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Dr. Angela Guy-Lee honored with 2025 Spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. Award

COMMUNITY, PG 20

Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu to keynote MLK event

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) is set to host its annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on Wednesday, Jan. 22, with Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu as the keynote speaker. The event will take place at 7 p.m. in the Malcolm Field Theatre, located in Curtiss Hall, and is open to the public.

Rev. Tutu, a renowned race and gender justice activist, will draw from her experiences growing up as a Black woman under apartheid in South Africa to inspire attendees. Her journey, marked by resilience and advocacy for human rights, has shaped her into a globally sought-after speaker. Beginning her public speaking career in the 1970s while attending Berea College in Kentucky, Rev. Tutu has since addressed diverse audiences, including business associations, professional conferences, and civic organizations, sharing her powerful message of unity and



REV. NONTOMBI NAOMI TUTU

justice.

The evening will also feature the presentation of the MLK Scholarship Awards and the Regional Drum Major Awards, recognizing individuals who exemplify Dr. King's vision of leadership and service.

SVSU's commitment to inclusivity will be reflected throughout the program. The university is providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and encourages early requests by contacting

The Conference Center at 989-964-4348.

This event underscores the importance of addressing systemic injustices and fostering dialogue. Rev. Tutu's keynote address will highlight the enduring relevance of Dr. King's dream and the responsibility of communities to challenge oppression and division.

For additional details about the event, visit svsu.edu/mlk or contact the Office of Diversity Programs at 989-964-4068.



Enrollment progress at SVSU

LATINO BANNER, COVER



Community empowerment to take center stage at DEIBJ symposium

COMMUNITY, PG 16



Federal funds help police with domestic violence cases

COMMUNITY, PG 24

FEATURED STORY

Planning starts close to home

COMMUNITY, PG 26



WORKING TOGETHER. SHARING THE DREAM.

MLK MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY CELEBRATION



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Nontombi Naomi Tutu

Race & Gender Justice Activist

Saginaw Valley State University
Wednesday, January 22, 2025
7:00 p.m. — Malcolm Field Theatre
Located in Curtiss Hall

This event will feature:

- Keynote Address — the Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu
- Presentation of the MLK Scholarship Awards
- Presentation of the Regional Drum Major Awards

For more information, please visit svsu.edu/mlk or contact the Office of Diversity Programs at **989-964-4068**

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

The challenges of growing up black and female in apartheid South Africa have been the foundation of the Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu's life as a motivational speaker and activist for human rights. Those experiences taught her that our whole human family loses when we accept situations of oppression, and how the teaching and preaching of hate and division injure us all.

She started her public speaking as a college student at Berea College in Kentucky in the 1970s when she was invited to speak at churches, community groups and colleges and universities about her experiences growing up in apartheid South Africa. She has since become a much sought-after speaker to a wide variety of business associations, professional conferences, elected officials and church and civic organizations.

The Rev. Tutu knew from the time she was young that she wanted to help change the lives of others and make a difference in the world. But she wanted to carve her own path. And that she has done.

Special thanks to our 2025 sponsors & Great Lakes Bay Region partners



SVSU will provide reasonable accommodations for those persons with disabilities. Individuals who wish accommodations should contact The Conference Center at SVSU at 989-964-4348 at least three days prior to the need. SVSU does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical impairment, disability or veteran status in the provision of education, employment and other services.

MICHIGAN BANNER

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MISSION

The Michigan Banner, Latino Banner and Youth Banner operates and serves as a print and online media venue committed to educating, informing and enlightening our readership regarding events and news that directly and indirectly affect the communities regionally and globally. Furthermore, to serve as a catalyst and a link for cultivating young adults as entrepreneurial and business leaders for the future.

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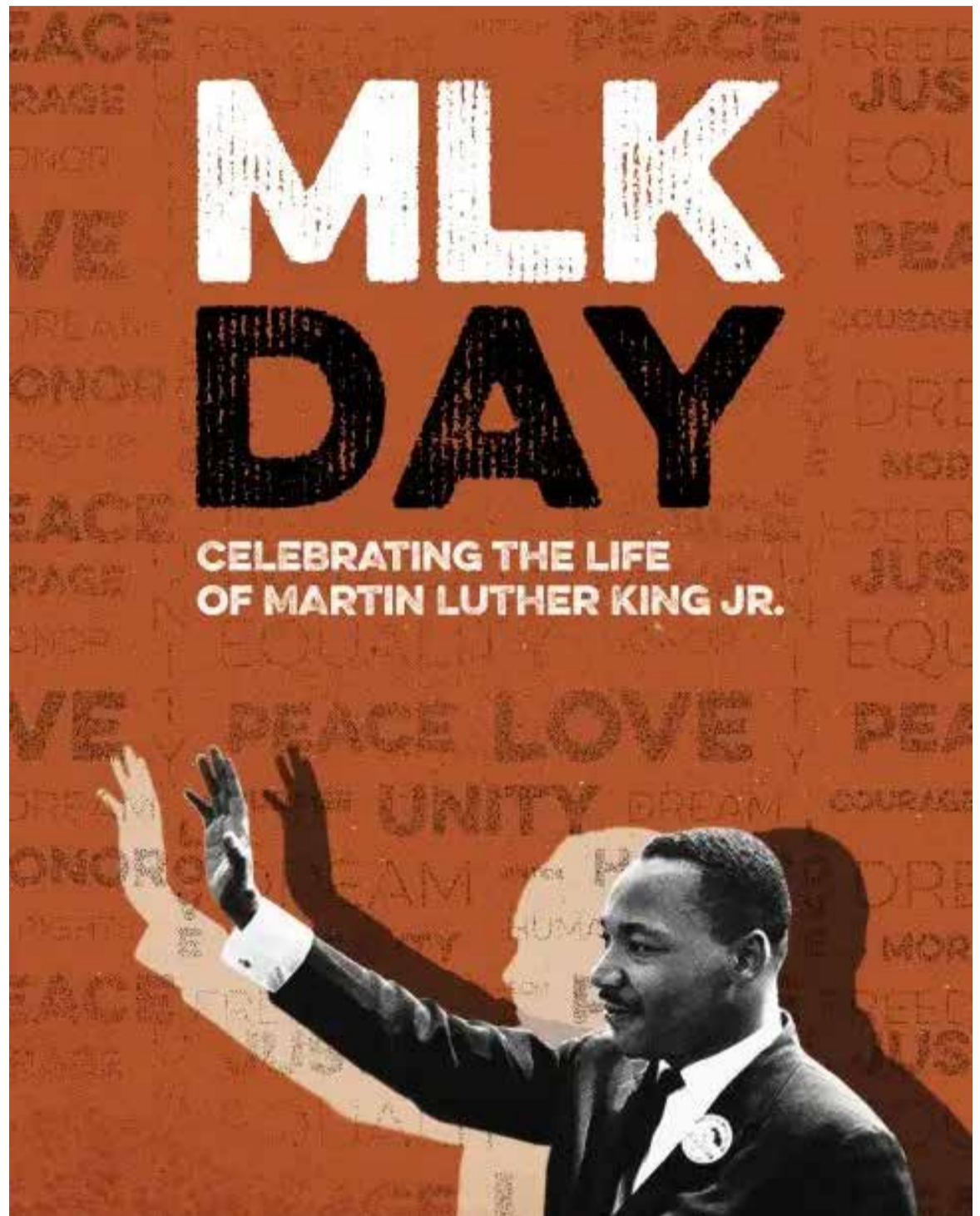
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MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 7 • NUMBER 2



How YOU can Honor Martin Luther King Jr. every day

BY MB STAFF

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. changed the world with his courage, compassion, and determination to fight for justice and equal-

ity. As a teenager, you might wonder: how can you celebrate the life of someone so impactful and live by his example? The answer lies in the values he stood for and the small ways you can make a difference every day.

Stand up for what's right

Martin Luther King Jr. believed in standing up against injustice, even when it wasn't easy. Whether it's speaking out against bullying, supporting a classmate who feels left out, or participating in community activities, you can be a leader for positive change. Look for ways to make your school or community more inclusive and fair for everyone.

Use your voice

Dr. King was famous for his speeches, like the iconic "I Have a Dream" address, where he shared his vision for a better future. While you might not give a speech to thousands, you can still use your voice to inspire others. Speak up when you see unfairness, join a club that supports equality, or start a project that promotes kindness and understanding.

Volunteer in your community

One of the best ways to honor Martin Luther King Jr. is through service. On MLK Day and beyond, you can volunteer at local shelters, clean up a park, tutor younger students, or organize a food drive. Dr. King believed that serving others builds stronger communities, and your efforts, no matter how small, can make a big impact.

Educate Yourself and Others
Dr. King once said, "The func-

tion of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically." Learn about the civil rights movement, explore the history of social justice, and understand the challenges people still face today. Share what you learn with friends and family to spark meaningful conversations.

Dream big

Dr. King had a dream of a world where everyone is treated equally. You can honor his legacy by pursuing your own dreams while making the world better for others. Whether you want to be an artist, scientist, teacher, or activist, use your talents to spread positivity and contribute to change.

How to celebrate MLK Day

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, consider attending a community event, such as a march, service project, or educational seminar. Many organizations host programs for teens, giving you the chance to connect with others who share your commitment to equality and justice.

Dr. King's legacy teaches us that anyone can make a difference, regardless of age. By following his example of love, service, and determination, you can live a life that honors his vision and brings us closer to the world he dreamed of.

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Applications open for 2025 Miss Michigan's Teen Competition

BY MB STAFF

MICHIGAN — The search is on for Michigan's next young role model as applications are now open for the 2025 Miss Michigan's Teen Competition, a preliminary for the Miss America's Teen program. This annual event offers young women across Michigan the opportunity to showcase their talents, build confidence, and win scholarships while representing the state in the prestigious national competition.

The competition, open to Michigan residents aged 14 to 18, is designed to empower teens by providing them with an outlet to build new friendships, develop their public speaking and performance skills, and unlock their potential. The titleholder will receive scholarship funds and represent Michigan in the 2026 Miss America's Teen Program.

The entry fee for participants is \$450, which includes a sash, a local crown (for use during the program), and participation in the main events. Additional costs include a \$50 orientation fee, a fitness outfit, and an opening number dress. The deadline for entries is Feb. 22, 2025.

The week-long competition will take place from June 9 to June 15, 2025, in Muskegon, Michigan. Contestants will compete in a series of events, including on-stage performances, showcasing their individual talents and skills.

"This program is not just about winning a title. It's about building confidence, creating opportunities, and helping young women develop into leaders," said organizers of the event. "We're looking forward to seeing this year's participants shine on stage and beyond."

Those interested in applying or seeking additional information can email peggy@missmichigan.org or call 989-392-9585.

The Miss Michigan's Teen competition is part of the larger Miss America's Teen organization, which focuses on empowering young women to achieve their goals and make meaningful contributions to their communities. It's an opportunity for participants to gain valuable experiences that will serve them for years to come.

For teens ready to take the stage and make an impact, this program offers a platform to inspire others and unlock their full potential.





Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA
DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE

Enrollment progress at SVSU

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — Latino students at Saginaw Valley State University have achieved parity in two key aspects of higher education, a top official reported Jan. 9 to members of LLEAD, Latino Leaders for Equity, Advocacy and Development.

The graduation rate of 57 percent has reached the identical ratio as the student body as a whole, said Ken Fettig, vice-president for enrollment management. A decade ago, those numbers were 47 percent for all pupils but only 34 percent for Latinos.

For at least finishing the freshman year, the score similarly is tied at 77 percent retention. As recently as three years ago, the count was 72 percent overall, with Latinos lagging at 61 percent.

Progress remains at the top of the agenda for both enrollment and achievement, with support from community groups like LLEAD, Fettig said. Of SVSU's 7,000 students, rounded off, 6 percent are Hispanic, up only slightly from 5.7 percent way back at the turn of the millennium. (The Black share is 11.5 percent, up from 9 over the same time span.)

For higher-ed admissions, he told a record-high LLEAD audience of more than 60 patrons:

- For admissions, Saginaw Valley State has joined the movement away from SAT and ACT standardized test scores,



FILE PHOTO

in favor of high school GPA, grade-point. A 2.75 or above guarantees acceptance, with anything between 2.0 and 2.75 subject to review.

- For scholarships, a higher GPA not only means a better chance, but a higher dollar amount. In this regard a 3.9 is better than a 3.6 is better than a 3.2.
- With a minimum GPA of 3.5, high school grads from Saginaw United, SASA, Bridgeport and Carrollton are eligible to compete for a full-tuition four-year scholarship. Students who opt to live on campus receive a \$1,500 credit toward

housing costs. Grads from city schools also may seek aid through Saginaw Promise.

Individual support and tutoring continue to improve. Of the top 12 majors, "undecided" is second only to nursing at SVSU. It's good to keep options open, but this is the time for young people to begin making decisions from among more than 100 undergraduate programs in the general areas of arts and behavioral sciences, education, health and human services, STEM and business

Saginaw LLEAD, part of a statewide network, has done everything from organizing children's book giveaways to helping teens visit college campuses.

A December fund-raiser from sales at T & T's Restaurant near the Court Theater will help sponsor a delegation to Chicago for the annual four-day February conference of the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute.

LLEAD meets at 6 p.m. on the second monthly Thursday at the downtown Delta College facility. The next session is Feb. 13. To volunteer on a variety of action groups, visit their web site.

The online starting point for enrollment and financial aid is svsu.edu/saginawproud.

(Note: Ken Fettig is the nephew of Burt Fettig (1935 to 2016), longtime Delta dean of students.)

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MAC Center reopens after rehab work

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — The renovated MAC Center for the Mexican American Council is ready for the public, this time on the inside.

Participants for Holiday in the Heart of the City were able to view the exterior of the former Catholic bishop's mansion at 1537 South Washington, across from Hoyt Park, painted blue and white in the colors of traditional Our Lady of Guadalupe tributes, but the inside wasn't quite ready.

Work continues, but now the first floor is ready from a \$250,000 ARPA grant for rehab. The two opening events will be:

- A college scholarship workshop from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 30, presented by the Delta College Hispanic/Latino Student Success Initiative, labeled "El Camino," Spanish for "The Way." MAC has focused on partnerships with both Delta and SVSU,
- Free reading tutor sessions from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Feb. 8. A children's library for all ages will be unveiled, featuring giveaways of workbooks, storybooks and other educational materials.

As warmer weather arrives, the MAC center will feature recreation and community activities in the sprawling rear yard that touches upon Lake Linton, across from Ojibway Island.

Information is available on the Saginaw Mexican American Council's Facebook page.



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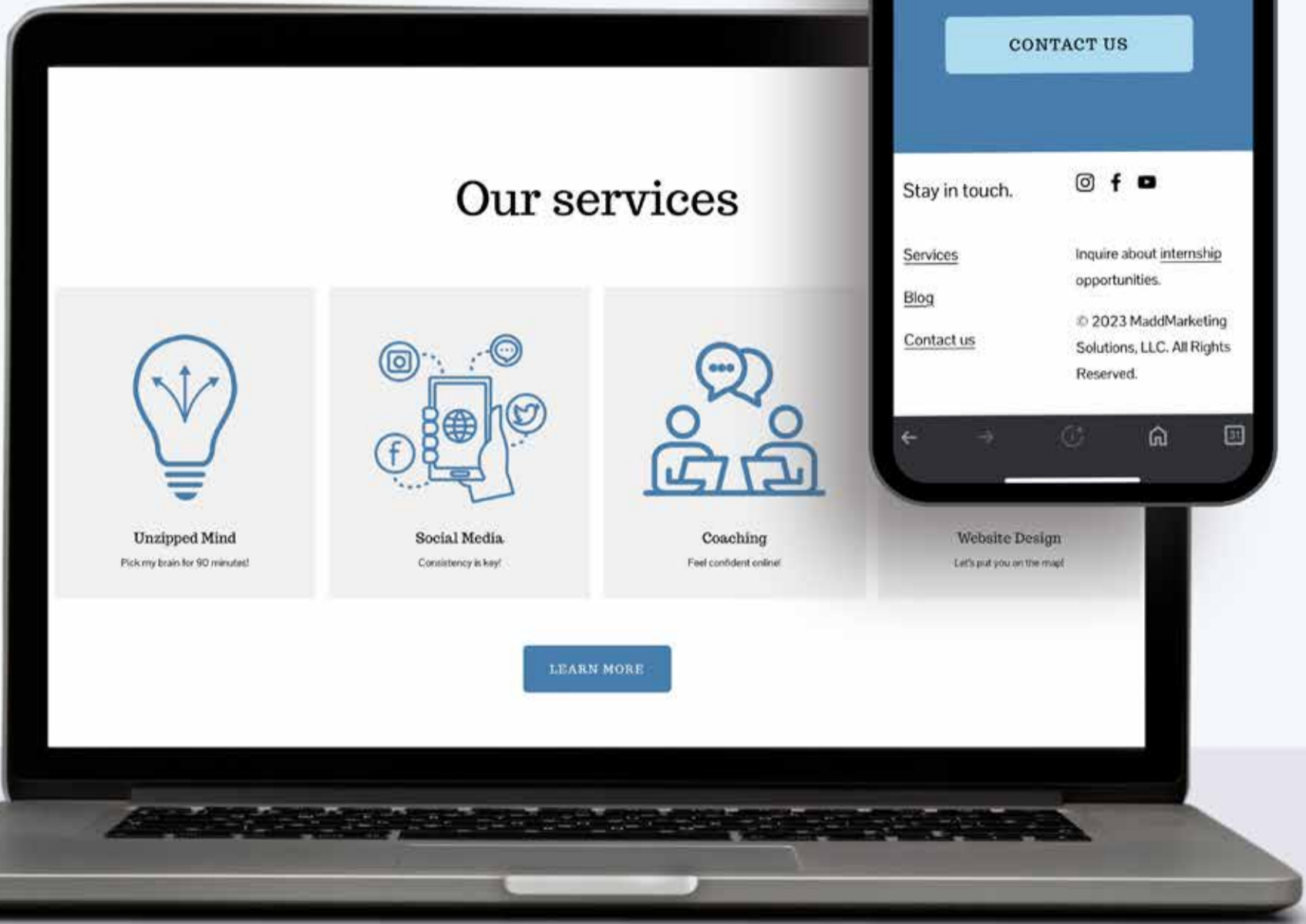
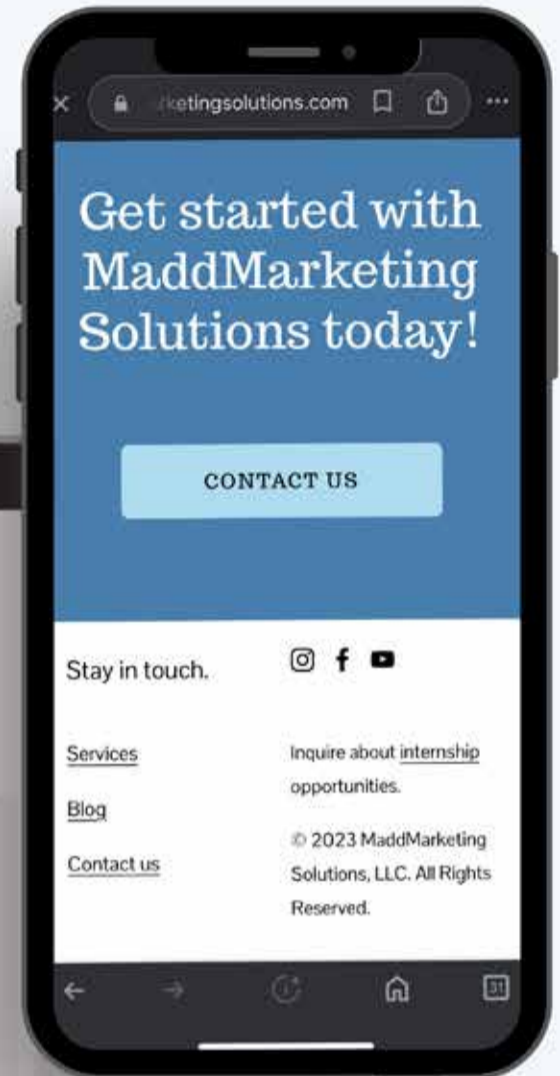
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COMMUNITY

MLK

The Ezekiel Project invites the community to advance Dr. King's vision at annual meeting

BY MB STAFF


The Ezekiel Project will host its annual General Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 30, 2025, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at New Mt. Calvary Church, 3610 Russell St., Saginaw, MI 48601. This year's theme, "Gathering at the Table to Advance Our Beloved Community," aims to bring residents together to work toward Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a society rooted in justice, equality, and love.

The event provides an opportunity for attendees to:

- Learn about the challenges facing the Saginaw community.
- Collaborate with others to develop actionable solutions.
- Play a vital role in building Dr. King's Beloved Community, a vision of understanding, compassion, and collective action.

This gathering serves as a call to action, reminding the Saginaw community that collective efforts can lead to transformative change. The Ezekiel Project encourages community members to join in this vital discussion and contribute to meaningful progress. Food and refreshments will be provided for participants.

For more information or to RSVP, contact info@theezekielproject.org.



Please Join us For The

GENERAL MEETING 2025

Gathering at the table to advance our beloved community

What is the Beloved Community?
Dr. King's Beloved Community is a vision of a society where justice, equality, and love prevail. It's a community built on understanding, compassion, and **collective action**.
Together, we can move closer to making this vision a reality.


This is your opportunity to:

- Learn about the challenges affecting our community.
- Collaborate with others to develop solutions and take action.
- Be a part of building Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of the Beloved Community.

**Thursday,
January 30th 2025
6pm to 9pm**

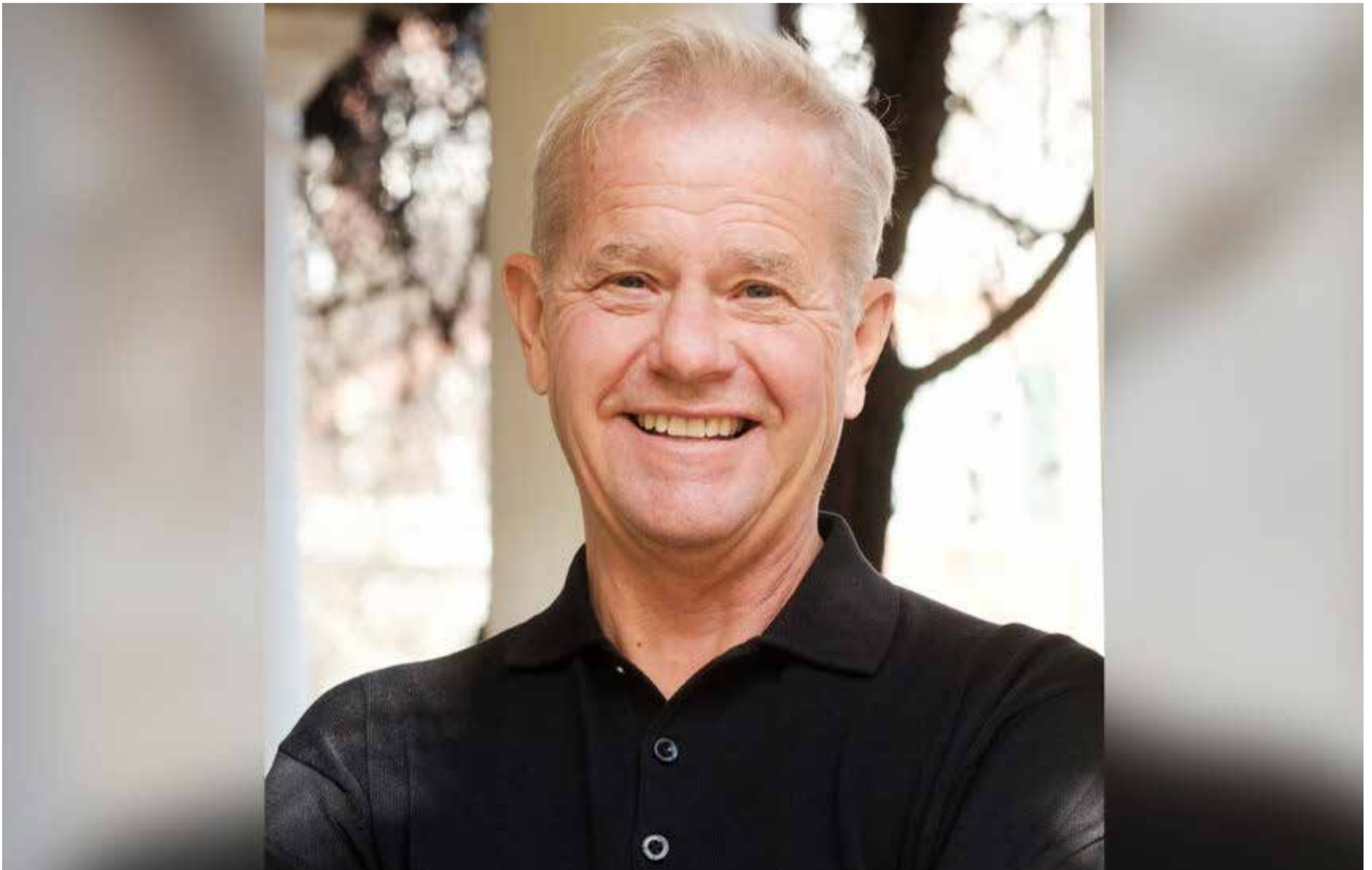
**New Mt. Calvary Church
3610 Russell St, Saginaw MI 48601**

FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED
For more information or to RSVP, contact us at info@theezekielproject.org



COMMUNITY

Larry Preston to retire as TempleArts Chairman



LARRY L. PRESTON (COURTESY PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — The TempleArts Board of Directors has announced the upcoming retirement of Larry L. Preston, who has served as chairman of the organization which includes The Temple Theatre and the Saginaw Art Museum & Gardens, since May 2019.

Preston, co-founder and former CEO of Tri-Star Trust Bank, will step down from the role on May 30, 2025. TempleArts CEO Mike Kolleth will assume the position of board chair following his own retirement as CEO on the same date.



MICHAEL KOLLETH (COURTESY PHOTO)

“In his six years of service to TempleArts, Larry has been a transformational leader,” said

Dr. Samuel Shaheen, President of the TempleArts Executive Committee.

“He was the driving force behind the merger of the Temple Theatre and Saginaw Art Museum & Gardens and central to charting a highly successful strategic vision for the organization. His contributions to arts and culture in the Great Lakes Bay region and beyond will resonate for generations to come. We thank him for his outstanding service to TempleArts and our community.”

Beyond his role at TempleArts, Preston’s contributions to the arts and cultural community have been substantial. He has served on the boards of or-

ganizations such as the Michigan Humanities Council, the Midland Center for the Arts, and the Great Lakes Bay Alliance, where he led the Advocacy and Art and Entertainment Committee.

Locally, Preston has been actively involved with the Saginaw Art Museum and the Saginaw Community Foundation, where he served as chairman. His efforts have earned him accolades, including the Saginaw Arts and Enrichment Commission’s Great Lakes Bay All-Area Award and the Outstanding Businessman of the Year Award from Saginaw Valley State University.

COMMUNITY

City dropoff station: Who's eligible?

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — Robert Wagner, a landlord who owns rentals in the city but resides in Saginaw Township, complained to the City Council on Jan. 13 that the once-a-month dropoff station no longer is accepting his trash.

General Services Director Phil Karwat responds that landlords only need to bring tenants with them on the monthly second Saturday mornings, along with their IDs to show city residency.

The 30-year-old drive-up service is in the parking lot along Holland Avenue south of City Hall, intended for large items -- bath tubs and appliances, for example -- that are not normally placed at curbsides.

A city-resident-only standard always has been in place, Karwat

informed the council, as the program costs local taxpayers more than \$30,000 a year, but in-city enforcement has become more strict because the dropoffs have become more intensive in recent years.

More than a dozen large 40-yard collection bins now are needed, he said, triple the prior loads and creating scenes similar to a "landfill."

Any non-resident still can "play the game" and beat the system by finding a city dweller to falsely vouch for the source of their garbage, Karwat noted, but the ID requirement forestalls some of the abuse.

Wagner told council members that he represents the Saginaw Landlords Association, with 443 members. Zillow.com indicates that he owns properties in 20 zip

codes, mostly in the county.

He said his dropoff visits usually are to dispose of junk from scofflaws who dump on vacant lots adjacent to his rentals, and he makes an effort to help "beautify" the town rather than simply collecting rent. A move to loosen the ID rules would benefit both the landlords and the neighborhoods, he said.

Karwat said the program is intended for large items, "not to bring loads and loads of trash" like the discarded car tires and mattresses that Wagner noted as examples.

Still, the site was created for precisely that purpose.

During the early 1990s, the city conducted what was billed as a one-time-only opportunity to dispose of anything and everything at curbside, no rules. Offi-

cialists were surprised at street sides piled high, with some comparing the scenery at the time to bomb-addled Beirut in the Middle East. Subcontractors were required to dispose of the excess at a budget-busting cost of nearly \$200,000, which would be doubled nowadays with inflation adjustments, in need of nearly an entire summer to finish the task. This led to creation of what was described as the trash disposal substation, intended to address what has been a suppressed desire for cleanup.

The 1980 council voted to change pickup to biweekly after property tax limits took effect. Residents protested and officials created a separate millage, now a fee, to maintain weekly service, and any sort of garbage pickup cutback to two weeks has not been considered since then.

VCD teams with Houghton-Jones

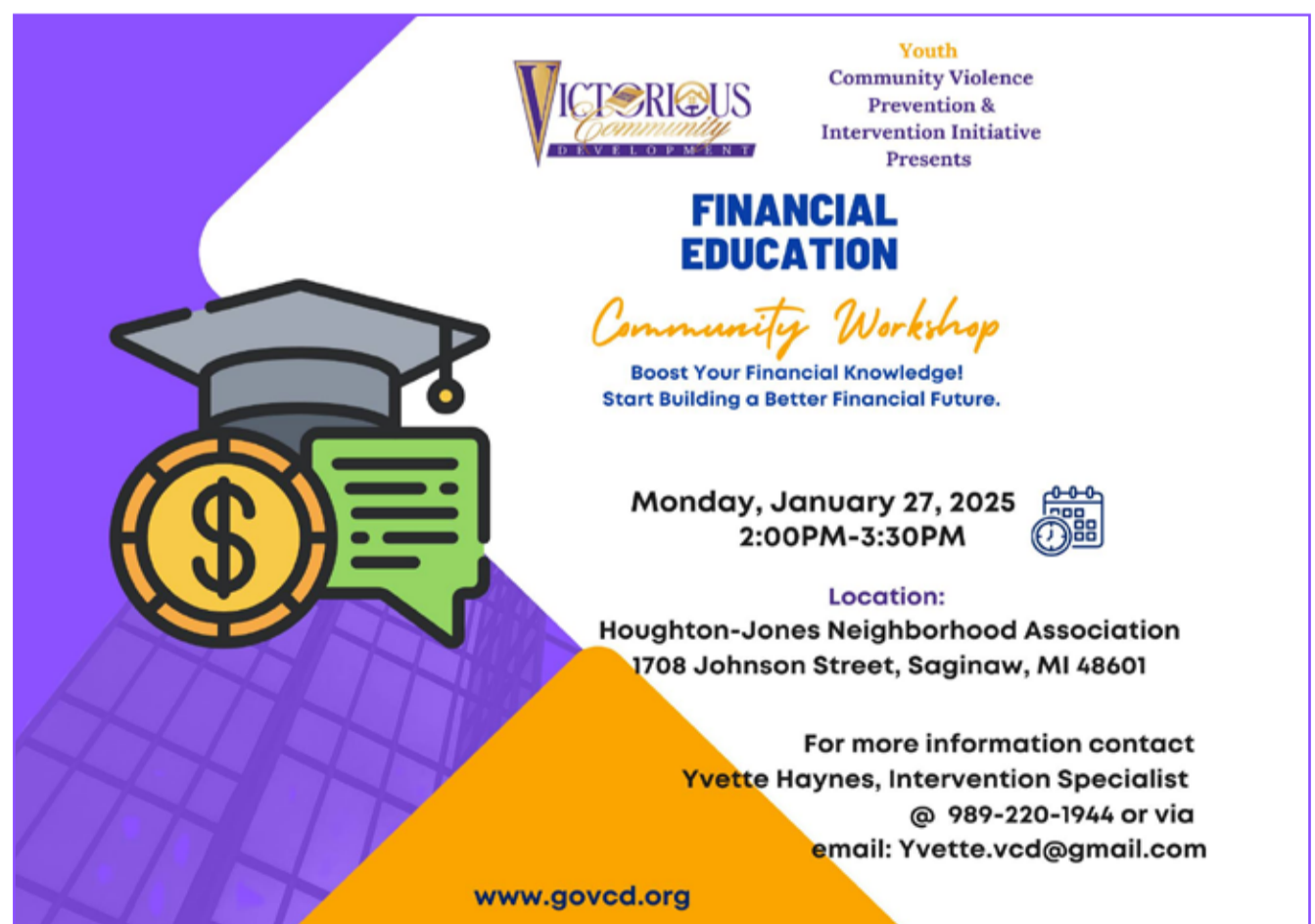
BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — A partnership is taking root between the Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Association and Victorious Community Development, formed and named in association with Victorious Believers Ministries, with its Community Violence Prevention and Intervention Initiative.

A family finance workshop will take place from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27, at the Christina Jones Neighborhood Resource Center, 1708 Johnson at North 11th.

More in depth, a series of eight weekly "Safe Communities, Strong Families" events starts at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 4, for "ongoing discussions and activities to empower families."

Participation is free of charge, with advance registration requested. Visit Houghton-Jones on social media or call (989) 752-1660.



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For more information contact
Yvette Haynes, Intervention Specialist
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COMMUNITY

Community empowerment to take center stage at DEIBJ symposium



PAULETTE GRANBERRY RUSSELL, J.D. AND DR. MICHAEL GAVIN (COURTESY)

BY SHAUNTELL SMITH

SAGINAW – The Saginaw Community Engagement and Inclusion Council (CEIC) will host the 2025 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Justice (DEIBJ) Symposium on Wednesday, January 29, 2025. The event, titled “Community Empowerment: A Call to Action,” will be held at Saginaw Valley State University’s Curtiss Hall from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The symposium, part of the CEIC’s mission to promote equity and inclusion in Saginaw County, aims to provide attendees with actionable tools and strategies to advance diversity and belonging within their communities and organizations.

Featured speakers include Paulette Granberry Russell, J.D., president of the National Association

of Diversity Officers in Higher Education and a nationally recognized leader on diversity and inclusion. Granberry Russell previously served for over 20 years as senior advisor to the president for diversity at Michigan State University.

Dr. Michael Gavin, president of Delta College since 2021, will also speak at the event. Gavin is known for his commitment to addressing societal inequities through education. Under his leadership, Delta College has expanded dual enrollment programs for high school students and created initiatives focused on workforce training, retention,

and student equity.

Additional speakers and presenters are expected to be announced soon.

The cost to attend is \$30 per person, with sponsorship opportunities available for students.

For more information or to register, visit saginawfoundation.com/symposium25 or contact Brian Jackson, Director of Donor Services & Special Initiatives, at CEIC-info@saginawfoundation.org or (989) 755-0545.



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a call to action

inspire
empower
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act

Symposium 2025
JANUARY 29 • 8 AM - 6 PM • SVSU

COMMUNITY

A source of help for distressed vets

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — Survivors of military service who cope with emotional damage have access to a support source, and organizers are aiming to build awareness.

The Saginaw County Veterans Treatment Court has entered its second decade, organized through the offices of District Judge David D. Hoffman.

Willie Haynes, a former City Council member, is among the leaders. His Army paratrooper service was during the peak of the Vietnam War. He avoided

the most horrific consequences, known as post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD, but he is there to help.

Any vets in need -- be it Korea, 'Nam or most recently, the Middle East -- are eligible. No, they won't be prosecuted in Hoffman's court room. He is simply giving his endorsement and use of his facilities for weekly Monday group sessions.

Vets who address their challenges attend graduation ceremonies, instead of going to jail for crimes they may commit amid the adjustments back to a tradi-

tional daily life.

The "court" should not be confused as a venue to tackle problems with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs over medical treatments. Those matters are separate.

Haynes is among seven volunteer mentors who are available 24/7 for any vet facing a personal crisis. He posts his own cell phone number, which is (989) 790-5378.



FILE PHOTO

Other partners with the Veterans Court represent the prosecutor's office, legal defense, police, and agents from parole and corrections.

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on
**THE STATE OF
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MODERATED BY DR. DAWN HINTON, PH.D.

BLACK HEALTH | BLACK LEADERSHIP | BLACK DOLLARS | BLACK VOTES
Monday, January 20, 2025 | 6:00 p.m. | Saginaw CAC | 2824 Perkins Street, Saginaw, MI

COMMUNITY

Flint & Genesee Education & Talent unveils new training catalog for 2025



COURTESY PHOTO

BY MB STAFF

FLINT — Flint & Genesee Education & Talent, a division of the Flint & Genesee Group, is set to launch its quarterly Talent Development catalog on Feb. 5, 2025, offering an array of professional training opportunities designed to empower local businesses and individuals.

The latest catalog introduces several new programs, including the highly anticipated DEI Champion Certificate Series, led by Sandra Etherly-Johnson, the Flint & Genesee Group's Executive Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Community En-

gagement. This three-part series will cover key topics such as Understanding Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Identity, Power, and Privilege, and Corporate Social Responsibility.

"We are pleased to partner with our organization's DEI expert to offer this insightful and important series," says Brianna Mosier, executive director of Flint & Genesee Education & Talent. "Alongside that series, we have other amazing new trainings, including a Mini Leadership Series and a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Series."

The DEI Champion Certificate Series is designed to deepen

participants' understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and society. Participants will gain not only knowledge and skills but also access to a DEI training site featuring a library of educational resources and a DEI Champion badge for use in professional communications and websites.

"We know when employees feel valued, engaged, and included, amazing things can happen," says Etherly-Johnson. "With this series, we are aiming to deepen individuals' understanding of DEI both in the workplace and society so that they can spark awareness, inspire meaning-

ful conversations, and make a change."

In addition to the DEI series, the catalog features a robust lineup of workshops between February and May 2025, including Turning Your Goals into Reality, Grant Writing 201, and Social Awareness – The Ultimate Level of Emotional Intelligence. Other offerings include Future of Hiring and Canva 101 for Business, ensuring a comprehensive slate of development opportunities for professionals at all levels.

To explore the full catalog or register for workshops, visit EducateFlintandGenesee.org/Workshops.



Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc Iota Chi Lambda Chapter



PRESENTS

THE 29TH ANNUAL

DR. MARTIN
LUTHER KING JR.

UNITY CELEBRATION

Monday, January 20, 2025

11:00am at The Dow Center-Unity Hall

TICKET PRICE: \$50

A "Unity March" at 10:00 A.M. will precede the luncheon. The March will gather 9:30 A.M. at the corner of Franklin Street and Hayden Street. We will march to the Dow Event Center. There will be remarks about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the end of the March at the Dow Event Center.



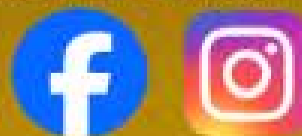
Speaker:
Amos O'Neal
MI State
Representative
- 94th District

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TICKET(S)

CONTACT

Larry Jones (989-714-0709)
Smallwood Holoman (989-859-2602)
Eddie Foxx (989-860-4146)

SAGINAW ALPHAS ARE ON



Community Awards presented by
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
and Delta College Black Faculty
and Staff Association

COMMUNITY

MLK

Dr. Angela Guy-Lee honored with 2025 Spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. Award



DR. ANGELA GUY-LEE

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — Dr. Angela Guy-Lee, an associate professor at Delta College, has been named the 2025 recipient of the prestigious Spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. Award. Her work as an educator, advocate, and leader embodies Dr. King's legacy of advancing representation, equity, and social justice.

Dr. Guy-Lee's academic journey reflects her dedication to education and diversity. She earned her first bachelor's degree with a double major in American Studies and Africana Studies from Wellesley College in Massachusetts, followed by a second bach-

elor's in Sociology from Eastern Michigan University. She went on to earn a master's degree in Sociology and a PhD in Medical Anthropology from Wayne State University. In 2023, she further demonstrated her commitment to fostering inclusivity by earning a certificate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from Cornell University.

At Delta College, Dr. Guy-Lee has been a driving force for equity and representation. She has served as a member and co-president of the Black Faculty and Staff Association, led classes at the Downtown Saginaw Center for the Saginaw Academy of Excellence since its launch in

2022, and actively participated in regional and national conferences. Notably, she developed a course for Delta's police academy titled "Race: A Social Construct," which examines the history and role of race in the United States.

Dr. Guy-Lee will be formally recognized during the 29th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Luncheon on January 20, 2025, presented by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and the Delta College Black Faculty and Staff Association. The luncheon will take place at The Dow Event Center in Saginaw and features the theme, "Mission Possible: Protecting Freedom, Justice, and Democracy in the Spirit of Non-

violence." Michigan State Representative Amos O'Neal of the 94th District will deliver the keynote address.

A Unity March will precede the luncheon at 10 a.m., further uniting the community in honor of Dr. King's enduring vision of nonviolence and equality.

For tickets or more information, contact Larry Jones at 989-714-0709, Smallwood Holoman at 989-859-2602, or Eddie Foxx at 989-860-4146.

Past Spirit of MLK Award Recipients:

- 2024: Dorian Rouse-Phelps
- 2023: Joseph Hernandez
- 2022: Lula Woodard
- 2021: Beth Kelch
- 2020: Carlos McMath
- 2019: John Neal
- 2018: Veronica Bond
- 2017: Monica Hernandez-Alaniz
- 2016: Rosemary Reeves
- 2015: Dr. Linda Holoman
- 2014: Dr. Charissa Urbano
- 2013: Carl Ruth
- 2012: Beverly Westbrook
- 2011: Mary Beth Looby
- 2010: Dr. Jean Goodnow
- 2009: William E. Ketchum, Jr.
- 2008: Teresa Stitt
- 2007: Katrina Nichols
- 2006: Joan Sabourin
- 2005: Jack Crowell
- 2004: Neville Britto

Dr. Angela Guy-Lee's recognition as the 2025 award recipient continues the tradition of honoring individuals whose work inspires progress and exemplifies the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

MLK

The power of selfless leadership

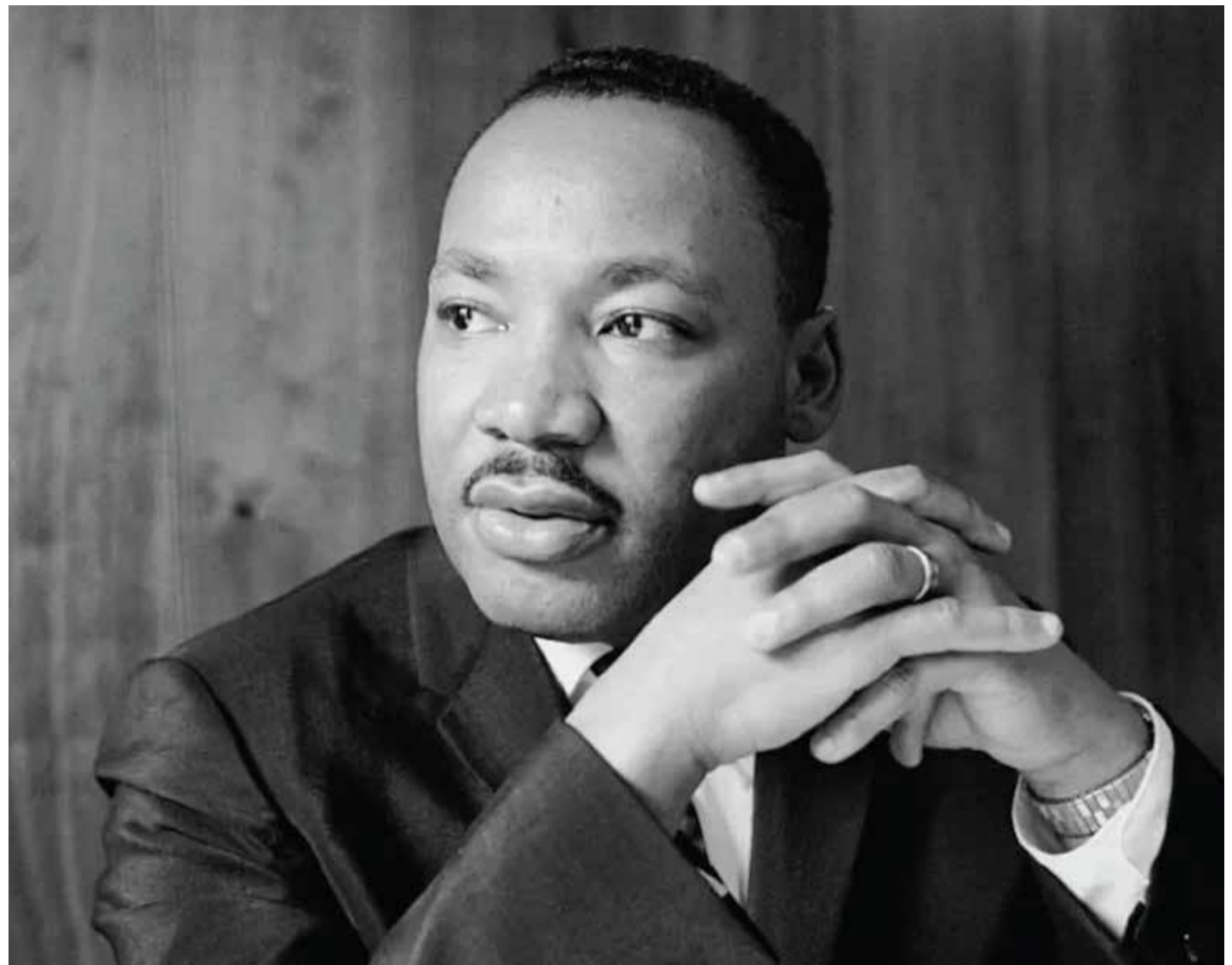
Lessons from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

BY MB STAFF

Leadership often evokes images of power and influence, but the most profound leaders are those who serve with humility, guided by a vision greater than themselves. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. embodied this ideal, demonstrating that leadership grounded in selflessness can inspire transformative change and unite communities. As we reflect on his legacy during Martin Luther King Jr. Day, his example challenges us to redefine what it means to lead.

Dr. King's leadership wasn't rooted in titles or authority—it was a calling to serve humanity. At the height of the civil rights movement, he didn't seek personal glory or accolades. Instead, he focused on the collective good, risking his safety and enduring unimaginable hardships to advance equality and justice. His dream wasn't for himself but for a better future for others, even those who opposed him. This unwavering commitment to serving others is the essence of selfless leadership.

What made Dr. King's leadership so impactful was his ability to see beyond immediate struggles and envision a brighter future. He recognized that true leadership requires not only addressing the problems of today but also sowing seeds for a better tomorrow. His message of nonviolence and love was a radical departure from the anger and division of the time, yet it resonated deeply because it spoke to the shared humanity of all people. Through his words and actions, Dr. King showed that leaders who prioritize compassion and unity can



FILE PHOTO

achieve the extraordinary.

Selfless leadership also requires immense courage. Dr. King understood the dangers he faced, yet he pressed on because his cause was bigger than himself. He walked in solidarity with those who had been silenced, using his voice to amplify theirs. He taught us that leadership is not about commanding from above but walking alongside those you serve, even in the face of adversity. His willingness to sacrifice for the greater good reminds us that the truest measure of a leader is their ability to prioritize others over their own

comfort or safety.

In today's world, where leadership is often associated with personal ambition, Dr. King's legacy serves as a powerful reminder that the most effective leaders lead with their hearts. They listen, empathize, and inspire others to reach their potential. They understand that their role is not to dominate but to uplift.

As we honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. this year, his example invites each of us to embrace selfless leadership in our own lives. Whether in the workplace, the community, or our personal relationships, we have opportu-

nities to lead with humility and compassion. By focusing on the well-being of others and working toward a shared vision, we can create the kind of change Dr. King dreamed of—lasting, meaningful, and deeply human.

The enduring power of Dr. King's leadership lies in its selflessness. He led not for his own sake but for the hope of a better world. Today, let his life inspire us to lead with purpose, to serve with love, and to always strive for the greater good. In doing so, we can honor his legacy and carry his dream forward.

COMMUNITY

Eric Rutherford joins Saginaw Community Foundation as chief operating officer

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — The Saginaw Community Foundation (SCF) has announced the appointment of Eric Rutherford as its new Chief Operating Officer. In this leadership position, Rutherford will oversee the Foundation's grants and scholarship programs, financial operations, and investments, while also managing human resources and contributing to the organization's strategic direction.

"Eric's leadership experience and commitment to our community align perfectly with our mission as we strive to bring people and resources together to build an equitable community for each of us in Saginaw County," said Reneé Johnston, president



ERIC RUTHERFORD (COURTESY PHOTO)

& CEO of Saginaw Community Foundation. "His expertise and passion for Saginaw County will be invaluable as we continue to build a flourishing community for all, forever."

Rutherford brings a wealth of

experience to his new role. Most recently, he served as director of the Hartley Outdoor Education Center, a program of the Saginaw Intermediate School District, in St. Charles. Prior to that, he was the director of Parks and Recreation for Bridgeport Township, where he played a key role in enhancing recreational opportunities for residents.

Recognized for his dedication to the community, Rutherford was named Saginawian of the Year by The Saginaw News in 2011 and was selected for the prestigious Gerstacker Fellowship at Saginaw Valley State University in 2015.

"I'm excited to join Saginaw Community Foundation and be part of an organization that makes such a positive difference

in Saginaw County," said Rutherford. "I look forward to bringing my experiences to support SCF in achieving its strategic goals of equity, diversity, inclusiveness, collaboration, sustainability, and community engagement in philanthropy."

A lifelong resident of Saginaw County, Rutherford holds a bachelor's degree from Saginaw Valley State University and a master's degree from Seton Hall University. He and his wife, Stacey, reside in Saginaw County with their two children, Graysen and Finley.

The Saginaw Community Foundation remains dedicated to fostering a vibrant and equitable future for the region, with Rutherford's leadership expected to further strengthen its mission and impact.

'Build Like a Girl' event to inspire young women

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — The Associated Builders & Contractors Greater Michigan (ABC-GM), Greater Michigan Construction Academy (GMCA), and LOGIC (Ladies Operating for Growth in Construction) are hosting the "Build Like a Girl" program in the Great Lakes Bay Region. The event is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at the Great Hall Banquet & Convention Center, 5121 Bay City Road in Midland.

The program is designed to introduce girls in grades five through 12 to career opportunities in the construction industry. Participants will have the chance to learn directly from local employers and hear from influential women working in the field.

Through interactive activities and a panel discussion, attendees can explore the possibilities of pursuing a career in construction, gaining insights into the education required and strategies for succeeding in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

Cathy Geiger, director of marketing and community affairs at ABC Greater Michigan, explained the program's intent: "Build Like a Girl strives to empower and educate young girls by providing opportunities to explore the construction industry through interactive experiences and guidance from successful women in the field. The hands-on activities at the company booths help inspire confidence, showing girls they are capable of achieving anything they set their minds to."

Organizers are seeking contractors and suppliers in the

construction industry to host interactive booths that allow attendees to experience hands-on activities related to their trade. Participation is free for companies, provided they offer an engaging activity that highlights the skills needed in their respective fields. Sponsors and prize donations are also being welcomed to support the event. The sponsorship deadline is Jan. 17, while participants wishing to ensure t-shirt availability should register by Jan. 19.

Attendees will receive several items, including a t-shirt, a truck hat sponsored by Three Rivers Corporation, and promotional materials from Build Your Future and other contributing companies. The event will be supported by financial and in-kind sponsors, including Bierlein-Trombley Electric, Blasy Electric,

Great Lakes Safety Training Center, Moltus Building Group, Niles Plant Services, Jolt Credit Union, Hunter Panels and Hunter Xci, Pumford Construction, Dow-Built, Sugar Construction, The State Bank, Three Rivers Corporation, Valley Electrical Contractors, Windemuller, and Wolgast Corporation.

Those interested in registering, hosting a booth, or contributing as a sponsor can find additional information on ABC's website or contact Cathy Geiger directly at cgeiger@abcmc.org. The event provides a unique opportunity for young women to explore rewarding STEM careers in the construction industry and connect with leaders who are paving the way for greater diversity in the field.

2025 BRINGING BACK THE ICE AT HOYT PARK

Brought to you by:



FREE Open Skating, Hockey & Sledding!

\$2 skate rentals



DATE

EVENT

TIME

Saturday, January 18

Night Skate
sponsored by Kiss 107.1

4:00 - 7:00pm

Saturday, January 25

Open Skate
Skate with SVSU Hockey Team

12:00 - 4:00 pm
1:00 - 3:00 pm

Saturday, February 1

Skate with the Mascots
Broom Ball
sponsored by Saginaw County Parks, 102.5 WIOG, and 96.1 WHNN

12:00 - 4:00 pm
1:00 - 3:00 pm

Saturday, February 8

School Skate
Promote Your Favorite Team – Wear your team colors!

12:00 - 4:00 pm

Saturday, February 15

Skate & Sledding
Decorative Sledding & Crazy Hat Contests
11th Annual Outhouse Race
sponsored by Positive Results Downtown, PRIDE, and 97.3 JOE FM

12:00 - 4:00 pm
1:00pm

Warming House Open!

FREE Hot Chocolate & Cookies

Race Starts at 1:00 pm



For more information contact Positive Results Downtown at (989) 753-9168, Friends of Hoyt Park Facebook Page or Larry at (989) 284-0945

Find and like our *Bringing Back the Ice* Facebook Page



COMMUNITY

Iron Belle Trail
to be extended

COURTESY PHOTO (STATE OF MI)

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — Michigan's Iron Belle Trail is nearly three-fourths finished, and the City Council is doing its part.

Members on Jan. 13 accepted a \$657,000 state "transportation alternatives" grant and pledged \$483,000 in matching monies, which will come from outside sources and not the city's cash-strapped general fund budget.

The pathway for hiking and bicycling starts at Detroit's Belle Isle and heads north across the Mackinaw Bridge to Ironwood at the Upper Peninsula's western edge, using existing trails and new connections.

Saginaw's current share of the trail is along the east riverbank, starting on the south side at Wickes Park, and then winding through Ojibway Island and Potthoff Park. It stops in the 200 block of South Water at the SVRC/former Saginaw News parking lot. The new connection would pass under the Genesee and then the Johnson Street bridges, cross the river, and then head for the city limits at Weiss and Carrollton Road.

The timetable for the work is some point during the next four years, depending on other fund requests.

Federal funds help police with domestic violence cases



FILE PHOTO

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — Victims of domestic violence in the city will receive a new source of support, thanks to one of the final federal grants issued by President Biden's administration.

A three-year U.S. Department of Justice allocation of \$448,000 will go mainly to hire, equip and pay an officer to work with people who are assaulted, primarily women, as they continue to pursue recovery.

A \$30,000 contract with Child and Family Services, or \$10,000 per year, will go to the agency.

Annie Coker, Sexual Assault Center director, wrote that staff "will play a pivotal role in providing training to this investigator and others in the SPD

about how to provide trauma-informed care to those in crisis and how to use already-existing community resources and local victim servicing agencies to assist victims in their healing process."

She continued, "The assigned investigator, in collaboration with (city police), will ensure victims are made aware of and supported in gaining access to the wealth of services available right here in our community and often available at no cost. This partnership will also work to develop an enhanced referral process that will assure that the victim remains connected to the appropriate supports through the entire criminal justice process. Partnerships with programs that support victims physically and emotionally during the legal process will

help to make these initiatives a success."

Coker's conclusion: "While we still have many steps to move forward with this, we are excited about the opportunity to create a more trauma-informed community and to support those who have been affected by these serious crimes."

Brian Rowell, communications specialist for the Police Department, said the Sexual Assault Center, will play a prime role "to develop and implement an enhanced referral process utilizing a specialized detective to process cases of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and the development of educational materials and training of sworn personnel."



SCAN ME



STRONGER TOGETHER | SAGINAW

ADDICTION SUPPORT GROUP

FAMILY & FRIENDS

Stronger Together — a Face Addiction Now - formerly known as Families Against Narcotics support group, offering a healing space for those impacted by a loved one's addiction.

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SAGINAW, MI 48602

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EVERY MONTH
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AND WORK ON YOUR
OWN RECOVERY.



FOR MORE INFORMATION: FACEADDICTIONNOW.ORG

COMMUNITY

Planning starts close to home

BY MIKE THOMPSON

SAGINAW — For the first time in three years, City Council members will step outside of City Hall for their annual planning session.

But they won't travel far. The daylong meet begins at 8:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 31, a mile away at the downtown Castle Museum.

This also will be the first time since President Biden took office that the main focus won't be on ARPA, his \$1.9 trillion American Rescue (from covid) Plan Act that included \$52 million for Saginaw. The previous council wrapped up the budgeting prior to a November election that produced four new members.

The first planning session that involved ARPA, in anticipation of a large turnout, took place upstairs at the Temple Theater. Indeed nearly 200 people attended for a portion of the proceedings, but parking was a problem. Thus the past pair returned to the confines of City Hall, but the headquarters now is under major renovation as part of the Rescue Plan.

This year, a spotlight may emerge on the council's unanimous December vote to explore seeking a referendum to wipe out a 1979 charter amendment that limits property tax increases.

As far as location, during healthier financial times both the City Council and Board of Education traveled to out-of-town lodging for overnight retreats, the old-time term for strategic planning.

When economic hardship took full root during the 1980s, both governing bodies decided to stay local for the symbolism of cost savings. SVSU, the Montague Inn and the former downtown Florentine Inn were among the locations. Elected officials would relax with staff and consultants and other attendees, re-



SAGINAW CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 13, 2025.

laxed and reclined on cushy sofas and comfortable chairs, for free-flowing discussions.

Newcomer faces friction

The change to single days in more "businesslike" surroundings has condensed the planning agendas, and at the council's Jan. 13 regular meeting, Carly Rose Hammond proposed scheduling a second session in February. She is a newcomer from the November election along with Jacinta Seals, Eric Braddock and Heidi Wiggins, but she received support only from the veteran Monique Lamar Silvia.

Mayor Brenda Moore responded that if council members desire more citizen feedback, they may schedule personal "coffee hours" like she does.

Pro-Tem Priscilla Garcia asked Hammond, "If you can't keep up now, how are you going to keep up then?" She noted that ARPA was a challenge when she was elected in 2022, and that by comparison, "Right now, it's not even as deep as you're making it out."

Michael Balls, the former pro-tem who matches Moore's 11 years on the council, said involved residents have offered

various ideas through the years, prior to Hammond's election two months ago, and that concerned citizens already know how to contact council members.

The discussion begins at 1:28.30 on the Jan. 13 videotape, and concludes 15 minutes later with a string of confused motion-making and amendments that mirror the prior council's occasional stumbles while aiming to conduct business.

City Manager Tim Morales attempted to serve as a compromise peacemaker, noting that the council could decide whether they need another all-day followup session after they wrap up on Jan. 31 and better know where they stand.

Plan lists priorities

Updated in 2017, the strategic plan names five priorities that are illustrated on Page 15 of the budget on the city's website, saginaw-mi.com. They are:

- Economic development of the urban core.
- Neighborhood revitalization.
- Arts, culture and recreation.
- Police and fire.

- Utilities (mainly water/sewer) infrastructure.

A second page described top challenges. "Lack of resources" and "decrease in population" both are followed by the identical addendum "outside of the city's control." However, the council does control tax-rate requests, subject to voter approval, and members on Dec. 9 unanimously approved Michael Balls' motion to pursue a referendum to remove the property tax caps, which could lead to an increase of slightly more 3.2 mills.

As Morales noted, the annual workshops have followed various formats through the years. This time the council is tapping a facilitator, Nancy Ohle of Midland, who brands her consulting enterprise as "Unleashing Potential." Her fee is \$7,800.

Hammond said she decided a second planning session is needed after an advance meeting with Ohle. Garcia said the proposal for a followup meet was "not fair" because she is among other members who have not spoken with the facilitator at this point.

Mayor Moore expressed that with Hammond at one end of the council table and Silvia at the other, "This could become a marathon."

COMMUNITY

Guided Grace Family & Youth Services hosts 2nd annual youth book giveaway on MLK Day



A GROUP POSES DURING LAST YEAR'S MLK YOUTH BOOK GIVEAWAY, WHICH UNITED OVER 120 YOUTH AND VOLUNTEERS.

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — Guided Grace Family & Youth Services, a local nonprofit organization, will host its 2nd Annual Youth Book Giveaway on Monday, Jan. 20, 2025, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at 1232 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw. The event, held in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, aims to inspire a love of reading among Saginaw's youth while promoting literacy as a critical skill for personal growth and success.

With more than 300 new multicultural books to be distributed, the event has expanded its reach to target youth in grades

K-9. Mayor Brenda F. Moore will join state and local lawmakers in distributing books to attendees as an act of service. The event will also include participation from the youth leadership organization Jack & Jill of America Inc., Great Lakes Bay Region Chapter, whose members will volunteer to support the day's activities.

This year's celebration will feature live music, art activities, refreshments, and a youth-led oratorical presentation. Mayor Moore will address attendees, emphasizing the importance of literacy and its connection to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy.

"Literacy is important for the

development of our youth. To help honor Dr. King's Legacy, I will once again be in attendance," said Mayor Brenda F. Moore.

Guided Grace FYS has further expanded its educational offerings with an after-school camp for K-8 students, supported by a \$306,000 Department of Education 32N competitive grant. The camp focuses on social-emotional learning (SEL) and innovative programs, including STEAM activities.

"We are honored to be part of the transformation in learning for our K-12 population. We take a hands-on, innovative, and altruistic approach that is unorth-

odox. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the focal point of our platform, and once we understand the baseline, our curriculum directors can develop programs, including STEAM, that can be implemented without big behaviors," said Nicole Liggins, CEO of Guided Grace FYS.

Last year's event was a resounding success, drawing over 120 youth and volunteers. This year, the organizers are optimistic about an even greater turnout. For more information about Guided Grace Family & Youth Services or to view photos from last year's event, visit their website.



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25
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KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Michael Galvin
DELTA COLLEGE PRESIDENT

10:00 AM – 12:30 PM
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Mid-Michigan Children's Museum brings STEM fun with new exhibit launch

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — The Mid-Michigan Children's Museum (MMCM) is set to host an engaging STEM-focused event on Saturday, Jan. 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., presented by Nexteer Automotive. This family-friendly event promises a day filled with hands-on activities and educational fun centered around Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

The event offers reduced admission of just \$5 per person, providing an affordable opportunity for children and families to explore STEM concepts through interactive crafts and activities. Visitors can enjoy the museum's gallery spaces while participating in experiential learning designed to spark curiosity and inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, and innovators.

A highlight of the day will be the ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening of the museum's newest exhibit, Car Works Cadillac, at 11 a.m. This exhibit is expected to captivate young minds with a focus on engineering and design, complementing the event's STEM theme.

"STEM Day at MMCM is designed to bring together education and entertainment, creating a dynamic experience for children of all ages," said organizers. "This event highlights the importance of STEM fields in a way that's accessible and exciting for families."

For more information about the event or the museum's exhibits, contact MMCM at (989) 399-6626 or visit their website at michildrensmuseum.org.

YOU ARE INVITED

STEM

DAY & RIBBON CUTTING EVENT

SATURDAY
JANUARY 18 | 10:00 AM-4:00 PM
@ Mid-Michigan Children's Museum

STEM EVENT

Kids of all ages can participate in the many STEM activities and games throughout the museum. Take home some cool giveaway items and enjoy the STEM fun from 10 AM-4 PM.

RIBBON CUTTING

Join us at 11 AM for the ribbon cutting ceremony for our newest Automotive exhibit that has been a few years in the making for our children.

mid-michigan children's museum

Reduced Admission: \$5 Per Person
315 W Genesee Ave, Saginaw, MI 48602

nexteer AUTOMOTIVE

Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation

COMMUNITY



Community leaders to receive Drum Major Award for local service



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: JEFF DUKES, DR. KENNETH JOLLY, AND GILBERTO GUEVARA SR. (SVSU)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — Three influential figures from the Great Lakes Bay Region will be honored for their exceptional dedication to community service during the 11th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Celebration. The event, scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at Saginaw Valley State University, will recognize Jeff Dukes of Bay City, Kenneth Jolly of Midland, and Gilberto Guevara Sr. of Saginaw with the Martin Luther King Jr. Drum Major Award for Community Service.

The award, inspired by Dr. King's "Drum Major Instinct" sermon, celebrates individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and service within their communities.

Jeff Dukes: Strengthening communities through service

Jeff Dukes, a licensed journeyman with UA Local 85 Plumbers, Steamfitters, and HVACR Service Techs, has made a significant impact in Bay City through his work with the AFL-CIO of Saginaw and Bay County. Dukes has constructed accessibility ramps for families in need and collaborated with organizations such as the United Way of Bay County and the Foster Families Navigation and Resource Center.

Dr. Kenneth Jolly: Advancing diversity and inclusion

Dr. Kenneth Jolly, a professor of history and chair of the Black Studies Program at Saginaw Valley State University, has played a vital role in fostering diversity,

equity, and inclusion (DEI) in Midland and beyond. Through his work with the Midland Area Community Foundation's Cultural Awareness Coalition, Jolly has contributed to the "We Hear You" DEI community assessment and facilitated workshops across the region.

His volunteer efforts extend to numerous community events, all aimed at creating a sense of inclusion and belonging.

Gilberto Guevara Sr.: A lifetime of service to Saginaw

Saginaw native Gilberto Guevara Sr. has devoted more than 50 years to community service. As the executive director of Artistas Latinx en Acción Siempre (A.L.A.S.), Guevara has created spaces for Michigan artists and performers to thrive in a judgment-free environment.

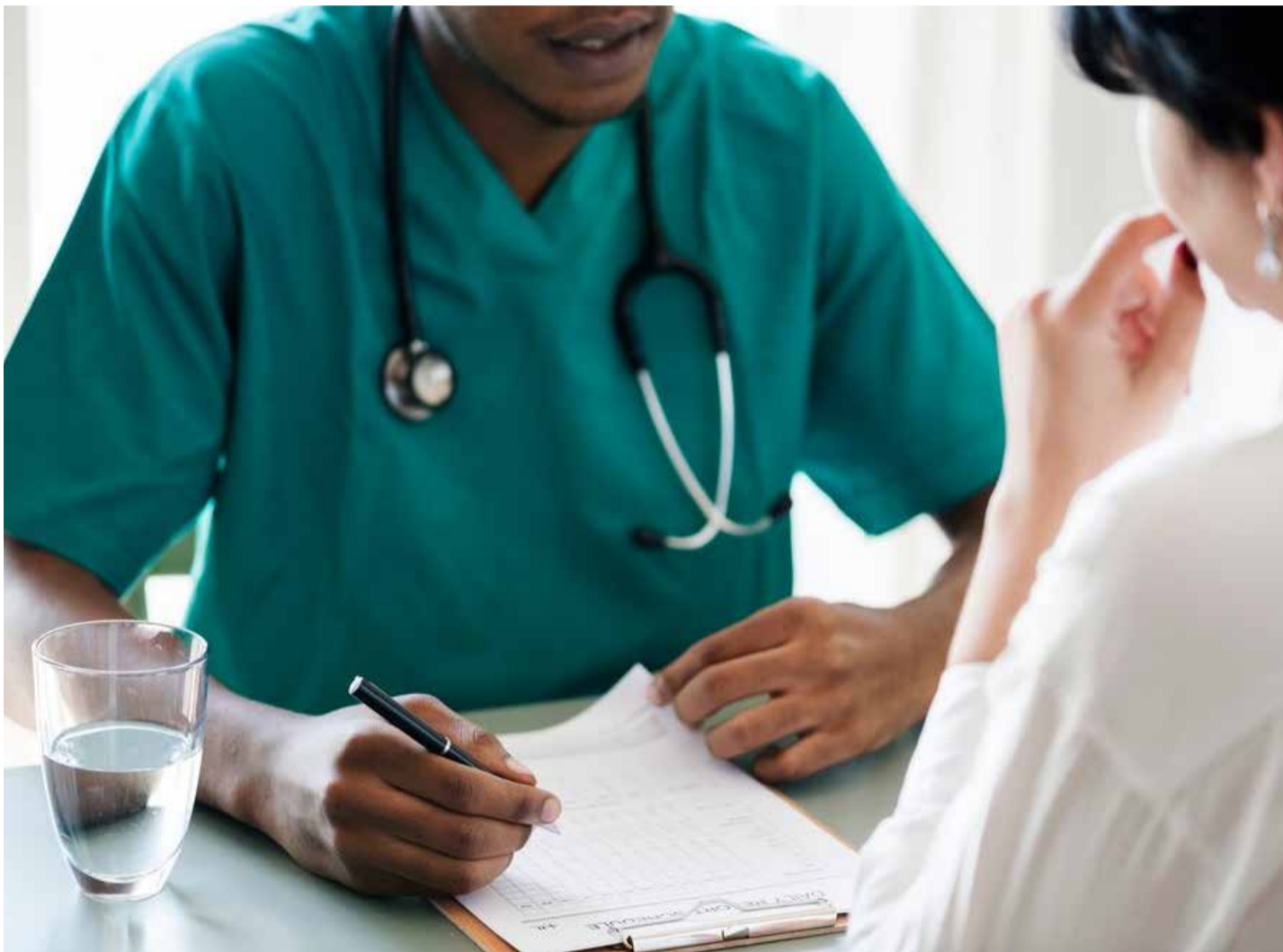
Over the decades, Guevara has served on more than 30 boards and commissions, focusing on youth services, education, and community development. His contributions have earned him recognition as an outstanding Chicano student alumnus by Delta College and the 2023 Hispanic Heritage Month Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan.

The Drum Major Award, established by the Great Lakes Bay Regional MLK Celebration committee, honors individuals from Bay, Midland, and Saginaw counties who embody Dr. King's vision of service and leadership.

For more details about the award and past honorees, visit svsu.edu/mlk/drummajoraward. To register for the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Celebration, visit svsu.edu/mlk.

HEALTH

Michigan joins Innovation in Behavioral Health Model to improve Medicaid and Medicare care



FILE PHOTO

BY MB STAFF

MICHIGAN — The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has been selected to participate in the Innovation in Behavioral Health (IBH) Model, a federal initiative aimed at improving care for adults with moderate to severe mental health conditions and substance use disorders (SUD). Michigan is one of four states chosen by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to implement the model, which focuses on integrating behavioral and physical health services.

The IBH Model is designed to enhance care quality and health outcomes for adults enrolled in

Medicaid and Medicare by aligning payment systems, improving quality reporting, and streamlining data sharing. The model also aims to reduce emergency department visits and hospitalizations by providing comprehensive and coordinated care.

“We are excited to have been chosen by CMS to offer this enhanced level of care to Medicaid beneficiaries seeking treatment for behavioral health issues and substance use disorder,” said Elizabeth Hertel, MDHHS director. “Michigan residents will receive more personalized and integrated care through this model designed to reduce visits to the emergency department, improve behavioral and physical health outcomes and address quality of

life needs such as housing, food and transportation.”

Medicaid and Medicare recipients face disproportionately high rates of mental health conditions and SUDs, often resulting in poor health outcomes, frequent hospital visits, and premature death. In FY2022, Michigan’s Community Mental Health Service Programs served nearly 179,000 individuals for behavioral health issues, with over 12,800 receiving SUD services exclusively. Additionally, the state’s Pre-Paid Inpatient Health Plans managed more than 62,000 admissions for SUD services.

Michigan will roll out the IBH Model across urban and rural locations, including the Upper Peninsula. Eligible sites will include

providers already participating in Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics or Health Home initiatives.

“Michigan’s receipt of this award from CMS underscores and will strengthen Michigan’s innovative community-based approaches to meeting the behavioral health needs of Michiganders,” said Robert Sheehan, CEO of the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan. “Building on Michigan’s network of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics and Behavioral Health Homes, this newly funded initiative will foster even greater access to and coordination of behavioral health care and other community services for Michiganders enrolled in Medicaid or Medicare.”

Under the IBH Model, specialty behavioral health providers will assess patients for both priority health and behavioral health conditions, as well as SUD. Providers will lead inter-professional care teams tasked with addressing patients’ health and social needs, including housing, food, and transportation. Compensation will be tied to care quality and improved patient outcomes.

The initiative begins its eight-year model period on Jan. 1, 2025, with a three-year pre-implementation phase funded by a \$7.5 million CMS grant awarded to MDHHS. This funding will support planning and implementation efforts to expand Michigan’s coordinated care capabilities and improve access for vulnerable populations.

The IBH Model reflects Michigan’s continued commitment to advancing behavioral health care and ensuring equitable access to services that improve outcomes for its residents.

HEALTH

Submit your continuing disability review report online



BY HILLARY HATCH
SOCIAL SECURITY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

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If you do not have a personal my Social Security account, you



FILE PHOTO

can fill out and print the SSA-454 at www.ssa.gov/forms/ssa-454-bk.pdf. You can mail or make an appointment to take your completed form to your local Social Security office.

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HEALTH

Delta College and SVSU install NARCAN Distribution boxes to combat opioid overdoses



PHOTO COURTESY OF SVSU

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — Lifesaving NARCAN® (naloxone) nasal spray is now readily accessible on the campuses of Delta College and Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) as well as SVSU's Riverfront Center in downtown Saginaw. This initiative is the result of a collaboration between the two institutions and Face Addiction Now (FAN), formerly known as Families Against Narcotics, as part of ongoing efforts to address the opioid crisis.

The rescue boxes, coordinated by FAN, are easily recognizable as repurposed newspaper boxes with unlocked doors, allowing individuals to take a package of NARCAN for immediate use or to have on hand for emer-

gencies. These boxes aim to provide quick access to naloxone, a medication that can reverse opioid overdoses and save lives.

The initial distribution includes two rescue boxes dedicated to the memory of Nick Kastros, a recovery advocate and AmeriCorps VISTA member at Delta College who passed away from a drug overdose in 2023. Kastros was instrumental in creating FAN's Hidden In Plain Sight trailer, which educates communities on recognizing signs of substance use disorder in teenagers. His family donated memorial funds to support this initiative and further his mission to combat the opioid epidemic.

"We are proud to honor Nick's legacy by continuing the work he was so passionate about," said

representatives from FAN. "This initiative will ensure that lifesaving tools are available to those who need them."

On SVSU's main campus, one box will be installed at Cardinal Commons near the Melvin J. Zahnnow Library and Starbucks, a busy area of campus. Another box, sponsored by the Saginaw County Health Department, will be located outside SVSU's Riverfront Center at 200 S. Washington Avenue in downtown Saginaw. Delta College's box will be placed outside the CREW Collegiate Recovery Center in room D121.

This initiative is part of FAN's broader harm-reduction program, which has distributed over 57,000 naloxone kits across Michigan. According to the Cen-

ters for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drug overdose deaths in the United States decreased by 3% in 2023 compared to 2022, marking the first decline since 2018. FAN hopes to build on this progress by ensuring naloxone is accessible in high-risk areas.

"By making naloxone readily available, we hope to reduce opioid overdoses and save lives in our community," said officials from Delta College and SVSU.

The rescue boxes are funded through donations from individuals and organizations, highlighting the collective effort to address the opioid crisis. To locate other naloxone distribution boxes throughout Michigan, visit Face Addiction Now's Rescue Box website.

POLITICS

Three candidates compete for Michigan Democratic Party chair



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: CURTIS HERTEL JR., MARK LUDWIG, AND AL "BJ" WILLIAMS.

BY MB STAFF

MICHIGAN — The Michigan Democratic Party is preparing to elect its next chair at the Spring State Convention on Feb. 22, 2025, with three candidates vying for the role: Curtis Hertel Jr., Mark Ludwig, and Al "BJ" Williams. The new chair will lead the party through key elections, including the 2026 gubernatorial race, and address pressing challenges such as grassroots engagement and member retention.

Curtis Hertel Jr., a former state senator from East Lansing, has received endorsements from Governor Gretchen Whitmer and

the party's Black Caucus. Hertel has emphasized the importance of unity within the party and aims to strengthen collaboration across diverse factions. His experience in the legislature and endorsements from prominent figures make him a front-runner in the race.

Mark Ludwig, chair of the Michigan Democratic Party's Rural Caucus, is advocating for greater attention to rural communities and grassroots organizers. Ludwig has highlighted frustrations within the party's activist base, particularly around communication and responsiveness. He has proposed measures to rebuild trust and engagement

with party members in underserved areas.

Al "BJ" Williams, a Detroit-based social justice advocate and president of the African American Leadership Institute, is focusing his campaign on empowering precinct delegates, expanding local organizing efforts, and fostering community partnerships. Williams aims to strengthen the party's infrastructure at the local level and improve candidate recruitment efforts.

The election will be held at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center. To participate, individuals must have been members of the Michigan Democratic Party for at least 30 days

before the convention, with the membership deadline set for Jan. 23, 2025.

This leadership contest comes at a critical time for the Michigan Democratic Party, which has seen significant losses in recent elections and faces ongoing challenges in mobilizing voters, addressing opportunity gaps, and retaining membership. The new chair will play a pivotal role in shaping the party's strategies as it looks to expand its influence in the state.

For more information about the convention and the candidates, visit the Michigan Democratic Party's official website.

Donald Trump prepares for historic second inauguration as 47th U.S. President



PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP BEING SWORN IN ON JANUARY 20, 2017 AT THE U.S. CAPITOL BUILDING IN WASHINGTON, D.C. (THE WHITE HOUSE)

BY MB STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Preparations are underway for Donald Trump's inauguration as the 47th President of the United States, marking his return to the White House for a second, non-consecutive term. The swearing-in ceremony is set for Jan. 20, 2025, on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol. This inauguration places Trump alongside Grover Cleveland as one of only two presidents in U.S. history to serve non-consecutive terms.

What to expect on inauguration day

The day will begin with a morning church service followed by a tea at the White House with outgoing President Joe Biden. The swearing-in ceremony, ex-

pected to draw a large crowd, will feature Chief Justice John Roberts administering the oath of office to President-elect Trump. Vice President-elect J.D. Vance will also take the oath, preceding Trump.

President Trump's inaugural address will focus on his vision and priorities for his second term. Themes are expected to include border security, economic growth, and infrastructure investment. Following the ceremony, a traditional inaugural luncheon will take place, highlighting cuisine reflective of Trump's background and Vice President Vance's roots in Ohio.

The day's events will also include an inaugural parade along Pennsylvania Avenue, concluding at the White House. Evening celebrations will feature multiple inaugural balls with performances from high-profile artists. Con-

firmed performers include Carrie Underwood, Kid Rock, Ted Nugent, and the Village People.

Enhanced security measures

Given heightened security concerns, Washington, D.C., is implementing strict measures to ensure safety during the inauguration. Approximately 7,800 members of the National Guard and extensive law enforcement personnel will be deployed. The event has been designated as a National Special Security Event, ensuring coordination among federal, state, and local agencies.

Immediate policy action

Trump has indicated that he plans to issue a series of executive orders immediately upon taking office. These are expected

to address border security, energy policy, and criminal justice reforms, including potential pardons for individuals connected to the January 6 Capitol events. His early policy initiatives are likely to have significant implications for both domestic and international affairs.

Historical context

Trump's inauguration coincides with Martin Luther King Jr. Day, adding a unique dimension to the historic event. His return to the presidency highlights his continued influence in American politics and underscores his appeal to a substantial voter base.

As the nation prepares for this momentous day, all eyes will be on Washington, D.C., for Trump's second swearing-in and the commencement of his presidency's next chapter.

EDUCATION

Dr. Pamela Pugh reelected as president of Michigan State Board of Education



PAMELA PUGH, PRESIDENT OF THE MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (COURTESY PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

MICHIGAN — Dr. Pamela Pugh has been reelected as president of the Michigan State Board of Education, solidifying her leadership for another term. The decision was announced during a board meeting held on Jan. 14, where members also confirmed the selection of other officers for two-year terms.

“It’s an honor to be chosen again by my colleagues to serve as board president,” said Dr. Pugh.

“I look forward to continuing to work with other board members, the Michigan Department

of Education, Gov. Whitmer, legislators, and our communities and local public schools to meet the goals in Michigan’s Top 10 Strategic Education Plan. While we definitely have accomplishments to celebrate, there is much more work to do to repair harm to public education caused by decades of callous policies and underfunding, to ensure Michigan has an education system that well equips our children for the futures they deserve.”

Dr. Pugh, a Saginaw resident, has served on the board since her initial election in 2014. In 2024, she ran for the Democratic nomi-

nation for Michigan’s 8th Congressional District, earning 16% of the vote in a race ultimately won by Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-Bay City).

Leadership roles confirmed

In addition to Dr. Pugh’s re-election, the board confirmed the following officers for two-year terms:

- **Co-Vice Presidents:** Ellen Cogen Lipton (Huntington Woods) and Tiffany D. Tilley (West Bloomfield)

- **Secretary:** Dr. Judith Pritchett (Washington Township)
- **Treasurer:** Marshall Bullock II (Detroit)
- **National Association of State Boards of Education Delegate:** Dr. Mitchell Robinson (Okemos)

Board members Tom McMillin (Oakland Township) and Nikki Snyder (Goodrich), who were reelected in the November 2024 elections, participated in a ceremonial swearing-in to begin their new eight-year terms.

EDUCATION

Delta College appoints Dr. Walaa Awad as associate dean of health and wellness division

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER — Delta College has named Dr. Walaa Awad as the associate dean of its Health and Wellness Division. Dr. Awad joins Delta with 14 years of experience from Baker College, where she directed the science program and led health science courses.

Dr. Awad's academic credentials include an M.D. from Tanta University in Egypt, a M.S. in Health Education from the University of Michigan–Flint, and a Ph.D. in Global Health Epidemiology from Walden University. She also holds certification as a



DR. WALAA AWAD

diversity officer and has worked extensively on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, including serving as a DEI counselor and training committee

leader.

“My leadership philosophy is grounded in collaboration, equity and innovation. I believe in empowering faculty and staff to bring their best ideas forward, creating a culture of trust and shared accountability,” said Dr. Awad.

In addition to her leadership and academic roles, Dr. Awad has presented research at local and international conferences on public health topics, including obesity and osteoporosis. She views her transition from clinical practice to academia as a significant milestone in her career.

“I love teaching. I love being

with the students in the classroom,” Dr. Awad said. “I strive to transfer my passion to my students and help build the trust in themselves that they can make change.”

As associate dean, Dr. Awad aims to contribute to the continued growth and development of the Health and Wellness Division. “I am excited about the opportunity to contribute my skills and vision to advance the mission of Delta College,” she said. “I am confident that my leadership approach will help drive impactful outcomes for the Health and Wellness Division and the college as a whole.”

Regional high school teams compete for \$77,500 in STEM grants and scholarships

BY SHAUNTELL SMITH

SAGINAW — Students from Bay, Midland, Saginaw, and Tuscola counties are preparing innovative projects for the 12th annual A.H. Nickless Innovation Award competition. The event, which challenges high school teams to develop solutions to global problems, will culminate with live presentations on Saturday, April 26, 2025, at Saginaw Valley State University.

Organized by the Nickless Family Charitable Foundation, the competition is open to high school students aged 13 to 18. Its mission is to inspire interest in STEM fields while encouraging teamwork and innovative thinking. Participating teams address issues such as alternative energy, healthcare, technology, and life sciences.

This year, 17 teams from six schools are competing, each having advanced to Phase Two of the competition. Each team received a \$1,000 grant to develop its proposed solution, which will be detailed in project reports due by March 31. On April 26, teams will present their projects during a public event held in Alan W. Ott Auditorium in SVSU's Gilbertson Hall, with free admission for attendees.

The projects this year are diverse, ranging from a blood oxygen sensing device for pilots to a low-cost AI-powered therapist, reflecting the creativity and resourcefulness of the participating students. Teams are tackling challenges such as improving energy efficiency, enhancing accessibility, and addressing healthcare issues, with many incorporating advanced technology and innovative designs into their

solutions.

“Build Like a Girl strives to empower and educate young girls by providing opportunities to explore the construction industry through interactive experiences and guidance from successful women in the field. The hands-on activities at the company booths help inspire confidence, showing girls they are capable of achieving anything they set their minds to,” said Cathy Geiger, director of marketing and community affairs at ABC Greater Michigan.

The competition offers significant rewards for the winning teams. At the conclusion of the event, up to \$42,500 in student scholarships and \$35,000 in STEM education grants will be awarded. First-place winners will receive \$5,000 scholarships for up to five team members and a \$20,000 grant for their school. Second-place winners will re-

ceive \$2,500 scholarships and a \$10,000 school grant, while third-place winners will earn \$1,000 scholarships and a \$5,000 school grant.

Since its inception in 2013-14, the A.H. Nickless Innovation Award has awarded over \$701,000 in scholarships and grants, with more than 500 students having participated in the competition.

The April 26 event will provide an opportunity for the public to witness the students' innovative solutions and celebrate the region's future STEM leaders. Details, including the event's start time, will be available closer to the date at ahninnovation-award.com.



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EDUCATION

State board calls for increased funding for career and technical education programs

BY MB STAFF

LANSING — The Michigan State Board of Education is urging state lawmakers and Governor Gretchen Whitmer to allocate more funding for career and technical education (CTE) programs, citing the need to expand access for students across the state. In a resolution approved Tuesday, the board emphasized the importance of equitable access to high-quality CTE programs, particularly in areas with limited opportunities, known as "CTE deserts."

The resolution calls for additional resources to help local and intermediate school districts establish new programs and address barriers such as funding, geography, and transportation that prevent some students from participating.

"Students who complete CTE programs gain valuable, practical skills and the opportunity to start exciting careers after high school and to build a strong foundation for success in post-secondary education," said Board President Dr. Pamela Pugh. "All Michigan students deserve access to these opportunities, regardless of their race, socioeconomic status, or where they live."

CTE programs, which cover a range of fields including agriculture, skilled trades, public safety, and STEM, provide students with work-based learning experiences that contribute to building a highly skilled workforce. According to the board, these programs also align with Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan goals, such as expanding secondary learning opportunities, increasing high school graduation rates, and boosting the percentage of adults with post-secondary credentials.



FILE PHOTO

"In addition to preparing students for rewarding careers, CTE courses can also keep some children engaged at school so they are able to graduate and improve their life outcomes," said State Superintendent Dr. Michael F. Rice. "Students enrolled in CTE programs have significantly higher high school graduation rates and higher earnings in the labor market. They acquire skills that prepare them for successful career entry, advancement, and/or continuing education—including college—for high-wage, high-

demand careers."

Enrollment in CTE programs has steadily increased over the past three years, surpassing pre-pandemic levels. In the 2023-24 school year, 112,156 students enrolled in CTE programs, up from 102,988 in 2020-21, the low point during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the number of students completing entire CTE course sequences, rather than taking individual courses, rose by 19% over the same period, from 44,226 to 52,625.

Despite the growth in enroll-

ment, the board maintains that more investment is needed to ensure all students have access to these valuable programs. Over the next five years, the board aims to expand CTE opportunities statewide to address gaps and provide all Michigan students with the tools they need to succeed in high-wage, high-skills careers.

The board's resolution underscores the importance of CTE in preparing students for a sustainable workforce and driving economic growth in Michigan.

EDUCATION

Former Jerome Elementary undergoing renovations to become high quality, state of the art green STEM preschool model



COURTESY PHOTOS

SAGINAW – Jerome was established as a Kindergarten through 5th grade elementary school in 1976 by the Saginaw Public School District. In 2013, due to low student capacity as well as district wide financial challenges. Dr. Ericka Taylor was the principal assigned to Jerome that year and understood first hand why the school was being offlined, especially in consideration of the many structural needs of the building and grounds.

However, when Dr. Taylor joined the Saginaw Intermediate School District in 2017 as the Director of Early Childhood, she was surprised to learn that Jerome was a preschool site that was being rented and utilized (in the very same condition) to provide early childhood services which include preschool classes, home visiting teachers and maternal infant support for the families of children birth through 5 years of age. This was an immediate reminder of the reasons why

Jerome was originally offlined, but it also spurred a deeper desire and vision to give our children and families in Saginaw County not only what they need, but what they deserve, which is the very best learning environment that we can possibly imagine and provide, despite their economic status and/or zip code!

A groundbreaking ceremony was held this past May and renovations are currently underway transforming the former Jerome elementary school into the new Jerome Preschool servicing students ages birth to 4 years old! These renovations will include a new roof, awning, heating/cooling system, parking lot and greenhouse. There will be designated space for onsite medical services for children and families, shared community space for partnerships with local colleges/universities, and community organizations. All classrooms and hallways will be updated with new lighting, paint and flooring. The former gymnasium will now be a multipurpose space for staff

professional development opportunities as well as community activities and events.

These renovations will not only enhance and beautify the local community, but will also give our youngest learners the academic, social and emotional foundation they need and deserve to begin their K-12 endeavors and beyond by providing them with a high quality, state of the art building focused on Green STEM. Our vision is that this preschool site will provide an early childhood model that we can replicate not only in Saginaw, but across the state of Michigan and beyond.

A huge thank you to Saginaw ISD Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Collier for allowing us to dream big for the children and families in our community! We welcome any questions you may have to be sent to Dr. Ericka Taylor, Executive Director of Early Childhood, at etaylor@sisd.cc.

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EDUCATION

Don't leave scholarship dollars on the table

Application Deadline is Feb. 10, 2025... A scholarship for students who reside in and graduate from a high school in Saginaw



FILE PHOTO

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — The Saginaw Promise is investing in the future of Saginaw and the lives of its students by working to eliminate barriers to higher education with information and a “place based” scholarship. Since 2012, the organization has awarded \$1,182,799 in scholarships to 662 Students. While supporting higher education, the scholarship is a benefit for residents, intended to stabilize and grow Saginaw’s population, attract new businesses, affect the overall economic environment in Saginaw; with impact and benefit for surrounding communities and the entire Great Lakes Bay Region. The Saginaw Promise scholarship benefits stu-

dents who reside in and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone (which consist of the cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Kochville and that area of Buena Vista designated to the Saginaw Public School District). The organization has been working to affect change in Saginaw and the lives of its students with a goal for all of Saginaw’s graduating students to earn a program certificate or degree.

Who is eligible?

High school graduates who meet residency, school attendance requirements and complete the online Saginaw Community Foundation application and FAFSA. Also eligible are students who have used only 1

year of their Saginaw Promise Scholarship (the Saginaw Promise scholarship is available up to two years) and students who have applied but have not used their Saginaw Promise scholarship (students have up to six years from high school graduation to use their Saginaw Promise scholarship).

How to apply for the Saginaw Promise scholarship?

Students must complete the online Saginaw Community Foundation scholarship application at saginawfoundation.org; remember to check off the Saginaw Promise scholarship on the application and to answer the two associated questions about

residency and school attendance. The deadline to complete the online application is February 10, 2025.

Students must also complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>.

For information/details about the Saginaw Promise, its scholarship or to donate, visit www.saginawpromise.org or telephone the Saginaw Promise at (989)755-0545.

(Note: The Saginaw Promise scholarship is renewable up to two years and must be applied for annually.)





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About Saginaw ISD HE/EHS

Established in 1965, Head Start promotes school readiness for children, ages three to five, in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social and other services.

Head Start programs promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families.

Early Head Start, launched in 1995, provides support to low-income infants, toddlers,

pregnant women and their families.

EHS programs enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

Together Head Start and Early Head Start have served tens of millions of children and their families.

At Saginaw ISD Head Start our attentive staff is available Monday through Friday to answer all your questions and make every effort to ensure you are 100 percent satisfied.

Saginaw ISD Head Start
Claytor Administrative Building
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Saginaw, MI 48601
Phone 989.752.2193
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For additional information concerning Saginaw ISD Head Start visit: www.saginawheadstart.org

Source: www.saginawheadstart.org



Sabrina Beeman-Jackson

Saginaw ISD Head Start/Early Head Start Program Director

“Head Start graduates are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to need special education, repeat a grade, or commit crimes in adolescence.”

Joe Baca, former Dem. California Congressman

“Our mission is to provide high quality services, developing school readiness and family empowerment for prenatal to age five children and families by working in partnership with parents and the community.”
-Saginaw ISD HE/EHS

A flyer for Saginaw ISD Head Start & Early Head Start. It features the Saginaw ISD logo at the top, followed by "HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START" in large letters. Below this, it says "FREE PRE-SCHOOL Enrollments for 0 to 5 year olds" and provides a phone number "Call: 752-2193 or" and the address "Visit the Claytor Head Start Building at: 3200 Perkins Saginaw, MI 48601". It ends with "REGISTER NOW!" and "Saginaw County Free Pre-School Partnership". There are images of children and colorful handprints.

BUSINESS + FINANCE

Governor Whitmer signs bipartisan bills to promote entrepreneurship



FILE PHOTO

BY MB STAFF

LANSING — Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed into law a package of bipartisan legislation on Monday aimed at strengthening Michigan's economy by supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation. The new laws establish the Michigan Innovation Fund and reinstate a Research and Development (R&D) Tax Credit, both designed to attract investments, lower business costs, and bolster the state's workforce.

The Michigan Innovation Fund allocates \$60 million to

provide early-stage capital for entrepreneurs and businesses, addressing a significant challenge for startups in the state. Proponents of the fund highlight its potential to align Michigan with other Midwest states that have similar programs. House Bills 5651, 5652, and 5653, sponsored by Representatives Greg VanWoerkom (R-Norton Shores), Jason Hoskins (D-Southfield), and Alabas Farhat (D-Dearborn), aim to foster economic development through direct support for business growth.

The R&D Tax Credit, established through House Bills 5100 and 5101, incentivizes businesses

to invest in research and development. Companies with fewer than 250 employees can claim up to \$250,000 annually, while larger businesses are eligible for up to \$2 million. An additional \$200,000 credit is available for companies collaborating with Michigan's research universities. Supporters of the credit cite its alignment with similar programs in 36 other states and its potential to attract high-tech industries to Michigan.

The legislation received widespread praise from lawmakers and industry leaders. Representative Jason Hoskins described the Innovation Fund as a tool to

create "a cycle of opportunity" that supports entrepreneurs and small businesses. Representative Julie Rogers (D-Kalamazoo) emphasized the importance of the R&D Tax Credit in driving innovation and strengthening Michigan's economy, particularly for small businesses and advanced industries.

University of Michigan President Santa J. Ono highlighted the potential for collaboration between academia and the private sector, noting that the new funding mechanisms will accelerate innovation and drive job creation. Industry groups, including the Michigan Manufacturers Association and MichBio, have also endorsed the measures as steps to improve Michigan's competitiveness and attract high-wage industries.

Governor Whitmer framed the legislation as part of broader efforts to position Michigan as a leader in innovation and economic development. She stated that the Innovation Fund and R&D Tax Credit "will empower Michigan entrepreneurs, lower costs for Michigan businesses, and create good-paying Michigan jobs."

The bipartisan legislation aims to strengthen Michigan's reputation as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship while supporting the growth of local businesses. By addressing barriers such as access to early-stage capital and providing tax incentives for research and development, the state seeks to enhance its economic competitiveness and create new opportunities for its workforce.

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Corning's clean energy investment recognized with national impact award

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW — Corning Incorporated's \$900 million investment to establish a solar component manufacturing facility in Saginaw County has earned recognition in the Clean Energy Manufacturing category of Business Facilities' 2024 Impact Awards. The acknowledgment highlights Michigan's role as a leader in clean energy innovation and the state's commitment to fostering transformative economic development.

The annual Deal of the Year awards, announced this week, also recognized the collaborative efforts of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Consumers Energy, and Saginaw Future. Corning's project aligns with Michigan's *Make It in Michigan* strategy, which emphasizes economic growth through investments in people, places, and projects that benefit local communities.

Quentin L. Messer Jr., CEO of the MEDC, noted the significance of the recognition. "This project exemplifies Team Michigan's commitment to earning private investment that adds to our tax base and supports the state's 'MI Healthy Climate Plan.' Corning's investment in Michigan is another example of the 'Make It in Michigan' economic development strategy delivering results for Michiganders."

Corning selected Michigan over competing sites in the Midwest and Northeast, citing the state's skilled workforce and its focus on creating a domestic clean energy supply chain. In February 2024, the Michigan Strategic Fund approved several incentives for the project, including a \$68 million Critical Industries Program performance-based grant,



COURTESY PHOTO

a 15-year State Essential Services Assessment exemption valued at \$12.3 million, and \$29 million in funding through the Strategic Site Readiness Program to support public infrastructure and road improvements in Thomas Township.

Scott Forester, Corning's division vice president and program executive for solar, expressed gratitude for the state's leadership and support. "These approved incentives helped confirm Michigan as the natural choice for this new endeavor. The planned new facility will create thousands of local jobs and advance the goal of expanding access to U.S. renewable energy solutions."

Michigan has been recog-

nized for clean energy leadership in Business Facilities' awards for three consecutive years. In 2024, Nel Hydrogen was honored for its \$400 million investment in green hydrogen production, and in 2023, General Motors received an award for its \$7 billion investment in electric vehicle and advanced battery manufacturing. The recognition for Corning's facility continues this trajectory, underscoring Michigan's success in attracting significant clean energy projects.

The investment is part of Michigan's broader efforts to lead in clean energy job creation and innovation. According to the 2024 Clean Jobs America Report, Michigan is home to 127,690 clean energy jobs, rank-

ing among the top states for energy sector employment growth. The state's abundant natural resources, favorable business environment, and commitment to climate-focused policies have positioned it as a hub for sustainable industries.

Corning's project, alongside other recent developments such as the openings of LuxWall and UL Solutions facilities in 2024, reflects the state's strategy to attract high-tech industries while creating opportunities for local communities. Through its *MI Healthy Climate Plan* and strategic initiatives, Michigan continues to drive economic growth and solidify its reputation as a leader in clean energy innovation.

BUSINESS + FINANCE

MCDC president Mark Williams elected to National Association of Development Companies board

BY MB STAFF

MICHIGAN — Mark Williams, president of the Michigan Certified Development Corporation (MCDC), has been elected as an at-large director of the National Association of Development Companies (NADCO). He will serve on the board through October 2025, contributing to the organization’s mission of ensuring access to affordable capital and services for small businesses across the country.

NADCO, founded in 1981, is the trade association for Small Business Administration (SBA) certified development companies and other lenders providing

SBA loans to small businesses. As an at-large director, Williams will play a key role in shaping policies, priorities, and positions for the organization. His responsibilities include providing strategic guidance, serving on committees, representing NADCO as an ambassador, and contributing to decision-making processes.

“I am honored to serve with the rest of the NADCO board in leading our industry,” Williams said. “It will be exciting to use my skills and experience on the na-



MARK WILLIAMS

tional level to ensure small businesses have access to the capital they need to succeed.”


Williams has been president of the MCDC since 2015 and brings decades of experience in the financial industry. His expertise includes credit analysis, loan review, portfolio management, and loan origination, developed through roles in various bank and non-bank lending organizations. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in financial administration from the Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University.

NADCO President and CEO Rhonda Pointon expressed enthusiasm about Williams’ election. “On behalf of NADCO, we

would like to welcome Mark to the board,” she said. “NADCO’s board members bring diverse perspectives to our organization, enriching our discussions and enhancing our decision-making processes. We look forward to working with Mark to advance the interests of small business lenders nationwide.”

Williams’ election to the NADCO board highlights his leadership and commitment to supporting small businesses, furthering the mission of both MCDC and NADCO to foster economic growth and opportunity in communities nationwide.

Ebony Payns
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BUSINESS + FINANCE

Starting the new year strong

BY MB STAFF

The new year is a time for reflection and renewal, especially for business owners. It's the perfect opportunity to evaluate past successes, address challenges, and chart a path forward with intention. Success doesn't happen by chance—it requires strategy, adaptability, and vision.

Begin by revisiting your business plan. Treat it as a living document that evolves with your goals and market conditions. Updating your mission and objectives can provide fresh clarity and focus. Simultaneously, assess your financial health. Analyze last year's performance to identify areas where you can cut costs, invest strategically, or improve profitability.



FILE PHOTO

Don't overlook your customers. Gather feedback to understand their changing needs and refine your offerings. Enhancing their experience—whether through better service, person-

alized communication, or digital upgrades—can set your business apart. Similarly, reengage your team. Share your vision for the year, recognize their contributions, and offer opportunities for

growth. A motivated team is key to success.

Innovation and adaptability are critical. Experiment with new strategies, embrace emerging technologies, or explore untapped markets to stay ahead. Monitor trends and remain open to change—it's often the businesses willing to pivot that thrive.

Lastly, don't neglect self-care. Running a business can be demanding, so set boundaries, delegate, and take time to recharge. A clear mind and renewed energy are essential for navigating challenges and driving success.

By planning with purpose, staying flexible, and prioritizing customers and employees, you can make 2025 a year of growth and opportunity. Here's to a successful new year!



FAITH IN FOCUS



MINISTRY WITHOUT WALLS - 3783 MANNION RD, SAGINAW, MI 48603

Ministry Without Walls expands vision with community-focused mission

BY PASTOR JOHN DUNN

Ministry Without Walls has recently returned to its location at 3783 Mannion Road with a renewed vision, shaped by recent global events and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeking divine guidance, the organization has embraced a broader mission: to make the church an integral part of the community.

The new direction for Ministry Without Walls is centered around the theme of "Breaking Down Walls." This initiative aims to bridge gaps between spiritual life and community service, uniting church members, volunteers, and local professionals in a shared mission.

The organization's vision includes several key objectives:



PASTOR JOHN DUNN

- Creating a space where the spirit, soul, and body can achieve wholeness.
- Providing resources to those in need.
- Fostering collaboration

between the church, volunteers, and community professionals.

- Ensuring a welcoming environment where love prevails and judgment is absent.
- Maintaining privacy and prioritizing safety.
- Emphasizing the importance of the whole person.

Ministry Without Walls will continue to offer various teachings and seminars on topics such as outreach, spiritual growth, mental health, healthy living, finding purpose, financial management, entrepreneurship, and more. These programs are designed to address diverse needs and support personal development.

Recognizing that the mission field is close to home, not far

away, the organization is committed to a collaborative approach, knowing that achieving this vision will require the collective effort of many. Ministry Without Walls is dedicating its resources, talents, and connections to dismantle barriers and connect with the community more deeply.

Those interested in learning more or getting involved are encouraged to visit the church on Sundays at 11:00 AM. This offers an opportunity to meet Pastor John Dunn, ask questions, and experience the ministry's mission firsthand.

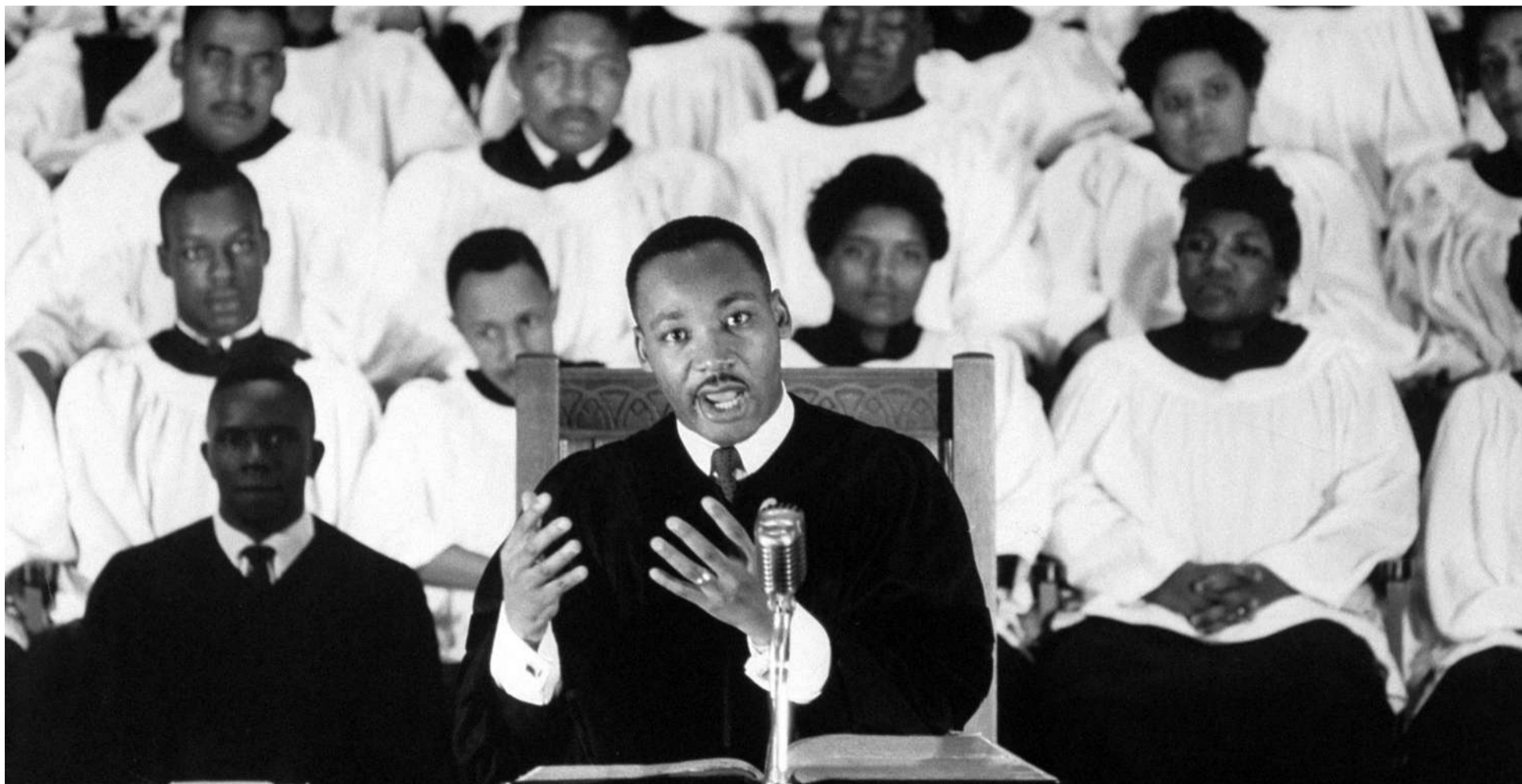
For more information, visit Ministry Without Walls at 3783 Mannion Road, Saginaw, MI 48603.

SPONSORED CONTENT

FAITH IN FOCUS

MLK

The faith that drove Martin Luther King's dream



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. PREACHING AT EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH (DONALD UHRBROCK/THE LIFE IMAGES COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES)

BY MB STAFF

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s leadership in the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s was deeply intertwined with his Christian faith. As a pastor and theologian, King viewed his work for justice and equality as a divine calling, rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ. His faith not only shaped his philosophy of nonviolence but also provided the moral framework for his activism.

King began his ministry at Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1954. It was here that he launched his civil rights activism, using the pulpit to articulate a vision of justice inspired by Christian teachings. His sermons emphasized the principles

of love, forgiveness, and equality, drawing heavily from biblical scripture to advocate for the dignity and worth of all people.

Central to King's faith was the belief in the transformative power of love, as expressed in Jesus' teachings. He often referenced Matthew 5:44, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," to urge his followers to reject hatred and embrace nonviolence. This commitment was evident in key events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Birmingham campaign, where King demonstrated how Christian principles could be applied to challenge systemic racism.

King's reliance on biblical imagery and language reached a pinnacle during his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963. Delivered at the March on Washing-

ton for Jobs and Freedom, the speech echoed the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament, invoking Amos 5:24: "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." He seamlessly wove together themes of freedom and equality, blending the American dream with the spiritual promise of liberation found in scripture.

His faith was not limited to the pulpit; it extended to his philosophy of nonviolent resistance, influenced by both Christian teachings and the example of Mahatma Gandhi. King saw nonviolence as a practical and spiritual tool to confront injustice without perpetuating the cycle of violence. This approach was rooted in his conviction that love and moral courage were more powerful than hatred and oppression.

King's vision of justice was

also deeply inclusive, recognizing the interconnectedness of humanity. He famously stated, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," reflecting his belief in a shared moral responsibility to uplift all people. His leadership inspired millions, and his faith-driven activism laid the foundation for transformative social change.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and work remain a testament to the power of faith in shaping a vision for justice and equality. By integrating his Christian convictions with his pursuit of civil rights, King demonstrated that religion could serve as a powerful force for positive change, inspiring generations to continue the work of building a more just and equitable world.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

A

**Agape Faith Bible Training Center**

Rev. Dr. Joseph Rodriguez
8121 Dixie Highway
Birch Run, MI 48415
(989) 777-3200 Ext. 20

B

**Bethlehem Temple Church of the Apostolic Faith**

District Elder Curtis E. Johnson, Pastor
3521 Webber St
Saginaw, Michigan 48601
989-755-8381

C

Christ Disciples Baptist Church

Founder Pastor Eddie Benson
Pastor Genevieve Benson
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Christ Fellowship Baptist Church

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**Christ Image Community Church**

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**Faith Harvest Church**

Bishop Ronald E. Chipp
1734 N. Mason
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**Faith Ministries Church**

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Midland, MI 48642
989-837-7777
faithministrieschurch.org

G

**Glimpse Of Hope Ministries**

Pastor Leslie D Lewis
2211 S. Outer Dr.
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**Glory House Ministries**

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Grace Chapel Church

Pastor James Nelson
2202 Janes Ave.
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Greater Williams Temple

608 E Remington St
Saginaw, MI 48601
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H

**Holy Communion Gospel Center**

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J

Jacob's Ladder

Pastor Dennis Barlow
1926 Fairfield Street
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L

Life in Christ Ministries

Pastor Dennis Cotton, Sr.
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LifeInChristMinistries07@gmail.com

M

Messiah Missionary Baptist Church

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**Ministry Without Walls**

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Saginaw, MI 48603

N

**New Beginnings Deliverance Ministry**

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Pastorbaldwin@charter.net

**New Beginnings Ministries**

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**New Birth Missionary Baptist**

Bishop Larry D. Camel
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Saginaw, Michigan
989-327-1755

**New Covenant Christian Center**

Pastor Ron Frierson
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Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-8485

**New Hope Missionary Baptist Church**

Rev. Dr. Willie F. Casey
1721 Tuscola Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-7600

**New Life Baptist Ministries**

Dr. Craig Tatum
1401 Janes Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-1151
newlifelcm.com

New Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

Pastor Alfred "AJ" Harris Jr.
3610 Russel St.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-0801

P

Prince of Peace Baptist Church

Pastor Robert C. Corley Jr.
825 North 24th Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
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R

**Resurrection Life Ministries Full Gospel Baptist Church**

Pastor Carolyn L. Wilkins
2320 Sheridan Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-395-3142

S

**Saint Paul Baptist Church**

Rev. Dr., Vincent D. McMillon
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stpaul2@yahoo.com
Facebook: St Paul MBC Family Connection

**Second Baptist Church**

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Bay City, MI 48708
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T

**Transforming Life Ministries**

Pastor William Brown
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**True Vine Baptist Church**

Pastor Paul E. Broadus
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U

**United Missionary Baptist Church**

Rev. Cedric Nickson
4290 Lamson Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
Church: 989-759-9411
Pastor 810.223.2987

V

**Victorious Belivers Ministries Church**

Pastor Chris V. Pryor
624 S. Outer Dr.
Saginaw, MI
989-755-7692

FUNDRAISING GOOD TIMES

Start the New Year right

BY MEL AND PEARL SHAW

What's new for the new year? We think about this for ourselves as individuals, and ideally, we put in place support to help us reach our goals. The same is true with fundraising. Take a moment to get charged up about what your nonprofit wants to achieve and put in place one of the supports you need to get the money to make it happen. We'll walk you through how to start creating a case for support and the benefits you can achieve when you start early in the year.

Step one. Define what you want to accomplish this year. Refer to your strategic plan, budget, minutes from board meetings, or any tools you have available that document what your organization or institution seeks to achieve. You may have binders full of documents with different and competing information, you may have a one-page outline of projected expenses and revenue, or you may have your recollections of what people say



FILE PHOTO

they want to make happen. Don't let the magnitude or lack of information get in your way. Start where you are. Read through what you have, or recollect what people keep saying. Write down – in simple language – a list of priorities. If your list is too long, look at similarities in priorities and condense these into a more inclusive priority. Limit your list to three priorities.

Steps two and three. For each priority, determine how much needs to be raised. Include costs such as staff, equipment, contractors, and transportation. Write down the total number for each priority. Consider how much time your organization spends on each priority and then allocate an appropriate percentage of your operating costs to each priority. This would include a percentage of items such as insurance, book-keeping, technology services, human resources, and rent. Add the percentage to each priority. This is the fundraising goal. Fi-

nally, for each priority, define the impact or what you are seeking to achieve.

Now make this information visually engaging. Create an attention-getting “cover page.” On the next page, list your priorities, including the fundraising goal and impact. That's it. Now share it with others on your team and get their feedback. Don't worry when most people don't like what you created. It's a starting place that will get your team in motion, creating a stronger piece. You have started the process of creating a case for support for your annual fundraising.

As your team builds on what

you created, they will ultimately come up with a piece everyone can use as they talk to those who support your nonprofit, and those who you want to support it. Remember, most nonprofits experience a donor attrition rate of up to 40%. This means you always want to be talking with your donors – and those who could become your donors – so that you reach your fundraising goals. Don't wait until the fourth quarter. Get started now and chart your own path. Equip your staff and volunteers. Reduce stress and avoid burnout. Move away from crisis fundraising. Happy New Year!



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Mel and Pearl Shaw are authors of four books on fundraising available on Amazon.com. For help growing your fundraising visit www.saadandshaw.com or call (901) 522-8727.



PICS OF THE WEEK

On Sunday, Jan. 8, the Saginaw Branch of the NAACP celebrated the swearing-in of its newly elected officers, administered by Terry L. Clark. Congratulations to the leadership team:

- Terry Pruitt, President
- Canika Pugh, First Vice President
- Ruth Ann Knapp, Second Vice President
- Ralph Martin, Third Vice President
- Lisa Coney, Secretary
- Dawn Pruitt-Granberry, Assistant Secretary
- Marcia Thomas, Treasurer
- Ceylon Bettis, Assistant Treasurer



Executive committee members include Brenda Beard, Rhonda Farrell-Butler, Darlene Carpenter, Eddie Foxx, Willie Haynes, Renee Hawkins-Morris, Joyce Harvin, Barbara Lauria, Janice Moore, Leola Wilson, Thelma Ruffin, and Joyce Seals.





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*Brittany Saunders is ready to pay it forward. The Chicago native enrolled at SVSU with ambitions to pursue a teaching career. Brittany was encouraged and invigorated by other passionate educators who worked closely with her to ensure she would accomplish her goals. And she is. Even before she was set to graduate, Brittany could boast a résumé with a paid internship in a school district along with K-12 classroom experience. **Now she can't wait to begin a professional career, inspiring students with the same kind of one-on-one attention she received from her professors at SVSU.***



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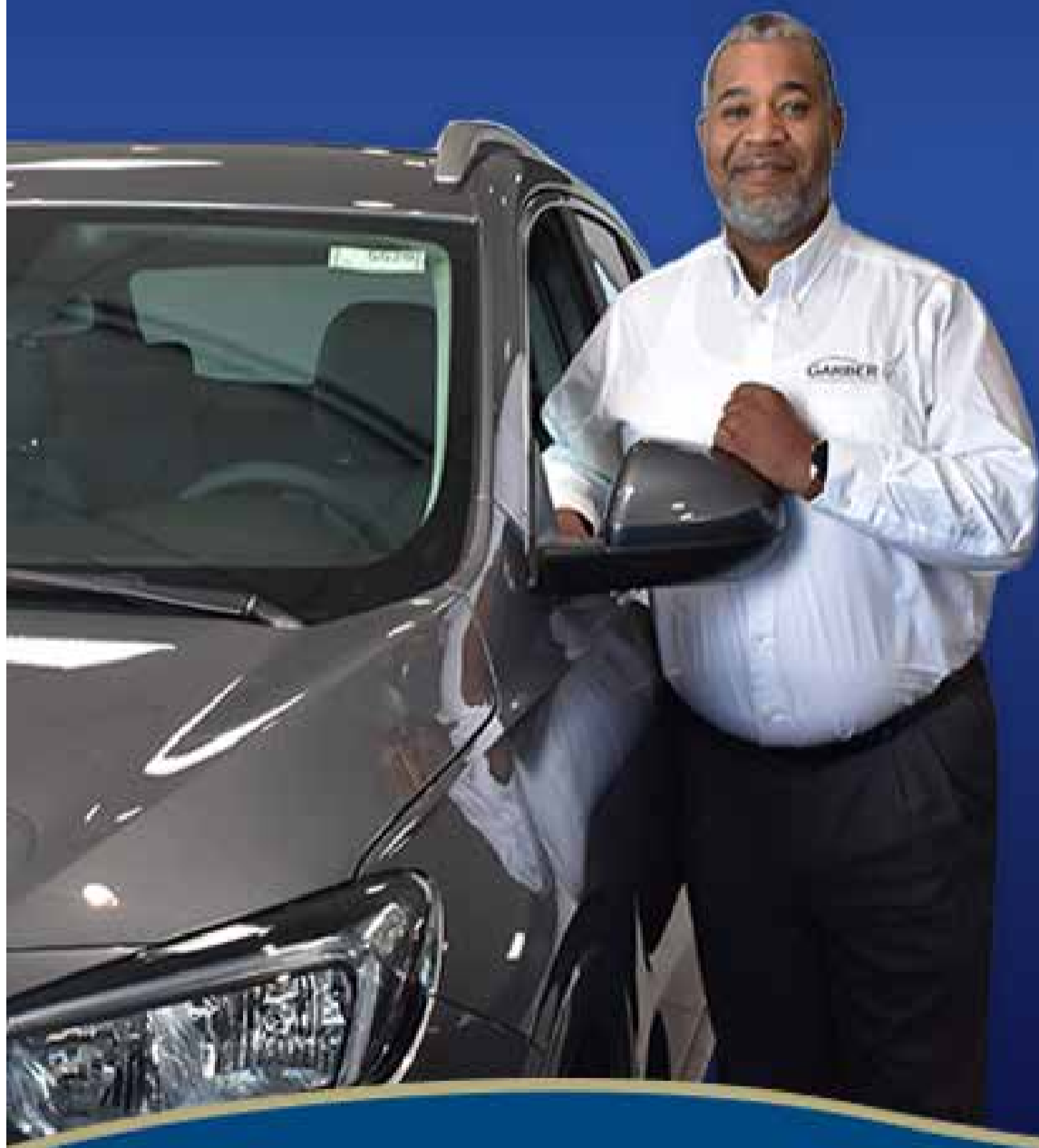
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