Corporation received a 2021 Impact Award by state leaders from the Michigan Works! Association. In response to high turnover rates, Lear embarked on efforts to improve overall employment satisfaction at its Farwell plant. Pam O'Laughlin, MMDC Clare County Director, worked directly with Lear to identify key dissatisfiers and create improvements. Among the changes were improved hiring and training processes, improved working conditions and better personnel, compensation, and scheduling practices. These efforts resulted in reduced turnover and increased employee morale. That's impact worth celebrating!

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY A GLOBAL LEADER IN PROCESS MINING

Central Michigan University (CMU) was certified as an Academic Center of Excellence by Celonis, a German process mining company that holds more than 60% of the global market. CMU shares this distinction with only three other institutions in the US and only 13 others worldwide. Careers in process mining, an emerging organizational strategy that leverages company data to provide insights into the overall effectiveness of its efforts, is expected to grow to \$1.42 billion by 2023, up from \$185 million in 2018. CMU is ahead of the pack in creating student experiences in this fast-growth industry.



CITY OF HARRISON GOES SOLAR

The City of Harrison received a \$15,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) for a large solar initiative. Solar panels were installed at eight city properties that had been identified as having the highest energy bills. The City of Harrison anticipates \$162,000 in annual savings as a result of the solar projects. City Manager Tracey Connelly reflects, "the City of Harrison was settled as a lumber town in the 1880's, with sawmills located on the shores of Budd Lake. We understand the importance of preservation and renewable energy. Converting many of our municipal buildings to solar energy is the right thing to do for our community, environment, and our budget."



COMMUNITY WINS

in Middle Michigan in 2021

GREENTREE GROCERY RECEIVES 'MAKE IT MT. PLEASANT' FUNDING

GreenTree Cooperative Grocery and RedBloom Yoga were the first two recipients of Make it Mt. Pleasant, a rental subsidy program designed to encourage and support new and expanding businesses in downtown Mt. Pleasant. The program supports up to two new businesses or expansions annually with funding available up to \$4,200 a year.

"When you look at downtown regions, they're such a lifeline of the community," says Justin Haun, Business Development Manager at Lake Trust Credit Union. "We believe that by having vibrant downtowns it's going to draw more people to that community and create stronger communities."



CONSUMERS ENERGY INVESTS IN MT. PLEASANT

In 2021, an entirely rebuilt City Gate was completed by Consumers Energy in Union Township. City Gate stations are the delineation point between gas transmission and distribution, where gas pressurizing and odorization occurs to ensure safe and reliable natural gas for a community. Union Township's new City Gate includes remote access points for immediate response in the event of a gas leak or other incident, providing improved safety and access for the local service area.

Also, 15 years ahead of schedule, Consumers Energy announced plans to stop using coal as a fuel source by 2025 and use 90% clean energy resources by 2040.



MT. PLEASANT JOINS MID MICHIGAN COLLEGE'S DISTRICT



Fall 2021 was the first semester in which residents of the Mt. Pleasant Public School District received in-district tuition rates at Mid Michigan College. An historic annexation of the district occurred in November 2020 when residents voted to become part of the College's service district and contribute 1.2232 Mills of their property taxes toward Mid's operations. As a result, residents in the Mt. Pleasant Public School District now pay 40% less than they had previously, an important step forward in promoting affordable and accessible higher education that results in a well-trained local talent pool.



At MMDC, we value the successes of our local communities, businesses, and partners. When they thrive, all of Middle Michigan grows stronger. We are grateful for the support of community leaders and organizations who share our goal to strengthen Clare and Isabella Counties.

Focused &



The City of Harrison has collaborated with MMDC for many years, working together on projects that will improve the quality of life of our citizens as well as provide jobs and attract talent to the area. MMDC has done an excellent job in keeping Harrison informed and we feel very fortunate to have Pam O'Laughlin and Jim McBryde in our corner and working alongside us toward the betterment of Harrison and its community members.

-Tracey Connelly, City of Harrison

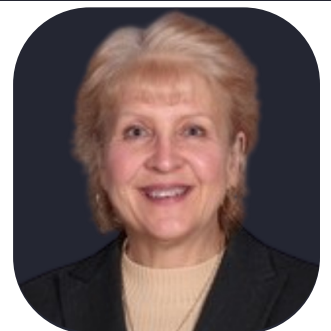


"Middle Michigan Development Corporation continues to be a spectacular regional partner for economic development in our area. The work that MMDC does to help municipalities and businesses both large and small locate opportunities for development, growth, and new and expanding building projects is second to none. Their connections to key people, grants, training, and other resources allow Mid-Michigan to continue to grow and compete with the rest of the State. I am proud to sit on the Board of Directors and thankful to be able to partner with such a great organization.

-Jeremy Howard, City of Clare

I want to commend and thank the MMDC team for their endless efforts on securing and distributing multiple grants to numerous small businesses over the past year, to ensure that the economic vitality in Clare and Isabella Counties is the best it can be!"

-Harmony Nowlin, Consumers Energy



“The world changed the last year and we are thankful to MMDC for what they have done for our community. Through their efforts, MMDC helped administer funding to help a tremendous number of small businesses keep afloat and keep Mt. Pleasant thriving in such a difficult time. These efforts kept our small unique and local businesses alive. Mt. Pleasant and Isabella County would not be the same without our small businesses that make us unique to both residents and visitors.”

-Chris Rowley, Mt. Pleasant CVB



Centered



MMDC Team, 2021 (from left to right):
Pam O’Laughlin, Heather Schlorff, Teri Rau, Jim McBryde, Kati Mora, Jessie Stickler



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Past President, Isabella Bank

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2021 Annual Report