



SUPPORT *Local* JOURNALISM ▶ ▶ ▶

[MICHIGANBANNER.ORG/DONATE](http://MICHIGANBANNER.ORG/DONATE)



**Delta College board moves to hire Michelle Allmendinger as next president**

EDUCATION, PG 27

**Dow names Karen S. Carter next CEO in historic leadership transition**



KAREN S. CARTER

**BY MB STAFF**

MIDLAND, Mich. — Dow on Tuesday appointed Chief Operating Officer Karen S. Carter as its next chief executive officer, effective July 1, in a planned succession that will make her the first woman and first person of color to lead the Midland-based materials science company.

Current Chairman and CEO Jim Fitterling will transition to executive chair on July 1, while Carter will also join Dow's board of directors. Richard Davis will continue serving as independent lead director. Dow said the move follows a multi-year succession planning process intended to ensure leadership continuity.

The leadership change comes as Dow navigates a prolonged downturn in the

global chemicals sector. In January, the company announced plans to cut about 4,500 jobs worldwide, or roughly 13% of its workforce, as part of a restructuring aimed at streamlining operations and improving efficiency. Dow said the actions are expected to deliver about \$2 billion in near-term earnings, with severance costs estimated between \$600 million and \$800 million.

"Jim has led the company through a period of significant transformation while strengthening Dow's strategy, culture and long-term positioning," Davis said in a statement. He added that the board has strong confidence in Carter's leadership.

Fitterling, who has served as CEO since 2018 and board chair since 2020, led Dow through its separation from

DowDuPont and helped reposition the company toward higher-growth, demand-driven markets. His tenure also included sustainability initiatives and efforts to strengthen operational discipline during a period marked by macroeconomic and geopolitical pressure.

In his new role, Fitterling will continue to chair the board and focus on long-term strategy, governance and external relationships while supporting the leadership transition.

"Serving as CEO of Dow has been the privilege of a lifetime," Fitterling said in a statement.

Carter, a more than 30-year Dow veteran, currently oversees global operations as chief operating officer. She previously led Dow's Packaging & Specialty Plastics segment, where the company said she focused on capacity expansion, reliability improvements and customer partnerships, including circular economy initiatives.

"I am deeply honored to assume the role of CEO and lead Dow into our next chapter," Carter said in a statement, pointing to innovation, operational discipline and long-term value creation as key priorities.

Dow operates in 29 countries, employs about 34,600 people and reported approximately \$40 billion in sales in 2025.



**Boys & Girls Clubs to open teen center in Saginaw**

YOUTH BANNER, PG 6



**Saginaw Cinco de Mayo celebration set for May 2**

LATINO BANNER, PG 5



**Covenant breaks ground on new orthopedic center in Saginaw Township**

HEALTH, PG 24

**Play Dates  
in the  
Park**  
EVENT 2026 SERIES

**SCHEDULE**

**Streetball Hockey Day**  
Saturday, March 21 • 11:30 AM – 2 PM  
First Ward Community Center  
1420 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St.  
for Ages 5–18  
Giveaway: Hockey Stick & Water Bottle

**Welcome to Summer! Field Day**  
Saturday, May 16 • 1PM – 4 PM  
Fordney Park  
1300 Chestnut St.  
for Ages 5–18  
Giveaway: Jump Ropes & Hula Hoops

**Swimming Day**  
Saturday, May 31 • 10:30 AM – 1 PM  
Saginaw YMCA  
1915 Fordney St.  
for Ages 5–17  
Giveaway: Life Jackets

**Fishing Day**  
Sunday, June 07 • 11 AM – 1:30 PM  
Old Town Docks  
222 N. Niagara St.  
for Ages 5–18  
Giveaway: Fishing Poles

**Home Garden & Planting Day**  
Saturday, June 13 • 11 AM – 1:30 PM  
Houghton-Jones Community Center  
1708 Johnson St.  
for Ages 5–18  
Giveaway: Garden Planter Kit

**Tennis & Pickleball Day**  
Saturday, August 15 • 11 AM – 1:30 PM  
Garber Courts  
1760 Fordney St.  
for Ages 5–18  
Giveaway: Tennis Racquets

**Skateboarding Day**  
Sunday, August 23 • 10:45 AM–1:30 PM  
Celebration Skate Park  
1830 Fordney St.  
for Ages 7–18  
Giveaway: Skateboards & Helmets

(989) 759-1540  
playdatesinthepark@saginaw-mi.com



**THIS DAY IN**

**MICHIGAN HISTORY**

**APRIL 16, 1912**

On April 16, 1912, Harriet Quimby – the first American woman to earn a pilot’s license – became the first woman to fly solo across the English Channel. Departing from Dover, England, in a borrowed plane she had never flown before and carrying no instruments other than a compass she had only recently learned to use, Quimby navigated fog and poor visibility before landing 59 minutes later near Hardelot, France.



HARRIET QUIMBY

**MICHIGAN BANNER**

301 E Genesee Ave, Suite 201B  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
989.992.2600  
publisher022@gmail.com

**PUBLISHER**

Michelle McCoy

**VP SALES & MARKETING**

Jerome Buckley

**EDITOR EMERITUS**

Rae Lynn Buckley

**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.

**DISCLAIMER**

The Michigan Banner and its staff are not responsible and will not be held liable for any mistakes, error, misspellings and false advertisements in part or whole that may be placed within its publication. Articles, information or comments printed in the newspaper are not necessarily the views or beliefs of The Michigan Banner newspaper. The Michigan Banner reserves the right to edit, change, or delete any information, or refuse to print any information, article or advertisement which is believed to be inconsistent with or conflicts with the mission of the newspaper.

**DEADLINES**

1 week before each publication date of the 1st and 16th of each month

**SUBMISSION PROCEDURE**

Mailed or e-mailed  
Preferred format: Jpeg or PDF

**CONNECT WITH THE MICHIGAN BANNER ONLINE!**

www.michiganbanner.org  
Facebook.com/TheNewMichiganBanner  
Twitter.com/MichiganBanner



**IN THIS ISSUE ▶**

Youth Banner .....	4 - 11
Latino Banner .....	LB 1 - LB 6
Community .....	18
Health .....	24
Education .....	27
Business .....	33
Sports .....	38
Faith .....	42

# MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 8



## Youth Leadership Bay County celebrates Class of 2026



YOUTH LEADERSHIP BAY COUNTY CLASS OF 2026 (COURTESY OF BAY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE)

### BY MB STAFF

BAY CITY, Mich. — Nineteen high school juniors from across Bay County have completed the Youth Leadership Bay County program, wrapping up a year of leadership training, community engagement and service projects aimed at preparing students to become more active in their schools and communities. The Bay Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation recognized the Class of 2026 during a graduation ceremony April 9 at the Bay-Arenac ISD Career Center.

The graduating class includes Lauryn Bitzer of John Glenn High School; Donté Briggs of Bay

City Academy; Izabelle Czuba of Bay City Central High School; Owen Dominowski of Bay City Western High School; Allison Fork of Pinconning High School; Fatima Hussein of Bay City Western High School; Ryan Marciniak of Bay City Central High School; Franciso Munoz of Tri-County Trades High School; Caroline Pardo of Tri-County Trades High School; Jack Podsiad of Bay City Western High School; Brynn Poirier of Garber High School; Parker Ramsay of Pinconning High School; Mylie Reder of Bay City Western High School; Elijah Reinbold of John Glenn High School; Alana Sautter of Garber High School; Valentino Solano of John Glenn High School; Kar-

son Thompson of Bay City Academy; Annabelle Warner of John Glenn High School; and Natalya Ziolkowski of Bay City Central High School.

Organizers describe the program as a way to introduce Bay County students to leadership principles and the workings of local industries and institutions. Over the course of the school year, students took part in monthly sessions centered on government, business, health care and community development. They also completed community impact projects with non-profit partners, tying leadership lessons to volunteer service and local needs.

Magen Samyn, president and

CEO of the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, praised the students' work and framed the program as part of a larger investment in Bay County's future leadership pipeline. Financial Plus Credit Union served as the presenting sponsor of the 2026 graduation ceremony.

The annual program is open to Bay County students entering their junior year and is coordinated through school counseling offices. For the students who graduated this month, the ceremony marked the end of a year spent learning how local leadership works — and how they can take part in it.

# TeenQuest graduates to get access to summer jobs through Genesee County initiative



TEENQUEST GRADUATE (COURTESY OF TEENQUEST)

## BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — More than 200 summer jobs will be available to TeenQuest graduates in Genesee County through this year's Summer Youth Initiative, giving local students a chance to earn income and gain workplace experience during the break from school.

The Summer Youth Initiative, a program of Flint & Genesee Education & Talent, will connect TeenQuest graduates with 24 local employers for six weeks of summer employment. The program is open to TeenQuest graduates ages 14 to 19 in grades 9 through 12.

An invitation-only job fair is planned for May, where partici-

pating employers will meet with eligible students interested in summer work. TeenQuest graduates should have received an email invitation with application details.

The initiative is designed to help students build job skills, explore career interests and gain experience they can carry into college, training programs and future employment. It also provides employers with an opportunity to invest in the region's young workforce.

Participating employers this year include nonprofits, public agencies, educational organizations and community groups across Genesee County. The list includes Asbury Community Development Corporation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of

Flint and Genesee County, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint, Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties, The Chosen Few Arts Council, Covenant Hills Camp and Retreat, Davison Township Parks and Recreation, DREAMS Inc., Financial Plus Credit Union, Flint Children's Museum, Flint Freedom Schools Collaborative, Flint Institute of Music, Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, Genesee County Community Action Resource Department, Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission, The Genesee County Prevention Coalition, Gloria Coles Flint Public Library, Hand of Home-FLM, Latinx Technology and Community Center, Motherly Intercession, Mott Community College, Next Level Experience at New

Standard Academy, Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village and Urban Renaissance Center.

The program comes as summer employment remains an important step for teenagers seeking both income and early exposure to the workplace. For many students, those first jobs can help shape future career plans while also building confidence, responsibility and professional skills.

Students who completed TeenQuest and have not received an invitation email can update their contact information through the Summer Youth Initiative registration page at [educateflintandgenesee.org/summer-youth-initiative/register](http://educateflintandgenesee.org/summer-youth-initiative/register).

# Boys & Girls Clubs to open teen center in Saginaw



ON FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION HELD A GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THEIR NEW TEEN CENTER AT 1781 FORDNEY ST., SAGINAW. (COURTESY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION)

**BY MB STAFF**

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Great Lakes Bay Region is moving forward with a new teen center in Saginaw, a project leaders say is intended to create a dedicated space for older youth to access academic support, mentoring and career-focused programming during after-school hours.

The organization scheduled a groundbreaking ceremony for 4 p.m. Friday, April 10, at 1781 Fordney St. in Saginaw, inviting

community members and Boys & Girls Club alumni to mark the start of the project. The center is being described as a teen-focused facility created specifically to serve local young people during the hours when many students are out of school but still need structured support and safe places to gather.

According to the organization's announcement, the new center will offer academic support, career readiness programming, mentorship and enrichment activities. CEO Lynn Pavlawk described the project as



ON FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION HELD A GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THEIR NEW TEEN CENTER AT 1781 FORDNEY ST., SAGINAW. (COURTESY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION)



ON FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION HELD A GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THEIR NEW TEEN CENTER AT 1781 FORDNEY ST., SAGINAW. (COURTESY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION)

an important step for the organization and the youth it serves, saying the center is meant to inspire confidence, help teens build connections and open doors to future success.

The investment stands out because it is aimed specifically at teenagers, a group that often has fewer age-appropriate after-school options than younger children. In a city where youth-serving agencies, schools and nonprofits have continued to stress the need for safe and consistent support systems, the teen center is positioned as both a

programming hub and a longer-term community investment.

As plans move from groundbreaking to construction, the project signals a broader regional effort to expand youth opportunities beyond the classroom and create spaces where teens can prepare for college, work and adulthood with stronger local support.



# Bullying

BY ESTHER VAUGHN

**Merriam-Webster dictionary defines bullying as abuse and mistreatment of someone vulnerable by someone stronger or more powerful. Approximately 160,000 students in the United States skip school every day due to fear of bullying.**

I was one of those students who skipped school by pretending to be sick because of how I was treated at school. The bullies in my class would pick on me because of my dark skin and my short hair. I would pretend to be okay but I was really sad. My sadness often turned into anger and I felt like I would explode. I wanted to beat them down.

I wanted to hate them but after talking to my aunt I feel much better. She said although they were ugly and rude to me I should not be rude or ugly to them. Instead we should pray for them because that's what Jesus did. My aunt said, "I am wonderfully and beautifully made in the image of Jesus. She also said, "Just because someone is talking about you doesn't mean it is true. Trust Jesus over people because He is your Creator.

If you are being bullied like I was, you are not alone! Do like I did tell a parent, a teacher, or a trusted adult because they are here to help us. They can help put a stop to bullying and give some great advice on what to do.

I hope this helps anyone who is being bullied.



# Regional students prepare for A.H. Nickless Innovation Award at SVSU



FIRST PLACE WINNERS ALTITUDE ANGELS FROM SAGINAW ARTS AND SCIENCES ACADEMY PICTURED AT THE 2025 NICKLESS INNOVATION AWARD COMPETITION. (COURTESY OF SAGINAW ARTS & SCIENCES ACADEMY)

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — High school students from across the Great Lakes Bay Region are preparing to compete April 25 at Saginaw Valley State University in the A.H. Nickless Innovation Award, a regional STEM competition that gives students a chance to present solutions to real-world problems while competing for scholarships and school grants.

The 2025-26 competition includes 20 teams from five schools: Dow High School, Freeland High School, John Glenn

High School, Midland High School and Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy. Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy will send 13 teams, while Dow has two, Freeland has three, and John Glenn and Midland High each have one. The event is open to students ages 13 to 18 from Bay, Midland, Saginaw and Tuscola counties.

The competition is designed to encourage students to work in teams, think creatively and build projects around topics such as alternative energy, health care, science, technology and life sciences. In the first phase, teams identified a problem and submit-

ted a two-page abstract outlining a proposed solution. Teams that advanced to Phase Two each received a \$1,000 grant to continue research and develop a more detailed project before final presentations later this month.

On competition day, teams will present their work publicly at SVSU, where judges will select the top three entries. First place carries up to five \$5,000 scholarships for student team members and a \$20,000 STEM education grant for the winning school. Second place includes up to five \$2,500 scholarships and a \$10,000 school grant. Third place includes up to five \$1,000

scholarships and a \$5,000 school grant. Altogether, as much as \$77,500 is available this year.

This year marks the 13th year of the Nickless competition. Since the first competition in 2013-14, organizers say \$763,500 has been awarded in student scholarships and STEM education grants, with more than 550 students taking part in nearly 180 Phase Two projects. For students in the Great Lakes Bay Region, the event remains one of the most substantial local opportunities to turn classroom science and engineering into scholarship support and public recognition.

TEMPLE  
ARTS

SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS  
THE TEMPLE THEATRE

YOUTH

ARTS

*Festival* 2026

WHERE WONDER GROWS

**MAY 7 | THEATRE + FILM NIGHT**  
**@ THE TEMPLE THEATRE**

**MAY 9 | MUSIC + VISUAL ARTS DAY**  
**@ THE SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS**

**FULL INFO AND SCHEDULE AT**  
**SAGINAWARTMUSEUM.ORG**



# United We Go opens casting for 2026 youth fashion show in Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — United We Go is accepting applications for youth ages 4 to 17 for its fourth annual I AM Youth Fashion Show, a Great Lakes Bay Region program that blends fashion, creative expression and confidence-building for children and teens. The casting call is scheduled for noon to 2 p.m. April 25 at CMURC Saginaw, 203 Washington Ave., Suite 206. The application deadline is April 24, and the fashion show is set for July 12.

The 2026 program centers on a new “I AM” series built around five statements: “I AM Creative,” “I AM Strong,” “I AM Worthy,” “I AM Important” and “I AM Resilient.” United We Go says the program is designed to help young people reflect on identity, build self-confidence and express themselves in a supportive setting. No prior modeling experience is required.

Organizers describe the fashion show as more than a runway event. Selected participants will take part in two to three training sessions and a full rehearsal before the July show, with instruction focused on runway confidence, posture, self-expression, communication, stage presence, teamwork and collaboration. The program is open to young people from across the Great Lakes Bay Region.

The fashion show is part of United We Go’s broader youth empowerment work in Mid-Michigan. On its website, the nonprofit says the I AM Youth initiative has grown from a single-day event into a broader program that includes empowerment workshops, storytelling, mentorship and community partnerships. United We Go’s 2025 event in Bay City featured 54 youth models ages 4 to 17, fol-

**4th Annual Youth Fashion Show**

**YOUTH MODELS**  
AGE 4-17 YEARS

# Casting Call

2026 I AM SERIES  
I AM CREATIVE, I AM STRONG, I AM WORTHY,  
I AM IMPORTANT, I AM RESILIENT  
WHAT IS YOUR I AM STATEMENT?

SAGINAW CMURC  
203 WASHINGTON AVE, SUITE 206

**2026**  
SAT 12PM -2PM  
APRIL 25TH

SCAN TO APPLY

WWW.UNITEDWEGO.ORG  
INFO@UNITEDWEGO.ORG

**I AM**  
**YOUTH**  
Fashion Show

UNITED WE GO 4TH ANNUAL YOUTH FASHION SHOW FLYER

lowing earlier shows that also expanded in participation and community reach.

A related wearable art workshop tied to the 2026 fashion show is also planned in Saginaw. The two-session workshop, led by multimedia artist Allise Noble, is scheduled for April 24

and May 8 at the same Washington Avenue location. Participants will create personalized fashion pieces and will have the opportunity to showcase that work at the I AM Youth Fashion Show.

United We Go, which recently marked its third anniversary, describes its mission as youth em-

powerment, art and community engagement across Mid-Michigan. For families in Saginaw, Bay, Midland and surrounding counties, the upcoming casting call offers another entry point into a program built around youth voice, representation and leadership development.

 **BEAUTI N BRAID**  
**BNB ACADEMY**

**Crowned Jr.™**

**BRAID PROGRAM** for Beginners



**3605 Davenport Ave.**  
**Saginaw, MI 48602**

- 6 Weeks of Hands-On Training**
- Braiding Techniques
  - Natural Hair Care
  - Confidence & Creativity

**Starts**  
**April 21**

(Tuesdays & Thursdays)

**Enroll Now – Classes Fill Fast!**

Flexible Payment Options Available

[www.beautinbraidacademy.com](http://www.beautinbraidacademy.com)  
989.207.3665

Sponsored by



**\*Only 15 seats available**

**Ages 8-16**



Scan to Register Now



# Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE

## Latino health and resource fair planned in Saginaw for May 9

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — A free Latino Health & Resource Fair is scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2026, at Thompson Middle School in Saginaw, offering health screenings, community resource information and educational sessions focused on end-of-life planning and doula services.

The event is set for noon to 3:30 p.m. at the school, 3021 Court St. Doors open at noon, followed by a welcome at 12:15 p.m. and programming beginning at 12:30 p.m., according to event materials provided to The Michigan Banner. The fair is open to the public.

The program is expected to include no-cost screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index and blood glucose, along with community resource tables from local organizations. A presentation titled “End of Life in the Latino Community: What You Need to Know — Honoring Your Wishes” is scheduled to be led by Dr. Jennifer Romeu. Another portion of the event will highlight doula care, with breakout sessions planned during the afternoon.

The fair continues a pattern of Latino-focused public health outreach in Saginaw. A 2025 Latino resource fair organized through BWell Saginaw and community partners centered on heart disease and stroke prevention, with free screenings and health education for residents. BWell Saginaw describes its broader work as focused on chronic disease, mental health and pregnancy and infant health in a county it says ranks among the least healthy in Michigan.

That outreach carries particu-

**LATINO HEALTH & RESOURCE FAIR**

**SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2026**  
12NOON—3:30PM

**THOMPSON MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
3021 COURT ST. | SAGINAW

DOORS OPEN/REGISTRATION: 12NOON  
Welcome: 12:15pm  
PROGRAM: 12:30PM  
HEALTH SCREENINGS/VENDORS: 1:30PM-3:30PM

**Health Screenings**  
At no cost to anyone.  
(BP, Cholesterol, BMI, Blood Glucose/Sugar)

**END OF LIFE IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY**  
What You Need to Know—Honoring Your Wishes  
Dr. Jennifer Romeu

**Community Resources**  
Local organizations will be onsite to discuss their services.

**PROMOTING HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR BIRTHING PEOPLE THROUGH DOULA SERVICES**

- Learn about the benefits of Doula Care
- Breakout sessions: 1:45pm, 2:15pm, 2:45pm
- Get your questions answered

**EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**  
Snacks and refreshments for all who attend. Free Chair Massages and Yoga. Prizes, Giveaways, and more!

For more information or to participate as a vendor, call Catherine Martinez at (989) 393-4231.

LATINO HEALTH AND RESOURCE FAIR FLYER

lar relevance in Saginaw County, where Hispanic or Latino residents make up 9.4% of the population, according to U.S. Census Bureau data. Federal health data also show high rates of hypertension among Hispanic adults, underscoring the value of free screenings and prevention-focused events in communities

working to reduce chronic disease risks.

The event flyer lists community partners including BWell Saginaw, the Center for Child Justice, Child & Family Services of Saginaw, CMU Health Street Medicine, East Side Peace Center, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers, MiGente, Premier Yoga &

Wellness Studio, Saginaw County Health Department, Saginaw Public Schools, STRIVE and the MAC Center.

Organizers are also inviting vendors to participate. Event materials direct those seeking more information or vendor details to contact Catherine Martinez at 989-393-4231.

THE LATINO BANNER IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY GREAT LAKES BAY HEALTH CENTERS



# LATINO LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY DAY



**APRIL 30 | 9 AM**  
**LANSING**

REGISTRATION:  
  
[BIT.LY/LLAD2026](https://bit.ly/LLAD2026)



 510 W Ottawa St,  
Lansing, MI 48933

# Saginaw LLEAD

May 2026  
Monthly Meeting



Inviting ALL Hispanic Leaders & the General Public!



**Guest Speaker**  
Delta College's Very Own  
**Chris DeEulis**  
Director of Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Delta College (BEDI)

- Seeking feedback from the Hispanic community as Delta wants to ensure their desire to continue their strong relationship with the Hispanic community

 Delta College  
Downtown Saginaw Center  
319 E Genesee Ave.  
Saginaw, MI 48607

 **Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026**  
6:00PM-7:30PM  
**FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED FROM T&T**

 **Delta College**  
Belonging, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion




 PRESENTS

## Rising up the Next Generation

OF DEBORAH'S, ESTHERS, HANNAH'S, & MIRIAMS

Speakers:

 CHERIE BENAVIDEZ	 RIKKI TH GUTIERREZ	 JESSICA BENAVIDEZ	 ANGELICA GARCIA	 ANITA MARTINEZ
---	---	--	--	--

*"Even when I am old and gray, O God, do not abandon me, until I tell the next generation about your strength, and those coming after me about your power."*  
Psalms 71:18

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026**  
**10AM-4PM**  
**(LUNCH INCLUDED)**

Praise & Worship: ANITA MARTINEZ  
Master of Ceremony: PASTOR ERLINDA MARTINEZ

708 W GENESEE RD SAGINAW, MI 48602

SAVE THE DATE

# 4TH ANNUAL K?ONDA!

# Cinco de Mayo CELEBRATION

**TUESDAY, MAY 5TH 2026**

SVRC MARKETPLACE OUTDOOR PAVILION  
203 S. WASHINGTON AVE., SAGINAW, MICHIGAN

ENTERTAINMENT STARTING AT  
5:30 PM UNTIL 9:00 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT MIGUEL: 989-332-1107  
VENDOR SETUP AT 3:00 PM

**MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!**

# Diocese of Saginaw opens new Tri-Cities migrant pantry donation site at Center for Ministry



UDIOCESE OF SAGINAW CENTER FOR MINISTRY, 5802 WEISS ST.

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Diocesan Migrant Pantry has established a new Tri-Cities donation location inside the Diocese of Saginaw’s Center for Ministry, with donations in Saginaw set to begin the week of April 27.

The new site is at the Diocese of Saginaw’s Center for Ministry, 5802 Weiss St., Door No. 18, in Saginaw. Organizers are asking residents to call before making plans to drop off food, clothing or other donations.

The Saginaw Migrant Pantry phone number is 989-294-2801.

The new Saginaw site expands donation access in the Tri-Cities area as the diocese continues its migrant ministry work serving farmworkers and their families. Diocese materials call for donations of pantry staples, clothing suitable for field work, diapers, toiletries and cleaning supplies, with white flour, shortening and baking powder listed among the high-demand items.

The Diocese of Saginaw’s Office of Multicultural Ministry has long organized support for migrant farmworkers across the region. On its ministry page, the diocese highlights its migrant pantry work and volunteer outreach, and its recent farmworker donation campaign urged residents to support pantry efforts for workers already in Michigan and those arriving for the agricultural season.

The new location does not change the work of Our Lady Consolata Parish in Gagetown, which will continue operating its migrant pantry on the Thumb side of the diocese. Diocese information has also identified Bay City and Gagetown as longstanding pantry support points for migrant ministry.

Residents interested in volunteering with Migrant Ministry can contact Maria Coss in the Mission Office at 989-797-6646 or Deacon Librado Gayton at 989-797-6604.

The pantry drive reflects a broader regional effort to sup-

port migrant farmworker families as planting and harvest work ramps up across Mid-Michigan. With the Saginaw donation site

now based at the Center for Ministry, organizers are asking donors to coordinate drop-off plans in advance as collections begin.



**Catholic Diocese of SAGINAW**  
Office of Multicultural Ministry

### Help us support Migrant Farmworkers

Together, we can build up the kingdom of God!

**How You Can Help:**

Donate:

- Drop off food items
- Drop off clothing
- Send monetary donations

to:

Catholic Diocese of Saginaw  
Office of Multicultural Ministry  
5800 Weiss Street  
Saginaw, MI 48603  
Memo line: "Migrant Ministry"

Donations will be accepted beginning the week of April 27th.

We need your prayers & support!

Your donations help to provide for those who need it most.

**Family Clothing:**

- Long Sleeve Shirts
- Jeans/Workpants
- Shoes & Socks
- Children’s Clothing (all sizes)
- Baby Diapers (Pampers, etc.)

Clothing suitable for work in the fields

**Food Items:**

- White Flour\*
- Shortening\*
- Baking Powder\*
- Cooking Oil
- Corn
- Pinto Beans
- Rice
- Cereal
- Salt & Black Pepper
- Toiletries
- Cleaning Supplies
- Peanut Butter & Jelly

(\*high demand items)

**UDIOCESE OF SAGINAW**  
Migrant Pantry  
989-294-2801

**Drop Off Location:**  
Center for Ministry  
5800 Weiss St., Door #18  
Saginaw, MI 48603

MIGRANT PANTRY FLYER

301 E. GENESEE AVE. SUITE 201, SAGINAW MI 48607 | 989-249-3882 | MICHIGANBANNER.ORG



It Matters Where  
You Buy Your Car



Make your next deal with

# Louis Garcia

Sales Associate • Used Car Sales

**Contact:**

(989) 770-3078

[l.garcia@garberbuick.com](mailto:l.garcia@garberbuick.com)



5925 STATE ST, SAGINAW, MI 48603  
SALES: 989-683-4697

# 47th annual Cinco de Mayo celebration set for May 2 in Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Saginaw's 47th annual Cinco de Mayo celebration will be held Saturday, May 2, with a downtown parade in the morning, a festival at Jolt Credit Union Event Park from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and an evening Gran Baile at Union Civica Hall.

The parade will begin at 10:30 a.m. and follow North Michigan Avenue and West Genesee Avenue from Court Street to Saginaw United High School, according to the City of Saginaw calendar.

The festival will take place at Jolt Credit Union Event Park, 300 Johnson St. Admission is \$5, and children 5 and younger will be admitted free. Live entertainment will include Los Estrellas de Oro, Conjunto GZ, Grupo Nzeo, DJ El Boogie and Ballet Folklórico de Detroit. Food trucks, bounce houses, folkloric dancers and merchandise vendors are also part of the day's lineup. The performance and admission details are from the event flyer provided to The Michigan Banner. The date, location and festival hours are confirmed on the venue calendar.

The evening celebration will continue at Union Civica Hall, 2715 Wadsworth Road. Doors will open at 7 p.m., dancing will begin at 8 p.m., and Motivo will headline the Gran Baile. Advance tickets are \$20, and tickets at the door are \$25. The dance details are listed on the Unión Cívica Mexicana Facebook page and on the event flyer provided to The Michigan Banner.

Cinco de Mayo commemorates Mexico's victory over French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. It is not Mexico's Independence Day, which is observed Sept. 16.

SAGINAW CINCO DE MAYO FLYER

In Saginaw, the annual celebration has become one of the region's most established Latino

cultural events, bringing the parade, music, dancing and food into the city's downtown core

each spring. La Unión Cívica Mexicana identifies this year's event as the 47th annual festival.

# Hispanic students post major gains in AP participation in Michigan



STUDENTS (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Hispanic students in Michigan have posted some of the state's strongest long-term gains in Advanced Placement participation, a trend that points to broader access to college-level coursework but also leaves room for continued growth in opportunity and support.

A 2026 Michigan Merit Curriculum legislative report found the 10-year growth in the percentage of Hispanic or Latino students in grades 10, 11 and 12 who took AP exams in Michigan reached 173%, compared with 77% nationally. The same report found participation by Hispanic students increased 3.2% over the previous year, while the number scoring 3 or higher on an AP exam rose 12.5%.

State education data put

those gains in concrete terms. In 2025, 5,233 Hispanic or Latino students in Michigan took at least one AP exam, up from 5,072 the year before. The number of Hispanic students scoring 3, 4 or 5 rose from 2,976 to 3,348. A score of 3 or above often qualifies a student for college credit, making the increase significant both academically and financially for families.

The Hispanic gains came during a record-setting year for AP in Michigan overall. The Michigan Department of Education reported that 65,906 students took at least one AP exam in 2025, a 4.5% increase from 2024. Students took 118,219 AP exams, and 49,708 students earned scores of 3, 4 or 5, both statewide records.

The trend matters beyond test-taking. AP courses are one of the main ways Michigan students can access college-level work while still in high school.

The state ties AP to broader goals around expanding secondary learning opportunities and increasing high school completion. Higher participation and stronger scores among Hispanic students suggest more students are entering rigorous coursework that can improve college readiness and reduce future tuition costs through earned credit.

The gains also come as Michigan's Hispanic population continues to grow. State labor market analysis found Michigan's Hispanic or Latino population increased 28.6% between 2013 and 2023, reaching nearly 600,000 residents. That growth makes educational attainment and access to advanced coursework an increasingly important issue for districts, colleges and employers across the state.

Even with the progress, the data point to a continuing need to widen access. Hispanic resi-

dents made up about 6% of Michigan's population in recent Census and state analyses, while the state's AP data show thousands of students are participating but still represent a relatively modest share of total AP test takers. Sustaining the recent growth will likely depend on whether schools continue expanding awareness, advising and course access in communities that have historically been underrepresented in advanced coursework.

For families in places such as Flint, Saginaw, Bay City and Lansing, the AP gains offer a measurable sign that more Hispanic students are reaching college-level academic opportunities in high school. The next question is whether that growth can continue across more districts and translate into stronger college completion and career outcomes statewide.

## COMMUNITY

# Celebrity basketball fundraiser in Saginaw to support mental health awareness

MY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Great Lakes Bay Area Celebrity Game will return to Saginaw on Sunday, April 19, raising money for a mid-Michigan nonprofit focused on mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

The event is scheduled for 2 p.m. at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, 2777 Hardin St. in Saginaw. Proceeds will benefit The B#4 Foundation, a nonprofit founded in 2023 in honor of Braden “Brady” Hessbrook. The foundation centers its work on mental health education, outreach, advocacy and community service.

This year’s fundraiser places mental health and suicide prevention at the center of a community event that has become a familiar fixture in the region. The celebrity game began in 2014 as a season-ending event for the Tri-City WELS Men’s Basketball League and added a charitable mission in 2015. Since then, it has raised more than \$32,000 for causes across the Great Lakes Bay area. The event now continues under the direction of coordinator Michael Priebe and the Great Lakes Bay Area Celebrity Game name.

The 2026 game will feature teams captained by Rachel Geddes of 96 WHNN and Matt Bingham of Z93. Scheduled participants include former world champion boxer Anthony Dirrell, former University of Michigan and NFL running back Fitzgerald Toussaint, Detroit Catholic Central coach and former Notre Dame standout Tory Jackson, WNEM Chief Meteorologist Chris Easlick, WNEM Sports Di-

2026 GREAT LAKES BAY AREA CELEBRITY GAME FLYER

rector Mark Pearson and former Saginaw Spirit goaltender Andrew Oke.

In addition to the game, the event will include a raffle and a silent auction featuring sports memorabilia. Tickets and event information are available through the Great Lakes Bay

Area Celebrity Game website and its Eventbrite ticket page.

The B#4 Foundation’s message — “B4 you give up hope, reach out — your life matters” — gives the fundraiser a purpose beyond entertainment. In a region where mental health remains an urgent public issue for

young people and families, the event blends visibility, fundraising and community presence in one afternoon gathering. That combination has helped the celebrity game grow from a local exhibition into a recurring fundraiser with a broader public-health message.

# Tornadoes damage property in Saginaw County



STOCK IMAGE OF DAMAGE FROM A FLOOD (FILE PHOTO)

## BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Two tornadoes touched down in Saginaw County late Tuesday night, damaging homes, barns and outbuildings in Albee Township and near Bridgeport as residents began cleanup across parts of the county Wednesday.

The more damaging storm was an EF-1 tornado in Albee Township. It touched down at 11:53 p.m. April 14 near West Birch Run and Amman roads, tracked northeast for nearly 4

miles and lifted at 11:58 p.m. near Fosters. Peak winds reached 105 mph, and the tornado's maximum width was 880 yards.

The heaviest damage was concentrated along Bishop Road near Alicia Road, where multiple pine and hardwood trees were snapped or uprooted, two outbuildings were destroyed, several silos were knocked down and at least four homes were damaged, including one that lost most of its roof. In Albee Township alone, nine properties had structures damaged or destroyed.

A second tornado, rated

EF-0, touched down at 12:06 a.m. April 15 near Roedel and South Reimer roads northwest of Bridgeport. It remained on the ground for about two minutes and traveled roughly a half-mile before lifting south of Roedel Road between South Reimer and Maple roads. Peak winds were estimated at 80 mph. Two barns lost most of their roofing, siding was torn from a nearby house, and trees were uprooted or heavily damaged.

No deaths or injuries were reported from either tornado. In Albee Township, residents spent

Wednesday sorting through debris and assessing what could be repaired or rebuilt. The fire chief directed anyone needing assistance to contact the township fire department for help connecting with the Red Cross.

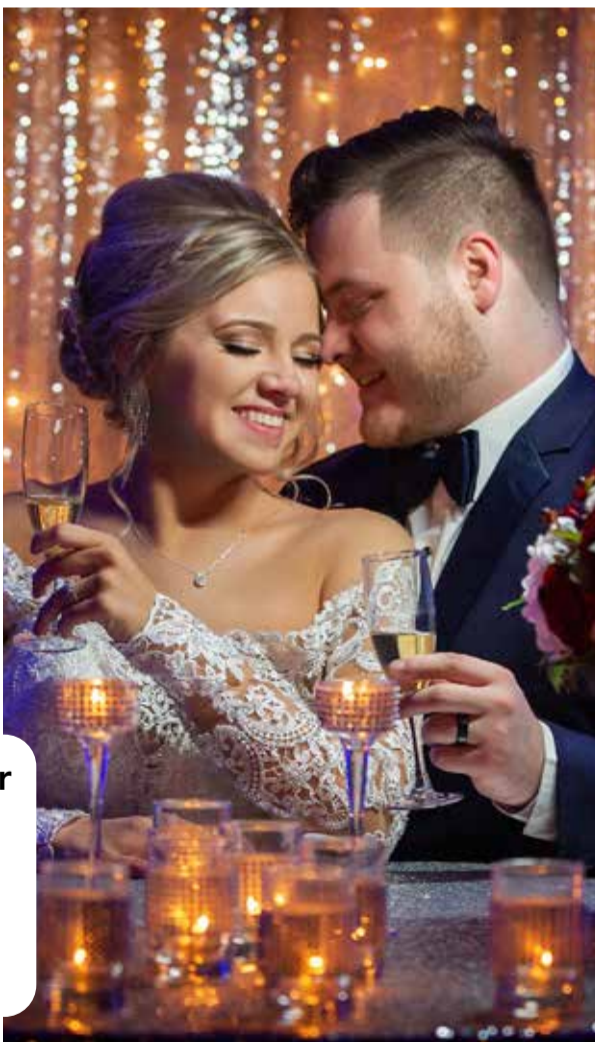
The storms were part of a broader severe weather system that swept across Michigan. On Wednesday, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency in 32 counties as flooding, straight-line winds and tornado damage affected communities across the state.

COMMUNITY

### Business & community events *beyond* compare.

When you choose HORIZONS, our team will customize the details for your business function to fit your unique needs and budget. Your event coordinator will be with you from start to finish, helping plan for every eventuality, and your personal banquet manager will be on hand during the event to ensure its success.

Get in touch with one of our event coordinators today!



Book a tour today!

### *Spectacular* weddings. Surprisingly affordable.

Your special day deserves to be everything you've always imagined. At HORIZONS, our experienced coordinators take care of all of the details to help plan the wedding of your dreams.

Complimentary to all weddings at HORIZONS:

- › Professional event planning
- › Beautifully accented ballrooms
- › White knee-length linen and napkins
- › China, silver and stemware
- › Wedding cake cutting and serving
- › Ballroom setup and cleanup
- › On-site security and ample free parking

#### More than a venue ... your planning partner.

HORIZONS is much more than a venue ... we're your dream wedding planning partner. Our experienced in-house hospitality professionals will create an exceptional experience for you and your guests – with stunning linen and floral designs, our renowned cuisine and exceptional service.

Whether you envision an intimate affair or an elaborate, themed event, we've done it all. Our unique, versatile facility features a dozen distinct venues spread over 40,000 square feet – offering infinite configurations to take you and your guests from ceremony to cocktail hour to the reception. Off-site catering is also available.

HORIZONS  
ART OF HOSPITALITY

HORIZONS Conference Center  
6200 State Street | Saginaw, Michigan

(989) 799-4122 | horizonscenter.com  
weddings@horizonscenter.com

@horizonscenter  
 @HORIZONSconfctr

# Saginaw Art Museum exhibition centers dignity and portraiture in Richard Lewis show

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Saginaw Art Museum & Gardens is presenting “The Price of the Ticket,” a Richard Lewis exhibition that places portraiture at the center of a quiet, direct conversation about presence, dignity and recognition. The show opened Feb. 5 and continues through April 25 at the museum, 1126 N. Michigan Ave.

The exhibition features portraits built around stillness rather than spectacle. Museum materials describe Lewis’ compositions as restrained and intentional, with each figure given room to occupy the canvas without distraction. That approach gives the show a reflective tone, asking viewers to slow down and meet each subject on human terms.

“The Price of the Ticket” is organized around the idea of mutual recognition. The museum describes the work as an exchange in which seeing another person fully becomes its own act of acknowledgment. Instead of leaning on elaborate symbolism, the paintings rely on the human face, posture and gaze to carry emotional and social weight.

Lewis brings a long career in figurative art to the Saginaw show. Biographical materials published by arts organizations say he was born in Detroit in 1966, graduated from Cass Technical High School, earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the College for Creative Studies and later received a master’s degree from the Yale School of Art. His work has also been recognized through Kresge Arts in Detroit, which describes a practice rooted in careful attention to faces and interior life.

The Saginaw exhibition is not limited to wall text and gallery viewing. The museum hosted an opening reception Feb. 5 and scheduled an artist talk April 9 moderated by artist Mario Moore. Event materials de-

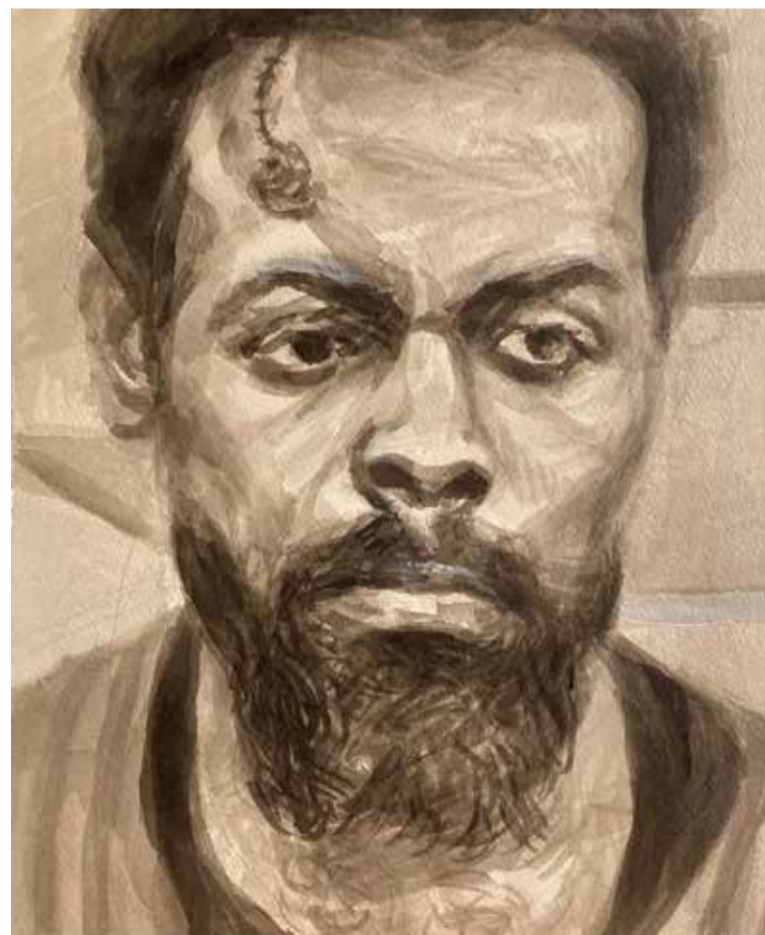


RICHARD LEWIS SPEAKS AT THE SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS ABOUT HIS EXHIBITION, “THE PRICE OF THE TICKET,” WHICH REMAINS ON DISPLAY THROUGH APRIL 25. (COURTESY OF THE SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS)

scribe that talk as a discussion of the ideas behind the portraits and Lewis’ focus on presence, stillness and close observation.

The show arrives as part of the museum’s broader 2026 exhibition calendar, where it appears alongside “It’s All Connected” by Mark Piotrowski and ahead of later programming including “Warhol and the Image Machine.” Within that lineup, Lewis’ exhibition offers a more intimate experience, one grounded in the face-to-face power of portrait painting.

For Saginaw audiences, the exhibition adds a contemporary portrait show by a Detroit artist whose work treats representation as something serious and unsentimental. In a museum setting often shaped by movement and event traffic, “The Price of the Ticket” asks for a different kind of attention: patient looking, sustained reflection and a willingness to encounter each subject as fully human. That reading is supported by the museum’s curatorial description and the framing of the artist talk.



SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS  
THE PRICE RICHARD  
OF THE TICKET LEWIS  
FEBRUARY 5 - APRIL 25, 2026



# HEALTHFORMATION 4 U

PRESENTS

9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# Smooth JAZZ -n- R&B

Benefit Concert for Sickle Cell

Featuring the  
Southern Soul Sounds of

*Ghost Ghoston*

SUNDAY

MAY 10, 2026

MOTHER'S DAY EVENT

DOORS OPEN @ 3PM • DINNER STARTS @ 4PM • SHOW STARTS @ 5PM

- Dance Floor • Cash Bar • Raffles & Giveaways
- Scholarship Presentation • Western Attire Welcome

**\$60**  
DONATION  
*(\$65 at the door)*

HORIZONS CONFERENCE CENTER

6200 STATE ST • SAGINAW, MI 48603

— FOR TICKETS CALL —

LEON 989-213-1972 • JAMES 989-992-5309 • BETTY 989-714-9046

ZELLE: healthformation u • CASH APP: \$Healthformation4u

## HEALTH

## CMU Health partnership receives \$60,000 to expand mental health programs in Midland County



CMU HEALTH

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Great Lakes Bay Region Mental Health Partnership at CMU Health has received \$60,000 in grant funding from the Midland Area Community Foundation to expand mental health programs and support services in Midland County.

The funding includes two grants awarded through the foundation's Caring for Our People focus area. A \$10,000 grant from the Midland Area Community Foundation Youth Action Council will support two Youth Mental Health First Aid training sessions in Midland County. A separate \$50,000 award will

support efforts to reduce mental health stigma, expand workplace and youth mental health programs, and improve access to mental health providers in the county.

"This is a meaningful investment in both our youth and the broader workforce as we work to break down the stigma surrounding mental health, which is often the most significant barrier preventing people from seeking support," said Dallas Rau, director of the Great Lakes Bay Region Mental Health Partnership at CMU Health.

Youth Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based curriculum developed by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. The program trains parents,

caregivers, teachers, school staff, neighbors, health and human service workers, and other adults to recognize and respond when a young person ages 12 to 18 is facing a mental health or addiction challenge or is in crisis.

Two training sessions are scheduled at the Delta College Downtown Midland Center. The first will be held April 29 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The second is scheduled for May 27 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The larger grant will help sustain the partnership's core strategies in Midland County by supporting staffing, outreach, administrative work and program coordination. The funding is intended to maintain existing efforts while expanding the part-

nership's reach.

"We're incredibly proud of the leadership and passion Dallas has demonstrated," said Dr. Abishek Bala, a child and adolescent psychiatrist at CMU Health. "Through the programming from GLBRMHP at CMU Health, this award empowers us to reach and significantly impact thousands of individuals across Midland County."

The Midland Area Community Foundation supports charitable giving and community initiatives aimed at long-term improvement and resident wellbeing across the region.

For more information about the Great Lakes Bay Region Mental Health Partnership, contact Rau at [rau1d@cmich.edu](mailto:rau1d@cmich.edu).

## HEALTH

# Covenant breaks ground on new orthopedic center in Saginaw Township



COVENANT HEALTHCARE LEADERS, STAFF, PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS GATHER FOR A GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, FOR A NEW ORTHOPEDIC FACILITY PLANNED ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE HEALTH SYSTEM'S MACKINAW CAMPUS IN SAGINAW TOWNSHIP. THE 26,000-SQUARE-FOOT PROJECT IS EXPECTED TO OPEN IN SUMMER 2027. (COURTESY)

## BY MB STAFF

Covenant HealthCare broke ground Wednesday, April 8, on a new orthopedic facility in Saginaw Township, a project aimed at expanding and centralizing outpatient bone and joint care.

The 26,000-square-foot building will rise on the west side

of Covenant HealthCare's Mackinaw Campus and is expected to house a broad range of outpatient orthopedic services under one roof. The facility also will serve as the home base for one of the region's most established orthopedic teams.

The project carries an estimated cost of \$25 million, with completion and opening targeted

for summer 2027.

A key component of the new center will be Covenant HealthCare OrthoExpress, an orthopedic-focused urgent care service that remains uncommon in the region.

Beth Charlton, Covenant HealthCare's president and CEO, said the investment comes at a time when health systems con-

tinue to face financial pressure, but she framed the project as a necessary step to meet the region's health care needs.

Charlton said consolidating the two existing orthopedic locations into one new facility also will allow Covenant to repurpose the space currently occupied by those practices for other growing services.

## HEALTH

# Public health summit set for May 1 in Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The 2026 BWELL Public Health Summit will return to downtown Saginaw on Friday, May 1, with a full-day program at the Temple Theatre focused on community health, Medicaid policy, behavioral health, chronic disease, and maternal and child health. The event includes two tracks: a free community track and a paid continuing medical education track for health care providers.

The summit is scheduled from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Temple Theatre, 201 N. Washington Ave. Registration is available through BWELL Saginaw's event page and online registration form. More information is posted on the BWELL Saginaw website, and registration is available through its event form.

Admission is free for residents and other non-provider attendees. Health care providers seeking continuing medical education can register for \$100 and receive up to 5.25 CME credits.

The morning program opens with registration and breakfast, followed by featured sessions from Christina Harrington, health officer for the Saginaw County Health Department, Natasha Bagdasarian, Michigan's chief medical executive, Dr. Delicia Pruitt, medical director for the Saginaw County Health Department and interim executive director of CMU Medical Education Partners, and Dr. Samuel Shaheen, president and CEO of Shaheen Development. Their sessions focus on community health transformation, Medicaid policy changes and health outcomes, and the role of collaboration in improving public health.

Afternoon breakout sessions are scheduled in four topic areas: community health, women and children's health, behavioral



**2026 BWELL Public Health SUMMIT**

**Transforming Community Health**

**REGISTER**

Scan the QR code or visit <https://pci.jotform.com/form/260335384389162>

**May 1, 7:30am-4pm**  
Temple Theatre

**Christina Harrington, MPH, Health Officer, Saginaw County Health Department**  
From Assessment to Impact: Our Strategy for Community Health Transformation

**Natasha Bagdasarian, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Executive for the State of Michigan**  
**Delicia Pruitt, MD, MPH, FAAFP, Medical Director, Saginaw County Health Department, Interim Chief Executive Director, CMU Medical Education Partners**  
Where Policy Meets Real Life: A Frank Conversation About Medicaid Changes and How They Will Impact Our Community

**Samuel Shaheen, MD, President and CEO, Shaheen Development**  
Stronger Together: How Community Collaboration Impacts Health Outcomes

2026 BWELL PUBLIC HEALTH SUMMIT FLYER (COURTESY)

health and substance use, and obesity and chronic disease. The program includes presentations on implicit bias in health care, immunization guidance, infant mortality, autism care, substance use disorder treatment, recovery support, obesity care, and pediatric obesity interventions.

BWELL Saginaw is a cross-sector community health partnership anchored by the Saginaw County Health Department and regional partners including

MyMichigan Health, CMU Medical Education Partners, Covenant HealthCare, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers, HealthSource Saginaw, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services-Saginaw, the Saginaw Community Foundation, Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority, Saginaw Intermediate School District, United Way of Saginaw County, and Saginaw Valley State University. The coalition uses community health

assessment data to guide county-wide improvement efforts.

The summit is designed to connect residents, providers, and institutions around practical responses to Saginaw County's most pressing health concerns. Temple Theatre, one of downtown Saginaw's best-known historic venues, will host the event. Questions can be directed to BWELL Saginaw at [bwellsaginawcountymi.gov](mailto:bwellsaginawcountymi.gov).

HEALTH

# Michigan adds second licensed dental therapist

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan has licensed its second dental therapist as the state works to expand routine dental care in communities where access remains limited.

Jamie Toney received her license in February and is practicing at The Wellness Plan Medical Center in metro Detroit. Her licensure follows Dana Obey, who provides dental therapy services in the Upper Peninsula, giving Michigan two licensed dental therapists serving patients in different regions of the state.

Dental therapists are licensed oral health providers who work under a dentist's supervision and perform routine services such as

exams, cleanings and fillings. Because the role focuses on a narrower range of procedures, the training path is shorter and less expensive than traditional dental school, making it one option for building the dental workforce more quickly.

The shortage is significant across Michigan. More than 1.5 million residents live in federally designated dental shortage areas, where finding timely care can be difficult. Those gaps affect children, seniors, low-income families, pregnant women, people with disabilities and rural residents.

Dental therapists can practice in private offices as well as schools, mobile clinics and community health centers, helping

bring care closer to patients who might otherwise face long waits or limited treatment options. The profession has existed internationally for more than 100 years and is now authorized in at least 14 states.

Michigan is also working to grow the pipeline for future providers. Ferris State University is developing the state's first dental therapy training program, with Dr. Deborah Brown, chief executive officer of My Community Dental Centers, selected to lead the effort. The state is supporting



that work through a federal oral health workforce grant.

The addition of a second licensed dental therapist marks another step in Michigan's effort to strengthen its oral health workforce and improve access to care in underserved communities across the state.

**THE REGION'S  
CANCER CARE  
LEADER**

**Next generation cancer treatments with next level patient care.**

When it comes to cancer treatment, more people choose Covenant HealthCare. Our patient experience is ranked in the top 10% nationally. As the region's cancer care leader, our team of specialists are always looking ahead, so you can put cancer behind you. Choose extraordinary. Choose Covenant HealthCare.

Learn more at [CovenantCancerCare.com](http://CovenantCancerCare.com)

**COVENANT**  
HealthCare

Extraordinary care for every generation.

## EDUCATION

# Delta College board moves to hire Michelle Allmendinger as next president

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Delta College's Board of Trustees voted 7-0 Tuesday to pursue a contract with Michelle Allmendinger to become the sixth president in the school's history, moving the Iowa community college administrator to the front of a search that began after President Michael Gavin announced his resignation last fall.

The vote authorizes the college to offer the job and begin contract negotiations with Allmendinger, who now serves as vice president of student affairs at Southeastern Community College in West Burlington, Iowa. Delta's published timeline lists July 1 as the tentative first day for the new president.

Allmendinger emerged from a finalist group that also included Reva Curry, Delta College's vice president of instruction and learning services, and Adam Cloutier, vice president of academics at Glen Oaks Community College and a Delta alumnus. Trustees narrowed the field after a national search that drew 63 applicants, cut to 10 candidates, then five finalists before two withdrew.

Board President Stacey L. Gannon described the selection process as thorough after the college completed finalist interviews last week. The search included trustee interviews, public forums and meetings with faculty, staff, students and community members, followed by feedback gathered from those sessions.

Trustees said Allmendinger stood out for her presence, com-



MICHELLE ALLMENDINGER

munication style and fit with the college's direction. Trustee Dianne M. Middleton said Allmendinger's demeanor impressed her and called her steady, approachable and capable of building on the sense of unity at Delta. Trustee Alexis Thomas said Allmendinger received strong feedback from faculty and staff and described her as believable, articulate and relatable.

Allmendinger was not present for Tuesday's vote. Trustees first ranked the three finalists using a point system before moving to discussion and a final vote. All but one of the seven trustees

present ranked Allmendinger first, leaving her as the leading candidate in the tally. Curry finished second in points. Trustees Michael Wood and Alexander Clark were absent.

A native of Moline, Illinois, Allmendinger brings a background that spans teaching, athletics and student affairs. She was a first-generation college student at Knox College, where she was a two-sport athlete and earned degrees in English and secondary education. She began her career as a high school English teacher and part-time college coach before moving into

full-time collegiate coaching. She later earned a master's degree in human kinetics from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a doctorate in higher education administration from Michigan State University. Her dissertation focused on ethics and decision-making in higher education administration.

Before joining Southeastern Community College in 2023, Allmendinger served as dean of student development at Clinton Community College in Iowa and earlier as athletics director and assistant dean of students at Scott Community College. During her Delta finalist interview, she described herself as a bridge builder and emphasized student success, collaboration and strategic planning.

Her selection comes during a leadership transition at Delta College. Gavin announced in September that he would step down, ending a four-year tenure. The board later chose Andrea Ursuy as interim president, with her service beginning in January.

Delta has had only five presidents since opening in 1961. Sam Marble served as the college's first president before leaving to become the founding president of Saginaw Valley State University. Don Carlyon led Delta from 1963 to 1992, followed by Peter Boyse from 1992 to 2005 and Jean Goodnow from 2005 to 2021. If contract talks are completed, Allmendinger would become the next leader of one of mid-Michigan's most important higher education institutions at a time when community colleges across the state are balancing enrollment, workforce training and long-term financial pressures.

## EDUCATION

# New Michigan report finds literacy coaches are improving classroom instruction



TUTOR WITH CHILD (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — A new Michigan report found that literacy coaches are helping elementary teachers strengthen reading instruction, adding evidence to a statewide push to improve early literacy in classrooms. The findings come from Michigan State University's Education Policy Innovation Collaborative, or EPIC, which examined coaching in 89 Michigan classrooms over three school years.

The study, titled *The Impact of Coaching on K-3 Literacy Instruction in Michigan*, drew on 318 hours of classroom observations, 1,330 coaching logs and interviews with 18 intermediate school district early literacy coaches. EPIC reported that

teachers who received coaching showed stronger research-aligned literacy instruction than teachers who did not.

The report adds weight to one of Michigan's main school-improvement strategies: investing in literacy coaches who work directly with teachers on classroom practice. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's office said the state has tripled the number of literacy coaches since she took office, and State Superintendent Glenn Maleyko called literacy the department's top priority.

Michigan's literacy work has taken on added urgency as the state tries to raise reading achievement and align instruction more closely with the science of reading. The Whitmer administration has tied literacy coaching to broader efforts that

also include teacher training and classroom materials designed to support evidence-based reading instruction.

For local districts in places such as Saginaw, Bay City and Flint, the report could have practical implications. Literacy coaches typically work behind the scenes, helping teachers improve lesson design, instructional routines and reading supports for younger students. EPIC's findings suggest those coaching relationships can translate into measurable classroom gains when they are clearly structured and aligned with research.

The state's emphasis on coaching also fits into a wider education picture in Michigan, where policymakers continue to focus on early reading as a foundation for long-term academic

success. Because the study centered on K-3 classrooms, the results speak most directly to the years when children are learning to read rather than reading to learn.

The report does not by itself solve Michigan's literacy challenges, but it gives the state new evidence that one of its major interventions is producing results inside classrooms. For schools still working to recover learning losses and raise reading performance, that makes literacy coaching more than a policy idea. It makes it a strategy with measurable backing. That final point is an inference based on the report's findings and the state's continued literacy investments.

# LET'S FIND OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS!



[www.sisd.cc](http://www.sisd.cc)

Know someone looking for their next opportunity? Saginaw ISD is **NOW HIRING** across all departments!

- competitive wages
- tuition reimbursement
- reduced childcare\*
- full benefits packages
- continued professional development

*\*For those that qualify through Tri-Share*



## EDUCATION

# What if a student is struggling in school?



BY CRAIG DOUGLAS

Three-quarters of the school year is in the books, and with nine weeks left, what can parents do if they have a child struggling in school?

There are many considerations on how to turn things around.

- First, focus on steady improvement rather than perfection. Start by identifying exactly where your child is struggling and prioritize the most important assignments or classes. Communicate with teachers to see what can still be completed or improved—many will help when effort is shown. Some teachers will grade heavily on improvement, turning a low grade into an acceptable one (what if an F could become a C?).
- Create an action plan that will include a simple daily routine for schoolwork. Look to break tasks into manageable pieces to build momentum. Encourage effort and progress instead of adding pressure, as confidence plays a big role in success. Use available supports like tutoring or after-school help when needed.
- Most importantly, keep perspective—finishing stronger, even in small ways, helps build confidence and prepares your child for a better start and finish next year.

**Resources:**

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/tips-reaching-out-to-parents-david-cutler>

<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/getting-derailed-parent-teacher-relationships-back-track>



## EDUCATION

# Saginaw Promise Changing Funding Options to Increase support to Scholars!



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES (COURTESY PHOTO)

Saginaw Promise, an economic initiative working to impact the future of Saginaw, its economy, and the lives of its students through information and scholarships for postsecondary education. Since 2012, the Saginaw Promise has awarded \$1,515,062 in scholarships to 804 scholars! Saginaw Promise Scholarship Applicants number 232 for the 2026/2027 academic year!

In 2026, the Saginaw Promise is increasing support to scholars as it can now fund “costs of attendance”, in addition to tuition and mandatory fees, the Saginaw Promise scholarship can now fund housing, books, sup-

plies, food, transportation etc. Funding “costs of attendance” will increase support and assistance to scholars as they pursue their educational goals and increase persistence and attainment rates.

Who is eligible for the Saginaw Promise scholarship? The Saginaw Promise Scholarship is a benefit and an incentive for children of families who live in and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone (comprised of the cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Kochville and that area of Buena Vista designated to the Saginaw Public School District). The organization’s goal is to impact the future of Saginaw by provid-

ing information and scholarships for postsecondary education to assist scholars to earn a program certificate or degree from a technical/trade school, community college, or university. The benefit of a postsecondary education will help retain and grow Saginaw’s population, which will support current businesses and attract new businesses with an educated workforce.

For Saginaw Promise Information or Questions: Visit [www.saginawpromise.org](http://www.saginawpromise.org) or email [dsanchez@saginawpromise.org](mailto:dsanchez@saginawpromise.org) or telephone (989) 607-3428.

SPONSORED CONTENT

## Support the Saginaw Promise 2026 Special events:

### “Swinging for the Promise” Golf Event

Saginaw Country Club  
Thursday, August 13, 2026  
10 AM

### “Power of a Promise” Luncheon

Horizons Conference Center  
Thursday, October 29, 2026  
11:30 AM

*\*Event details regarding golf registration, event tickets and sponsorship opportunities will soon be available for both events and included on the Saginaw Promise website.*

# NOW OPEN: Enrollment for NO-COST, High- Quality PreK for All



## APPLY NOW FOR THE 26-27 SCHOOL YEAR TO SECURE YOUR SPOT!

Open to children who will be four by December 1, 2026.

Thanks to **Michigan's PreK for All program**, participating PreK classrooms are available at **NO COST** to families with licensed teachers throughout Saginaw County.

### OPTIONS INCLUDE:

- Half-days or full-days
- Four- and five-day programs
- Extended day programs are available in some locations
- Transportation is available in some areas

Research shows participation in a quality PreK program **improves a child's emotional, social and intellectual skills** and helps ensure they are healthy and ready for kindergarten.\*

All Michigan 4-year-olds qualify for NO-COST, **high-quality** PreK with licensed teachers. While children from low-income families receive priority, this program is available to all Michigan families regardless of income.

*\*Administration for Children and Families: Children's Learning and Development Benefits from High-Quality Early Care and Education: A Summary of Evidence*



Visit [www.earlychildhood.sisd.cc](http://www.earlychildhood.sisd.cc) or call **989-752-2193** for more information and apply today!

## BUSINESS + FINANCE

# Faler Drugs closes in Saginaw after 164 years in business



FALER DRUGS, 1806 COURT ST #4040, SAGINAW

**BY MB STAFF**

SAGINAW, Mich. — Faler Drugs has closed in Saginaw, ending a business that dated to 1862 and had operated as a drugstore on Court Street since 1906. The longtime neighborhood pharmacy closed Friday, April 10.

The store's history stretched across generations. It began as a hardware and grocery business before becoming a pharmacy, and later became closely identi-

fied with the Faler and Wenzel families. Edward Wenzel worked at Faler Drugs for more than 60 years and owned and operated the store with his wife, Joyce.

In its final years, the business was run by siblings Michael Wenzel, Sandra Lieber and Kevin Wenzel, who continued operating the store after their parents' deaths. The decision to close came after years of running the family business and the mounting strain of managing an inde-

pendent pharmacy.

The closing marks the loss of one of Saginaw's oldest neighborhood businesses and another independent pharmacy in a market increasingly dominated by larger chains. For longtime customers, Faler Drugs was more than a place to fill prescriptions. It was a familiar stop where generations of residents knew the staff by name.

Kevin Wenzel plans to continue serving pharmacy custom-

ers at Mackinaw Street Pharmacy, offering some continuity for residents who relied on Faler Drugs. The Court Street property has not yet been listed for sale, though there has been interest in the building.

With the doors now closed, the end of Faler Drugs leaves behind a piece of Saginaw history — a business rooted in the Civil War era that remained part of daily life on the city's East Side for well over a century.

## BUSINESS + FINANCE

# GM to invest more than \$150 million in Saginaw plant for next-generation V-8 work



SAGINAW METAL CASTING OPERATIONS (COURTESY OF GM)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — General Motors plans to invest more than \$150 million in its Saginaw Metal Casting Operations to support production of sixth-generation V-8 engine blocks and cylinder heads for full-size pickup trucks, extending a major manufacturing role for the Saginaw plant as the company prepares its next engine program.

The investment will fund new equipment and tooling at the plant. GM tied the Saginaw project to its broader sixth-generation V-8 strategy, which already included a 2023 investment of \$579 million at Flint Engine Operations and \$216 million at Bay City GPS for related future V-8 production work.

The Saginaw announcement keeps the region at the center of GM's truck powertrain manufacturing network. Flint is being prepared to assemble the next-generation small-block V-8 engines, while Bay City was previously selected for camshafts, connecting rods and block and head machining support. The new Saginaw investment adds engine blocks and cylinder heads to that long-term production pipeline.

At the Saginaw plant, the work carries both industrial and economic weight. Local coverage and industry reports identify the facility as employing about 300 workers, and plant director John Lancaster described the investment as a commitment to the plant's future and workforce.

The next-generation V-8 program is tied to GM's full-

size pickup business, one of the company's most important product lines. GM said the Saginaw-produced blocks and heads will be used in full-size trucks, reinforcing continued demand for internal-combustion truck manufacturing even as the automaker continues investing in electric vehicles.

The Saginaw project also follows a larger pattern inside GM's manufacturing strategy. In 2025, the company announced an \$888 million investment at its Tonawanda propulsion plant in New York for the next-generation V-8, another sign that GM is continuing to put substantial capital behind gasoline-powered truck and SUV production alongside its EV buildout.

For Saginaw, the investment is another significant manufacturing development at a time when the region continues to

compete for industrial jobs and long-term plant commitments. Rather than adding a new facility, GM is deepening work at an existing operation that has long been part of the company's Michigan manufacturing footprint.

No opening date was attached to the Saginaw announcement, but outside industry reporting tied the sixth-generation V-8 launch to 2027 production timing. That would place Saginaw's tooling and equipment upgrades within the next phase of GM's truck engine rollout.

The investment gives Saginaw a direct role in GM's next truck cycle and adds another large-scale auto manufacturing commitment to mid-Michigan, where Flint, Bay City and Saginaw remain linked through the company's future V-8 production network.

THE MICHIGAN BANNER IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AT&T

# AMERICA'S PUBLIC SAFETY NETWORK

As public safety's partner, we are bringing better connectivity to first responders when and where they need it—including rural, tribal, and remote areas of the country.

With **~31,000 public safety agencies** and organizations harnessing the network, and **~3 million square miles** covered, FirstNet®, Built with AT&T is the trusted communications network built with and for first responders.

To learn how we're supporting public safety in Michigan, visit [attconnects.com/Michigan](https://attconnects.com/Michigan)



© 2026 AT&T Intellectual Property. FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

## BUSINESS + FINANCE

# Saginaw Control & Engineering to expand in Saginaw County



SAGINAW CONTROL &amp; ENGINEERING

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW TWP., Mich. — Saginaw Control & Engineering plans a \$50 million expansion in Saginaw County that will add at least 95 jobs and extend the footprint of one of the region's established manufacturing companies.

The project centers on a new 230,000-square-foot facility in Thomas Township, along with machinery and equipment purchases tied to continued growth. The expansion will support operations across the company's two local locations in Saginaw County.

The company, headquartered on Midland Road in Saginaw Township, has served the electrical industry since 1963 and manufactures standard and custom electrical enclosures as well as precision sheet metal fabrications. Its products are used across industries including robotics, agriculture, food and beverage, and data centers.

The new jobs will start above the regional median wage and include benefits. The company's benefits package includes medical, dental and vision coverage beginning on the first day of employment, with the company covering employee health insurance premiums for its plan.

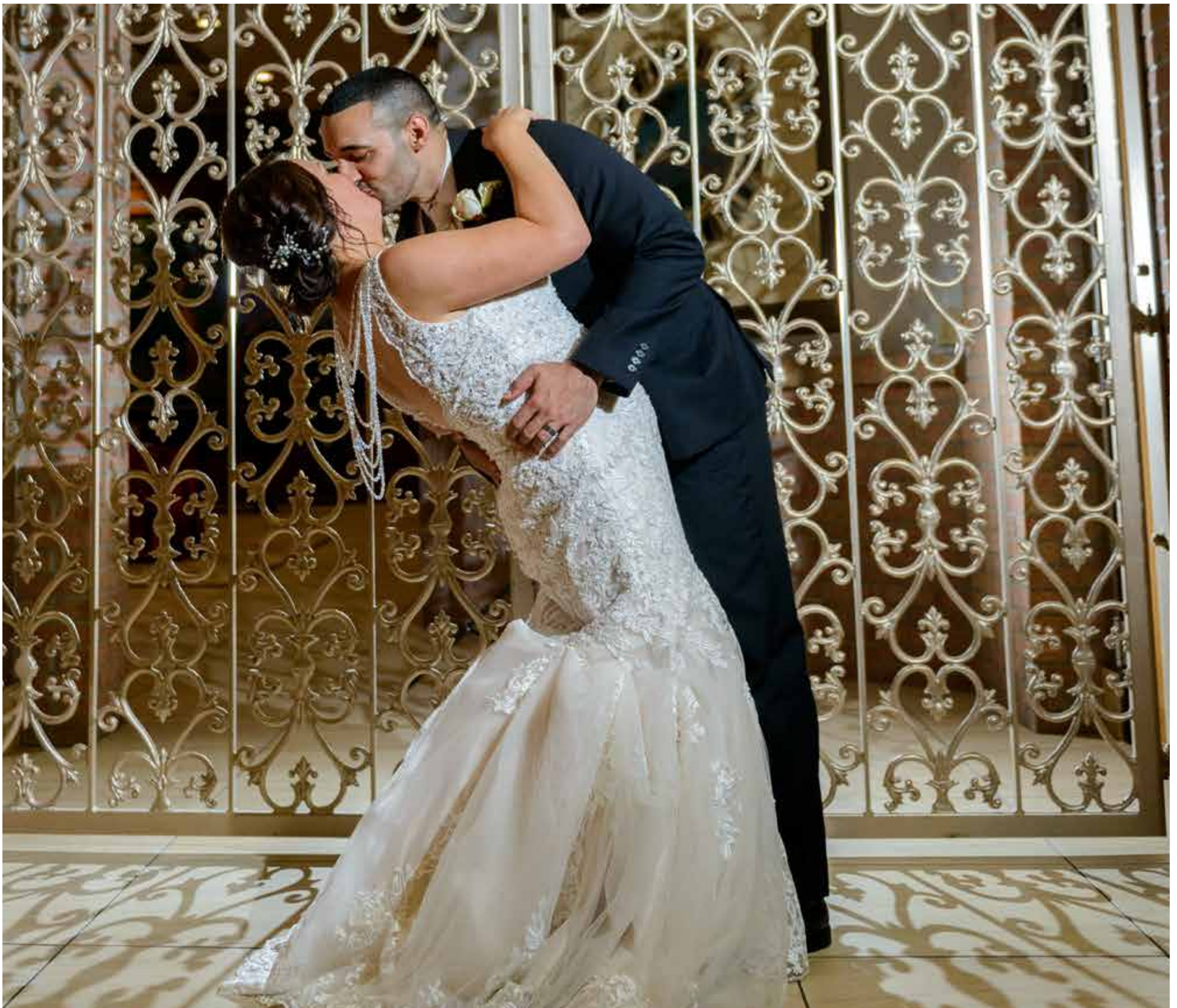
State support for the project includes a \$570,000 performance-based grant through the Michigan Business Development Program. Thomas Township also anticipates approval of a real property tax abatement tied to the new construction, and the Michigan Economic Development Corp. authorized a State Education Tax abatement to pair with local support.

The expansion adds to a manufacturing base that remains central to the Saginaw area economy. For local officials, the investment is both a jobs announcement and a sign that an established employer is choosing to grow in its home market rather than shift

production elsewhere.

The company's growth has been steady for years. Saginaw Control & Engineering reported year-over-year growth since 2009, including a 15% increase in 2025, creating the need for more production space and equipment as it seeks to increase market share.

For a region that has spent years trying to hold onto industrial employers while creating new opportunities, the project stands out as a substantial private investment with immediate hiring implications. Job seekers can apply through the company's careers portal.



## Your *dream wedding* destination.

Our creative team delights in making your vision come to life so you and your guests will experience an unforgettable day. Start planning your dream wedding today with HORIZONS.

**HORIZONS**  
ART OF HOSPITALITY

HORIZONS Conference Center  
6200 State Street | Saginaw, Michigan

(989) 799-4122  
weddings@horizonscenter.com

horizonscenter.com @horizonscenter  
@HORIZONSconfctr @horizonsweddings

## SPORTS

# SVSU launches women's hockey program for 2026-27 season



SVSU WOMEN'S HOCKEY CLUB DISPLAYED ON A VIDEO BOARD DURING A SAGINAW SPIRIT GAME. (COURTESY OF SVSU WOMEN'S HOCKEY)

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Saginaw Valley State University is adding women's hockey, with the program set to begin play in the 2026-27 academic year and become the first women's collegiate hockey team in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

The new team will compete at the American Collegiate Hockey Association Women's Division II level in the Central Collegiate Women's Hockey Association, according to the pro-

gram's official site. Home games are planned at Saginaw Bay Ice Arena on Bay Road.

The launch places SVSU into a growing part of the sport in Michigan. Coverage of the announcement noted continued momentum for women's hockey in mid-Michigan and statewide, including strong crowds for recent Professional Women's Hockey League events in Detroit.

The program has already begun recruiting for its inaugural roster. An open prospect skate is scheduled for April 17 and 18 at Saginaw Bay Ice Arena, giving

players a chance to connect with the new team ahead of its first season.

SVSU's women's hockey site says the program is being built to create more opportunities for girls and women to continue playing beyond high school while keeping competition and recruiting rooted in a region with a long hockey tradition. That matters in mid-Michigan, where youth and junior hockey already have a visible presence through local programs and the Saginaw Spirit.

The addition also broadens SVSU's athletics and campus rec-

reation profile at a time when universities are looking for ways to attract students through both academics and student life. University communications highlighted the unveiling of the team as one of the school's notable developments this month.

For the Great Lakes Bay Region, the program creates a new college-level option for women who want to keep playing close to home. It also gives local hockey fans another team to follow as women's participation in the sport continues to expand.



# The Foundation



The Swagnew Foundation has been providing resources to youth, aiding mental and physical development, as well as providing low cost and free sports camp experiences since 2013. Meet the team behind it >>



## Vince Agnew Founder

### Personal

Native of Grand Rapids, Michigan and graduate of Catholic Central High School. Graduated from Central Michigan University receiving a bachelors of science degree in Journalism.

Mother and Father, Valencia and Darron Agnew, still reside in Grand Rapids, along with siblings, Paige and Carty.

Inducted into Grand Rapids Catholic Central Hall of Fame for academic and athletic excellence as a two-sport All-State student-athlete.

Attended Central Michigan University 2006-2010, playing on a team that won three MAC Championships and ranked in the Nation's Top 25. Vince was named Defensive MVP in 2009 and named a Captain and Defensive MVP in 2010.

### Professional

Played professional football for the Miami Dolphins, Dallas Cowboys, Kansas City Chiefs and Toronto Argonauts.

Retired and began work as a feature writer for the NFL, interviewing first-round draft picks and influential league leaders. During that time, also volunteered at parks and served as a Title-I paraprofessional in Davison Public Schools teaching math and reading.

Worked as a personal trainer and sports development professional at the Freeland SportsZone and Midland Country Club.

Owner of Michigan Made and Founder of the Swagnew Foundation.

## Steph Agnew Co-Founder



### Personal

Native of Bad Axe, Michigan and graduate of Bad Axe High School. Graduated from Central Michigan University followed by receiving a masters degree in Occupational Therapy at Nova Southeastern near Ft Lauderdale, FL.

Mother and Father, Theresa Byrne and Ron Johnston, still reside in Bad Axe.

BAHS Varsity Letter Winner in Volleyball, Basketball and Track and Field, and broke multiple school records in each sport from 2002-2006 as well as winning a Track and Field State Championship.

Attended Central Michigan University 2006-2011, and is a member of CMU's current record-holding 4x400 M Relay team.

Served as a caregiver during college, living with and providing care for her late cousin Jess that was born with muscular dystrophy.

### Professional

Has worked as an Occupational Therapist providing services to a wide range of populations, from youth to the geriatric settings. This includes traumatic brain injuries, home care, within the school district and in-patient rehab.

Steph has volunteered with entities across the state and country including the Special Olympics of Michigan, National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, Suicide Prevention and more.

She has spent the last 8 years working for My Michigan Health serving geriatric and special populations as an OT.

Co-Owner of Michigan Made and Co-Founder of the Swagnew Foundation.

## SPORTS

# First MHSAA boys volleyball season begins with strong mid-Michigan presence

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Michigan's first Michigan High School Athletic Association-sanctioned boys volleyball season is underway, bringing an official state tournament structure to a sport that spent years building momentum as a club activity. In its inaugural sanctioned season, 118 schools are competing in two divisions, including a dozen in mid-Michigan.

The new season marks a major shift for boys volleyball in the state. The sport had operated for years outside the MHSAA as a club-level offering before gaining full sanctioning for spring 2026. The MHSAA announced the season this week as part of its spring sports lineup, with practice having opened March 9 and the first contests beginning March 18. Regionals are scheduled for May 26-30, followed by quarterfinals June 2, semifinals June 5 and the state finals June 6 at Kellogg



BOYS VOLLEYBALL TEAM (FILE PHOTO)

Arena in Battle Creek.

Mid-Michigan schools are part of that first wave. WNEM reported that 12 schools in the region are taking part, with some programs entering the season after several years of club experience and others starting from scratch under the new sanctioned format. That mix has created a season defined as much by development as competition, with coaches teaching fundamentals while trying to establish a long-term culture around the sport.

"It's been extremely re-

warding," Davison coach Katie Naves told WNEM. "It's a really good group of guys. They're very coachable, a lot of energy. They're learning so many parts of the game on how to run drills."

At Midland High, coach Grant Murschel described the season as a chance to build more than a roster. "As you build the program, you build a culture," he told WNEM. "A lot of guys will buy into the culture of just learning how to play good volleyball, build their volleyball I.Q., and just be able to compete in a dif-

ferent level of sport."

Players across the region are also adjusting to a sport that is new to many of them in a varsity setting. Swan Valley junior Nolan Erlenbock told WNEM that few of the players had much background in volleyball before this season, making the experience both challenging and fun. Mt. Pleasant senior Nathan Davis described the inaugural year as a foundation-building moment for the future of the program.

The statewide numbers suggest boys volleyball has arrived with real traction. MHSAA called the debut season one of the headline changes of the spring calendar, and the 118-school participation total easily clears the threshold typically needed to support a meaningful statewide championship bracket. The sport now joins the association's formal postseason structure, giving teams a chance to compete for the first official boys volleyball state titles in Michigan history.

## Detroit Pistons clinch East's top playoff seed

BY MB STAFF

DETROIT — The Detroit Pistons have locked up the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference, completing one of the NBA's biggest turnarounds and securing home-court advantage throughout the conference playoffs.

Detroit clinched the top seed April 4 with a 116-93 win over Philadelphia, then entered the postseason bracket as the East's No. 1 team. NBA playoff stand-

ings published after games of April 12 listed the Pistons in the top spot, set to face the Eastern Conference play-in winner holding the No. 8 seed.

The top seed comes just days after Detroit also clinched its first Central Division title since the 2007-08 season. NBA coverage described the division title as the end of a long stretch of struggles for a franchise that had fallen to 14-68 only two years earlier.

The playoff path is now set. The NBA's 2026 postseason

schedule lists the play-in tournament for April 14-17, with the first round of the playoffs beginning April 18. Detroit's first-round opponent will come from the play-in field after Philadelphia, Orlando, Charlotte and Miami finished in the East's 7 through 10 positions.

For Detroit, the No. 1 seed marks a dramatic shift from recent seasons and puts the franchise back at the center of the conference race for the first time in nearly two decades. Team coverage from the Pistons framed

the final week of the regular season as a chance to tune up for the playoffs after finishing on top of the East.



# ARENA FOOTBALL

IS COMING TO  
SAGINAW MICHIGAN



[CLICK HERE TO BUY YOUR TICKETS](#)

## FAITH IN FOCUS



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

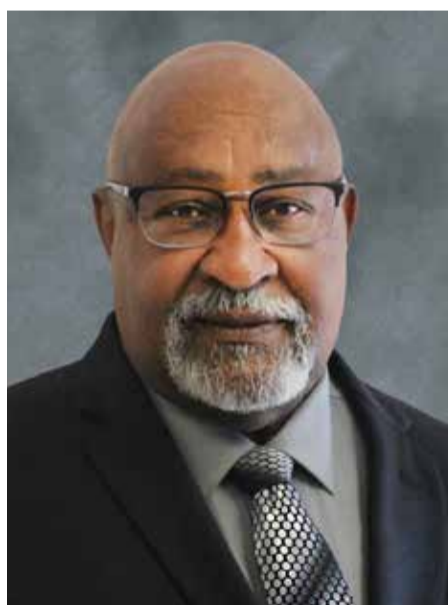
## Ministry Without Walls expands vision with community-focused mission

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

## SERMONETTE SERIES

## Pray, Prepare, and Expect – The Posture Of Powerful Faith

*"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen"*

**Hebrews 11: 1 KJV**



BY MINISTER CAROLYN  
CARTER TOWNSEL

In a world where uncertainty seems to dominate headlines, believers are reminded of a timeless principle that shifts outcomes and transforms lives: Pray, Prepare, and Expect. This threefold posture is not merely spiritual language—it is a divine strategy that calls Christians to active, expectant faith.

Too often, prayer is treated as a closing act rather than a starting point. Yet Scripture reveals that prayer is the foundation upon which preparation and expectation are built.

The Bible declares in *James 2:17*, "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." This challenges believers to move beyond passive hope into intentional readiness. When we pray, we are not informing God—we are aligning ourselves with His will. But alignment demands movement.

### Pray — The Starting Point of Faith

Prayer is communication with God, but more importantly, it is an act of surrender and trust. In *Philippians 4:6*, Scripture instructs, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Prayer invites God into our circumstances—but it also positions us to hear instruction. True prayer shifts perspective and prepares the heart for what comes next.

### Prepare — Faith in Motion

Preparation is the evidence that we believe God heard us. It is the physical manifestation of spiritual confidence.

Consider Noah, who built an ark before a single drop of rain fell (*Genesis 6*). His preparation looked irrational to others, but it was rooted in obedience.

Preparation says: "I believe God enough to get ready for what I cannot yet see."

Whether it is organizing your life, developing your

skills, or positioning yourself for opportunity, preparation is not optional—it is required.

### Expect — The Language of Faith

Expectation is where many believers fall short. We pray and even prepare—but we hesitate to truly expect.

Yet Scripture boldly states in *Mark 11:24*, "Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

Expectation is not wishful thinking—it is confident anticipation rooted in God's promises. It changes how you walk, speak, and respond. Expectation causes you to live as though the answer is already on the way.

The message is clear: prayer alone is incomplete without preparation, and preparation lacks power without expectation. These three elements work together to produce results that reflect God's faithfulness.

When believers embrace this posture, they shift from passive observers to active participants in God's plan.

So the question remains:

When you pray—are you preparing?  
And when you prepare—are you truly expecting?

Because the life of faith is not just about asking God for something...

It's about being ready when it arrives.

Therefore, Beloved;  
Pray like it depends on God.  
Prepare like it depends on you.  
Expect because God never fails.

Blessings to All,  
Carolyn

## FAITH IN FOCUS

## Zion Missionary Baptist Church to celebrate pastor and family's 25th anniversary in Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

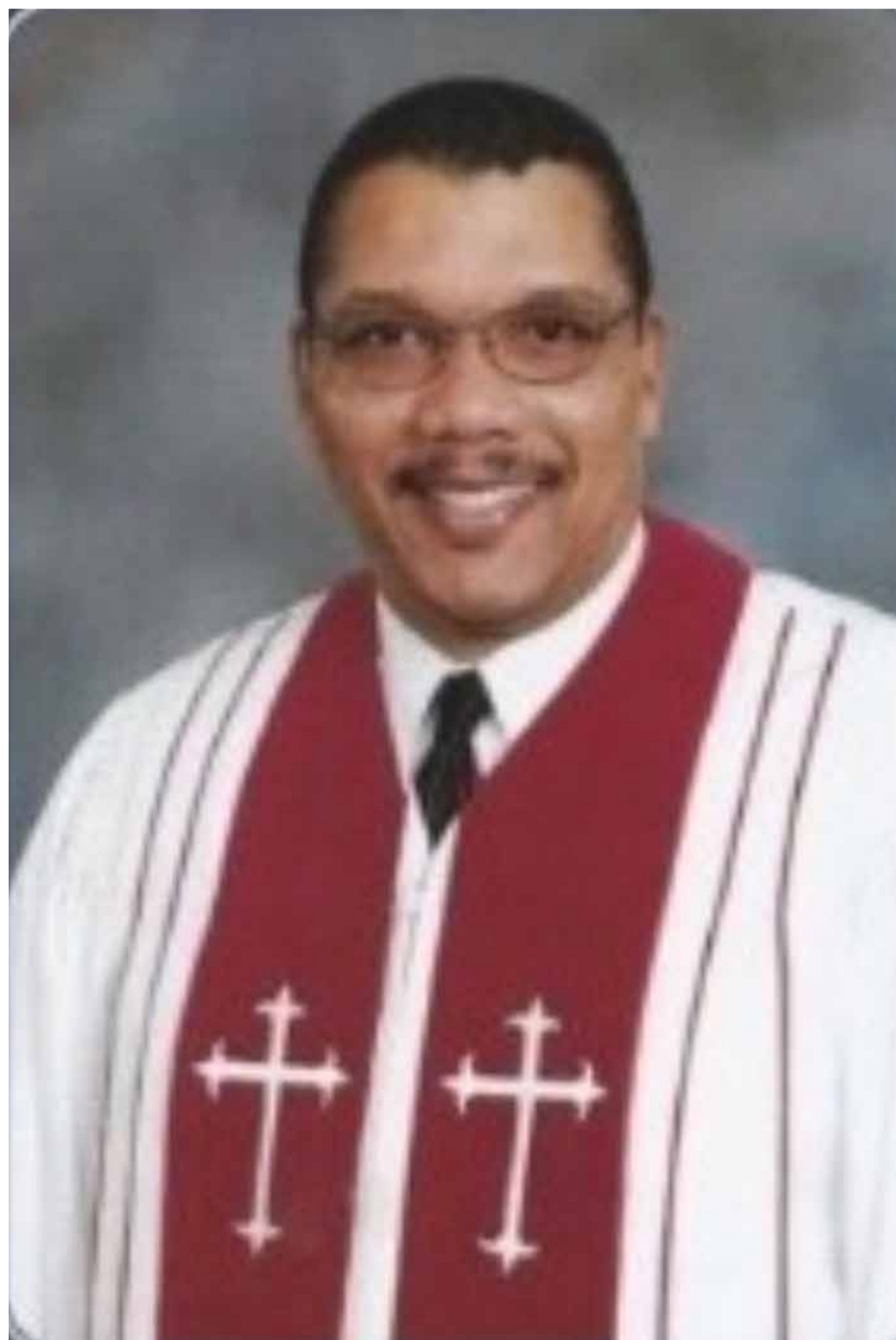
SAGINAW, Mich. — Zion Missionary Baptist Church will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Pastor Rodrick A. Smith and his family in May, honoring a quarter-century of leadership at one of Saginaw's oldest Black churches.

The anniversary celebration will begin with a banquet at 5 p.m. Friday, May 15, 2026, at Horizon Conference Center. Ticket information is available by calling the church at 989-754-9621. The observance will continue Sunday, May 17, with Sunday school at 9 a.m. and worship service at 10 a.m.

The milestone marks 25 years since Smith was called to lead Zion Missionary Baptist Church in May 2001. His tenure represents a significant chapter in the life of a congregation established in 1868, just five years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed.

Zion Missionary Baptist Church has long stood at the heart of Saginaw's Black faith community. The church traces its home base to Second and Johnson streets since its founding and holds the distinction of being the oldest Black Baptist church in the city. Its first pastor was the Rev. W. E. Walker.

Over the decades, Zion has been led by a succession of pastors who helped guide the congregation through periods of challenge and growth. In 1928, the Rev. Reid launched an expansion effort that included the purchase of neighboring property, though those holdings were later lost during the Great Depression. Other pastors who served the church in the years that followed



PASTOR RODRICK A. SMITH

included the Rev. Arnold, the Rev. Schatine, the Rev. Toomey, the Rev. Johnson and the Rev. O.J. Steele, who assumed the pulpit in 1945.

Steele was succeeded in April 1956 by the Rev. Roosevelt Austin. Under Austin's leadership, Zion continued to grow and prosper. After his retirement following 44 years of service, the Rev. Arthur Washington served as in-

terim pastor through April 2001 before Smith was called to the pulpit.

Smith brought to Saginaw a ministry shaped by faith, military service and theological training. A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, he accepted Christ in May 1969 at age 7, was baptized and became a member of Zion Baptist Church in Shreveport. He graduated from Green Oak High

School in 1979 and joined the United States Marine Corps in 1982, where he completed orientation training and testing in military police. He later graduated from the Tenth Marine Artillery Training School in 1984.

His formal ministry preparation continued in Louisiana and Texas. In 1996, Smith graduated from United Theological Seminary and Bible College in Monroe, Louisiana, with a bachelor of theology degree. He later earned a master of theology degree from the same seminary on May 23, 2003. He also continued biblical studies through E.K. Bailey Ministries Inc. in Dallas, receiving certification in expository preaching in July 2004.

Smith preached his initial sermon in 1991 and was ordained in 1993 by Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Benton, Louisiana. Before coming to Zion in Saginaw, he served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bellevue, Louisiana, from 1994 to 1999, and later as pastor of Galilee Baptist Church in Plain Dealing, Louisiana, from June 5, 1999, until his call to Michigan.

Smith's ministry has continued a legacy of service at Zion while building on the foundation established by generations before him. His anniversary celebration also recognizes the support of his family, including his wife, Irma Gates-Smith, and their daughter, Angela.

As Zion Missionary Baptist Church prepares to mark the occasion, the anniversary will connect Smith's 25 years of leadership with a congregation whose history spans more than 150 years at the corner of Second and Johnson, now Roosevelt Austin Street, where the church continues its ministry in Saginaw.

FREE ADMISSION

MEMORIAL CONCERT  
SONGS OF  
MAESTRO  
RICHARD

*Smallwood*

SATURDAY,  
APRIL 25, 2026 · 6PM  
BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH



MINISTER DEMONA REED  
DIRECTOR

535 CATHAY STREET · SAGINAW, MI, 48601

*Freewill offering will be collected to benefit  
Restoration Community Outreach (RCO)  
and The Charles McNair Freedom School*

**FEATURING**  
WORLD RENOWNED  
MUSICIAN EXTRAORDINAIRE,  
DR. A. JEFFREY LAVALLEY



WITH AREA  
CHOIRS  
FROM:

BETHEL  
A.M.E.  
CHURCH

THE NEW  
CHRIST  
COMMUNITY  
CHURCH

ZION  
MISSIONARY  
BAPTIST  
CHURCH

EPHESUS  
7TH DAY  
ADVENTIST  
CHURCH

...AND OTHERS

# CHURCH DIRECTORY



### Faith Ministries Church

Rev. Dr. Anthony Revis  
Prophetess Linda J. Kemp Revis  
3420 E Ashman St.  
Midland, MI 48642  
989-837-7777  
faithministrieschurch.org



### Ministry Without Walls

Pastor, John Dunn  
3783 Mannion Road  
Saginaw, MI 48603



### New Life Baptist Ministries

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



### Glory House Ministries

Pastor Jim House  
3660 Hermansau Rd.  
Saginaw, MI 48603  
(989) 752-4769



### World Outreach Campus

Bishop Hurley J. Coleman Jr.  
2405 Bay Road  
Saginaw, MI 48602  
989-752-2955  
worldoutreachcampus.com



### New Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

Pastor Rev. Corey Clay, Jr.  
3610 Russel St.  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
989-754-0801



### Holy Communion Gospel Center

Pastor Charlene Washington  
1245 E. Genesee  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
989-752-3993



### New Beginnings Ministries

Pastor Augustine Delgado  
701 Hess Avenue  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
newlife3881@gmail.com



### Saint Paul Baptist Church

Rev. Dr., Vincent D. McMillon  
120 North 15 St.  
Saginaw, MI. 48601  
stpaul2@yahoo.com



### Jacob's Ladder

Pastor Dennis Barlow  
1926 Fairfield Street  
Saginaw, MI 48602  
989-799-6601



### New Birth Missionary Baptist

Bishop Larry D. Camel  
3121 Sheridan  
Saginaw, Michigan  
989-327-1755



### Victorious Belivers Ministries Church

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



### Bridgeport Community Church

Pastor Rob Ashmall  
3821 State St.  
PO Box 541  
Bridgeport, MI 48722  
989-777-1840



### New Covenant Christian Center

Pastor Ron Frierson  
2395 S. Outer Drive  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
989-752-8485



### Anointed Temple Ministries

Bishop Tim D. Holden, Sr.  
612 Millard St.  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
901 Melbourne  
Detroit, MI 48211



### Bethel AME Church

Rev. Dr. Dennis Laffoon  
535 Cathay St.  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
(989) 755-7011  
bethelame-saginaw.org



### Zion Missionary Baptist Church

Pastor Rodrick A. Smith  
721 Johnson Ave  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
989-754-9621  
zmbc-saginaw.org



List your Ministry  
in The Michigan  
Banner Church  
Directory

CONTACT US AT (989) 249-3882 TO ADD YOUR MINISTRY TODAY

## FUNDRAISING GOOD TIMES

## Ahead or Behind? Mid-Year Fundraising Plan

BY MEL AND PEARL SHAW

*Heads up! Now is the time to be proactive in implementing and managing your fundraising plan. You do have a plan, don't you?*

Creating a fundraising plan is the first step toward reaching your fundraising goals. You also have to implement the plan. Checking in on your progress helps ensure you reach your year-end goals. Here are four items to help you stay on target. Use these as a checklist with your team now, and on a quarterly basis.

First, check to see if your organization knows if it has agreed on an amount that needs to be raised, what the money will be used for, and what the anticipated impact will be. Do you have a case for support and other marketing materials you use to communicate with current and potential donors and funders? If not, it's time to put your vision into words and images.

Next, assess where you believe the funding will come from. Have you created a list of prospective donors and funders with anticipated giving levels,



FILE PHOTO

both high and low? We recommend estimating anticipated giving based on both "anticipated" and "worst" scenarios. You don't want to project receipt of a gift or grant at a certain level, only to receive funding that is significantly lower than anticipated. The list of prospective donors should be recorded with specific names of who you will talk to and when. You need a pool of prospective donors and funders who you are working with and who you believe can give at levels required to meet your fundraising goals. You also need cultivation and solici-

tation processes in play to meet your goals. All of this needs to be tracked. You can't keep it in your head. This means your check-in should include a data assessment: what is being recorded and

what reports are being produced?

The third step is to determine where things stand right now. How much has been raised to date? How many proposals or solicitations have been submitted and are awaiting a response? How do you weigh the potential of each, resulting in the amount requested? What are you using to make this evaluation? Is funding coming in as projected?

Next, let's talk about your team. Have you built a team of staff and volunteers with each person responsible for specific tasks? Do you have financial and volunteer commitments from the team? How is their work progressing? Is everyone following through with their commitments? Is your organization receiving funds as a result of their work? Do you feel the team has the will to do the work required over the balance of the year? What about team members responsible for your awareness and education campaign: are they in motion?

Assessing your work is critical – this allows you to make adjustments. If you are on track, we offer our congratulations. If you are behind, now is the time to get in motion and add contingency plans in case you can't reach your fundraising goals. You can do it: people are depending on you.



Copyright 2026 – Mel and Pearl Shaw of Saad&Shaw–Comprehensive Fund Development Services, providing fundraising coaching, planning, case for support services, and more. [www.saadandshaw.com](http://www.saadandshaw.com). Virtual services and consultations always available.



## PICS OF THE WEEK

### The Nashes and the Rings: A Shared Home, A Shared History with Dr. Jack Nash

On Thursday, April 2, Dr. Jack Nash presented “The Nashes and the Rings: A Shared Home, A Shared History” at the Saginaw Art Museum & Gardens. The presentation examined the intertwined histories of the Ring and Nash families, whose lives were connected through the historic home that now houses the Saginaw Art Museum & Gardens. The residence was built and owned by the Ring family and later became a shared home, where the Nash family lived as caretakers and raised their two children alongside the Rings.

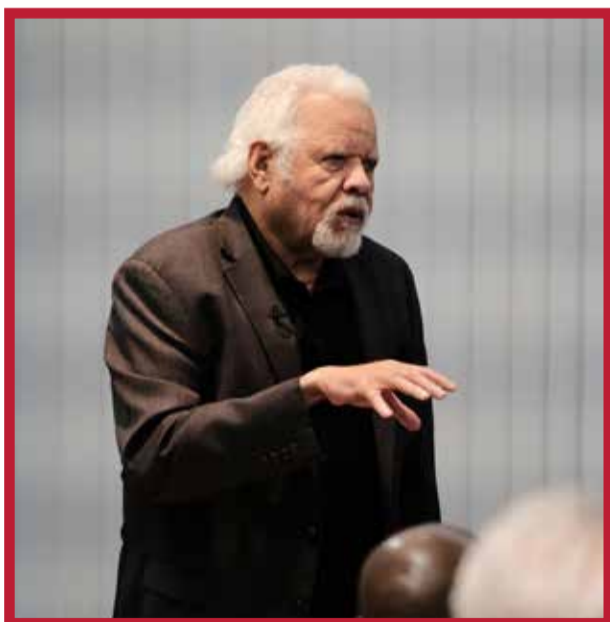


PHOTO CREDIT: FB / SAGINAW ART MUSEUM & GARDENS



# It Matters Where You Buy Your Car

Make your next deal with

# John Wright

Sales Associate • Used Car Sales

**Contact:**

(989) 308-4971

[jwright@garberbuick.com](mailto:jwright@garberbuick.com)



5925 STATE ST, SAGINAW, MI 48603  
SALES: 989-683-4697



**We**

*inspire.*

**Nathan Hankerson**  
Senior majoring in  
Pre-Medicine/Biology

**You are so much more than a student.**  
*At SVSU, we see and cultivate your full potential. Our award-winning faculty partner with you to pursue hundreds of different research opportunities, study abroad experiences, academic conferences and practical internships. Cardinals fly far beyond the classroom. We unleash our students' talents around the globe — from presenting at Oxford University to touring Asia for a new cultural perspective.*



**SAGINAW VALLEY**  
**STATE UNIVERSITY**  
[svsu.edu/opportunity](https://svsu.edu/opportunity)



RECOGNIZED IN 2016 & 2018 BY  
INSIGHT INTO DIVERSITY WITH THE  
HIGHER EDUCATION EXCELLENCE  
IN DIVERSITY (HEED) AWARD.



7400 Bay Road • University Center, MI 48710 • (800) 968-9500